

3 January 2024

Mr Blair Comley PSM
Secretary
Department of Health and Aged Care

Mr Matt Carrodus
Chief Executive Officer
Gold Coast Primary Health Network

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By email: [REDACTED]

Subject: Communication materials re Gold Coast Urgent Care Clinic

Dear Messrs Comley and Carrodus

AMA Queensland members have sent copies of a communication toolkit (enclosed) published by the Department and the Gold Coast Primary Health Network (GCPHN) in November last year about the Australian Government's Gold Coast Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (GCUCC). The materials set out information for practices and patients about the GCUCC including social media carousels and newsletter copy.

Members are concerned that the materials under the 'Do you know where to go' banner and the green, orange and red graphics (for 'primary care', 'urgent care' and 'emergency care') inadvertently imply that general practices cannot provide the services listed for the GCUCC. They believe that the materials may divert patients who would have otherwise visited their regular GP to the GCUCC, particularly since the GCUCC is a free, bulk-billing service.

We acknowledge, however, that information in other sections of the materials states the following:

- 'The Medicare UCC is for when you need urgent care for a minor illness or injury that can be managed without a trip to the emergency department, but cannot wait for a regular appointment with the GP'; and
- 'The Clinic is not a replacement for seeing your usual GP and won't see patients for chronic-illness management, preventative screening, or non-urgent matters'.

That said, we share our members' concerns that patients are likely to find some of the materials confusing and may present to the GCUCC instead of their usual general practice.

This would clearly impact the viability of local practices, increase unnecessary presentations to the GCUCC and result in the GCUCC failing to achieve its aim of reducing emergency department (ED) presentations. It is also likely to fragment care.

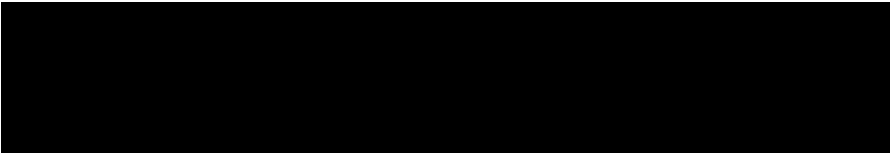
As you are aware, the government has provided many reassurances that general practices will not be impacted by the establishment of urgent care clinics and the model will not reduce continuity of care and patient outcomes. Despite this, GPs and other health professionals are reporting to us that UCCs are operating in direct competition with their businesses, with many opening only during

standard week-day business hours (e.g. 8am-5pm) and not after-hours, on weekends or public holidays as originally proposed. This is having a significant impact on the viability of their practices.

We also note Minister Butler's recent media release stated just 1 in 5 visits to UCCs take place from 6pm onwards. This indicates that 80% of UCC visits are likely occurring when existing general practices are open, supporting the concerns of our members and other health professionals that UCCs are a direct threat to their businesses. It also implies the current model is unlikely to be creating any additional capacity within the public health system, which was the original intent of establishing the facilities, including to reduce ED pressures.

As such, we would welcome an opportunity to discuss these issues with you further, particularly options to clearly define the role of urgent care clinics vis-à-vis general practice now all 58 have been opened across the country and the current operating hours of UCCs.

Yours sincerely



Dr Maria Boulton
President
AMA Queensland

Dr Brett Dale
Chief Executive Officer
AMA Queensland

medicare

Urgent Care Clinic

November 2023



Communication Toolkit

For the Gold Coast Medicare Urgent Care Clinic

phn
GOLD COAST

An Australian Government Initiative

Background

The Gold Coast community will benefit from the opening of the city's first Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (UCC), which opened on Monday 13 November 2023.

The federally-funded Medicare Urgent Care Clinic is located at Our Medical Gold Coast at Oxenford and provides a much-needed service for the northern part of the Gold Coast.

It provides medical care when the situation is urgent but not life-threatening. People experiencing a life-threatening emergency should call 000 and be seen in a hospital emergency department.

