



East Canberra General Practice policies and procedures

(as at April 2018)

Appointments

As a general rule, consultations are by appointment with the patient's regular doctor. We see the development of continuing doctor patient relationships as essential to effective treatment. If the patient's regular doctor is not available within the time desired, our reception staff will offer an alternative appointment with another doctor.

Same day appointments

A number of appointments are reserved with each doctor for same-day bookings. These slots become available as soon as the practice opens, so please call early if you wish to secure one of these consultations.

Longer Appointments

If you require a longer appointment, please let our staff know. You should also advise reception if more than one member of your family needs to see the doctor, so an appointment can be allocated to each of them.

Cancellation fee

A cancellation fee of \$40 may be charged for appointments not kept, unless 6 working hours prior notice has been given (e.g. to cancel a 3pm appointment the patient would have to give notice by 9am on the same day).

Emergencies

We will always make time for patients needing emergency treatment. If you believe that you or your child needs urgent medical care, please advise the receptionist. He/she will then call a nurse to triage and assess the situation. The nurse may arrange for you to come to the practice immediately to be seen by a doctor or advise you to go straight to hospital if necessary. After discussion with the nurse, you may decide that the matter does not need same day treatment and a later appointment can be scheduled.

Telephone contact with doctors

Doctors do not routinely take telephone calls from patients. If a patient wishes to leave a message for a doctor, reception will forward it to a nurse for appropriate triaging and follow-up.

Home Visits

Home visits are available for patients of the Practice who are too disabled to come to the practice premises. Patients are asked to contact the practice during normal working hours to arrange home visits. Nursing home visits are available by arrangement.

Patients who require an interpreter

If required, a free telephone Interpreter service is available for patients. This service includes over the phone and on-site capability. Please note: 48 hours' notice is required to book an onsite interpreter.

No repeat prescriptions/referrals without an appointment

An appointment must be made for all repeat prescriptions and referrals. No phone prescriptions or referrals will be given.

Patient Care

East Canberra General Practice offers holistic healthcare to their patients- that is, care which responds not only to the presenting medical condition, but also its long-term history and its psycho-social context. The practice encourages patients to develop an ongoing relationship with their GP so the patient's experience of discrete health care events is coherent and connected, and consistent with the patient's medical needs. Research shows that many health problems are related to diet and lifestyle choices. Therefore, East Canberra General Practice doctors raise these concerns with patients and recommend responses.

Care Plans

Chronic diseases such as, cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, asthma, and arthritis account for approximately 80% of the total burden of illness in Australia. Chronic illnesses can compromise quality of life and lead to gradual deterioration of health. Patients with a chronic illness may wish to ask their doctor to prepare a Care Plan. Care Plans drawn up by East Canberra General Practice doctors typically include a detailed overview of the patient's health history and treatment; and identify treatment objectives and methods, patient self-care options and the identity of other health professionals involved in their care. These health summaries can be retained by the patient for presentation at hospital or to other health professionals.

Investigations, referrals, or treatments

Doctors will as necessary, discuss the purpose, importance, benefits, risks and possible costs of proposed investigations, referrals, or treatments with patients.

Process for the follow up of results

Pathology or other tests ordered by an ECGP doctor are assigned to the referring doctor for assessment upon completion. If the doctor deems the results as normal, he or she will discuss them with the patient at the next consultation. Occasionally, the doctor may direct the Practice nurse to inform the patient of a normal result (e.g. pap smears). In the case of abnormal results, the doctor will direct the Practice nurse to either ask the patient to come in or provide simple treatment advice (e.g. use of medication that can be purchased over the counter).

Patient Recalls

The Practice offers a recall system to provide systematic preventative care and early case detection. Patients who do not wish to be involved in this system should advise their doctor.

Privacy

East Canberra General Practice has developed a detailed policy about the collection, use and disclosure of the patient information that it holds. The Practice maintains strict control of access to patient medical records. If you would like to know more, please discuss the matter with your doctor or ask for a copy of our policy statement.

Parents/guardians & Children

Children have a right to privacy of health information. In certain cases, our doctors may exercise their professional judgment in accordance with the law to restrict parents or guardians from this information.

Your Rights

Patients are encouraged to discuss any problem about treatment with their doctor or may alternatively write to him or her or the Practice Principal. Patients may also raise the complaint verbally with the Practice Manager or by writing to info@ecgp.net.au. Concerns about interactions with nurses or receptionists may be raised verbally or in writing with the Practice Manager. If a patient feels he or she is unable to resolve the problem within the Practice, the patient can contact The Health Complaints Commissioner by phoning 6205-2222.

Your rights to access medical information

Patients have the right to access their medical information, and may ask to view, or obtain, either all or part of it. No reason is required for such a request, but the practice may seek clarification of what is required.

Please note that a variable charge is usually payable to cover associated production and administration costs.

In exceptional circumstances access to information may be denied under provisions set out in the Health Records (Privacy and Access) Act 1997. Further details can be obtained directly from [ACT Health](#)