

PRACTICE INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS



279 Gilbert Road West Preston 3072

Tel: 9470 1954 Fax: 9471 0558



General Information

Originally, The Bruce Street Medical Group, this clinic was established in 1939 by the late Dr. Alex Swain. There had been a number of GPs join the clinic over the years, notably Dr. Ian Swain, Dr. John Buchanan, and Dr. Geoff Pearce (all who have retired in recent years), and Dr. Kevin Parker. Dr. Parker left the clinic in 2006.

Dr. Vincent Gallichio joined the clinic in early 2002, having moved from the clinic that he had established in East Ivanhoe 23 years before. Dr. Gallichio is now the practice principal of The Clinic 279. He works cooperatively in upgrading and managing the practice with his Practice Manager, Vera Alexander-Smith. They have improved standards in numerous areas and have been commended by Accreditation Teams over the years. Our clinic is indebted to the skill, hard work and dedication of Vera.

The doctors, nurses and support staff at this clinic have one clear goal to provide high quality traditional general practice care to individuals and families.

The doctors have skills and training in the health needs of women and men, adolescents, children and infants. The doctors are ably assisted by our highly experienced Registered Nurses, and by our receptionist staff. Reception staff is recruited for their ability to interact with patients and their families in a friendly and sensitive manner. Each member of The Clinic 279 has frequent and regular in-house training.

It is a complex business caring for unwell patients and their families. Needs are diverse and varied. In order to attend to the needs of a large number of people in a compassionate yet efficient manner, we have organised the clinic in such a way to fulfil these needs.

We are privileged to be involved in the health needs of our patients, the community, and endeavour to meet those needs to the best of our ability. We strive to continue to improve our service in rapidly changing and evolving times.

“Our commitment to the future...

Best Practice with the best people.”

SUMMARY OF OPENING HOURS AND APPOINTMENTS

On Weekdays, we are open from 8.30am until 6pm. We are also open on Saturday mornings from 9am until 12:30pm. Our practice is closed on Sundays and public holidays.

Our practice consultations are managed by appointment only, a standard consultation are 15 minutes, long consultations of 30-40 minutes are highly recommended if patients have numerous or complex issues to discuss with the doctor.

Please check with the receptionist regarding what would be an appropriate time for your appointment and the applicable fees.

We make every effort to see you at your allocated appointment time, occasionally patient's issues take longer than the allotted time and emergencies may also arise, which requires immediate attention. We appreciate our patients' understanding.

A consultation with a doctor is required for a referral to a medical specialist, it is important that the referral is appropriate and the relevant medical information is included for the specialist.

All consultations are payable on the day, the practice has available EZYCLAIM facilities allowing patients to pay and then claim the Medicare rebate on site. When making your appointment please enquire with the receptionist as to the fee applicable.

We provide a high standard of care in a well-equipped and well-located practice. Our latest Accreditation Team referred The Clinic 279 as "an enviable Boutique Clinic" with "the very best of equipment".

We currently still bulk-bill those patients holding a health care card or pension card. Longer consultations will be charged at a higher fee with a higher Medicare rebate available.

Treatment Room fees are charged for the use of these facilities, dressings used and for treatment by our nursing staff.

THE STAFF AT THE CLINIC 279

Management

Dr. Vincent Gallichio (Practice Principal)
Vera Alexander-Smith (Practice Manager)

Medical Staff

Dr. Vincent Gallichio
Dr. Dennis Zhou

Nursing Staff

Sarah Saunders (R.N.)

Reception Staff

Billie-Jo Amy Soula Jelena Rebeca

Other Services Available

Psychologist / Counsellor

Manuela Barichello

Specialist Consultants

Mr. Matt Barnes (Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, specialising in Hip and Knee Surgery)
Dr. Jennifer Flynn (Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, specialising in Shoulder Surgery and Medico-Legal Reporting)

Physiotherapy

Associate Professor Amir Takla & Associates:
David Georgy Michael Morcos Fiona Magat

Podiatry

Mohammed Haddad

Dietetics

Natasha Muir

Echocardiography - William Wan

Consulting: Wednesday morning

MAKING AN APPOINTMENT.

