

# IPSWICH HEALTH GUIDE



## **Ipswich Health Guide**

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**Access Community Services**

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The information in this document reflects the most current information available to Access Community Services at the time of publication. The information in this document also reflects the most relevant information to the West Moreton Region at the time of publication.

All care was taken to accurately translate this document from English. If there are any concerns with the translation please contact Access Community Services.

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# PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: .....

Address: .....

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Phone: .....

Family members:

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Your GP is: .....

Your medical centre is: .....

Phone: .....

Address: .....

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Preferred language: .....

Additional languages .....

.....

.....

## KEY LEGEND



**Pay for:** privately billed



**Referral Required:** you need to get a letter from your doctor



**Medicare covered:** you will not be required to pay for anything, it is covered by the Australian Government



**Health Care Health Card covered:** If you are receiving a centrelink payment, you may receive a Health care card or Pension card. This card can make health services free to you



**Subsidised by Health Care Cards (small gap):** There may be a fee for a health care service you have visited, your health care card may cover some of the cost. You may still be required to pay a small fee



**Free services:** There are no costs associated with this service



**Medicare covered with gap:** There may be a fee for a health care service you have visited, your medicare card may cover some of the cost. You may still be required to pay a small fee

# KEY VOCABULARY

ENGLISH VOCABULARY	TRANSLATION
Health	
Doctor	
Nurse	
Medical Centre/Clinic	
Blood Test	
Xray	
Referral	
Specialist	
Hospital	
Immunisation	
Child Health	
Dentist	
Appointment	
Interpreter	
Consent	
Pharmacy	
Emergency	
Health Assessment	
Care Plan	
Prescription/ script	
Abnormal	
Medication	
Allergy	
Pain	
Infection	
Disease	
Injury	
Ultrasound	

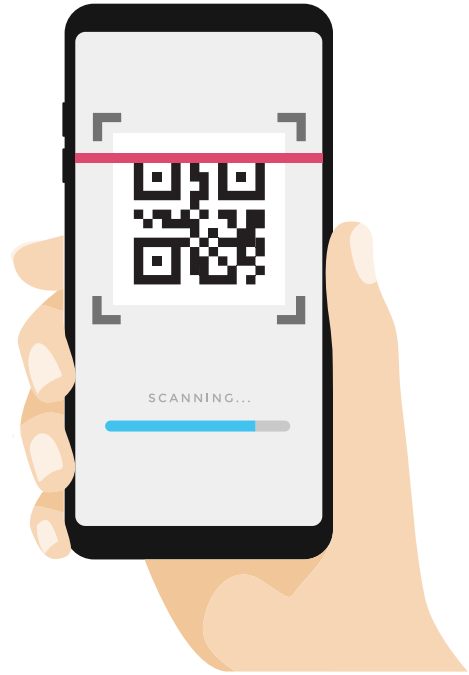
# QR CODES GUIDE

This Book contains QR codes.

Download the app below to scan these QR codes and you will be taken directly to the websites that will provide more information.



Search "QR Scanner and Barcode Reader"





# ROUTINE PROCESS

**Arrive in Australia:** you may meet with a refugee health nurse, who will ask you questions about your health history and determine an appropriate GP to be your family doctor.

**First appointment:** you will receive a date and time. Your case manager can support you to attend.

**Arriving at the clinic:** you need to tell the receptionist at the desk your name so your doctor knows you have arrived. If you need an interpreter tell the receptionist your language.

**Consultation:** your doctor will call your name when it is your turn and will lead you to a small room. If there is not already an interpreter on the phone, tell the doctor the language you require.

**Health assessment:** you will be asked questions about your health and life. It is important to give as much information as possible so your doctor can understand factors that may be affecting your health positively and negatively. You may be asked to lie on the bed so the doctor can listen to your heart, lungs and digestion.

**Specialist:** if you need to see a specialist, your doctor will send a letter to the hospital and may give you a copy of the letter. See page 14 for more information

**Routine extras:** blood, urine, faecal samples will need to be given. Pathology testing is an accurate way to find problems even if you don't have symptoms. See page 17 for more information.

The refugee health nurse or GP will refer you to the dentist, child health service and QPASTT as part of your settlement program.

**Immunisation:** after your blood tests you will return to your GP for your first immunisation. See page 12 for more information

**Chest X-ray and Tuberculosis screening:** Some countries have a high incidence of Tuberculosis. As part of your settlement program you are required to attend Tuberculosis screening. The Refugee Health Nurse or GP will refer you to this service. You and your Case Manager will receive Appointment Dates and times. You will need to attend two appointments, two days apart.

**Appointment 1:** You will receive a small injection into your forearm.

**Appointment 2:** the reaction at the injection site will be measured which indicates the presence or absence of Tuberculosis.

**ROUTINE PROCESS FOR REFUGEES**

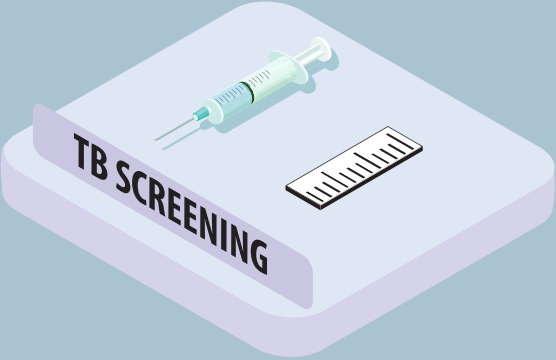


**ARRIVE IN AUSTRALIA**

**REFUGEE NURSE**



**Discuss health history**



**TB SCREENING**



**VACCINATIONS**



**OTHER SERVICES**





## IMMUNISATION

In Australia, all children are able to access government funded vaccinations. Vaccination protects communities and future generations of our communities by eradicating disease. There are a range of diseases that are preventable by vaccination and available through your family doctor.

All children under 19 years old are required to be vaccinated. Your Centrelink payment will be affected if schedules are not started within 63 days of arrival and completed within 6 months.

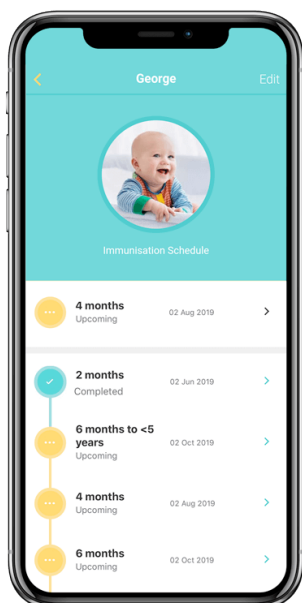
These vaccinations need to be given in a specific order and vaccines of the same type must be given one month apart. They cannot be given earlier even if your Centrelink payments are affected.

