

## **FAQs for Health professionals**

### **What does a *Life!* course cover?**

- The importance of good nutrition and regular physical activity
- Risk factors for type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke and their link to lifestyle
- Goal setting to assist in the adoption and maintenance of lifestyle changes
- Linkages to local programs and services to adopt lifestyle changes.

### **How long does a *Life!* course run for?**

The course runs over six sessions, over a period of six months. You will have an individual 'Introductory Session' with a health professional, the remaining five group sessions are run fortnightly with the final session taking place after four months, allowing participants to apply their new skills to everyday life.

### **Can I refer a patient who has diabetes into the *Life!* course?**

No. The *Life!* course is only for those who are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes, but are not currently living with diabetes.

### **Does the patient need to be diagnosed with pre-diabetes in order to qualify as eligible for the *Life!* course?**

No. The patient needs to have diabetes excluded. In addition, the patient needs to meet the following criteria:

- Aged 45 years or more and have scored 12 or higher on the Australian Type 2 Diabetes Assessment (AUSDRISK) tool OR
- Aged 18 years or more and be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent and have scored 12 or more on the AUSDRISK tool OR
- Aged 18 years or more and have previously been diagnosed with heart disease or gestational diabetes OR
- Aged 16 or over, have had a WorkHealth assessment and have scored 12 or higher on the AUSDRISK tool.

The patient must not have diabetes, angina/ angioplasty/ myocardial infarction (diagnosed in the last 3 months), clinically active cancer and must not be pregnant.

## Can I refer a patient with pre-diabetes to the *Life!* course, without having them complete the diabetes risk test?

No, however a patient with a history of a high risk condition can be referred without completing a diabetes risk test. If no history exists, the patient's **AUSDRISK** test score is required for a patient to be referred to a Life! course.

## What do I need to do to refer a patient to the *Life!* course?

Simply complete the *Life!* referral form and fax it to your local *Life!* facilitator or the central referral service on 9667 1757. The referral form is available in a number of formats, including **Medical Director, Genie, Best Practice** and **Zed Med**.

## What if a patient ineligible for the *Life!* course?

Please contact your Medicare Local or Community Health Service to find out what services are available in your area. Encourage your patient to seek information about preventing diabetes from the Diabetes Australia – Vic website [www.diabetesvic.org.au](http://www.diabetesvic.org.au) or by calling 13 RISK (13 7475).

- Information on heart disease can be found on the Heart Foundation [website](#) or by calling 1300 36 27 87.
- Information on stroke can be found on The Stroke Foundation [website](#) or by calling 1300 194 196.
- Healthy lifestyle information is available from the Physical Activity Australia [website](#) and the Better Health Channel [website](#).

## Are there any exclusions for referring into the *Life!* program?

Yes. People with any of the following conditions are not eligible to be referred to the Life! program:

- diabetes
- pregnancy
- recent angina diagnosis/myocardial infarction within the last three months.

## Is there a fee for the *Life!* course?

The course is **generally** free for most eligible people, including:

- Patients on a Concession or Health Care Card
- Patients on low to medium incomes (as per the Health and Community Care (HACC) guidelines)
- Anyone referred through WorkHealth.

*\*For all others, a \$50 co-payment is generally required.*

## Who has duty of care for a patient taking part in a *Life!* course?

The organisation providing the *Life!* course has duty of care for the patient

## Will I receive feedback on how my patient is progressing on the *Life!* course?

Yes, you will receive a letter after your patient's fifth and sixth (final) *Life!* session. The letter will detail your patient's progress to date, including lifestyle improvements any change in body weight and waist circumference. You will also be notified if your patient does not complete the course.

## What happens after my patient finishes the course?

You will receive a letter notifying you that your patient has completed the *Life!* course. The letter will also contain information on changes to the patient's weight and waist circumference, as well as lifestyle changes they have made as a result of the program. Your patient will also be encouraged to see you once a year after they complete the *Life!* course for follow-up.

## Who can refer people to the *Life!* Telephone Health Coaching program?

- General Practitioners
- Allied health professionals and *Life!* recognised health professional who implement a first visit.
- People can refer themselves\* by calling 13 RISK (13 7475)

*\*self referrals are asked to nominate their usual GP when referring*

## **What is the aim of the *Life!* Telephone Health Coaching service?**

*Life!* Telephone Health Coaching is a free service conducted via the phone, rather than face-to-face. It supports individuals to adopt healthier lifestyle habits through small and sustainable changes - reducing their risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke. It works to initiate self-discovery and utilise behavioural evidence methods.

## **How long does *Life!* Telephone Health Coaching run?**

Telephone Health Coaching is individualised and arranged at a time the client is available. The initial health coaching call will focus on the identification of general and specific health goals related to the reduction of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke risk factors. Baseline data will be collected in relation to the chosen target behaviours and risk factors. The health coach will also establish a follow up call schedule with the client. The first call may last up to 45 minutes, while follow up calls generally last 15–20 minutes. Follow up calls will be offered to the referred individuals at one month, two months, three months and five months. Follow up calls review participants progress and offer additional support to help individuals change their lifestyle to reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

## **Why should I refer my patient to this service?**

Telephone based health coaching is increasingly being recognised as an effective and efficient methodology for supporting positive behavioural change in relation to chronic condition risk factors such as those related to type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke as well as assisting in the management of existing conditions.

## **Who can use the *Life!* Telephone Health Coaching service?**

The service is ideal for people who are ready to make positive, long lasting improvements to their health but want the additional support from a health professional.

## **Is there a cost involved?**

No. The *Life!* Telephone Health Coaching service is funded by the Victorian Government and is free to all participants who are eligible for the program.

## What can the GP/Health Professional do to help?

Ask patients who do not have diabetes to complete the Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment tool and discuss their score with them. Refer patients at high risk to have a fasting blood glucose test or OGTT to exclude diabetes. Discuss the seriousness of their risk factors and how they can lead to type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke and refer eligible patients to the *Life!* program.

## What if your patient is considered high risk and has pathology that excludes diabetes within the last 12 months?

Refer them to the *Life!* program by completing the referral form and faxing it to 03 9667 1757 or Call 03 8648 1880 for further information.

## What is the difference between the *Life!* course and *Life!* Telephone Health Coaching?

The *Life!* course is delivered in a face-to-face supportive group environment whilst telephone health coaching is delivered one-on-one over the phone. The Telephone Health Coaching service uses similar principles to those underlying the *Life!* course. Telephone Health Coaching provides a flexible option for those who can't attend the group course.

## What MBS Item Can I claim for making this referral?

Typically, for a standard consult, which results in a referral to the *Life!* program, the GP would claim an Item 23 against the consultation.

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### **How do I order all resources?**

You can order all resources you require online through our life website. The following link will take you directly to the resources and publications page: <http://www.lifeprogram.org.au/media-and-resources/publications-order-form>

### **I'm interested in completing the online training program to be able to conduct an Introductory Session, what are my next steps?**

To express your interest in completing the online training program, you must first contact Michelle Jones at: [MJones@dabetesvic.org.au](mailto:MJones@dabetesvic.org.au) to discuss your options for completing the program.

### **I'm a GP/Nurse, who is my main contact in the *Life!* team?**

For any matters relating to the *Life!* program please contact Michelle Jones, Primary Care Prevention Coordinator at: [MJones@dabetesvic.org.au](mailto:MJones@dabetesvic.org.au)