

Medicare Benefits Schedule map to ACHI

Thirteenth Edition User Guide

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Medicare Benefits Schedule map to ACHI – Thirteenth Edition User Guide

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Associated file

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1. Introduction

Mapping between the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) and the Australian Classification of Health Interventions (ACHI) provides the ability for data users and researchers to include data from both sources with some confidence of parity between codes.

Users of the mapping tables should be aware of the differences between the two systems and limitations of the mapping process. Most importantly MBS is a billing system which groups similarly priced medical specialist services, whereas ACHI is an intervention classification which has specific codes for different procedures organised primarily by anatomy. The MBS-ACHI map table only presents a single best map from MBS items to ACHI stem codes, and as such, the data reflected in the MBS item is not exactly equivalent to the data collected in the ACHI code. Furthermore, the maps between MBS and ACHI are limited by additional detail in the MBS item description which is not generally included in ACHI, such as: diagnostic terms, treatment setting, clinician type and count of treatment.

2. Scope of mapping

This is a one direction map from MBS to ACHI. Some ACHI codes have been created to meet the requirements of a classification system (residual codes) or to cover concepts not in MBS. Not all ACHI codes will be represented in the MBS to ACHI forward mapping table. There is currently no user requirement for a backward map from ACHI to MBS.

The MBS captures medical interventions across a broad scope of treatments and contact methods with patients. Concepts exist within the MBS that are not comparable to the admitted and intervention focused ACHI codes, for example: items representing specialist appointments in the non-admitted setting, codes specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and refugees and items with specific administrative requirements.

The evolution of the MBS system has diverged from ACHI principles, with:

- continued expansion into bundling diagnostic concepts with interventions
- bundling multiple interventions into a single MBS number
- granularity of sites, sizes and counts of interventions.

The following MBS categories are allocated as IN or OUT of scope for ACHI*.

<i>In scope MBS categories</i>	<i>Out of scope MBS categories</i>
2 – Diagnostic Procedures and Investigations	1 – Professional Attendance
3 – Therapeutic Procedures	6 – Pathology Services
4 – Oral and Maxillofacial Services	8 – Miscellaneous Services
5 – Diagnostic Imaging Services	9 – Dental services
7 – Cleft Lip and Cleft Palate Services	
10 – Dental Benefits Schedule	

* During the mapping process, certain services from within in scope MBS categories have been determined to be out of scope for ACHI, including MBS items for: telehealth, assistance, anaesthesia consultations, initiation of management of anaesthesia, device programming, preparation/processing of specimen, procedure/management/attendances in ICU.

Maps are only updated and published at the completion of a new edition development cycle.

3. MBS source codes, ACHI target codes and Map table

3.1 Source Codes – MBS Item Number

The MBS is a listing of services and interventions subsidised by the Australian Government. Each service is defined by an item number and description of the intervention or criteria necessary for the item to be assigned.

The MBS July 2025 download file – Released 5 June and effective 1 July 2025 – was used as the source for the MBS map to ACHI Thirteenth Edition.

3.2 Target Codes – Thirteenth Edition ACHI Codes

ACHI is an intervention classification system based on the MBS for interventions mainly performed within an admitted care setting. Non-MBS ACHI codes have been created to ensure coverage of a range of interventions used in the admitted setting and more broadly.

3.3 Map table – Thirteenth Edition

Title	Description
ItemNum	The MBS item number.
Description	The MBS item description.
In Scope for ACHI (Yes/No)	Whether the MBS item is considered in/out of scope for ACHI purposes.
ACHI Stem Code	<p>The first 5 digits of an ACHI code that best maps to the MBS item. Multiple ACHI codes may use the same stem code (for example stem code 11015, represents ACHI codes 11015-00 and 11015-01). Also, multiple MBS items may be mapped to the same stem code. Prior to comparing data coded using ACHI, it is important to review all codes with the same stem code for the purposes of the analysis being undertaken.</p> <p>Descriptions for the stem codes do not exist in ACHI, however Appendix A: <i>ACHI Code List</i> in the <i>ACHI Tabular List Thirteenth Edition</i> provides a list of ACHI codes in numerical order with the corresponding block number to verify the specific ACHI codes.</p>
Map Match Rating	A rating assigned to describe the map match between the MBS item and the codes represented by the ACHI stem code – Refer to Section 4 Map Match Rating for a definition of ratings and examples.

4. Map Match Rating

Each MBS item will be assigned one of the following Map Match Ratings to describe the match to ACHI.