Your Doctors clinic will send reminders to your phone when you are due for your next vaccinations. It is important to respond to these messages by making an appointment with your doctor to ensure you stay on schedule.

If you have arrived in Australia as a refugee and are over the age of 19 years old, you will also be eligible to receive vaccination catch-ups which will be funded by the government through Medicare. Adult vaccinations are not linked to Centrelink payments.



Scan the QR code to access more information



You can download the app  
"Vaccinate" to help stay on track

# LEVELS OF HEALTH CARE

## THE ROLE OF YOUR GP

A General Practitioner is often called a GP or family doctor and is usually the first person you go to with a health problem. They are doctors who are trained to have broad knowledge and sit within the community. They care for the health of people from babies to elderly, which is why they can often be referred to as the family doctor.

Your GP's role is to gather health information about you and determine a treatment plan personalised to you. They may decide to treat your illness with medication or they may send you to see another doctor who specialises in one area of health to investigate your health concern more. Your GP may give you advice to manage your concern at home, or refer you to other health professionals such as physiotherapists to help manage your condition. Your treatment may include one intervention or many different interventions.

### You can see your GP for:

- Minor injuries and illnesses. If you have a serious illness or injury you should call triple 000 and request an ambulance.
- Health advice
- Prescriptions for medications
- Ongoing care if you have a chronic condition (This is a condition that doesn't go away and can only be managed such as Diabetes)
- Vaccinations
- Preventative health screening (such as cancer screening and blood pressure checks)
- Care during pregnancy
- Care for childhood development
- Care for times you are feeling stressed or unhappy for longer than one month
- Medical certificates if you need to miss school or work due to illness

### Billing for GPs range from



Bulk Billed



Medicare + gap



Medicare + gap with HCC covering the gap

**Ask your doctor if they will bulk bill if you are unsure**



## THE ROLE OF YOUR LOCAL HOSPITAL



Your local hospital is Ipswich Hospital



Other local hospitals include the *Princess Alexandra Hospital* and *Queensland Children's hospital*.

Different departments and roles within the hospital mean you may be required to go to hospital for a situation that is not an emergency.



### • **Outpatient**



If your GP refers you to a specialist or Allied Health professionals (see page 16 for more information), they may request that you see them at your local hospital. They will also communicate with you about your appointments via letters. If you are not able to understand the letter sent to you in English, it is important you request assistance in understanding these letters from your GP or Case Manager. If you do not respond to the letter, you may lose your place on a waitlist. This means you will need to ask your GP to send a new referral letter.



### • **Elective**



In some circumstances, you may have a condition that requires surgery and will be placed on a waitlist. Each hospital has their own waitlist, which can be very long. When your local hospital receives the referral letter from your GP they will put you into a category from 1-3 and will send you a letter to notify you that you are now on the waitlist. The period of time you can expect to be waiting starts when you receive this letter.

**Category 1** means urgent and you can expect to be seen by a specialist within 30 days.

**Category 2**, your condition is assessed to be semi-urgent. You can expect to be contacted by the specialist within 90 days.

**Category 3** means non-urgent and is the most common category to be placed in. This means you could be waiting up to 365 days to see a specialist.

If during this time your condition changes, it is important to discuss this with your GP. This information may change your place in the waitlist. The more information you give your GP, the more they are able to advocate on your behalf.



- **Emergency**

Australian emergency departments are very busy. This is partly due to people attending who do not have an emergency which impacts how quickly each patient can be seen.

To help manage this, Australia operates Emergency Departments with a category system instead of a first-in, first-served system.

The categories are:

**Category 1:** Life threatening illnesses or injuries that require immediate attention, such as uncontrolled bleeding or severe burns.

People in this category will be treated as soon as they arrive.

**Category 2:** Very urgent attention is required, such as stroke or difficulty breathing. People in this category should be treated within 10 minutes.

**Category 3:** Serious injury or illness but in a stable condition such as broken bones. People in this category should be treated within 30 minutes.

**Category 4:** Low risk of danger or stress.

**Category 5:** non-emergency concerns such as a cold.

Hospitals aim to see category 4 and 5 patients within 2 hours. Australia uses this category system to ensure people receive treatment for illnesses and injuries within an appropriate time frame.

It is important to be aware of other options for health care if your health concern is not life threatening or severe.

### **So if not the emergency department, then where?**



- **Call 13 43 25 84 (13 HEALTH)**

You can speak with a health professional on the phone who can advise if your condition requires seeing your GP or attending the emergency department