Telephone or call in to make an appointment with the doctor of your choice. If your usual doctor is not available, another doctor will be able to see you. Urgent problems and emergencies will always be accommodated, even if an appointment is not available. However, the doctor assigned to you may not be the doctor whom you regularly see. Several appointments are available each day including emergency appointments for urgent cases. (Online appointments will be available soon).

A standard consultation is 15 minutes. However, longer consultations are always available. They have different Medicare Item numbers and attract a higher fee (but also a higher Medicare rebate). Should you wish to discuss a number of issues or anticipate that you will need a longer consultation, or need more than one family member seen, please discuss this with the Reception staff when booking your appointment.

CANCELLING APPOINTMENTS.

We ask our patients to kindly cancel their appointment if they are unable to attend. It is important to give us plenty of notice, preferably 24 hours, so that other patients can be accommodated. **Patients, who repeatedly miss appointments without cancelling, may not be offered an appointment in the future.**

WAITING TIME.

We respect the fact that your time is important and we apologise for any unexpected delays. Whilst we endeavour not to keep you waiting, the nature of medical practice is unpredictable.

Emergencies, unexpected counselling, fitting in extra family members, patients presenting with a complex set of issues – all cause delays. If you have pressing commitments soon after your consultation, please advise the receptionist on arrival.

PERSONAL PRIVACY AND PATIENT COMFORT

At The Clinic 279, we pride ourselves in maintaining a comfortable, welcoming environment for our patients and their families. There are dedicated areas for children with good quality books and toys. The clinic is professionally cleaned by an accredited cleaning company and maintained on a daily basis. We provide curtains and gowns or sheets in each consulting room.

It is equally important that patients respect the area, which is shared by other patients, children and the clinic staff. Please note that whilst we have filtered water available, food and drink is not permitted in the clinic. Smoking is not permitted in any area inside or outside the building or surgery surrounds.

If there is an area in the clinic, which is not to the level of your expectation, please advise staff at the Front Desk.

PARKING

Ample parking is available in Bruce Street for patients. **Please note that on-site parking is only reserved for doctors and staff, and also for ambulance and other emergency vehicles.** It must otherwise be kept clear at all times.

TRIAGE

At The Clinic 279, we have a Triage system in place for all urgent medical matters. All triage cases are clinically assessed by our Registered Nurses either over the phone or in the clinic, to determine how quickly the patient needs to be seen.

We do have emergency appointments available every morning and afternoon with each doctor for such cases. Because it is very difficult to predict level of demand each day, your doctor may be called to assist with a triage patient during your consultation, particularly in a life threatening situation. During these times delays are expected.

We ask for your understanding in these situations. It may just be *you* or your loved one needing urgent medical help next time. Isn't it comforting to know that we will take care of you and your family, should an emergency arise?

We appreciate your patience and thank you for your understanding.

If there is an emergency such as heavy unexpected bleeding, chest pain, severe abdominal pain, breathing problems, collapse and so on, **DO NOT CALL THE SURGERY.**
- instead, **CALL 000 FOR AN AMBULANCE.**

ACCREDITATION

The Clinic 279 is fully accredited by an independent body every 3 years. Recognition by means of accreditation demonstrates the commitment of the practice to continually improve services to our patients and ensuring high quality care is provided in a safe and well-organised way. For the last 18 years, we have been commended for being exemplary and exceeding standards in almost every area as set down by the medical profession.

THE CLINIC 279 IS A FULLY COMPUTERISED PRACTICE

It is increasingly difficult to run an efficient practice and maintain comprehensive clinical records without computers. This practice is fully computerised for both administration and medical purposes. Computer equipment is regularly updated and maintained. We have a secure computer environment protected by a firewall and we perform daily backups of all our data.

