

REFERRAL GUIDELINES: GENERAL MEDICINE



Essential Referral Content

Demographic

- Date of birth
- Contact details (including mobile phone)
- Referring GP details
- Interpreter requirements
- Medicare number

Clinical

- Reason for referral
- Duration of symptoms
- Relevant pathology & imaging reports
- Past medical history
- Current medications

The Alfred Outpatient Referral Form is available to print and fax to the General Medicine Outpatient Department on 9076 3812



Exclusion Criteria

The following conditions are not routinely seen at the Alfred:

- Patients who are being treated for the same condition at another Victorian public hospital
- Children under 18 years of age are not seen at The Alfred

REFERRAL PROCESS: GENERAL MEDICINE



STEP 1

You will be notified when your referral is received by outpatients. Essential referral content will be checked and you may be contacted if further information is required.



STEP 2

The referral is triaged by the specialist unit according to clinical urgency. This determines how long the patient will wait for an appointment.



STEP 3

Patients with **urgent** conditions are scheduled to be seen within 30 days. Patients with **routine** conditions are given the next available appointment according to clinical need. Both the referral and patient are notified.

Some clinics offer an MBS-billed service. **There is no out of pocket expense to the patient.** MBS-billed services require a current referral to a named specialist– please provide your patient with a **12 month referral addressed to the specialist of your choice.** Please note that your patient may be seen by another specialist in that clinic, in order to expedite their treatment.

Please note: The times to assessment may vary depending on the size and staffing of the hospital department. If you are concerned about the delay of the outpatient appointment or if there is any deterioration in the patient's condition, please contact the General Medicine Outpatient line on 9076 2375.

REFERRAL PRIORITY: GENERAL MEDICINE

The clinical information provided in your referral will determine the triage category. The triage category will affect the timeframe in which the patient is offered an appointment.

<p>IMMEDIATE</p> <p>Direct to the Emergency & Trauma Centre</p>	<p>URGENT</p> <p>Appointment timeframe within 30 days (can be seen within 1 week if clinically indicated)</p>	<p>ROUTINE</p> <p>Appointment timeframe greater than 30 days depending on clinical need</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest pain (new) • Heart palpitations • Severely short of breath (significantly worse than baseline) • Severe pain—unexplained, new and/or prolonged • Sudden loss of functioning—weakness (especially one sided), blurred vision, facial droop • Fall with suspected fracture and/or head/spinal injury • Severe acute onset of cognitive deterioration 	<p><u>Within 1 week:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major clinical risk if treatment is delayed • Severe or progressive undiagnosed problem where condition is potentially serious • Uncontrolled, acute, deteriorating and/or severe symptoms, and/or major functional impairment • Suspected malignancy • Identified as at-risk on discharge due to social circumstances • Hospital admission is possible if patient is not evaluated within 1 week <p><u>Within 30 days:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition may become serious if assessment and/or treatment is delayed • Deterioration of known condition • Symptoms causing social/economic/functional impairment • GP diagnosis probable but further investigation or confirmation required • Hospital admission is possible if patient is not evaluated within 30 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up on normal test results • Follow up on stable psycho-social issues • Where wait time will not put the patient at risk of prolonged discomfort or development of more serious symptoms/disease • Reassessment of known major/complex multi-system disease • All other conditions
<p>Phone the Gen Med Physician Hotline on 0428 626 183 or send to The Alfred Emergency & Trauma Centre.</p>	<p>Urgent (within 1 week) cases must be discussed with the clinical triaging team for prioritisation on 9076-2375 and a referral faxed to 9076-3812</p>	<p>Fax referral to 9076-3812</p>