

Communication Policy

There are multiple ways in which our Practice communicates with patients and third parties – face to face, telephone, fax or email are the most common.

Telephone: Patients can contact the practice between 9:00am and 5:00pm Monday to Friday. Our reception staff may use a triage system to assess the urgency of the patients' needs and concerns. Our reception staff will also perform a three-point identifier check to ensure the correct patient chart is matched to the patient on the phone. Please note, it is often not possible to speak to the doctor at the time of calling. A secure message will be sent to the doctor who will return your call when possible; exceptions may be made if the matter is deemed to be urgent.

Fax: When correspondence is received from other healthcare providers, it is directly imported into the patient's file and then sent through to the doctor to review. This includes results, emails and specialist letters.

Email: Email is not a secure form of communication and is not encouraged by Vital Signs Medical Practice for this reason. If you do choose to contact the surgery via email, this is considered as patient consent for our staff to reply via email. Our staff endeavour to respond to email messages within 24 hours.

SMS: Our Practice does not communicate via SMS.

Post: Letters may be sent regarding reminders or recalls. Letters received by the practice are scanned into the patient chart and forwarded to the doctor to review.

Website: Our website is updated regularly and contains the practice contact details, location, opening hours and information regarding fees and services offered. Our after-hours doctor service details are also available.

Social Media: Our Facebook page is used for prompt notification of any Practice changes that may occur such as Holiday-period closures, or last minute changes – such as unforeseen early closures, power outages and the like. We also provide shared Health Information messages from 3rd Parties that we believe would benefit our patients such as Health Alerts from NSW Health.

Communicating with patients with special needs -

A contact list of translator and interpreter services and services for patients with a disability is maintained, updated regularly and readily available to all staff at reception.

These include:

- National Relay Service (NRS):
 - Voice Relay number: 1300 555 727
 - TTY number: 133 677
 - SMS relay number: 0423 677 767

- Auslan services: 1300 287 526

- Translation and Interpreter Service (TIS) Doctors Priority Line: 1300 131 450