Our computerised medical system enables us to provide you with a reminder notice of issues relating to your health e.g.: reminders when preventative actions are required such as pap-smears, vaccinations, repeat pathology etc.

PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Your medical record is a confidential document. The Clinic 279 takes its responsibilities with respect to Privacy very seriously. It is our intention to maintain security of your personal health information at all times and to ensure that it is only available to authorized members of staff. Reception staff members **do not** have access to your clinical records.

CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCE

It is particularly important that you advise us should any of your personal details change, so that our information is always accurate and up-to-date. Please ensure that we have your CURRENT telephone numbers, especially Mobile Number, and your current address.

It is now a Medicare Requirement that you present your Medicare Card and any current Pension or Health Care Card upon each visit, so we can check if your records are current.

MANAGEMENT OF YOUR PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

The Clinic 279 has a Privacy Policy that is available for your perusal on request.

In essence:

- ❖ No Information shall be collected at The Clinic 279 without patient written or implied consent.
- ❖ All patient information collected shall be used to provide a comprehensive approach to patient care.
- ❖ Information will be collected in a manner that ensures protection of privacy and confidentiality.
- ❖ No information that identifies the patient will be released to third parties without consent. However, there may be circumstances where the doctor will be obliged to release details of a patient's personal health information without their express consent - this may be the case if the situation was an extreme emergency, or if legally compelled to do so.
- ❖ The Clinic 279 operates a fully-computerised medical records system: All doctors and employees have individual passwords to allow access.
- ❖ Information is backed up daily and passwords changed regularly.
- ❖ Administrative staff with access to your personal health information have signed confidentiality agreements.
- ❖ Some medical information is downloaded directly into your medical record e.g. pathology results. These are encrypted to ensure confidentiality.
- ❖ As this clinic is associated with several Universities, on occasion, de-identified information may be released for research purposes. An example may be – how many patients with diabetes have had the Flu Vaccine? It will never contain any personal information so that you can be identified.
- ❖ Any other research or study may be conducted via invitation – for instance, the ASPREE Study looks at the role of Aspirin in vulnerable groups of patients. You may be asked to participate, if you would like to do so.

INTERPRETER SERVICE

Of course, the quality of medical care provided is going to be a reflection of the quality of information received. In situations where patients are speakers

of languages other than English, a quality, free and accredited Interpreter Service is available on an hour's notice.

WHEN PATIENTS MOVE TO ANOTHER CLINIC

When patients move to another medical practice, we will support the continuity of care by preparing a relevant summary of your medical records. When we receive a request signed by you authorising transfer of medical information, we will mail or fax this summary to your new G.P. Generally there is no fee involved for this service.

Recently, we have developed the capability of downloading your entire electronic file to a CD or DVD and transferring this to your clinic of choice via mail. The cost for this service is \$20.

Should there be a need to review and more comprehensively summarise your clinical details, or copy records, a fee is levied according to AMA guidelines, reflecting the time needed to recruit this information.

PERSONALLY CONTROLLED ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD (PCEHR) – NOW, “MY HEALTH RECORD”.

The **Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record (PCEHR)** is a shared electronic health summary set up by the Australian government with implementation overseen by the National Electronic Health Transition Authority (NEHTA). The purpose of the PCEHR is to provide a secure electronic summary of people's medical history^[1] which will eventually include information such as current medications, adverse drug reactions, allergies and immunisation history in an easily accessible format.

This PCEHR is stored in a network of connected systems with the view to improving the sharing of information amongst health care providers to improve patient outcomes no matter where in Australia a patient presents for treatment.

It is currently an opt-out system with a unique **individual healthcare identifier (IHI)** being assigned to participants and the option of masking and limiting information available for viewing controlled by the patient or a nominated representative.

The Commonwealth Department of Health has announced that the name of the Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record (PCEHR) has changed to **My Health Record**.