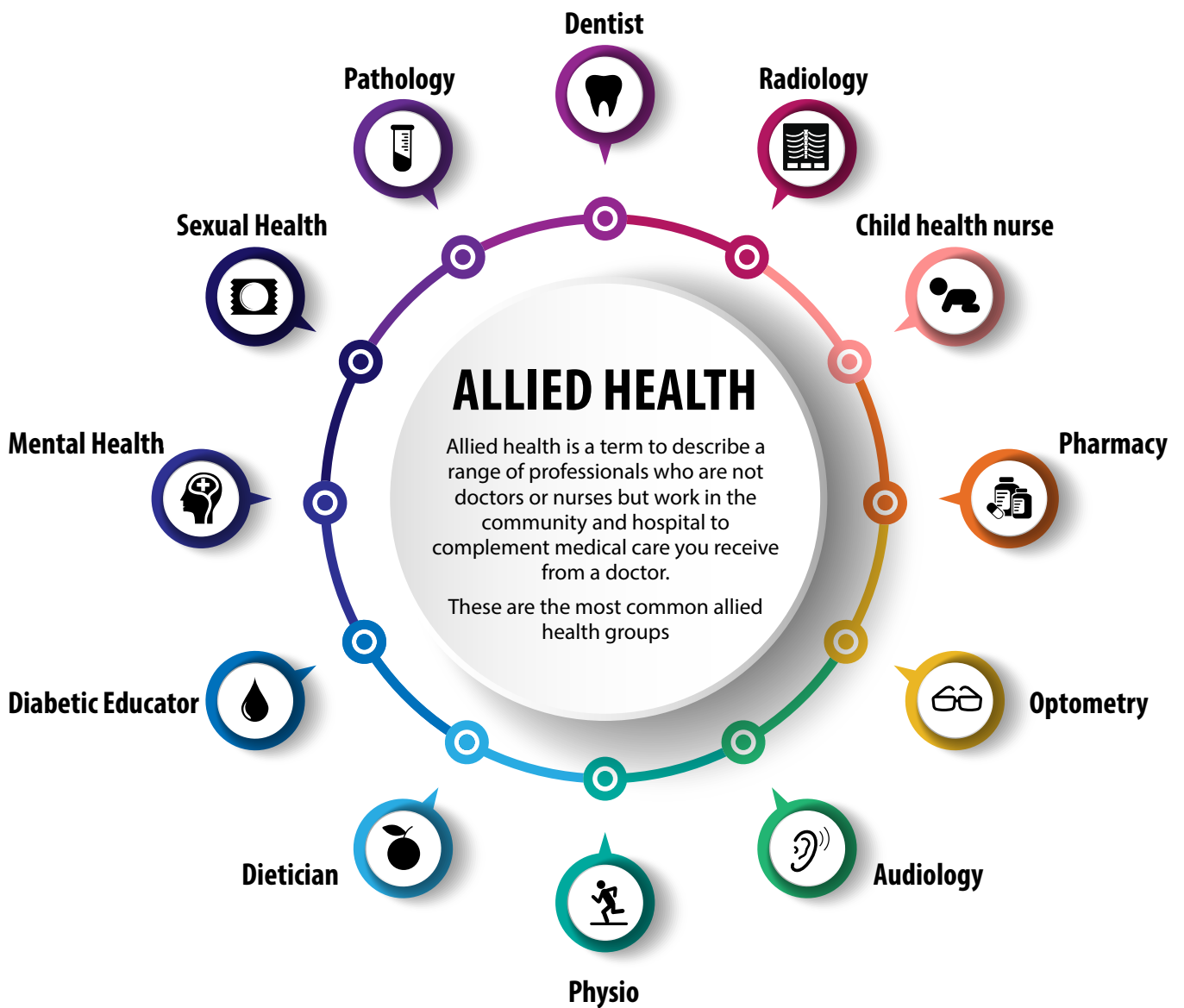


- **Home Doctor** (See page 29)

Home doctor services will do home visits overnight while your GP is closed for non-emergency health concerns.

- **Make an appointment to see your GP** (See page 25)
- **Visit your local pharmacy** for help with minor symptoms such as skin irritations, headaches, diarrhoea and constipation

# ALLIED HEALTH







## DENTIST

Dentists are a type of doctor who treat teeth. They examine and treat oral disease and provide advice on oral health care and habits.



You can make appointments with **West Moreton Oral Health 1300 300 850**  
You will need your Health care card.



If you do not hold a Health Care card, you will need to attend a private dentist, which are often located close to GP clinics. If you attend a private dentist, it will be privately billed.



Through the Queensland Government if children under 17 years old need to attend a dentist, they can attend a public or private dental and receive \$1000 of dental care covered by Medicare for every two-year period.



## PATHOLOGY



Following your First Health assessment, you will be given a letter for pathology with one of the following icons at the head of the page:



You can use your form to attend any of these clinics. For example, if your doctor gives you a letter with the Medlab logo on it but a QML centre is closer to your home, you can take your Medlab letter to QML.

When you receive one of these forms, it is to run pathology tests. This is where scientists analyse blood, urine and/or faeces to detect abnormalities which may be illnesses you require treatment for.

When you give a urine or faecal specimen, the pathologist will give you a small container. When you give the urine, you should let some of the stream go into the toilet and start collecting into the container half way through urinating.

When giving a faecal sample the lid of the pot will have a scraping tool attached. You can scrape the sample of the faeces with this tool.

You will often need to do this collection at home unless you need to go to the toilet while at the collection centre. If you are collecting at home, you need to have the sample back to the pathologist as soon as possible. If it is older than 24 hours, they will not get valid results and the test will need to be completed again.



You can only have pathology testing with a letter from your doctor.



## RADIOLOGY

Following your First Health assessment, you may be given a letter for radiology with one of the following icons at the head of the page:



You can use your form to attend any of these clinics. For example, if your doctor gives you a letter with the Exact Radiology logo but an Imed centre is closer to your home, you can take your Exact Radiology letter to Imed.

You may be sent to get a range of tests done which may include

- MRI
- Xray
- Ultrasound
- CT scan



It is important to ask about any payment required as criteria for some scans can be strict and won't be covered by Medicare.

If you are required to pay, you should return to your doctor and check if they can request a similar but different scan.



Your doctor will write on your letter why they want you to have the scan. This determines what medicare will pay for. Most Xrays and ultrasounds will be paid for by Medicare.



You can only have radiology testing with a letter from your doctor.



## CHILD HEALTH NURSE

Child Health clinics are situated in various locations across Ipswich. Child Health clinics have many services available to children and parents.

If you have a child under 5 years old, the refugee health nurse will refer your child to have an assessment at the child health clinic. This assessment is to ensure your child is developing in an expected way and identify any concerns. The child health nurse will assess behaviour, movement abilities, speech abilities, dental health, and nutritional health. They will also ask questions about the family's lifestyle.

### You can find Clinics at:

Ipswich Health Plaza  
21 Bell St, Ipswich

Goodna Community Health Centre  
81 Queen St, Goodna





## PHARMACY

In Australia, you will not be able to receive medication directly from your doctor. Your doctor will explain what medication they would like you to take and how. They will print a prescription letter, which you will need to take to a pharmacy. Pharmacies are often located close to GP clinics. If you are unsure, ask your Doctor.

Most Medication in Australia is strictly regulated. There will not be many medications you will be able to buy without a prescription.

When you are given medication, the pharmacist will explain how and when to take the medication. If you do not understand, it is important to ask for an interpreter. Taking medication incorrectly can make you sick.

Your pharmacist may ask you if you want generic medication. This means the medication is not privately owned and it will be cheaper.

If you have a Health care card, the cost of your medication will be subsidised for most generic medication. You will still be required to pay a small fee.



Medications with a Health Care card



Medications without a Health Care card



## OPTOMETRY

Optometrists are professionals who study your eyes and are able to detect if you need glasses.

If you are unable to see objects clearly when close or at a distance, it may be beneficial to have an eye test completed. You do not need a **referral** to see an optometrist and the cost of the test is paid for by Medicare.

If your optometrist determines you may need glasses, you can ask about the Spectacle Supply scheme. Your optometrist may be able to apply to the government to provide you with free glasses.



To be eligible for this service you will need a Health care card or Pension card.





## AUDIOLOGY



Audiologists diagnose hearing impairments which may be genetic, injury to the ear or injury from loud noises such as war and gun fire.

You should discuss this with your doctor and have a referral sent to an audiologist if you are concerned about your hearing abilities.

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## PHYSIO

Physiotherapists are trained to help you if you have problems with pain and movement. They can teach you exercises and ways of moving your body to reduce pain. They can also work with you to manage chronic injuries.



