

FAQ: Medicare Urgent Care Clinics Information for GPs & General Practices

04 December 2023

What is a Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (UCC)?

Medicare UCCs will ease the pressure on our hospitals and give Australian families more options to see a healthcare professional when they have an urgent, but not life threatening, need for care.

The clinics:

- accept walk-in patients,
- provide bulk-billed services,
- are open for extended hours,
- provide treatments that do not require a hospital admission, such as for some broken bones, wounds, and minor illnesses and burns, and
- are based in existing GP clinics and health centres.

Medicare UCCs **do not** provide chronic disease management plans or preventive health procedures such as cervical screening tests. Local or regular GP would be the first point of contact for routine and non-urgent health care.

Does the patient pay to attend a Medicare UCC?

Patients that present to a Medicare UCC with a Medicare card will be bulk-billed.

What are the opening hours for each of the Medicare UCCs?

Medicare UCC Location	Address	Opening Hours
OPEN NOW Elizabeth Medicare Urgent Care Clinic	30 Philip Hwy Elizabeth SA 5112	10am – 8pm 7 days per week
OPEN NOW Marion Medicare Urgent Care Clinic	453 Morphett Rd Oaklands Park SA 5046	10am – 8pm 7 days per week
OPEN NOW Western Medicare Urgent Care Clinic	1202-1210 Old Port Rd Royal Park SA 5014	10am – 8pm 7 days per week
OPENING SOON (END OF 2023) Morphett Vale Medicare Urgent Care Clinic	1 Doctors Rd Morphett Vale SA 5162	8am – 7pm Mon – Fri 8am – 3pm Weekend and Public Holidays

For more information visit <https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/medicare-urgent-care-clinics>

Which conditions are considered urgent?

- Urgent care is when the patient needs medical attention for an illness or injury that can be managed without a trip to the emergency department but cannot wait for a regular appointment with a GP.
- If a patient presents to a Medicare UCC with a routine or non-urgent health condition, the clinic will refer the patient to their usual GP or nearest medical practice.

How do I know if a patient has attended a Medicare UCC?

The patient's usual GP (*as indicated by the patient*) will be sent a Discharge Summary by the treating clinician at the Medicare UCC. This will be sent via Secure Messaging Delivery and will happen in the same way you receive a discharge summary from an Emergency Department. Information will also be uploaded to the patient's My Health Record (*where available*) and the patient may also be given a hard copy.

Patients often perceive "non availability" of a GP based on non-bulk billing GP, while there are plenty of available GPs who will see patients for a private fee?

Medicare UCCs will only see patients with an urgent presentation; the purpose is to reduce the burden on Emergency Department.

How will you prevent non-urgent patients (*i.e., regular GP patients*) from turning up at a Medicare UCC, and taking business from other practices?

Low acuity patients will be declined/rejected and will be referred back to their usual GP.

Patients will be provided with information on when it is appropriate to attend a Medicare UCC. The frequency of these situations will also be measured and reported to Adelaide PHN.

Will Medicare UCCs be forced to write to usual GP and sent by secure messaging?

Encrypted/secure messaging is used to send discharge summaries back to GPs.

Are the Medicare UCC referral pathways being posted on HealthPathways?

Yes, the Medicare UCC referral pathways have been added to HealthPathways: [access here](#).

How do I refer my patients to a Medicare UCC?

1. Check the eligibility criteria below:

Inclusions (*guide only, in addition to clinical assessment*):

- Non-life-threatening illnesses or injuries.
- Minor sprains and strains.
- Suspected simple fractures.
- Minor wounds, cuts, abrasions, lacerations.
- Minor infections.
- Insect bites and rashes.
- Minor eye and ear infections.
- Minor burns.
- Gastroenteritis.
- Sexually transmitted infections (*STIs*).
- Urinary tract infections (*UTIs*).
- Upper respiratory tract infection.

Exclusions (*guide only, in addition to clinical assessment*):

- Life-threatening illnesses or injuries.
- Complex fractures.
- 2nd or 3rd trimester pregnancy-related conditions.
- Highly complex mental health co-morbidities.
- Injuries as a result of a motor vehicle accident, including pedestrians.
- Patients requiring resuscitation and/or emergency treatment.

2. Prepare the required information:

When phoning Medicare Urgent Care Clinics the following may be required:

- Referring practitioner details.
- Patient's current location.
- Patient details.
- Interpreter requirement.
- Patient's clinical situation.
- Brief background and suspected diagnosis (and reason for suspicion).
- Vital signs.
- Alerts to infectious status or communicable diseases.
- Investigations and treatment undertaken.
- Relevant psychosocial information.
- Whether the patient is self-presenting.

Contact the service, ask for the Medicare UCC nurse, and provide the above handover information (*please use table of Medicare UCCs to determine the most appropriate clinic and their contact details*)

If you have any further questions, please contact enquiry@adelaidephn.com.au.