

Communication Policy



Our practice communicates with patients and third parties in multiple ways, most commonly face to face, telephone and email.

Electronic communication provides a useful and alternative method of contact. Our patients have the option to contact, or be contacted by our practice, via Email and SMS.

Our practice uses digital technology to enable our patients to have 24-hour access to our appointment system. Patients can book their healthcare appointment online via the booking page on our website or by using the HotDoc App.

Our patients agree to the use of electronic communication during the patient registration process via the new patient form sent out through the HotDoc platform. This consent is linked to the patient file in the Practice Software.

Communication

I consent to receive SMS reminders, messages and emails

Yes _____

Privacy and Terms

We are committed to protecting the confidentiality of your personal information and health records. In submitting this form, you;

1. acknowledge that we, and our service providers, will collect your personal and health information to enable us to provide you with our health services and any related communications (for example, to manage your appointment bookings); and
2. consent to our handling of your personal information in accordance with our Privacy Policy (you can access our Privacy Policy on our website, or by asking us for a copy).

Do you agree to the terms?

I agree _____

There are several considerations that patients should be aware of when communicating electronically -

1. Unencrypted transmissions, such as emails, run the risk of being intercepted.
2. Once identified patient information is emailed, it is likely to remain in the recipient's email system and the senders email system indefinitely, meaning any future breach of either mailbox can result in a breach of confidentiality pertaining to the contents of that email.
3. The recipient cannot be guaranteed. For example, if another person has access to your email account, they could gain access to the confidential information transmitted.
4. If an email containing confidential information is emailed to an incorrect recipient, it is not possible to retrieve or retract the distribution of that information. We do, however, have a privacy notice attached to our emails which states

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION This message and any files transmitted with it are confidential and should be read only by those persons to whom it is addressed. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately and erase all copies of the message and attachments. If you are not the intended recipient you are hereby notified that any perusal, use, distribution, copying or disclosure is strictly prohibited.

Communicating by Telephone

Our practice endeavours to provide patients with timely access to advice or information about their clinical care via the telephone.

Patients can contact the practice between 8.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

If the matter is life threatening, a recorded on-hold message will instruct the caller to hang up and dial 000 for an ambulance.

Our reception staff may use a triage system to assess the urgency of the patients' needs and concerns. They will also perform a three-point identifier check to ensure the correct patient file is matched to the patient on the phone. It is often not possible to speak to the doctor at the time of calling, however, exceptions may be made if the matter is deemed urgent.

Please note: In most instances, an appointment will be made for a phone consultation to ensure all your healthcare questions are answered and documented appropriately and you receive a Medicare Rebate.

Communicating by Electronic Means Email and SMS

Our practice email account for patients and stakeholders to communicate with our practice is practicemanager@moffatbeachmedical.com.au. This email is checked during normal business hours only and is not monitored when the practice is closed on weekends and public holidays or during an unplanned event.

If you choose to contact the surgery via email, this is considered as consent for us to reply via email. We endeavour to respond to email messages as soon as possible during normal business hours.

An auto reply will acknowledge the email and includes information on the hours the email inbox is monitored, immediate action and urgent medical attention.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Thank you for emailing Moffat Beach Family Medical Practice. Emails will be responded to as soon as possible. If your email requires immediate action, do not wait for a reply, please phone the Practice on 07 5438 2333 during business hours 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday. If you require urgent medical attention, please call 000 or attend your closest emergency department. This email is not monitored on weekends, public holidays or during an unplanned event.

Please Note: Only appropriate matters will be dealt with via email exchange.

These may include

- changing your appointment
- requesting paperwork that has been misplaced
- confirming a follow-up timeline with the doctor
- notifying the practice that you have attended a specialist appointment

No consulting or advice is offered via email. A consultation must be arranged with the GP.

Our practice uses SMS messaging to remind patients of their upcoming appointments and for non-urgent recalls and routine reminders through the HotDoc platform. It is the patient's responsibility to contact the practice and follow up on these messages where appropriate. We require 48hrs notice for cancellation where possible.

Communication with a patient via electronic means will be added to the patient's medical record. This includes any results, emails and specialist letters.

Please make sure you update the practice if there is a change to your mobile number. Please let us know if you would like to be removed from the SMS list.

Please note: For patients who have opted out of SMS communication, a letter may be sent to you via email or post regarding recalls and reminders.

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. There is an online booking option via HotDoc.

Communicating with patients with special needs available

Our aim is to facilitate optimal communication with our patients. Patients who do not speak English or who are proficient in another language, or who have special communication needs, can utilise a language service to communicate with the GP or team members.

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

These include:

- National Relay Service (NRS)
- Auslan services [1300 AUSLAN](#)
- Translation and Interpreter Service (TIS) Doctors Priority Line [1300 131 450](#)

Feedback and Suggestions

We are a small business, and we are constantly learning and evolving to ensure the needs of our patients are met. We encourage and welcome your feedback and suggestion to help us improve our services.