

See below in red. Association letter. (HF) is the only health fund that does not agree with all other health funds? Why?

Why not stipulate clearly what they want so practitioners can comply.

Australian Physiotherapy Association [communications@physiotherapy.asn.au](mailto:communications@physiotherapy.asn.au)

## Pilates update: all parties agree physio is physio

Dear Monte,

I am pleased to inform you that the APA has won a hard fought battle ensuring Pilates-informed exercises prescribed by physiotherapists as part of an individualised program will continue to receive rebates in one-on-one, group and class settings.

The Department of Health has just released its final clarification on the Rules governing its Private Health Insurance (PHI) reforms and agreed with our position that the use of exercises drawn from Pilates are acceptable and within the scope of physiotherapy practice.

As previously advised and in keeping with the intention of the natural therapy reforms, Pilates-only sessions will no longer be funded as of 1 April 2019. The reform of natural therapies was designed to eliminate rebates for non evidence-based therapies, and not intended to impact physiotherapy.

However, the review into natural therapies conducted by the government and announced last year, did not differentiate between Pilates-informed exercises prescribed by physiotherapists as part of a treatment program and Pilates offered by fitness instructors and in other contexts.

Therefore, we have been in long and hard negotiations to ensure that all parties agree physiotherapy is physiotherapy.

Outlined below is the APA's interpretation of the Department of Health's [circular on PHI](#). We will update members on any changes that may occur between now and 1 April 2019.

### PHI compliance

The key to PHI compliance is the basic foundations of individualised assessment, follow up and record keeping that should already underpin your practice.

To comply with current PHI requirements, physiotherapists must create:

1. Individualised assessment of patients in one-on-one, group sessions and classes.
2. A program of exercised-based interventions specific to the patient. In group sessions this includes adjusting the group program for individuals as required. In both groups and classes, the exercises should address a current health problem.
3. High quality clinical notes that reflect physiotherapy practice. You cannot reference Pilates in your clinical notes.

### Advertising and promotion

Advertising and promotion of sessions must reflect the fact that they are physiotherapy exercise sessions, not Pilates.

Scheduled physiotherapy exercise classes advertised or promoted as Pilates—in material such as timetables, pamphlets and online—cannot lawfully receive rebates.

This Rule does not affect other types of marketing material such as your business name, practice signage and branding. It's perfectly acceptable for a practice to incorporate the word Pilates in its branding, and in fact to offer Pilates-only classes that do not attract rebates.

However, sessions eligible for rebates by private insurers cannot consist solely of Pilates and therefore cannot be called Pilates in any timetables, promotion or advertising.

As far as the APA is aware, [REDACTED] is the only insurer that has taken a harder and more stringent view of the Rules and we encourage members to contact [REDACTED] directly to clarify their position if required.

### Service descriptors

Service descriptors have not been impacted by the PHI reforms. You can continue to claim item code 560 and 561 where the insurance company allows it.

Finally, it's important to note where we started: the Government's original position was that no Pilates was going to be eligible for rebates, regardless of who the practitioner is, or how it's delivered. We've fought our way back from this untenable position to a much more workable one, which respects the expertise and skill of our profession.

Yours sincerely,

Phil Calvert  
APA National President

(HF) is very poor at communicating about RULES, fails to treat practitioners equally and many letters to clarify go unanswered.