My Health Record is a secure online summary of your health information. You can control what goes into it, and who is allowed to access it. You can choose to share your health information with your doctors, hospitals and other healthcare providers.

ACCESSING THE INFORMATION IN YOUR MEDICAL FILE

Under the Privacy Act, and the Health Records Act (Vic), you are permitted to view information relating to your health that was collected after 21 December

2001. This may be in the form of viewing it in the presence of your usual G.P., or requesting a copy of all or part of your file. This will incur a charge for time and photocopying if necessary.

We prefer that all such requests be made in writing so that we can process your requirements accurately and also so we can file your request in your record. The reception staff can provide you with a request form for accessing your file, and can assist you with your enquiry.

Remember that your clinical file remains the property of The Clinic 279 and cannot leave the premises with the exception of Court Order.

If there is any concern regarding information about you collected at The Clinic 279 and how it is used, please discuss this with the Practice Manager or with one of the doctors.

MEDICAL FEES

The Clinic 279 is a private medical clinic. There is a lot of confusion about Medicare and bulk-billing in the community. As with almost all medical clinics, we are not employed by or paid by the Government. Medicare is a governmental instrumentality by which patients have the cost of their consultation rebated. For over 10 years, Medicare rebates have been close to half the AMA recommended fees and have never taken into account the rapidly increasing costs of running a practice, which have outstripped any increases that Medicare pay for a patient consultation. It is unlikely that practices will be able to afford to bulk-bill patients in the future, a trend that has started already in many practices. However, as a service to our patients, children aged 16 and under, as well as those who have a **current** Pension, Health Care Card or DVA Gold Card will continue to be bulk-billed.

You must present your Medicare Card, and if you have one, your Pension or Health Care Card; or your DVA card at each visit.

With regard to medical fees:

- ❖ All fees are based on the complexity of the consultation and the time spent in meeting your health needs.
- ❖ A standard consultation is usually 5-15 minutes. However, longer consultations are always available. They have different Medicare Item numbers and attract a higher fee (but also a higher Medicare rebate).
- ❖ Operations and certain investigational procedures are billed separately and are not included in the consultation fee.
- ❖ Patients holding full pension cards and current health care cards, as well as Veteran Affairs patients may sign a voucher after the consultation as settlement of the fee. **Please remember that this is a discount of approximately 50% of the AMA recommended fee.**

- ❖ Any patient who has difficulty in paying for medical treatment is encouraged to discuss the matter with the doctor.
- ❖ The fee for the consultation must be settled immediately after seeing the doctor. For your convenience, we have an Epos facility at the Front Desk and your Medicare rebate can be organised straight into your bank account (if your bank account is registered with Medicare).

Examples of fees are as below, but a full set of fees is available for your perusal at the Front Desk, should you wish to look at them. Please note that The Government in their wisdom has frozen Medicare Rebates from 2015 till 2019. Currently Bulk-Billed Fees stand at about 50% of the recommended fee.

To this point, we have been able to keep fees to well below most practices. However, to keep our doors open, we will on occasion need to charge card-holders fees, such as Treatment Room Facility Fees, which covers the cost of dressings, medicines which have been bought by the clinic.

Examples of common fees 2015-Present:

Item	Fee	Rebate
Level B Consultation <20 minutes	\$78	\$38.20
Level C Consultation 20-40mins	\$150	\$73.95
Home Visit <20 minutes	\$130	\$63.00
Mental Health Plan 20-40 minutes (note: some preparation for this may have been done beforehand & not in the consultation)	\$150	\$92.50

Longer consultations attract higher fees as well as higher Medicare rebates.

HOME VISITS, ASSISTED CARE FACILITIES AND NURSING HOMES

Our doctors are available for house calls. This service is reserved for urgent issues when the patient cannot attend the clinic, and for frail or elderly patients. Routine consultations are always better carried out in the clinic. If you anticipate needing a home visit, please call the receptionist before 12 noon to arrange this. Please note: We are only able to visit patients within a certain geographical area surrounding the clinic. Our receptionist can inform you of the details, when you call.

