

# The *Life!* program – Information for GPs

## About the *Life!* program

### What is the *Life!* program?

The *Life!* program is a free lifestyle modification program that helps people reduce their risk of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The *Life!* program will provide your at-risk patients with the motivation and support required to make and maintain positive changes, to adopt healthy behaviours and lead a more active lifestyle.

*Life!* is run by health professionals and delivered as a group course or a telephone health coaching service. Participants receive a comprehensive workbook and learn more about:

- healthy eating
- physical activity
- sleep
- managing stress and setbacks
- goal setting

They also receive motivational emails to help them stay on track for success.

### About the *Life!* group course

The *Life!* group course comprises seven sessions run across a 12-month period. The introduction session (1 hour) is a one-on-one between the participants and their *Life!* facilitator where participants can ask questions and learn more about the program. Group sessions are 1.5-2 hours. The first four group sessions are run fortnightly, group session five is at six months and the final session takes place 12 months after starting the program.

Courses are delivered across Victoria and the group environment gives participants the support and motivation they need to reach their health goals.

### About Telephone Health Coaching

The *Life!* Telephone Health Coaching (THC) service is delivered by a health professional at a time convenient to the participant. THC comprises seven phone calls with a personal health coach over 12 months. The introduction call (45 minutes) gives participants the opportunity to ask their health coach questions and to learn more about the program before the initial call (45 minutes). The next 5 calls (20-45 minutes each) occur monthly and the final call is scheduled 12 months after starting the program.

### Participant eligibility

To be eligible, the patient must have one or more of the following:

- AUSDRISK score  $\geq 12$  and BMI score  $\geq 25 \text{ kg/m}^2$
- AUSDRISK score  $\geq 12$  and BMI  $\geq 23 \text{ kg/m}^2$  (if participant self-identifies as being of Asian background)\*
- Absolute Cardiovascular Disease Risk Assessment score  $\geq 10\%$
- Have one of the listed pre-existing conditions which are known to place them at increased risk of CVD or type 2 diabetes. (Please see the *Life!* GP referral form for full eligibility criteria.)

### Program exclusion criteria

- Diabetes
- Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) diagnosis in the last 3 months
- Clinically Active Cancer
- Pregnancy

It is important to consider the suitability of the *Life!* program for each individual.

### *Life!* for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people

We offer the:

- **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) *Life!* program** in plain English, Vietnamese, Chinese and Arabic, working with translators and bilingual facilitators.
- **Road to Good Health (RTGH) Aboriginal *Life!* program**, working with Aboriginal Health Workers to deliver culturally relevant sessions.

The referral pathways into the RTGH or CALD *Life!* programs are the same as the mainstream *Life!* program (please see the *Life!* GP referral form for full eligibility criteria).

### Promote the *Life!* program at your clinic

You can order free resources, including posters, postcards and AUSDRISK tools, to promote the *Life!* program. Please visit [www.lifeprogram.org.au/health-professionals/order-resources](http://www.lifeprogram.org.au/health-professionals/order-resources) or call (03) 8648 1880 to order your resources.

\*Asian background includes three distinct sub-regions (Parliament of Australia, 1997): Northeast Asia (Mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Taiwan); Southeast Asia (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma (Myanmar), the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam); and Southern Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal).

## What do you need to refer a patient?

- 1 The *Life!* GP referral form with all sections completed and the patient's consent.
- 2 A copy of the AUSDRISK tool (if completed with the patient).
- 3 Attach patient blood test results within the last 12 months of the *Life!* referral date (Fasting Blood Glucose (FBG)- Attach OGTT if FBG 5.5 - 6.9 mmol/L and Lipids: TC,HDL, LDL and TRIGs)

A patient's blood test results are required to ensure that type 2 diabetes has been excluded. It is also encouraged to complete a health screening for your patient.

## What happens after a patient is referred into the program?

Our team will contact the patient within 24-48 hours to discuss their referral and enrolment into the program. We will notify the clinic of the patient's enrolment outcome.

Once they are enrolled, the patient will receive written confirmation of this and their facilitator or health coach will contact the patient to schedule in their introduction session. The patient will receive program materials and support to participate in the subsequent sessions. The referring practitioner will receive updates regarding the patient's referral outcome and progress throughout the program once they are enrolled.

## HealthPathways

The *Life!* program is listed as a lifestyle modification program on the HealthPathways online portal primarily for general practitioners. It is also available to nurses, allied health and other health professionals.

## MBS item numbers

Medicare health assessments provided by GPs may be delivered using Medicare items 701, 703, 705, 707 (the general, time-tiered health assessment items) and 715 (the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Assessment). Heart health check by GPs may also be delivered using Medicare item 699.

For further information please visit [www.mbsonline.gov.au](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au)

## Can we refer to a local *Life!* provider/facilitator?

Yes. If you have an existing relationship with one of our *Life!* providers/facilitators, you can nominate them and we will note this on your clinic's file. We also encourage you to make a note on the patient's referral form. We will endeavour to assign referrals to your preferred *Life!* provider/facilitator assuming group availability and participant suitability.

## Medical software

The GP referral form template is available to be imported into four commonly used medical software packages:

- Best Practice
- Genie
- Medical Director
- ZedMed

## Eligible patients in your practice

To identify high risk patients, you can search your patient database to assess who may require a preventative health check. The *Life!* team can support your practice with PENCAT and POLAR.

Please contact the *Life!* team for further support.

## What is the GP incentive agreement?

The GP incentive agreement provides a financial incentive for general practices to refer eligible patients to the *Life!* program. The reimbursement for referring into the *Life!* program is:

- \$20.00 +GST for referring an eligible participant
- \$25.00 +GST for each participant who completes an introduction session (the first session of the *Life!* program).

Payment is made to the medical clinic not to the individual GP.

## Signing up to the agreement

To sign up with the GP incentive agreement, please read, sign and fax the agreement to (03) 9667 1757 or email it to [casefinding@diabetesvic.org.au](mailto:casefinding@diabetesvic.org.au)

## Payment

**Payment 1:** When a registered clinic completes and submits the *Life!* program referral for an eligible patient, Diabetes Victoria will automatically generate an invoice. Payment will be made to the clinic by EFT account. The clinic will be emailed the invoice and remittance advice within 30 days.

**Payment 2:** When your referred patient has completed the introductory session of the program, Diabetes Victoria will automatically generate an invoice and make the second payment. The clinic will be emailed the invoice and remittance advice within 30 days.

## Contact us

For all enquiries, please contact us on:

Email: [casefinding@diabetesvic.org.au](mailto:casefinding@diabetesvic.org.au) Telephone: 03 8648 1880