The UCC is staffed by highly trained medical professionals and provides bulk-billed urgent healthcare, with no out-of-pocket expenses for patients. People do not need an appointment or a referral. They can walk in to be seen between 8am and 10pm. Support services such as radiology are available on-site.

The Medicare Urgent Care Clinic will help reduce pressure on the Gold Coast's public hospital emergency departments, allowing them to focus on emergency and life-threatening conditions.

The Gold Coast clinic is one of the 11 Medicare UCCs across Queensland; in Bundaberg, Cairns, Ipswich, Logan, Northern Brisbane, Redcliffe, Rockhampton, Southern Brisbane, Toowoomba, and Townsville.

The Medicare UCC is an initiative of The Australian Government.



Communication Resources

Social Media Graphics

Downloadable images can be found [here](#)

medicare
Urgent Care Clinic
Our Medical Gold Coast

Visit urgent care services for:

- Minor infections
- Minor fractures, sprains and sports injuries
- Back and neck pain
- Pain when urinating (UTIs)
- Stitches and glue for minor cuts
- Insect bites and rashes
- Minor eye and ear problems
- Symptoms of respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat, headache or muscle ache
- Symptoms of gastroenteritis, such as diarrhoea, vomiting, nausea or fever
- Mild burns

For more information go to gpcpn.org.au/urgent-care-clinic

medicare
Urgent Care Clinic
Our Medical Gold Coast

OPEN UNTIL 10PM EVERY NIGHT

2 Leo Graham Way, Oxenford

medicare
Urgent Care Clinic
Our Medical Gold Coast

Care when it's urgent, but not an emergency.

Open 7 days
8am - 10pm

- No appointments necessary.
- Bulk-billed services.
- Parking onsite.

2 Leo Graham Way, Oxenford QLD 4210
For more information go to - www.gpcpn.org.au/urgent-care-clinic

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For more information go to - www.gpcpn.org.au/urgent-care-clinic

If there's medical **URGENCY** but not an **EMERGENCY**

medicare
Urgent Care Clinic
Our Medical Gold Coast

NO APPOINTMENTS NECESSARY | OPEN UNTIL 10PM EVERY NIGHT

medicare
Urgent Care Clinic
Our Medical Gold Coast

2 Leo Graham Way, Oxenford Qld 4210

Open until 10pm every night.

- No appointments necessary.
- Bulk-billed services.
- Parking onsite.

Seek Urgent Care for:

- Minor infections
- Minor fractures, sprains and sports injuries
- Back and neck pain
- Pain when urinating (UTIs)
- Insect bites and rashes
- Symptoms of respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat, headache or muscle ache
- Symptoms of gastroenteritis, such as diarrhoea, vomiting, nausea or fever
- Mild burns

Social Media Carousels

Downloadable images can be found [here](#)

medicare
Urgent Care Clinic

DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO GO?

Four yellow arrow icons pointing right.

Primary Care
This is your regular, trusted doctor.

- All non-life-threatening health needs that can wait to be seen.
- Any noticeable changes in your general health and wellbeing, including your mental health.
- Annual exams, screenings and health checks.
- Immunisations
- Earaches, coughs, colds, fevers and diarrhoea
- Prenatal care
- Skin lesions
- Muscle and joint pains

Yellow arrow icon pointing right.

Urgent Care
Free treatment for urgent conditions that aren't life threatening.

- Minor infections
- Minor fractures, sprains and sports injuries
- Back and neck pain
- Pain when urinating (UTIs)
- Stitches and glue for minor cuts
- Insect bites and rashes
- Minor eye and ear problems
- Symptoms of respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, headache or muscle aches
- Symptoms of gastroenteritis, such as diarrhoea, vomiting, nausea or fever
- Mild burns

Yellow arrow icon pointing right.

Emergency Care
Go to nearest ED or call 000.

- Chest pain
- Warning signs of stroke, including altered sensation in face, arms and legs
- Sports injuries
- Severe bleeding or bleeding that doesn't stop
- Severe shortness of breath
- Vehicle or industrial accidents
- Poisoning
- Complicated bone fractures
- Major illness
- Head injuries with loss of consciousness
- Suicide attempts or thoughts

Yellow arrow icon pointing right.

