

# Specialist Clinic Referral Guidelines

## BARIATRIC SURGERY

If the referral is urgent, for example for patients awaiting organ transplantation, endometrial cancer or visual loss secondary to intracranial hypertension, please contact the Bariatric Surgery Program by email [bariatric.program@alfred.org.au](mailto:bariatric.program@alfred.org.au)

### To refer your patient to Specialist Outpatient bariatric surgery clinics

Please send your referral to Alfred Specialist Clinics via **Consultmed eReferral**. To log in or create a free **Consultmed account** click [here](#).

Alfred Health's preference is for all referrers to utilise eReferral; however, referrals can be sent via fax to (03) 9076 6938, or email to [op.referrals@alfred.org.au](mailto:op.referrals@alfred.org.au) whilst we transition our services to this secure platform.

Where appropriate and available, the referral may be directed to an alternative specialist clinic or service.

Please note a referral may be declined if it does not contain essential information required for triage, if the condition is not appropriate for referral to a public hospital, or is a condition not routinely seen at Alfred Health.

The clinical information provided in the referral will determine the triage category. The triage category will affect the timeframe in which the patient is offered an appointment. Waiting times to scheduled appointments vary across clinics and are impacted by factors including clinic demand, capacity and staffing. You can view waiting times to scheduled appointments for urgent and routine referrals [here](#).

**The referral must include the completed [Bariatric Clinic Screening Assessment](#). Please note referrals will not be accepted if the completed assessment form is not included.**

**In accordance with the Department of Health's Framework for Bariatric Surgery, candidates for the Alfred Health Bariatric Service program should:**

- Have a BMI>40 OR a BMI>35 with two or more significant obesity related co-morbidities, e.g. HPT requiring medication; type 2 diabetes mellitus; dyslipidaemia; obstructive sleep apnoea; pulmonary HPT; obesity hypoventilation syndrome; non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (fatty liver)
- Be over 18 years of age at time of referral
- Be under 60 years of age at time of referral
- Have attempted but not succeeded in achieving or maintaining clinically beneficial weight loss using non-surgical measures
- Patients who are being treated for the same condition at another Victorian public hospital.
- Patients must be non-smokers

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Please include in the referral:

<p><b>Demographic details:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of birth</li> <li>• Patient's contact details including mobile phone number</li> <li>• Referring GP details</li> <li>• If an interpreter is required</li> <li>• Medicare number</li> </ul>	<p><b>Clinical information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reason for referral</li> <li>• Duration of symptoms</li> <li>• Relevant pathology and imaging reports (<a href="#">Alfred or Sandringham Radiology</a> preferred to facilitate access to results)</li> <li>• Past medical history</li> <li>• Current medications.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Bariatric Clinic Screening Assessment.</a></li> </ul> <p>In addition, bariatric referrals require:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Past medical history, including mental health conditions</li> <li>2. History of bariatric surgery</li> </ol>
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Some clinics offer private consultations in public rooms. If the patient chooses to be seen as a private patient, **please provide a referral to a named specialist** to comply with MBS billing requirements. There is no out-of-pocket cost to the patient. Please note the patient may be seen by another consultant in that clinic to expedite their care.

**Please note:** The times to assessment may vary depending on size and staffing of the hospital department.

**If there is a concern about the delay of the appointment, any deterioration in the patient's condition, or if an urgent specialist opinion is required, please contact the Oesophago-Gastric/Bariatric Surgical Registrar on call on 9076 2000.**

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**Direct to the Emergency Department:**

- Severe abdominal pain or intolerance of fluids after bariatric surgery
- Fever or shortness of breath after bariatric surgery

Please call the Admitting Officer on 1800 ALFRED (1800 253 733)

**Immediately contact the Oesophago-Gastric/Bariatric Surgery Registrar to arrange an urgent assessment for:**

- Vomiting and/or severe reflux following bariatric surgery

Alfred Health has introduced a **Health Improvement and Weight Management Program** for patients to complete prior to receiving an outpatient appointment in the Bariatric Surgery Clinic. Patients will receive an invitation to participate in the program within 6 months of being referred to the service.

The aim of the Health Improvement and Weight Management Program is to support patients to lead a healthy lifestyle and improve their wellbeing. If patients do proceed to undergo bariatric surgery, the aim is to reduce surgical risk by improving general health.

The program includes a number of steps the patient is required to complete, and it is compulsory to complete all steps prior to receiving an outpatient appointment.

On completion of the program, an outpatient appointment is scheduled in the Bariatric Surgery multidisciplinary clinic where patients are assessed by a specialist bariatric consultant, and if required a Respiratory and/or General physician specialising in management of obesity.

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### Criteria for referral to Bariatric Surgery

In accordance with the Department of Health's Framework for Bariatric Surgery, candidates for the program should:

- Have a BMI >40; or BMI>35 with two or more significant obesity related co-morbidities, such as:
  - \* Hypertension requiring medication
  - \* Type 2 diabetes mellitus
  - \* Obstructive sleep apnoea
  - \* Pulmonary hypertension
  - \* Obesity hypoventilation syndrome
  - \* Non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (fatty liver)
  - \* Dyslipidaemia
- Be over 18 years of age at time of referral.
- Be under 60 years of age at time of referral. (Please note wait time for surgery may be lengthy.)
- Have attempted but failed to achieve or maintain clinically beneficial weight loss using non-surgical measures.
- Be a non-smoker
- Patients with acute psychiatric illness should be stabilised prior to entering the program

### What happens if the referral is accepted?

- Patients will be required to complete a Bariatric Health questionnaire which will be sent on acceptance of referral.
- Patients are required to actively participate in a 16-week online Health Improvement and Weight Management program.

On completion of these requirements, patients will then receive an appointment to attend the multidisciplinary Bariatric Surgery clinic and discuss the options for management.