

MOVE TO INCREASE MIXED BILLING CAPACITY AT PARKWOOD MEDICAL CENTRE.

Dear valued patient,

As you are aware, Parkwood Medical Centre has been a mixed billing Practice since inception. This means that some patients pay an out-of-pocket cost or 'gap' for appointments. This gap is the difference between the Practice's private fee and your Medicare rebate. Patients eligible for a rebate who have not been bulk-billed, usually incur a gap of between \$20-\$50, dependent on appointment type.

Our mission at Parkwood, has always been to provide the highest standard of care, while promoting good health and well-being for all our patients, with a holistic approach to diagnosis and management. We pride ourselves on enriching your standard of care with the services, skills and knowledge of our team, as well as, up to date technology and equipment. The decision to mix-bill has always been based on our need to ensure that our patients have access to high quality healthcare, regardless of their financial situation.

For years, Medicare rebates have failed to keep pace with inflation and do not reflect the cost of delivering high-quality general practice services. Government froze rebates in 2014, and only began indexing or increasing them in 2020, initially at 0.9% and most recently at 1.6%. However, the cost of running a practice has continued to rise by 4 - 6% annually over the last 10 years. The rebates claimed by our Practice must cover all our costs. These include, but are not limited to, employment and training of receptionists and practice nurses, rent, medical supplies, utilities, equipment purchasing and maintenance, computer software, hardware and IT support, insurance, and practice accreditation.

We operate as a small business, and until now have absorbed these increasing costs. Over the years we have resisted expanding the group of patients we charge a gap fee and have in fact bulk-billed **most** patients. However, to continue delivering the best standard of care for our patients, this is no longer sustainable.

From 1st October 2022, between 9am - 4.30pm the Practice billing policy for standard appointment types will be as follows:

Patent Cohort	Gap
Children aged 0 – 12 years, Pensioner concession card holders 75 years and over, and DVA	Bulk Billed
Younger patients aged 13 – 17 years, and patients 18 – 74 years, with a Pensioner Concession card or Health Care card	\$20
Commonwealth Seniors Health card	\$20-30
All other patients	\$40

Early and late appointments on weekdays between 8.00am – 8.45am, and 4.45pm – 5.45pm, and Saturdays remain private billing

Please understand that we have had to take this step to protect the sustainability of our Practice. This has been a difficult decision for us, and we understand it may also be difficult for some of our patients.

We thank you for your continued support of Parkwood Medical Centre. If you have any questions or wish to provide feedback or suggestions around these changes, please feel free to write to the Practice Manager by emailing pmanager@parkwoodmc.com.au

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your understanding and ongoing support as we make this transition.

More information on fees is available at Reception.

Doctors and staff
Parkwood Medical Centre