NOW YOU KNOW WHERE TO GO

medicare
Urgent Care Clinic

Our Medical Gold Coast
2 Leo Graham Way, Oxenford

Yellow hand icon pointing up.

Your health - do you know where to go?
The right place to go for care can depend on your condition and the level of care you need.

Primary Care
This is your regular, trusted doctor.

- All non-life threatening health needs that can wait to be seen
- Any noticeable changes in your general health and wellbeing, including your mental health
- Annual exams, screenings and health checks
- Immunisations
- Earaches, coughs, colds, fevers and diarrhoea
- Prenatal care
- Chronic disease management
- Muscle and joint pains

Contact your GP

Urgent Care
Free treatment for urgent conditions that aren't life threatening.

medicare
Urgent Care Clinic

- Minor infections
- Minor fractures, sprains and sports injuries
- Back and neck pain
- Pain when urinating (UTIs)
- Stitches and glue for minor cuts
- Insect bites and rashes
- Minor eye and ear problems
- Symptoms of respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, headache or muscle aches
- Symptoms of gastroenteritis, such as diarrhoea, vomiting, nausea or fever
- Mild burns

Visit an Urgent Care Clinic

Emergency Care
Seek Emergency care for:

- Chest pain
- Warning signs of stroke, including altered sensation in face, arms and legs
- Severe bleeding or bleeding that doesn't stop
- Severe shortness of breath
- Serious vehicle or industrial accidents
- Poisoning
- Complicated bone fractures
- Major illness
- Head injuries with loss of consciousness
- Suicide attempts or thoughts

Go to nearest ED or call 000

Social Media Copy

Post 1:

The Gold Coast's first Medicare Urgent Care Clinic is now open. Located at Our Medical Gold Coast in Oxenford, the Urgent Care Clinic is open from 8am to 10pm daily for people needing urgent but not life-threatening medical care. Urgent presentations are bulk-billed with no out-of-pocket expenses. Visit www.gcphn.org.au/urgent-care-clinic to learn more.

Post 2:

Gold Coast Primary Health Network is pleased to announce the Gold Coast's only Medicare Urgent Care Clinic is now open at Oxenford.

With no appointment necessary, people can walk in for free (bulk-billed) urgent healthcare for conditions every day from 8am until 10pm. Onsite services also include radiology and pathology and a pharmacy is open until 10pm every night.

The Medicare Urgent Care Clinic is located at Our Medical Gold Coast, 2 Leo Graham Way, Oxenford (take exit 57 off the M1).

For more information, visit www.gcphn.org.au/urgent-care-clinic

Post 3:

The northern end of the Gold Coast has a new Medicare Urgent Care Clinic at Oxenford. Open every day from 8am to 10pm daily, the clinic provides walk-in, free (bulk-billed) care to patients who have urgent conditions that aren't immediately life-threatening.

The Medicare Urgent Care Clinic is the place to be seen for minor illnesses or infections, minor injuries such as broken bones (simple fractures), cuts, and minor burns.

Find the Gold Coast Medicare Urgent Care Clinic at Our Medical Gold Coast, 2 Leo Graham Way, Oxenford (take exit 57 off the M1). Visit www.gcphn.org.au/urgent-care-clinic to learn more.

Post 4:

The Gold Coast community can now access fully bulk-billed treatment for urgent, but non-life-threatening medical conditions at the newly opened Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (UCC).

Open from 8am until 10pm every day, the Medicare UCC is located at Our Medical Gold Coast in Oxenford and supported by onsite radiology and pathology. There is also a pharmacy, open until 10pm each night.

The Medicare UCC is for when you need urgent care for a minor illness or injury that can be managed without a trip to the emergency department, but cannot wait for a regular appointment with a GP.

Visit www.gcphn.org.au/urgent-care-clinic to learn more.