The doctors also regularly attend all Nursing Homes and Assisted Care facilities in the area.

AFTER HOURS SERVICE

Patients of The Clinic 279 can obtain after-hours medical advice from:

- ❖ The Ambulance Service - call 000 for an emergency
- ❖ The clinic also uses, "Doctor, Doctor" Locum Medical Service (formerly, ALMS) Tel: **132660**, who will provide a home visit, if required after hours. Fees are charged for a home visit - enquire when you telephone.

Closest Accident & Emergency Departments

P
U
B
L
I
C

AUSTIN HOSPITAL

Burgundy St.
Heidelberg

Telephone:
9456 5000

MERCY HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN

Burgundy St.
Heidelberg

Telephone:
8458 4444

ST VINCENT'S HOSPITAL

Victoria Pde.
Fitzroy

Telephone:
288 2211

NORTHERN HOSPITAL

Cooper St,
Epping

Telephone:
8405 8000

ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Flemington Rd.
Parkville

Telephone:
9345 5522

P
R
I
V
A
T
E

JOHN FAWKNER HOSPITAL

Moreland Rd.
Coburg

Telephone:
9385 2500

NORTHPARK PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Cnr. Greenhills
& Plenty Rds.
Bundoora

Telephone:
9468 0565

EPWORTH HOSPITAL

Erin Street
Richmond

Telephone:
9426 6666

BABIES & CHILDREN

Problems concerning babies and children should be directed to the Doctor-On-Call, at the Clinic – or, After-Hours: to The Austin Hospital or directly to The Royal Children's Hospital Emergency Department 9345 5522.

Phone advice can also be obtained from THE MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH LINE on 132229.

Other Services Available to Patients

PHONE CONSULTATIONS

It is always advisable to contact the doctor if your illness is not improving as expected or as advised by the doctor. If you are worried about a sick family member or a child, please contact us.

It is often not possible to speak to the doctor when they are consulting, except in urgent cases when reception staff will interrupt the consultation with your call. In these cases our nurse may be able to triage the call.

For all other matters, please leave a brief message including a contact number (and your mobile number if you are not at home). We also advise that you inform our receptionists if there are any time-constraints for returning your call, otherwise, the doctor will attempt to return your call within 2 hours of the request being registered. All messages are prioritised and attended to before close of the day.

Please keep in mind that the doctor generally has tight constraints on their time, so queries can only be limited to brief advice. Should you require a more extensive discussion, please make an appointment.

REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS & SPECIALIST REFERRALS

Prescriptions are legal documents governed by the Medicare Act. Due to legal constraints and due to the practice of good medical care, this clinic has decided that repeats of prescriptions are generally NOT available without a consultation.

Please monitor your scripts carefully and as they are legal documents, keep them in a safe place. It is important that you plan your consultation with the doctor in advance, so that you are not left without **important medications**.

In **exceptional circumstances**, the doctor may issue a repeat prescription without a consultation, but this will incur an administrative fee of \$20. If the prescription is not picked up from the clinic within two weeks, the prescription will be destroyed but payment will still be expected as the service has been completed at your request.

Please arrange to pick up your prescription or inform the staff if someone else will pick it up for you (Privacy Requirement), or ask the Pharmacy to pick it up for you.

SPECIALIST REFERRALS

It is a legal requirement under the Medicare Act that a referral to a specialist be given by the treating physician only after due consideration and this obviously required your physical presence during a consultation. A referral is needed for you to obtain a Medicare refund for the fees charged by a specialist.

This involves an assessment of your condition and a decision that the services of a specialist are required to deal with your problem. It is a requirement under the Medicare Act that all referrals are issued **in advance** of your consultation with a specialist, except in emergencies.

For these reasons, we have determined a policy that referrals are not available without consultation. It is also illegal to backdate referrals and GPs are required to refuse such requests as it may lead to disciplinary action by AHPRA.