You can see a physiotherapist without a referral but will be required to pay a fee



You can speak to your Doctor about your concerns who may be able to refer you to a physiotherapist under a care plan which may give you five sessions paid for by Medicare

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## DIETICIAN

Dieticians are trained to help you understand how the food you are eating can improve or affect your health. They can work with you to understand what food you require to feel your best, especially if you have a condition such as diabetes. Poor food choices with conditions such as diabetes can make you unwell and in some cases may require you to go to hospital.



You can speak to your Doctor about your concerns who may be able to refer you to a dietitian under a care plan, which may give you five sessions paid for by Medicare



## DIABETIC EDUCATOR

Diabetic Educators are specialists in managing Diabetes. It can be challenging to manage diabetes because it is often dependent on diet, exercise, lifestyle, medication and daily monitoring of your blood.

You should see a diabetic educator

- if you were recently diagnosed
- for a yearly to check up
- when your diabetes is affecting you more often
- when you have other health concerns as they can make your diabetes worse
- when you have high emotional stress
- if you start taking different medication

### **You can see a diabetic educator at no cost to you at**

Ipswich Health Plaza  
21 Bell st

This centre has drop in clinics if you don't have an appointment.

You doctor may also refer you to this service and you will be given appointments. This service is linked to the Ipswich hospital, therefore if you are in hospital, your diabetic educator will visit you while you are in hospital to ensure you diabetes remains stable.



## SEXUAL HEALTH

Ipswich has a Sexual Health Clinic to proactively manage sexual related illness and disease. They also provide education and help manage chronic conditions such as HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.

If you are newly diagnosed with these chronic conditions, the sexual health clinic can support you with contact tracing to ensure the spread of the disease is restricted.

### **You can make an appointment by contacting the clinic**

07 3817 2428  
Ipswich Health Plaza  
21 Bell st, Ipswich.



## MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS/ COUNSELLORS

Mental Health Providers are widely used in Australia, not only for people with Mental health conditions but also people who have experienced traumatic or stressful events and require short-term support to manage their feelings about it.

There are several options for Mental Health and emotional wellbeing services



**Referral through your Doctor:** Your doctor will ask you about events or feelings you have been experiencing in the last four weeks. They may then put you on a care plan, which enables you to see a counsellor for up to 10 sessions. This can be repeated yearly as necessary. Your Doctor will refer you to a counsellor and part of the fee will be subsidised by Medicare. There may be a gap payment still required



**Ipswich Hospital:** You can attend the emergency department or call 1300 64 2255 and receive emotional distress support. Depending on your circumstance, you may be assigned a Mental Health Case Worker for 6 weeks to support you with your day-to-day life.



**QPASTT** If you arrived in Australia as a refugee, you are eligible to access a free service with counsellors who specialise in the experiences of refugees, particularly torture and trauma



**Online support:** Beyond blue provides free online support enabling you to chat to a counsellor online.



Scan the QR code to access Beyond Blue



## EMERGENCY SERVICES



### QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE (QPS)

The Queensland Police are positioned in the community to keep people safe and prevent crime. They also detect crime that has been committed and assist the government to bring offenders of crime to justice.

#### When to call?

Before, during or after a crime is being committed. Crimes can include breaking into your house, violent acts, theft and more.



Scan this QR code to learn more about what is considered a crime in Queensland



### QUEENSLAND AMBULANCE SERVICE (QAS)

The Queensland Ambulance Service are a statewide service that is both an emergency service and non-emergency.

#### When to call?

If you have a life threatening injury or illness. This can include chest pain, sudden weakness, bleeding that cannot be controlled and severe burns.

Do not call the Ambulance for transport, sore throats, headaches, minor injuries and illnesses. This may result in a fine. In these circumstances, make an appointment with your Doctor or home doctor if it is later than 6pm. See page 29 to find out how.

If your injury or illness is immediately life threatening, you will be transported to hospital under flashing lights and sirens. This can be frightening if you are not expecting this to happen.



You can QR scan to a video demonstrating what to expect when calling an ambulance.



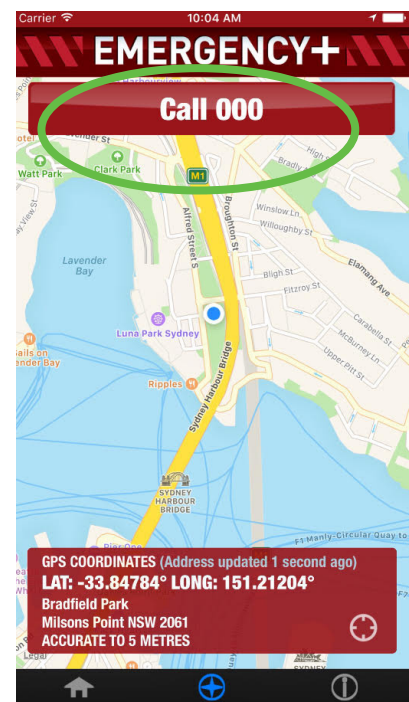
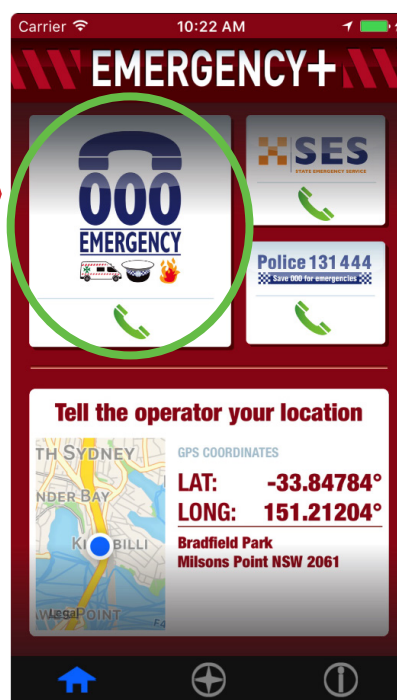
# EMERGENCY PLUS APP



Download emergency plus app

Click "Call / CALL" through the app and connect to **000**

When the operator answers, state your language. The operator will connect you with an interpreter for more information. This App will also show your location to assist in locating you





# MAKING APPOINTMENTS AT YOUR DOCTOR



## MAKING APPOINTMENTS OVER THE PHONE

If you cannot speak English to make an appointment, this is how you can.

When you call **TIS National** you will be greeted by an English-speaking TIS National operator who will ask what language interpreter you need. All voice prompts will be in English so keep repeating the language you need. You will be placed on hold while the operator searches for an available interpreter. Please stay on the line even if there is no hold music.

If an interpreter in your language is available, the operator will connect you with the interpreter and ask you which organisation you need to contact. Please have the name of the organisation, their contact phone number ready when you call TIS National.

The operators must remain impartial and cannot recommend which organisation you should contact. When you are connected with an interpreter, the interpreter will not engage in informal conversation with you as they are required to remain impartial during all interpreting assignments.

