



25 June 2024

## Changes to eligibility for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) equipment from 1 July 2025

The Australian Society of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy (ASMIRT) is the peak body representing medical radiation practitioners in Australia. Our aims are to promote, encourage, cultivate and maintain the highest principles of practice and proficiency of medical radiation science, always mindful that the welfare of the patient should be at the centre of everything we do.

Please find some feedback on the above document:

### Why are the changes being made?

Expanding Medicare funding for services performed on MRI machines in MM 1 areas will improve patient access to timely and affordable MRI services. The removing of the final barriers to patient access recognises the important role that MRI scans play in the diagnosis and management of conditions.

ASMIRT do not believe that it is that simple.

MR is not always the best modality for differential diagnosis. The whole dose argument is inconsistent, and “rules” are not to be used with a broad brush. There is evidence demonstrating that doctors change requests to MR from CT when children require scans (eg. Abdomen for large bowel queries), but the MR role is not the gold standard and the children are undergoing both scans and exposed to two different contrasts. ASMIRT believes that the Choosing Wisely program and RANZCR should guide best practice, along with evidence-based referral guidelines, e.g. iRefer from the Royal College of Radiologists that can be implemented.

ASMIRT are also cognisant that MRI scans are being performed without an MRI Radiologist on site during image acquisition who could “personally attend” the patient if the situation required. This is not in the best interests of patients who need the right imaging sooner for an earlier diagnosis and treatment.

### Existing personal supervision and eligible provider requirements

#### Personal supervision

Clause 2.5.3 of the [Health Insurance \(Diagnostic Imaging Services Table\) Regulations \(No. 2\) 2020](#) outlines personal supervision as part of the permissible circumstances for performing MRI and MRA services. A Medicare-eligible MRI service is performed in a permissible circumstance only if it is:

- a. both:
  - i. performed under the supervision of an eligible provider who is available to monitor and influence the conduct and diagnostic quality of the examination, including, if necessary, by personal attendance on the patient; and
  - ii. reported by an eligible provider; or
- b. performed in an emergency; or
- c. performed because of medical necessity, in a remote location.

ASMIRT suggests an audit of centres to ensure that MRI scans are performed with the “eligible provider” to “personally attend” the patient. This aspect along with contrast examination processes needs to be audited.

ASMIRT also recommends that the MRI service is led by the medical radiation practitioner as the quality and excellence of scanning comes from their knowledge, skills and abilities and recognised qualifications.

ASMIRT are not aware of any MRI scanner not being located in “B” described below in the documentation.

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#### Registered Office:

Suite 1040-1044 (Level 10)  
1 Queens Road  
Melbourne Vic 3004  
Australia

#### All Correspondence to:

P.O. Box 16234  
Collins Street West Vic 8007  
Australia

#### Contact us:

T +61 3 9419 3336  
F +61 3 9416 0783  
W [www.asmirt.org](http://www.asmirt.org)