

HEALTHCARE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2014
HEALTHKEYA (CHIENJEN) BIL 2014
EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

This Bill is intended to ensure that reimbursement of medical expenses in accordance with the Act does not exceed the maximum prescribed benefit payable under the Medicare Benefits Schedule of the Commonwealth for that particular service. While this limitation does not apply to services provided by the Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise, it does apply to all other services whether provided in Norfolk Island or in the Commonwealth or other place outside Norfolk Island and whether provided as a referral by the hospital medical staff or as a self-referral.

The Bill provides in the first 3 clauses for the usual short title, commencement and definition of the principal Act being amended. Clause 4 provides for the amendments in the Schedule to be made.

The Schedule sets out 1 Item amending 1 provision.

Item 1 restructures section 18 by renumbering it and inserting a new subsection (2) that provides that a person cannot be reimbursed for medical services provided in Norfolk Island or elsewhere an amount that exceeds the maximum prescribed benefit payable under the Medicare Benefits Schedule of the Commonwealth for that particular service. This provision does not apply to services provided by the Norfolk Island Hospital enterprise but it does apply to other services in Norfolk Island and to services provided anywhere else in the world.

The changes made by this new insertion into section 18 are made subject to the provision of subsection (3) that does not impose the restrictions on previously incurred but not yet claimed charges. Thus subsection (3) provides that the amendment does not extend to claims for charges for medical services incurred prior to the commencement of the amendment or for claims for charges for medical services referred for treatment off shore from Norfolk Island where those medical services have commenced and are being received prior to the commencement of the amendment and the eligible person is continuing to receive those referred medical services at the commencement of the amendment. The limitation made by the amendment will, however apply, for example, to persons who have subsequently completed a course of treatment but a condition reappears and a new referral is made.

19 February 2014