

Case Study:

Unnecessary Admission (Cardiology)

Case Details

- A 30+ year-old patient presented with 1-2 months of breathlessness and chest pain on exertion. Doctor admitted the patient with a provisional diagnosis of unstable angina.
- Doctor ordered the following investigations:
 - Blood tests,
 - Resting 12-lead electrocardiogram (ECG),
 - Patch Holter testing,
 - Spirometry,
 - CT angiography (CTA), and
 - Resting transthoracic echocardiogram
- All investigations were performed on the day of admission, and were reported as within normal limits.
- Patient was discharged the day after admission with a plan for an exercise stress echocardiogram (ESE) to be performed in a week. This was also reported as within normal limits.

Claim Adjudication

- Case notes and supporting documents were requested from the doctor and medical institution.
- An independent Specialist Panel appointed by the MediShield Life Council reviewed the treatment and claim.

Panel Findings and Decision


The Panel found that all components claimed were deemed to be inappropriate.

- There was no indication to immediately admit this patient who had a low pre-test probability based on young age and absence of strong risk factors.
- The patient could have been risk stratified with ECG and troponins rapidly in the outpatient setting. If these were found to be negative, admission and further testing would not be indicated.
- ESE was especially unnecessary 7 days later, since CTA had already been done and was negative. Holter testing was also not indicated as this patient had no complaints of palpitations.

Key Learning Points

- Doctors should not admit patients and order investigations when it is not medically necessary, nor submit MediShield Life claims for such episodes.
- Additional documentation may be required as evidence for the Panel's deliberation on the appropriateness of the treatment and MediShield Life claim.

Summary

Decision by Panel	Admission was deemed inappropriate in the circumstances of the case, and all costs incurred are not claimable under the MediShield Life Scheme.
 Inappropriate	

- The total charges from inappropriate items amounted to approximately \$5,000.
- Enforcement action will be taken against the doctor. Egregious or repeated non-compliances will lead to suspension or revocation of the doctor's MediSave and MediShield Life accreditation.