Once you and your doctor have determined that a referral is necessary, we reasonably assume that you will make every reasonable endeavour to attend the appointment either made for you or made by you. We recognize that you have a choice in determining the course of your health outcomes.

However, since we have undertaken a consultative process, should you decide to make alternative arrangements, we expect that you will not only advise us, but also the specialist concerned.

Failure to attend the specialist's appointment may place your health or treatment regime in jeopardy. You should make every attempt to attend.

Again, it is important to attend for repeat referrals; but, for continuing specialist care, an ONGOING REFERRAL may be written at the doctor's discretion.

In the instance where a consultation is not possible, it will only be at the doctor's discretion that a referral may be obtained without a consultation and this will incur an administrative fee of \$20. Payment will be required at time of collection or it can be forwarded to the specialist, via credit card over the phone.

No Medicare rebate available for this service. Again, to comply with Privacy Laws, **only the patient or authorised persons are able to collect the referral.**

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Reissue of pathology referrals or X-ray referrals that have been lost, or forgotten when you go to have the tests done, may incur a cost of \$10.00 again via credit card over the phone.

TEST RESULTS

All results are checked by your doctor.

Please note:

❖ **IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE A FOLLOW-UP CONSULTATION TO OBTAIN AND DISCUSS THE RESULTS OF TESTS.** This is so they can be discussed in the necessary detail and any issues can be discussed. This is not always possible over the phone.

❖ However, some routine tests in healthy patients where the results are expected to be normal, such as Cervical Screen, these may be given over the phone at the discretion of the doctor. In these cases, call 10-14 days after the tests are performed and the nurse will be able to provide you with a summary of your results.

❖ Alternatively, the doctor may agree to organise for the Pathology Company to forward a copy of the results to you.

This is the safest way for you to be sure there are no problems. In most cases, they will be normal or as expected and can be discussed at your next routine appointment

- ❖ Follow up will depend on the clinical context as well as the results themselves.
 - If results are abnormal, another appointment will be required to discuss them further and to take appropriate action. Abnormal results cannot be discussed in detail over the phone.
 - In a few cases, abnormal results may demand urgent action.
- ❖ In urgent cases where results of investigations are abnormal, the doctor will contact you on the same day (that is why it is important that we have your current mobile number and home address!).
- ❖ PLEASE NEVER ASSUME THAT IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN CONTACTED BY THE CLINIC, THAT THE RESULTS OF YOUR TESTS MUST BE NORMAL. As we have hundreds of results and reports received each week at the clinic, we cannot contact each patient to discuss their results.

Although we have a system in place to contact patients by phone or by letter to recall those who do not follow up their results, the best systems cannot overcome human error, such as the situation where we may not have received the results or the results may have been filed without being acted upon, despite our best efforts.

❖ Cervical Screening Tests (formerly, Pap smear) results are notified by mail, and results are routinely forwarded to the Victorian Cervical Cytology Registry, which provides a safety net to ensure women whose results are abnormal are followed up. If you do not wish your details recorded at the Registry, please inform the doctor. As a courtesy to our patients, we will advise you when repeat cervical screening is due, unless we are otherwise advised.

PLEASE CHECK WITH THE DOCTOR AT THE TIME OF THE REFERRAL FOR THE MOST APPROPRIATE WAY TO OBTAIN RESULTS OF TESTS.

*****AGAIN, PLEASE ENSURE THAT WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT TELEPHONE NUMBERS, ESPECIALLY MOBILE NUMBER, AND YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS.*****

For Our Patients

The doctors and nurses at The Clinic 279 have at their disposal a number of resources to be able to provide you with reputable information on your medical condition and how to keep well. We regard teaching patients and their family about their health an integral part of General Practice. The word “doctor” comes from the Latin word *docere*, to teach.

Don't forget to see the many brochures available in our waiting room, for you to take home. Please enquire at reception for further information.

