

Coming to hospital

If you come to hospital, you will be asked who your GP is, and whether you would like us to communicate with him/her about your treatment. You have the right to refuse this and we will always respect your privacy.

Sometimes we need to phone your GP to get details about your previous medical history or to check which medications you take.

When you are discharged we may wish to inform your GP of your treatment, or ask him/her to follow up some tests or treatment you are having.

By communicating with your GP we are better able to ensure that you receive the care that you need - both within the hospital, but also after you are discharged.

Family doctor + hospital = better care

Need more information?

- Australian Medical Association - Victorian Branch
Telephone: 03 9280 8722
- General Practice Divisions - Victoria
Telephone: 03 9341 5200
- Australian Divisions of General Practice
Telephone: 02 6228 0800
- Human Services Directory
<http://humanservicesdirectory.vic.gov.au/>

Southern Health

Family doctor + hospital = better care



OUR VALUES: integrity, compassion,
accountability, respect, excellence



Southern Health

Better Health for Our Community

Why do I need a GP?

GPs (general practitioners) are medical practitioners who are trained in general and family medicine. They are also often known as family doctors, because they provide complete medical care for the whole family.

The GP is the first place to go for medical things. They have the key to many other services.

Some of the services provided by GPs include:

- treatment of acute illness
- disease prevention
- immunisation
- chronic disease management
- travel medicine
- sports medicine
- women's health, and
- aged care.

GPs are able to manage most of your health-care needs, and can refer you to specialist doctors and other health and community services when needed.

Your GP is the best person to decide when you need emergency, specialist or other treatment - and where you should go for that treatment.

After you have been in hospital your GP can provide follow-up care to help keep you healthy and prevent any further hospital visits.

Choosing a GP

One of the most common ways to choose a GP is to ask for recommendations from your family, neighbours and friends.

If you have access to the internet, you can look for a GP on the Victorian Human Services Directory. This is found at <http://humanservicesdirectory.vic.gov.au/>

Consider your own needs: do you have young children?; do you travel on public transport?; would you prefer to see a female or male GP?; do you have special cultural or language needs?

Be prepared to look around. Your final choice should be a GP who makes you feel confident and relaxed and with whom you can communicate well.

Finding a GP with whom you feel comfortable and can communicate well can be an important step towards maintaining and improving your health

What should I look for?

Phone some of the local GP clinics in your area. You might ask them some of the following questions:

- What is the billing practice?
- Does the waiting area cater for children?
- Are there female/male GPs?
- Do the doctors speak a particular language or have access to an interpreter service?
- Are they able to provide treatment for minor lacerations and simple fractures?
- Do they provide home visits if needed?
- Is the clinic open in the evenings and on weekends?
- What arrangements are in place for after-hours care?
- Are longer consultations able to be booked if needed?
- Is there wheelchair access to the clinic?