Tag GCPHN on Social Media:



@gcphn



@gcphn



Gold Coast Primary Health Network

Newsletter Copy

Short Version:

First Gold Coast Medicare Urgent Care Clinic opens

The Gold Coast's only Medicare Urgent Care Clinic has started to see patients at Our Medical Gold Coast in Oxenford.

The Medicare Urgent Care Clinic is open every day from 8am to 10pm and provides walk-in, free (bulk-billed) care to patients for urgent conditions that aren't immediately life-threatening.

Visit www.gcphn.org.au/urgent-care-clinic for more details.

Longer Version:

First Gold Coast Medicare Urgent Care Clinic opens

Gold Coast Primary Health Network is excited to announce the opening of the Gold Coast's first federally-funded Medicare Urgent Care Clinic at Oxenford.

The Urgent Care Clinic provides treatment for conditions that are not immediate life-threatening emergencies, but require urgent medical attention. The Clinic is not a replacement for seeing your usual GP and won't see patients for chronic-illness management, preventative screening, or non-urgent matters.

The Medicare Urgent Care Clinic is located at Our Medical Gold Coast, 2 Leo Graham Way, Oxenford (take exit 57 off the M1). Radiology and pathology services are also available.

It is open daily from 8am until 10pm and provides walk-in, free (bulk-billed) care to patients with urgent healthcare needs such as minor illnesses or infections, minor injuries such as simple fractures, cuts, and minor burns.

Learn more about the Urgent Care Clinic at www.gcphn.org.au/urgent-care-clinic



Newsletter Image

Download this image [here](#)

Information for GPs and Healthcare Providers

[Download a PDF here](#)

Information for Gold Coast Healthcare Providers about the Gold Coast



Please note that there is NO out-of-pocket cost for patients that have a Medicare card

Primary Care
Visit primary care for:

- All non-life threatening health needs that can wait to be seen
- Any noticeable changes in your general health and wellbeing, including your mental health
- Annual exams, screenings and health checks
- Immunisations
- Earaches, coughs, colds, fevers and diarrhoea
- Prenatal care
- Chronic disease management
- Muscle and joint pains

Urgent Care
Visit urgent care services for:

- Minor infections
- Minor fractures, sprains and sports injuries
- Back and neck pain
- Pain when urinating (UTIs)
- Stitches and glue for minor cuts
- Insect bites and rashes
- Minor eye and ear problems
- Symptoms of respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, headache or muscle ache
- Symptoms of gastroenteritis, such as diarrhoea, vomiting, nausea or fever
- Mild burns

Emergency Care
Go to nearest ED or call 000 for:

- Chest pain
- Warning signs of stroke, including altered sensation in face, arms and legs sports injuries
- Severe bleeding or bleeding that doesn't stop
- Severe shortness of breath
- Serious vehicle or industrial accidents
- Poisoning
- Complicated bone fractures
- Major illness
- Head injuries with loss of consciousness
- Suicide attempts or thoughts

Where is the Gold Coast Medicare Urgent Care Clinic?
The Gold Coast Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) will be located at *Our Medical Gold Coast, 2 Leo Graham Way, Oxenford*. The UCC operates separately from the general practice and will be open from 8am until 10pm daily and will see patients from Monday 13 November 2023.

Who can access 'urgent care'?
Patients can access urgent care when they need 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 their usual GP.

The Gold Coast Medicare UCC provides acute episodic care and treatment that does not require a hospital admission. This may include:

- minor infections
- minor fractures, sprains, sports injuries and neck and back pain
- urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- stitches and glue for minor cuts
- insect bites and rashes
- minor eye and ear problems
- respiratory illness
- gastroenteritis
- mild burns

The Gold Coast Medicare UCC won't be able to see people for major trauma or complex conditions. There is an agreed escalation pathway in place with the Gold Coast University Hospital Emergency Department. There are limited MBS items accessible at the Medicare UCC and should the presentation not require urgent care, patients will be referred back to their GP for further assessment and management.

Can I refer patients to a Medicare UCC?
Yes, if the issue is an urgent care matter as outlined above you can provide patients with the contact details of the GC Medicare UCC. However, patients do not need a referral to attend a Medicare UCC.

