

## Why is it important that my GP knows when I am receiving hospital or other health services?

GPs can provide information that is useful for hospital staff and other health care professionals who are caring for you which may help with your treatment.

After you leave hospital, your GP may be required to provide follow up care (eg review of medication). It is usually recommended that you arrange to see your GP a few days after you leave hospital.

Please tell the hospital or clinic staff who your GP is and what suburb their practice is in.

Your GP will be notified of your admission and discharge from ACT Health services unless you indicate otherwise. Your GP will also be provided with a summary of your care while in hospital.

**...your GP is a member of your medical treatment team - let your GP know, so your GP can help...**

## Other contacts:

**Health Direct** — Health Direct is a telephone service where you can speak with a Registered Nurse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to obtain information and advice that will help you better manage you and your family's health issues. Health Direct can be contacted by telephoning 1800 022 222.



## Acknowledgements:

*"General Practice—Choosing a GP"* Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital

*"Do You have your own GP?"* Division of General Practice Northern Tasmania Inc

*"Your Health Care: The role of the GP"* Casey Hospital Development Team, Southern Health

*"Why You Need a GP"* Osborne Division of General Practice Ltd

*"Emergency Department"* The Townsville Hospital, Queensland

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For speak and listen users, please phone 1300 555 727 and ask for 13 22 81. For more information on these services visit <http://www.relayservice.com.au>

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ACT Division of  
General Practice



## Why do I need a General Practitioner (GP)?

Your GP is an important member of your healthcare team

Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol and Drug Services



## Why is it important for me to have a GP?

GPs are doctors based in the local community who can assist you and your family to look after all aspects of your healthcare.

They can diagnose and treat you for immediate and ongoing medical conditions.

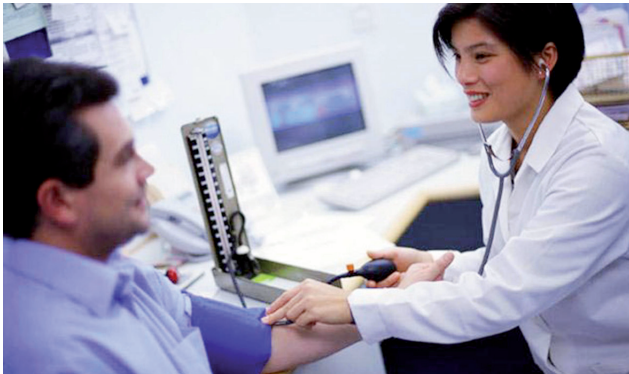
If you have to go to hospital, your GP will continue important treatment after discharge, and may prevent future hospital stays.

## What other care can my GP provide?

GPs can also provide other services such as:

- Pregnancy care
- Health screening such as Pap tests
- Immunisation
- Minor surgical procedures such as removing moles and stitching up cuts
- Diagnosis and treatment of skin problems
- Preventative health
- Mental health care and referral

Your GP can work with and refer to other health care providers, such as dietitians, physiotherapists, community nurses and other medical specialists to provide you with the best possible care.



## How do I choose a GP?

- Talk to friends, neighbours and other people in your community. Ask which GP they see.
- Speak to your local pharmacist.
- Look in the Yellow Pages under “*Medical Practitioners*”.
- The staff at both hospitals would be happy to put you in contact with the GP Liaison Unit for further information about GPs near you.
- Health Direct also keeps information about GPs in your area and can be contacted by telephone on 1800 022 222.

## What should I consider before choosing a GP?

Finding the right GP is important for your overall health. Using the same general practice each time you need medical treatment helps develop a relationship so that you feel comfortable with your GP and their general practice.

When choosing a GP you might like to consider the following:

- Would you prefer to see a female or male GP?
- Is the practice in a convenient location?
- Do you have any other special needs (eg cultural, language, wheelchair access)?
- Does the practice provide home visits?
- What is the practice’s billing arrangements (eg do they bulk bill; are they happy to negotiate their fees)?
- Do they have a play area in the waiting room for children?
- What are the practice’s opening hours?
- Does the practice provide after hours care?

- Is there free or paid parking near the practice?
- Do you need to have a doctor who is close to a chemist, pathology, x-ray or other medical facility?

## What if I need access to a GP after hours?

For information about general practices offering extended hours of operation on weekends and evenings contact Health Direct on 1800 022 222.

CALMS—The Canberra Afterhours Locum Medical Service provides after hours medical care for everybody in the ACT. The service provides medical consultations in special clinics by appointment. If it is necessary, a doctor can do a home visit. The CALMS clinics are located in three places: The Canberra Hospital, Calvary Hospital, and the Tuggeranong Health Centre on weekends.

The service operates from 6pm-8.30am weekdays, and all day weekends and public holidays.

The price charged for CALMS consultations may vary depending on which doctor you see because individual doctors set their own fees. CALMS has developed a “not to exceed” fee structure, which they ask their members and locums to refer to. Charges will be less for pensioners and health care card holders.

The details of your visit to CALMS are forwarded to your regular GP the next day.

To contact CALMS, telephone 1300 422 567.