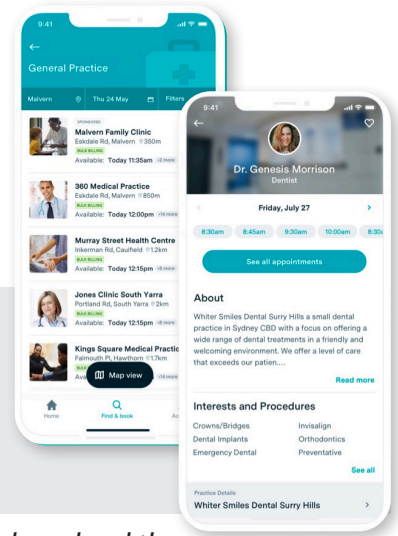
The interpreter will tell the TIS National operator who you need to contact and the operator will proceed to call and connect you and the interpreter to the organisation requested. If no interpreter is available in your language, the operator will ask you to call back soon. If you speak more than one language, you may like to request an interpreter in another language.



## MAKING APPOINTMENTS ONLINE - HEALTH ENGINE



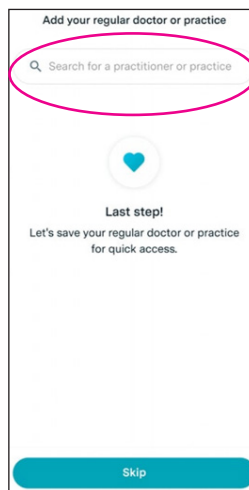
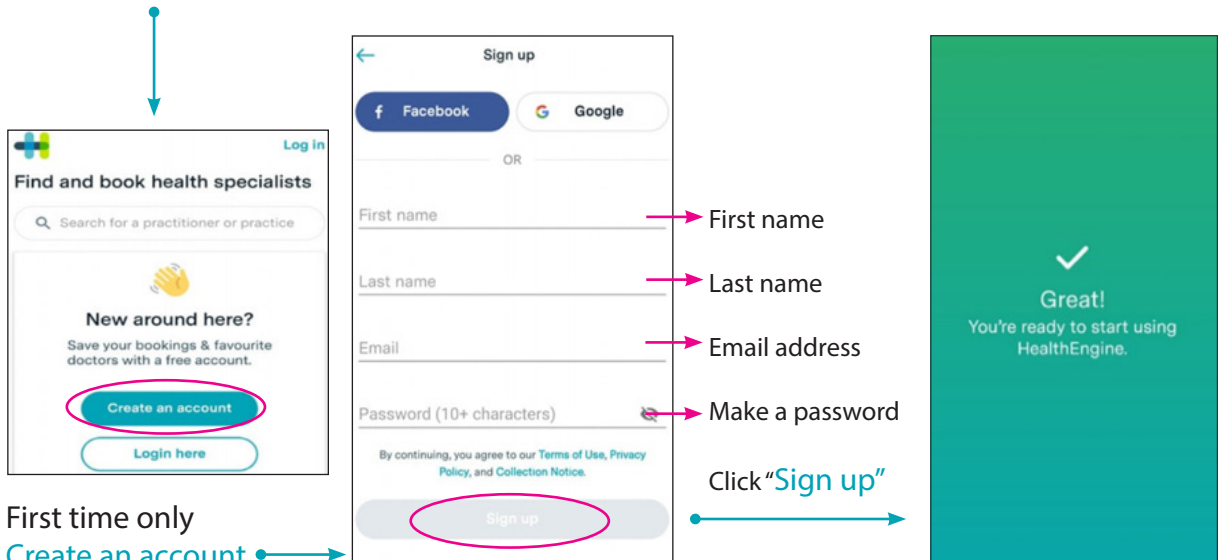
Scan the QR code to access health engine website and download the app



Or type in **"health engine"** in your google play or app store and download the app. Open the app...



To set up an account

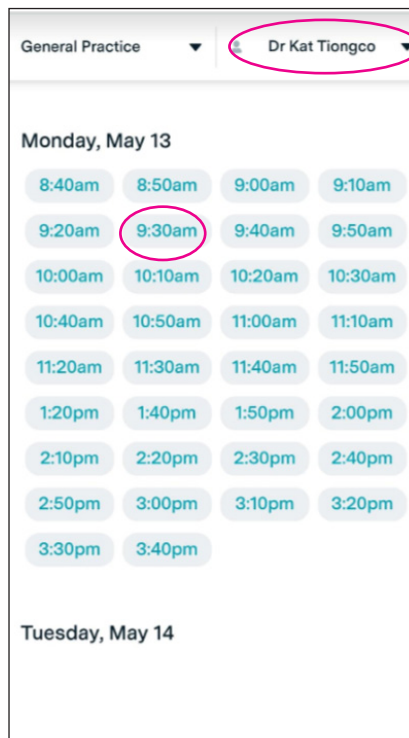
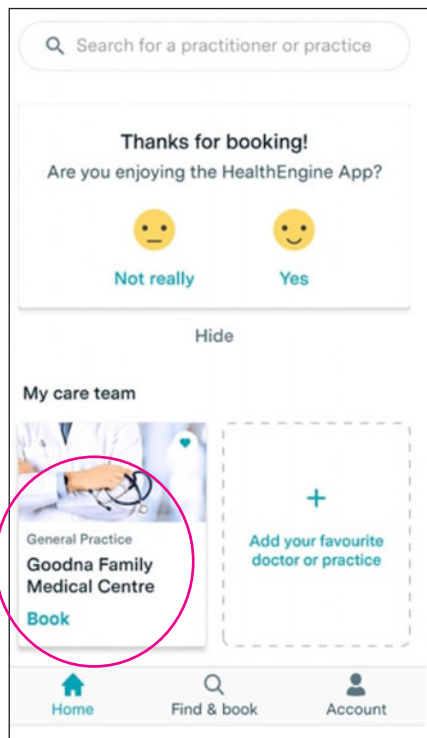


You can add your doctor to your account so you don't have to search for them every time you make an appointment  
Type the clinic name

Eg. **"Goodna Family Medical"**

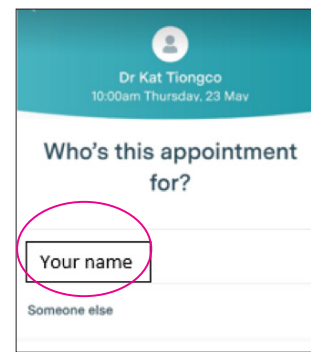
To make an appointment when you already have an account:

**Start here**



Choose your doctor from the list

Choose a time and date



**Patient details**

**About patient**

First name \_\_\_\_\_

Last name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact details**

Mobile number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

First name

Last name

Date of birth

Mobile number

Email address

Street address

**Policies**

By continuing with your booking, you agree to HealthEngine's [Terms of Use](#), [Privacy Policy](#), and [Collection Notice](#). Please also review the practice's policies below.

