

COVID-19 – IMPORTANT Information for GP’s WE ARE OPEN

The Digestive Health Centre **remains open** and is following all DHHS, Commonwealth, GESA, NSQHS and other official recommendations to respond to the current outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). We have stringent infection control procedures to ensure the safety of our staff, patients and visitors.

As part of the COVID-19 response, National Cabinet have agreed that as of Monday 27 April 2020 Category 1, Category 2 and urgent Category 3 gastroscopies and colonoscopies can be performed. This announcement provides relief for our patients and the team here at Digestive Health as any further delay placed on elective surgeries could have resulted in worsened health outcomes, increased anxiety and also reduced social and economic productivity.

Only Category 1, Category 2 and some exceptional Category 3 procedures will continue at The Digestive Health Centre until further notice. Our consulting services are in full operation and are being provided to patients via Telehealth (see overleaf for booking instructions). This includes our paediatric and allied health professionals.

In the interests of patient and staff safety, and to reduce COVID-19 in the broader community we have put a range of measures and precautions in place.

These include:

- Screening of our staff
- Social distancing practiced throughout the facility
- Additional cleaning and sanitation measures have been implemented
- Placement of extra Hand hygiene products around the facility
- Screening patients and visitors in order to provide safe care
- Limiting visitors/carer access
- Equipping our Endoscopists, Anaesthetists and Nurses with appropriate personal protective equipment
- Offering Telehealth (phone) consultations for all patients
- Conducting pre admission nurse consultations over the phone instead of face to face
- Preparation instructions are emailed to all patients undergoing a procedure
 OR Preparation kits are posted, time allowing
- Offering cashless transactions
- Providing thorough post procedure follow up calls

At the Digestive Health Centre, your patient’s Digestive Health is our priority. As we all navigate our way through this pandemic you can be assured that we will continue to provide the best quality of care to all of our patients.

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 Continence
 Physiotherapist

Booking information for Telehealth consultations, phone consultations & urgent procedures

- Step 1:** Please indicate on your referral, if your patient requires a Telehealth consultation, Phone consultation or an urgent procedure
- Step 2:** Referrals can be sent to us via;
Fax – 9706 9119
Email via argus – argus@digestivehealth.com.au
- Step 3:** A Digestive Health team member will contact your patient to arrange a suitable time for consultation
- Step 4:** One of our Gastroenterologist's will contact your patient via phone or a video call platform

Please note MBS requirements:

Conditions to be met before using the new Covid-19 codes for Phone/Video Consultation (as at 18/03/2020)

Vulnerable, Isolated patients are those where at least one of the following apply:

- a) The person has been diagnosed with COVID-19 virus but who is not a patient of a hospital; or
- b) The person has been required to isolate themselves in quarantine in accordance with home isolation guidance issued by Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC)
- c) The person is considered more susceptible to the COVID-19 virus being a person who is:
 - a. At least 70 years old; or
 - b. At least 50 years old and is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; or
 - c. Is pregnant; or
 - d. Is a parent of a child under 12 months; or
 - e. Is already under treatment for chronic health conditions or is immune compromised; or
- d) The person meets the current national triage protocol criteria for suspected COVID-19 infection