Will my patients go to a Medicare UCC instead of coming to my practice?
No. There are limited MBS items that patients can access at the Medicare UCC and the patient's usual GP is still the first point of contact for non-emergency, routine and preventative health care. Medicare UCCs won't be able to see people for things like chronic disease management or preventive health procedures such as cervical screening tests. A patient attending a Medicare UCC for non-emergency, routine or preventative health care will be referred back to their nominated usual GP.

Will I know if one of my patients has received care at the Gold Coast Medicare UCC?

Yes. Any patient attending the UCC will have a discharge summary issued. The summary will be:

- Uploaded into My Health Record (unless requested not do so by the patient)
- Electronically provided to the patient's nominated usual GP/ practice within 24 hours.

If electronic transfer is not possible or the patient does not name a usual GP, the patient will be given a hard copy of the discharge summary. The Medicare UCC will also advise the patient's nominated usual GP of any test results.

Will diagnostic imaging and pathology services be available to patients attending the Medicare UCC?

Yes, the Gold Coast Medicare UCC will have arrangements in place with diagnostic imaging and laboratory-based pathology services collocated to the Medicare UCC. There is also a pharmacy open until 10pm nightly.

How much will it cost to attend a Medicare UCC?

The Gold Coast Medicare UCC will provide urgent health care with no out-of-pocket costs for patients. Any diagnostic services, such as radiology and pathology, will also be provided with no out-of-pocket costs for patients.

What was the process for selecting the provider of the Gold Coast Medicare UCC?

The Australian Government is funding 58 Medicare UCCs across Australia, which includes one clinic on the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast Medicare UCC is designed to reduce pressure on local Emergency Departments and provide better access to primary care.

A cross-functional panel oversaw the in-depth and rigorous process that led to selecting the provider of the Gold Coast Medicare UCC.

A single Register of Interest was offered followed by a formal Expression of Interest (EOI) process. Practices participating in the EOI process were required to demonstrate how they met criteria set by the Australian Government, including:

- Onsite access to diagnostic services in radiology and pathology and close to pharmacy services
- A location with easy access, and should divert patients from Gold Coast University Hospital
- Open extended hours with the ability to accept walk-in patients
- Accessible to all people, including vulnerable people and young people.

Getting the right care at the right time

Downloadable PDF can be found [here](#)

Your health – do you know where to go?

The right place to go for care can depend on your condition and the level of care you need.



Primary Care

This is your regular, trusted doctor.

Visit primary care for:

- All non-life threatening health needs that can wait to be seen
- Any noticeable changes in your general health and wellbeing, including your mental health
- Annual exams, screenings and health checks
- Immunisations
- Earaches, coughs, colds, fevers and diarrhoea
- Prenatal care
- Chronic disease management
- Muscle and joint pains

Contact your GP



Urgent Care

Free treatment for urgent conditions that aren't life threatening.

medicare

Urgent Care Clinic

Visit an urgent care service for:

- Minor infections
- Minor fractures, sprains and sports injuries
- Back and neck pain
- Pain when urinating (UTIs)
- Stitches and glue for minor cuts
- Insect bites and rashes
- Minor eye and ear problems
- Symptoms of respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, headache or muscle ache
- Symptoms of gastroenteritis, such as diarrhoea, vomiting, nausea or fever
- Mild burns

Visit an Urgent Care Clinic



Emergency Care

Emergency departments should be reserved for situations that could result in loss of life or limb if not treated immediately.

Seek Emergency care for:

- Chest pain
- Warning signs of stroke, including altered sensation in face, arms and legs sports injuries
- Severe bleeding or bleeding that doesn't stop
- Severe shortness of breath
- Serious vehicle or industrial accidents
- Poisoning
- Complicated bone fractures
- Major illness
- Head injuries with loss of consciousness
- Suicide attempts or thoughts

Go to nearest ED or call 000

medicare

Urgent Care Clinic



Further information:

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