**Practice policy**

If your appointment is for immunisations, or anything that may require a nurse, please call our clinic on 07 3278 6922.

Sherwood Medical Centre is a Bulk Billing Clinic.

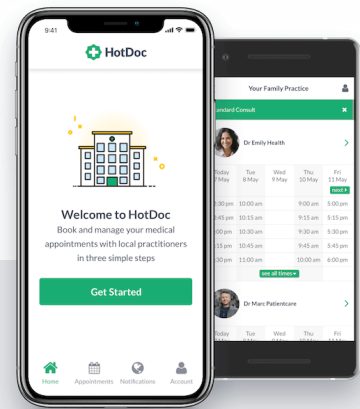
**I agree**



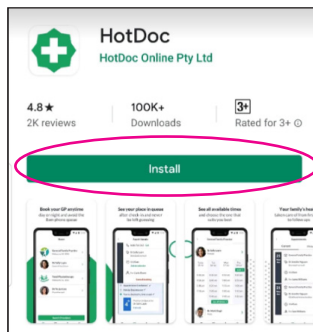
## MAKING APPOINTMENTS ONLINE - HOTDOC



Scan the QR code to access hotdoc website and download the app

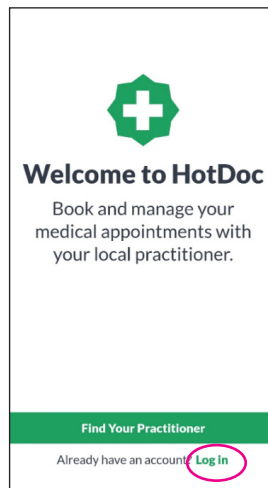


Or type in "hotdoc" in your google play or app store and download the app.

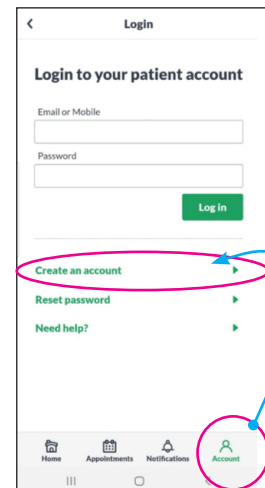


Click "install"

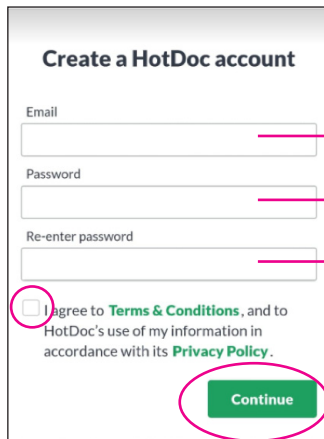
Open the app



Click "Log in"



Click "Account" Then "Create an account"

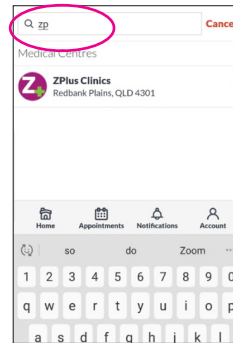


Type your Email

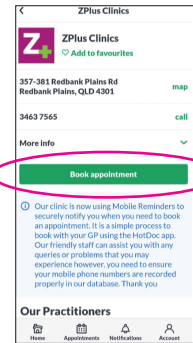
Make a password

Type the same password exactly the same as the first

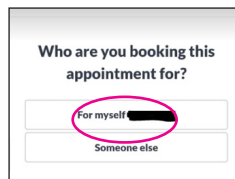
Check the box then click continue



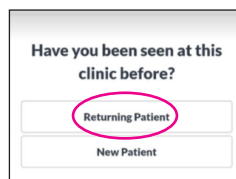
Search for the clinic you attend example: "zplus"



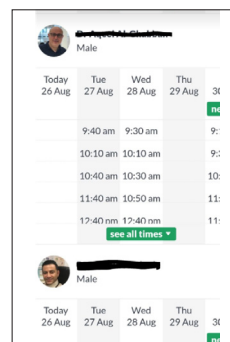
Click "Book appointment"



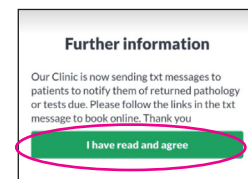
To book for yourself click the first box  
If you have added family members, their names will appear below. You must make appointments for the correct member of the family



If you are returning to the clinic you had your refugee health assessment at (recommended) you should click "returning patient"



Choose a date and time



To confirm the appointment you will need to click to continue

# HOME DOCTOR SERVICE

If you are unwell and your GP clinic is closed and your illness is not an emergency, you can request a home doctor to assess you at home.

This service is available between 6pm until 7am on weekdays and on Sunday and public holidays.

You can access a doctor through the app and will be notified by text message when you can expect the doctor to arrive. If your condition changes or it is an emergency, you should attend the emergency department at Ipswich hospital.



