



Home and Other Visits Policy

1. Purpose

GreenHills Health Hub aims to provide continuity of care to patients who are unable to attend the practice by providing or facilitating home and other visits when **clinically appropriate, safe and reasonable**.

Where a home visit cannot be provided, the practice will assist the patient to access an appropriate alternative source of care.

2. Home and Other Visits

Home or other visits may be considered where a patient:

- is confined to their home due to illness, disability, frailty or mobility limitations;
- cannot safely attend the practice;
- requires an assessment or treatment that can be appropriately provided at their location;
- would be placed at increased infection risk by attending the practice; or
- is residing in residential aged care or another residential care facility.

Requests for home visits are assessed by a GP or appropriate clinical staff member. The decision will consider:

- the patient's clinical needs and urgency;
- whether a home visit is clinically appropriate;
- the patient's location and distance from the practice;
- availability of an appropriate clinician;
- infection prevention and control requirements; and
- the safety of the clinician and others at the location.

A home visit will only be undertaken where the practice considers it **safe and reasonable**.

3. Clinician Safety

The safety of clinicians undertaking home visits is a priority.

A home visit may be declined where there are known or potential risks including:

- violence or threatening behaviour;
- unsafe premises or access;
- uncontrolled animals;
- significant infection risks; or
- any other circumstance that may place the clinician at unreasonable risk.

Staff are not expected to undertake a home visit where they reasonably believe their safety may be compromised.

Appropriate infection prevention and control measures, including PPE where required, will be used during home visits.

4. When a Home Visit is Not Possible

A home visit may not be possible because it is not clinically appropriate, is outside the practice's reasonable geographical area, a suitable clinician is unavailable, or the visit cannot be undertaken safely.

In these circumstances, the patient will be offered or directed to an appropriate alternative, depending on their clinical needs.

Alternatives may include:

- telephone or video consultation with a GreenHills Health Hub GP;
- the practice's contracted Medical Deputising Service, 13CURE, for after-hours telehealth;
- GP Access;
- Healthdirect;
- Maitland Medicare Urgent Care Clinic;
- private HEAL specialist services, where appropriate;
- another appropriate local medical service; or
- an Emergency Department or **000** where emergency care is required.

5. After-Hours Care

GreenHills Health Hub has an arrangement with **13CURE** as its contracted Medical Deputising Service (MDS) to provide after-hours telehealth consultations for the practice's patients.

13CURE has the contact details of the Principal GP for use in an urgent situation requiring communication with the practice.

With patient consent, clinical information from an after-hours consultation will be communicated to the practice to support continuity of care and incorporated into the patient's medical record by the next day.

The practice also maintains information about other after-hours and urgent care services, including GP Access, Healthdirect, Maitland Medicare Urgent Care Clinic and HEAL specialist services.

Current operating hours, contact details and access arrangements for these services are maintained on the practice website in the 'Patient Hub' section.

6. Continuity of Care

Where possible, the patient's usual GP will remain involved in their care.

Where another service provides care, the practice will seek relevant clinical information or reports and ensure this information is appropriately managed in the patient's medical record.

External clinical correspondence and reports are managed in accordance with the practice's clinical correspondence, results and recall procedures.

7. Residential Aged Care and Other Facilities

Where appropriate, patients in residential aged care or other residential settings may receive care through:

- their usual GP;
- another GP from the practice;
- an appropriate visiting medical service;
- telehealth; or
- another suitable healthcare provider.

The patient's clinical needs, safety and continuity of care will be considered when determining the most appropriate arrangement.

8. Staff Responsibilities

Reception and administration staff:

- obtain sufficient information about a home visit request;

- refer the request to a GP or appropriate clinical staff member for assessment;
- do not make clinical decisions regarding the appropriateness of a home visit; and
- provide information about alternative services as directed.

GPs and clinical staff:

- assess home visit requests;
- consider clinical appropriateness, safety and infection control;
- arrange an appropriate alternative where a home visit is not possible; and
- document care and follow-up appropriately.

Practice Manager:

- maintains this policy and the practice's after-hours arrangements;
- ensures staff are aware of available alternatives; and
- ensures information in the website's 'Patient Hub' is reviewed and kept current.

9. Related Documents

- Infection Prevention and Control Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy
- Incident, Near Miss and Adverse Outcome Reporting Policy
- Clinical Reminders, Results and Recall Policy
- Clinical Handover Policy

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if there are changes to RACGP Standards, legislation, practice arrangements or available healthcare services.

Current as of:	9/09/2026	Version:	1.0
Amendments			
Date of amendment:	Version:	Details of amendment:	
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