



BILLING POLICY UPDATE

Don Medical Clinic

BACKGROUND

- Don Medical Clinic was established in 2014 as a family practice
- It is a private business
- We have a strong belief in person-centred team based collaborative health care and offer a health care service that deliver this care
- We endeavour to provide accessible and affordable care to our patients
- We are not a government service and we do not provide a free service
- You , the patient pays for this service, many of you though consent to the Medicare rebate to be directly paid to the doctor and may not have actually paid any money at the front desk on leaving the clinic and therefore have not been out of pocket
- We cannot continue to offer this sort of service (bulk billing)
- We value your health and wellbeing and we endeavour to inspire you to do the same

WHAT IS OUR HEALTH SERVICE ?

MISSION STATEMENT

- Don Medical Clinic is a general practice committed to providing consistent, multidisciplinary and collaborative health care.
- We offer a team-based approach and strive to offer consistent, up-to-date and evidence-based medicine.
- Don Medical Clinic will strive to be a hub for learning and workplace well being, in a safe, non-judgemental and nurturing environment.

PRACTICE PHILOSOPHY

- Our aim is to:
- To deliver comprehensive whole patient-centered care, in a welcoming, non-judgemental family focused environment.
- To treat each other with respect and without judgement.
- To be honest and transparent in our dealings with each other, including both staff and patients.
- To feel safe to provide feedback in a positive manner.
- To feel safe to manage a grievance or concerns in a constructive fashion.
- To strive to maintain good mental and physical health for oneself and to support health and well being in the workplace and to the community that we provide a service to.
- To achieve excellence as a teaching practice and support the next generation of health professionals.
- To encourage a dynamic, creative and innovative approach to our delivery of team-based health care to the community.
- We will take pride in the delivery of diligent comprehensive patient-centered health care that is offered by the Don Medical Clinic team.
- All staff at Don Medical Clinic strive to continue to learn and be up to date with advances in health care and workplace policies and procedures. All staff will be encouraged to engage in further educational activities.

CHALLENGES

Accessible

- Limited manpower

Affordable

- Increase in running costs

BILLING OPTIONS AT DON MEDICAL CLINIC *

- Private Fee
- Concession fee
 - for those who have a concession card or pension care
- Bulk Billing
- Dept of Veterans Affairs
 - Gold Card
 - White Card – covers specific condition and mental health
- Workers Compensation
- Work related medicals
- Patients who identify as indigenous and have chronic disease are required to register annually and will receive concessions as part of that

* See more detailed billing policy on our website

MEDICARE

- Bulk billing is where you as the patient consent to the government providing the funds for your care directly to Don Medical Clinic for the services you have received
- Its important to remember that when Medicare was introduced in ...it was to provide people with financial support that would subsidise their health costs
- It was never established as a service to provide free health care to people
- It is health insurance scheme just like other private health schemes
- Over time though doctors have had pressures to bulk bill patients where the cost of service is set at the level of the rebate provided for that service under an item number set by Medicare
- This fee is well under the actual true value of the service provided and if clinicians were to only charge rebate fees or bulk bill the practices will run at a loss

HOW DOES THIS EFFECT YOU ?

- Over time the rebate fees have not increased along side the inflation that has occurred with practice running costs
- Therefore to continue to offer the personalised service that is provided to you at Don Medical Clinic there will be less bulk billing for services
- This means you may be bill where in the past you were not billed and only the rebate was accepted as adequate for the services provided
- The practice was never a bulk billing clinic and there is a detailed billing policy on our website
- <https://www.donmedical.com.au/don-medical-clinic-billing-policy>

OUR COMMUNITY

- We acknowledge at Don Medical Clinic that the community is low socio-economic and the health needs are high but we cannot run a free service
- We will continue to bulk bill
 - Young people aged 0-18 yrs of age
 - And older people over 75 on a concession card
 - Outside these ages ranges we will privately bill patients and offer concession fees to those people on health care cards
 - There maybe exception to this rule on an individual basis

HOW TO KEEP YOUR COSTS DOWN

- Invest in an annual health check and keep yourself well , follow the advice prescribed to you
- Consider the Keep Well Clinic if you have chronic comorbidities
- If you have chronic conditions attend 2-3 yearly or as prescribed by your doctor to manage and keep ongoing needs stabilised
- Plan ahead for prescriptions and referrals as last minute requests will attract a fee

ACUTE PRESENTATIONS

- Don Medical Clinic prides itself on being able to offer services in a timely manner
- These appointments though will attract a fee in order for us to do so
- A triage phone call with the nurse will be offered to assist us in defining the urgency of your request
- Offering information to our experienced reception staff will also allow a triage process to define the urgency and thereby keep your cost down
- What you think is an urgent on the day costly appt could sometimes wait for a week or so and be more affordable for you
- Sick children and medical emergencies are always an exception to this rule and will be seen promptly

COMPLEX NEEDS

- We have many patients in our practice with complex needs
- We have endeavoured to utilise as many of the Medicare item numbers to keep costs down
- We therefore encourage people to consider
 - Annual health checks
 - Use of chronic disease item number i.e. General Practice Management Plans
 - Utilisation of nurse only appts for routine follow up and review where indicated by the doctor
 - This is outlined on our website under our [Keep Well Clinic](#)

FOLLOW UP APPTS

- Follow up of a current presenting issue will attract a lower fee to keep your cost low in order to complete your assessment
- Follow up of results
 - Face to face - may attract a concession fee
 - Telephone - may attract a concession fee
 - Email / text - no fee especially if normal and no action required

TELEPHONE CALLS

- Telephone calls will attract a fee
- Please discuss this with reception at the time of the booking
- If the doctor decides to accept the Medicare rebate for this service (bulk bill) you will be required to sign a form that consents to this



IN CLOSING

- We will always work with you to enable you to access quality health care
- We are known for going above and beyond to support our practice community and we will continue to do so
- However, the clinic running costs, patient's increasing complex needs and the growing demands around various services i.e. NDIS have put more pressure on our service and we need to ensure we are being funded adequately for the care we provide



QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

- If you have any queries then please contact reception team
 - 6441 5299
 - manager@donmedical.com.au