For Our Doctors & Nursing Staff

On a very regular basis, usually once a week, the doctors at the clinic undertake continuing education. We are very fortunate to have been instructed by some of the most eminent specialists in Australia. This ensures that we are kept up to date with current information and practices. We also strive to maintain a collegiate atmosphere within the clinic so that we can all learn from each other's experience and expertise.

For our Reception Staff:

All members of staff undergo continual training as per Accreditation Standards and matters relating to good patient care.

For Our Students

We have an association with Melbourne and Monash Universities and regularly teach medical students who spend time with us observing communication and clinical skills in a general practice setting. It is a privilege for us to play a small part in the future of these young health professionals. Students understand the confidentiality requirements of a medical practice. With your permission, the student will observe your consultation. No student observation will occur without your permission. However, we are grateful for your patience and understanding in helping these students hone their skills.

ADMINISTRATION AND COMPLAINTS

The Clinic 279 prides itself on the professional structure that is now in place and the manner in which it is delivered. We pride ourselves on having the best systems and procedures in place. Staff members are recruited for their ability to interact with patients and their families in a friendly and sensitive manner. All staff members also receive regular “in-house” training, in communication and conflict resolution to ensure our “best practice” policy, in every situation.

Even though we constantly monitor and improve our processes, procedures and our performance, it is part of the human condition that errors do occur. It is the management of these errors that stands us apart!

We value your feedback because we are keen to learn from problems, develop solutions and prevent recurrence.

Please ask reception staff to provide you with a feedback form should you wish to make any recommendations, criticisms or complaints. They are all welcome and will be taken seriously. You can do this anonymously or request to speak with the Practice Manager.

We encourage you to have your say as this ultimately helps us to improve our service to you.

The Practice Manager is Vera Alexander-Smith and she attends to all administrative matters. If you need to follow up any issues you may have about the practice, please contact Vera.

Should you wish to raise your concerns with an independent authority, you can contact:

The Health Services Commissioner 10th Floor 55 Swanston Street Melbourne 3000 Tel:
9655 5200.

GOVERNMENT MEDICARE CHANGES ..

ARE NOW IN PLACE, AND THIS MEANS THAT WE NEED TO
CHANGE WITH IT!

TREATMENT-ROOM FACILITY FEES

We have instituted a Treatment Room Facility Fee, in addition to normal medical or procedural fee charges.

The reason for these changes are that all practices have been conducting the Nurse-run treatment room at a massive loss to the clinic because Nurses wages and medical and surgical dressings & equipment, let alone payment for the doctor's

time and expertise, are not even remotely covered by Medicare rebates.

With new Medicare changes, this means that we cannot continue to run these services and remain viable. Most practices have already had these fees in place for some time!



1. All Wound Care, a \$10 TR Facility Fee will take place for each visit.
2. Immunisation, Biopsies and other minor procedures will incur a \$10-20 TR Facility Fee. (No additional fee for Childhood Immunisation or over 65 Flu/Pneumonia vaccines)
3. All Surgical Procedures such as lacerations or excisions, as well as treatment of fractures, will incur a \$50 TR Facility Fee.
4. Any other service not rebated by Medicare for our nurse's time and equipment, such as ear toileting, will also incur a fee of \$10 TR Facility Fee.
5. Nurse Pap Tests \$30 TR Facility Fee. There is a rebate for a GP Pap test



Please note that these fees are not rebatable from Medicare.

However, many other services provided by our nurse will not incur any additional fees at all.

Please do not hesitate to ask your doctor, reception staff or nurse if you have any questions.

Also, as a result of the changes, we have instituted a **SWIFT SOLUTIONS CLINIC.**

This may involve first seeing our Nurse and then the Doctor in order to quickly organise the minor service that you need.

Examples are those rapid encounters such as Repeat Prescriptions and Referrals (which are now no longer available over the phone for pickup) and other minor matters, such as getting results back for blood tests and imaging (now no longer available over the phone). In fact, any interactions that are expected to take less than 10 Minutes.