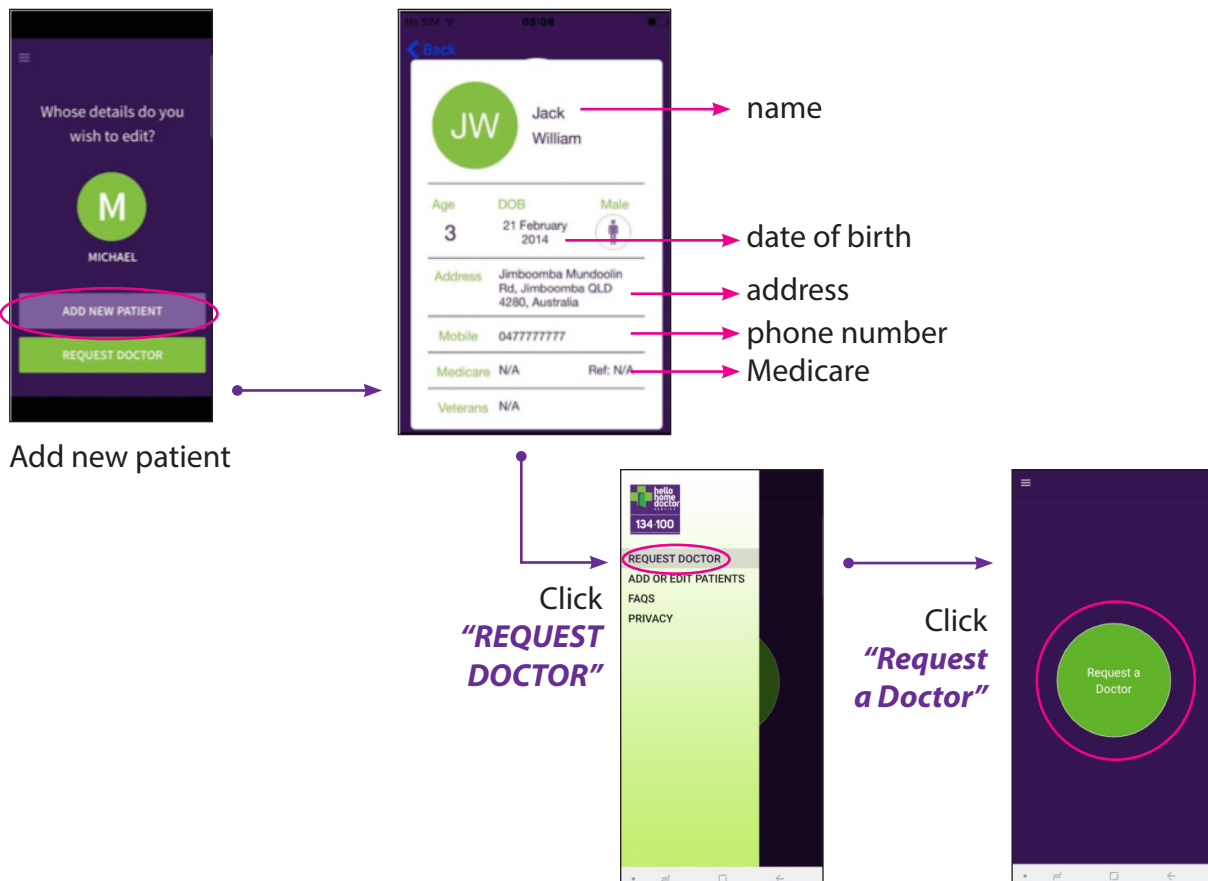
## MAKING APPOINTMENTS - HOME DOCTOR



Scan the QR code to access "hello home doctor" website and download the app



Or type in **"hello home doctor"** in your google play or app store and download the app. Open the app...





## HELP IN A CRISIS

### MENTAL HEALTH & SUICIDE



**Ipswich Hospital:** You can attend the emergency department or call 1300 64 2255 and receive emotional distress support. Depending on your circumstance, you may be assigned a Mental Health Case Worker for 6 weeks to support you with your day-to-day life.



**Online support:** Beyond blue provides free online support enabling you to chat to a counsellor online.



Scan the QR code to access this service

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence and Family violence can be any behaviour where power is exerted to control another through fear.

#### This can include

- Physical violence and deprivation of sleep or food
- Verbal Abuse; including persistent name calling
- Financial Abuse; preventing you from accessing money that is yours, preventing you from holding employment, or accumulating shared debt under your name.
- Social Abuse; controlling who you see and when you can spend time with others

If you fear your safety in the home and are seeking support you can contact DV Connect. DV Connect use interpreters over the phone.



**Women's Hotline**

**1800 811 811**

24 hours a day  
7 days a week



**Men's Hotline**

**1800 600 636**

9am – midnight  
7 days a week



**Sexual Assault  
Hotline**

**1800 010 120**

07:30am – 11:30pm  
7 days a week

DV connect can support you with over the phone counselling, link you with support services and assist you to develop a safety plan.



What is family and domestic violence?

# RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEALTH IN AUSTRALIA

In Australia there are rules in health care that health providers are obligated to follow. This is to ensure access to health care in Australia is a right, not a privilege.

Australia has many documents and laws preventing services from discrimination or refusing treatment to those who seek it.

Australia is a multicultural country, therefore our laws and your healthcare rights reflect this.

## What can you expect from health care in Australia?



### ACCESS

You have the right to access healthcare services to address your health care needs



### SAFETY

You have the right to receive high quality care. This means Doctors, nurses and other health care professionals should be highly skilled and avoid harm at all costs



### RESPECT

You have the right to access healthcare services to address your health care needs



### COMMUNICATION

You have the right to communicate in your preferred language. This means you have the right to an interpreter in every service that provides health care.



### PARTICIPATION

Informed consent is essential before receiving any health care. You have the right to be informed about your health and health care. You have the right to be involved in and make all your health care decisions.



### PRIVACY

You have the right to your personal information being kept private and confidential. Health services and professionals will not give any of your information to anyone without your consent. This will only give consent to share specific information with specific people you give consent for. You have the right to withdraw your consent at any time.



### COMMENT

You have the right to question your health care services to better understand what is happening or if you are concerned your health is not being treated properly. You also have the right to make a complaint about any service that you feel is not meeting your needs in the way it should be. In Australia, people do not lose their jobs when complaints are made and you will not receive worse care for making a complaint. Complaints are useful to services to understand how improvements can be made.



For more information please visit [www.safetyandquality.gov.au](http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au)





# TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING SERVICES

## WHO ARE INTERPRETERS?

Interpreters are people who can fluently speak two or more languages and have undergone assessment to ensure their interpretations are high quality. Interpreters are legally required to maintain everything they interpret confidential. If you are concerned that you know the interpreter personally, you have the right to request a different interpreter.

If you have a sensitive issue to discuss you can ask your doctor to request interpreters from another state or another gender to ensure you feel comfortable to discuss your health care openly.

## WHAT IS TIS?

TIS is a free interpreting service to non-English speaking people in the community. It is also used by services, some services need to pay for the service and others have their fees paid for by the government.

## WHEN CAN I USE TIS?

TIS national is available to use 24 hours, every day. If you are calling a particular service, you will need to know what their business hours are. This can vary between different services.

## WHO CAN I CONTACT THROUGH TIS NATIONAL?

Australian Government agencies and Medical Services have an obligation to be responsive to other cultures and languages by providing interpreters to clients/patients who require them. This includes

- State and federal government departments (including Centrelink and Medicare)
- Medical and health practitioners
- Pharmacies
- Emergency services

If your Health Professional is not using an interpreter you have the right to ask for one. If they refuse to use an interpreter with you, you can make a complaint using the services complaints process.

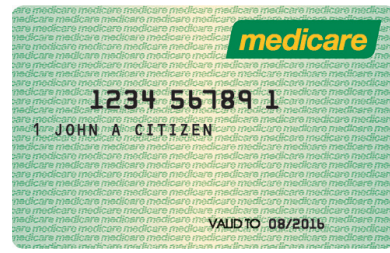
**To find out how to make phone appointments using TIS national, Go to page 25**





# MEDICARE

Medicare is Australia's Universal health care system. Enrolling in Medicare is part of your orientation process. Your case manager will assist you with this. When you are enrolled in Medicare, many health care services become cheaper or free to you through Bulk Billing.