Map match rating	Description
1 Full concept match	<p>The MBS item number matches the ACHI stem code map and the concepts align.</p> <p>The MBS item number is included in ACHI and the descriptor is essentially a synonymous match to the ACHI code descriptor(s) represented by the ACHI stem code.</p> <p>Example 1</p> <p>MBS item 37004 BLADDER, repair of rupture (Anaes.) (Assist.) maps to stem code 37004 (ACHI codes: 37004-01 <i>Other laparoscopic repair of bladder</i>, 37004-02 <i>Other repair of bladder</i>, 37004-00 <i>Laparoscopic repair of ruptured bladder</i>, 37004-03 <i>Repair of ruptured bladder</i>).</p> <p>This is assigned Map Match Rating 1 because the MBS item number is the same as the ACHI stem map (37004) and the concepts align or are essentially synonymous.</p>
2 Partial concept match	<p>The MBS item number does not match the ACHI stem code map but the concepts align or partially align.</p> <p>The MBS item number is not included in ACHI but the MBS item descriptor is a match to the descriptor(s) represented by a different ACHI stem code.</p> <p>Example 2</p> <p>MBS item 30232 MUSCLE, RUPTURED, repair of (limited), not associated with external wound (Anaes.) maps to stem code 30235 (ACHI code: 30235-00 <i>Repair of ruptured muscle, not elsewhere classified</i>).</p> <p>This is assigned Map Match Rating 2 because the MBS item does not match the ACHI stem (ie 30232 does not equal 30235) but for mapping purposes the concepts align.</p>
7 Many map options	<p>An 'in-scope' MBS item number with more than one map option in ACHI where it is not feasible to select a single best fit ACHI stem code map.</p> <p>Example 3</p> <p>MBS item 30384 Open or minimally invasive excision of a retroperitoneal mass, 4 cm or greater in largest dimension, lasting more than 3 hours, other than a service to which another item in this Group applies (H) (Anaes.) (Assist.)</p>

Map match rating	Description
	<p>ACHI has not utilised this MBS item number and the ACHI Alphabetic Index at <i>Excision/ lesion/retroperitoneal</i> has subterms for female or male. Therefore, this item number is assigned to 7 Many map options.</p> <p>Example 4</p> <p>MBS item 30723 Laparotomy, laparoscopy or extra-peritoneal approach, for drainage of an intra-abdominal, pancreatic or retroperitoneal collection or abscess (Anaes.) (Assist.)</p> <p>ACHI does not utilise this MBS item number and there is no best fit map from options:</p> <p>30394-00 [987] <i>Drainage of intra-abdominal abscess, haematoma or cyst</i> or 30394-01 [987] <i>Laparoscopic drainage of intra-abdominal abscess, haematoma or cyst</i> or 30575-00 [976] <i>Incision and drainage of pancreatic abscess</i> or 30402-00 [987] <i>Drainage of retroperitoneal abscess, haematoma or cyst</i> and/or 30390-00 [984] <i>Laparoscopy</i>.</p>
8 No ACHI map	<p>An 'in-scope' MBS item number with no stem match in ACHI, that is, there is no equivalent concept in ACHI.</p> <p>Example 5</p> <p>MBS item 39720 Awake craniotomy for functional neurosurgery</p> <p>ACHI does not utilise this MBS item number as ACHI does not classify operative approach as a separate code (craniotomy).</p>
9 Preliminary map	<p>A preliminary ACHI stem code map for MBS items with a start date post ACHI content development date (post March 2023).</p> <p>MBS content released post March 2023 has been assigned a preliminary map rating where possible. It should be noted that this map has not undergone thorough review and it is possible that the map will be revised in the next ACHI development cycle.</p> <p>Example 6</p> <p>MBS item 38376 Percutaneous insertion of an intravascular microaxial ventricular assist device, into the left ventricle only, by arteriotomy, including all associated intraoperative imaging</p> <p>This MBS item has a start date 01/03/2025 so it was not considered in the Thirteenth Edition development cycle. The best current ACHI stem map is 38615 per ACHI code 38615-00 <i>Insertion of left ventricular assist device</i>.</p> <p>See also Section 5. Inclusion of new MBS content, preliminary map</p>

Map match rating	Description
10 Not in scope	<p>MBS items categorised as not in scope for ACHI. Namely these are items related to professional attendance/assistance, pathology services, dental services, anaesthesia consultations, initiation of management of anaesthesia, telehealth and telephone attendances.</p> <p>Example 7</p> <p>MBS items 3-10997 Professional attendance/medical service</p> <p>ACHI does not classify attendance items in any setting.</p>

5. Inclusion of new MBS content, preliminary map

The cut off for inclusion of new MBS content into the ACHI development cycle is about 2 years prior to the implementation date for the next ACHI edition (for example Thirteenth Edition implemented on 1 July 2025 includes revision and development of MBS content published before March 2023). To align new MBS content with an ACHI edition implementation date, IHACPA is trialing the provision of preliminary maps for MBS content released in the interval between the ACHI development cut-off date and the new edition implementation date.

These preliminary maps are simply a guide to assist users to locate an approximate ACHI stem code map and the preliminary maps will be revised and updated as an outcome of development for the next ACHI edition.

New MBS content (post ACHI development cut-off date) will fall into one of the following preliminary map scenarios.

Scenario for Thirteenth Edition	Preliminary map assignment
Concept match	<p>ACHI Stem Code: Best fit ACHI stem</p> <p>Map Match Rating: 9 Preliminary</p>
Many map options or no clear best fit map, such as a new intervention	<p>ACHI Stem Code: N/A</p> <p>Map Match Rating: 9 Preliminary</p>
Clearly “not in scope”	<p>ACHI Stem Code: N/A</p> <p>Map Match Rating: 10 Not in scope</p>



Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority

Eora Nation, Level 12, 1 Oxford Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Phone 02 8215 1100

Email enquiries.ihacpa@ihacpa.gov.au

www.ihacpa.gov.au