



OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

We thought it important to acknowledge the obvious and serious impacts that Covid-19 has had upon everyone's lives in 2020. We as a medical team provide a range of health services to help our patients remain healthy and fit, both physically and mentally. We will continue to be operating during the Covid-19 pandemic by both telehealth and necessary private face-to-face services.

Face to Face

During the current pandemic, we will offer daily options for face-to-face GP healthcare. However, to safely assess and manage these appropriate in person health consultations, a telehealth phone consultation with a GP will be initially required. Face-to-face consultations include necessary examinations where Telehealth is insufficient. These include skin checks, dressings, simple injuries, GP lactation and new mother services, regular childhood immunisation and flu vaccination services. Please note all other services including GP Counselling, psychology, dietetics, speech pathology and diabetes education for now remain accessible by telehealth for now. For patients with cold and flu like symptoms, we run a separate clinic where necessary examinations or swabs can be performed in an outside area or in a patient's car, so very unwell patients do not need to enter the clinic.

For **patient safety** we have:

- Regular use of hand sanitiser, and all surfaces are wiped down with hospital grade disinfectant between each patient.
- Doctors wear masks, gloves, goggles and protective gowns.
- Team members report if they are exhibiting coronavirus-like symptoms before attending work.
- Upon arrival, patients are requested to wait in their car and wait for their practitioner to call and see them.
- Patients are encouraged to pay via contactless card after the consult.

Telehealth

We have opened a **Telehealth consultation service** which enables you to attend appointments from home or work through preferably telephone or when needed video-link via the internet. Video telehealth is similar to FaceTime, Skype or Zoom and allows you to interact with your practitioner visually. Telehealth is easy to use, from your phone, tablet or computer and has levels of encrypted for your privacy and safety.



Medicare rebates are available for appointments with:

- General Practitioners and most Medical and Surgical Specialists
- Psychologists, where the patient has a Mental Healthcare Plan from their General Practitioner.
- Allied Health Practitioners (for example Dietitians, Physiotherapists), where a patient has a Chronic Disease Management Plan – CDMP (previously, an Enhanced Primary Care Plan – EPC) from their General Practitioner.
- **Private health insurance rebates** may be available for appointments with Allied Health Practitioners. Please contact your insurer for further details.

For further information about Covid-19, we recommend you visit:

- The **Commonwealth Department of Health's** web site at <https://bit.ly/2K2DIAx>
- The **Victorian Department of Health's** web site at <https://bit.ly/2XwOkKw>

Skin Cancer Checks

Face-to-face skin checks are still being performed at the clinic, but we have decided that only patients at a higher risk of skin cancer should present for the time being.

This would include:

- Past history of melanoma
- Past History of SCC – Squamous Cell Carcinoma
- Past history of facial BCC – Basal Cell Carcinoma
- Patients with a growing mole or nodule

Patients who fall into these categories should book a telehealth consultation with their doctor and a treatment plan will be discussed, including whether a face-to-face consultation is advisable.

Procedures (biopsies and excisions) are still being performed, as skin cancer still needs to be treated. For all consultations and procedures, the doctors will wear masks and strict hygiene measures will be followed after every patient, including hand washing, cleaning of equipment and surfaces – bed, chair and desk.

The safety of our patients and staff is paramount. Skin cancer checks that are assessed as safe to defer will be re-booked at a future time when the COVID-19 situation has stabilised.

Like to make a booking?

We encourage anyone with any concerns or questions to book a telehealth consultation. For the time being, we are currently bulk billing these consultations (no out of pocket fee). Face-to-face consultations will incur a private fee – the same as usual practice fees.

You can **book** a **telehealth** appointment **online** to assess your needs at <https://www.bluffroadmedical.com.au/> or <https://www.baysidefamilymedical.com.au/>.