## Medicare can cover

- Seeing a GP
- Tests and scans, such as x-rays and blood tests
- Surgery and procedures performed by specialists in a public hospital
- Eye tests by optometrist

In the event that Medicare does not cover this, services are required to discuss cost with you before completing the test or consultation.



Visit [medicare website](#)

# HEALTH CARE CARD



## Eligibility

- Live in Australia
- Receive Centrelink payments

Your card is valid for one year at a time. A new card will be sent automatically if you remain eligible.

## This Card entitles you to

- Subsidised medicines
- Public dental services
- Hearing checks
- Private billing (GP clinics may bulk bill for Health Care Card holders)
- Subsidise costs of mobility aids if required.



Health care card website

# GIVING FEEDBACK

In Australia, giving negative or positive feedback is welcome. This does not affect a person losing their job or you receiving poor services. Feedback is welcomed for the purpose of improving services for everyone.

## HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK

- Most services will have an option to give feedback via telephone or online
- Go to the website for the health service to find their email or phone number
- Tell the receptionist or another professional at the service that you would like to make a complaint



### MEDICARE

**Online Form** - scan QR code on left

**Phone:** 1800 132 468

**Write to:** Centrelink and Medicare  
DHS Complaints and Feedback  
Reply Paid 7800  
Canberra BC ACT 2610

### QUEENSLAND PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND STAFF

**Email:** [co\\_complaints@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:co_complaints@health.qld.gov.au)

## RYAN'S RULE

If you feel that the health of you or your family member in hospital is getting worse, when that is not an expected outcome, you can activate **"Ryan's Rule"**

### STEP 1

Express your concerns to both the Nurses and the Doctor caring for you or your family member.

If you are not satisfied with the response, go to step 2.

### STEP 2

Express your concerns with the Nursing manager in the ward you or your family member are staying in.

If you are not satisfied with the response, go to step 3.

### STEP 3

Phone 13 43 25 84 and provide the following details:

- Hospital Name
- Patient Name
- Ward and Bed number
- Your contact number

This activates a process where a Doctor or nurse will objectively review the clinical case and support you to advocate for other options of treatment or care.

### (Note: Ryan's rule is not for general complaints)

These methods of feedback are to be used when negotiating directly with the services (Doctor, Case Manager, Centrelink Service Representative) has not been successful.

More information on Ryan's rule ....



# CULTURAL NORMS

## **APPOINTMENTS:**

In Australia, schedules are strictly followed. If you are late to your appointment, you may be required to wait until there is availability, which could be several hours wait, or you will be asked to come back another date and time.

Some clinics will allow you to do this up to three times before they will not allow you to make any more appointments with them or they may charge you a fee for missing your appointment.

It is advisable to arrive for all medical appointment at least 15 minutes early.

Walk in appointments are allowed in some clinics. However this is usually reserved for emergencies. If a doctor allows you to have a walk in appointment once, it is important not to do this every time.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

It is not customary to shake hands with medical professionals. Our research tells us this is the most common way to spread infection. You may also see medical professionals washing their hands or rubbing their hands in alcohol gel to prevent the spread of infection.

If you are a female and having your reproductive organs examined by a male doctor, you may request a female escort if it is not already provided to you.

Most Doctor Clinics will have both male and female doctors. You can request a female or male doctor if it will make you more comfortable or for cultural or religious practices. Female doctors are often popular and not readily available, therefore you will need to make appointments with them early.

## **ADVOCACY**

In Australia, doctors will give you options about health care treatments you can receive. Doctors will explain the benefits and risks to each treatment and it will be your responsibility to make a decision that is compatible with your lifestyle and goals. You are encouraged to ask questions and have an understanding about your own health so you are able to advocate for yourself and family.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Australia is very diverse in culture and nationalities. Many people look different and have the physical traits of nationalities outside of Australia. Health care providers will not assume you need an interpreter, therefore you must ask for one if you need language assistance.

## **CONSENT**

It is required by law in Australia that all adults must give consent for their own health care. If you have a cultural norm that requires a spouse to give consent for you, it is important to discuss this with your doctor. When consent is sought for children, either parent can give consent for children under 18 years old.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT AND I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET THERE?**

It is important for Case Manager to be aware of appointments you do not know how to get to as they can assist by showing you how to catch public transport and give you directions. If you do not attend your appointments without notifying the service, they may not let you book another appointment

## **CAN I WALK IN AND GET A DOCTORS APPOINTMENTS STRAIGHT AWAY?**

Some medical clinics will allow you to walk in and wait for a doctor to be available however you should not do this every time you need to see a doctor. This should only be done if it is an urgent health issue. See page.... For instructions making doctors appointments.

## **MY DOCTOR SENT A REFERRAL FOR ME TO SEE A SPECIALIST WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED BUT I AM STILL WAITING. WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

When your doctor sends a referral to a specialist, a team of medical professionals will look at your situation and determine on a scale of 1-5 how urgently your issues needs to be attended to. This process can take up to 90 days. You will receive a letter when this process has happened to say you are now on a waitlist.

There are a lot of people in Australia using the public health system which means waitlist can take a long time. While you are waiting for your specialist appointment it is important to continue discussing this issue with your GP. If you notice more pain or your health issue changes, making it more difficult to do everyday activities you should notify your GP.

## **MY CENTRELINK PAYMENTS HAVE BEEN CUT DUE TO LATE IMMUNISATIONS FOR MY CHILDREN, WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

You need to make an appointment with your gp and take the letter you have received from Centrelink. Your GP will review your families immunisation status and vaccinate your child if required.

## **WHY DO I NEED TO GO TO SO MANY HEALTH APPOINTMENTS?**

As part of your settlement program, you are supported to have a comprehensive health assessment and treatment if required. Many refugee clients come from countries where there has been poor access to healthcare, therefore our program is designed to give you a healthy start to life in Australia. The health checks you are given provide a well rounded view of your health needs.

## **WHY AM I ASKED ABOUT MY MENTAL HEALTH?**

The criteria you have met to be assigned refugee status means you have more than likely experienced events that are expected to be stressful or traumatic. When we say mental health in Australia, we are not only talking about mental health conditions that may alter a person's behaviour. We are also including emotional wellbeing. When a person experiences high levels, of stress and/or trauma (including witnessing events) it can cause a change in your brain that changes the way you feel, sleep or the thoughts you have. The services that may be offered to you such as QPASTT aim to resolve these before it becomes more serious such as chronic (long term) depression and anxiety. They can also support people experiencing depression or anxiety to manage their symptoms





