

Proposed COVID-19 Action Plan for General Practice reception staff

Document based on "Coronavirus (COVID19) Practice Plan – RECEPTION" provided to the QLD GPLO Network, thanks to Dr Melanie Stuttgart GPLO for the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service.

Triage

- Consider adding an alert message to your online appointment booking system and your practice's website (if available)
"If you have cold and flu symptoms and have recently travelled overseas or believe you may be at risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection DO NOT book your appointment online or come into the practice unannounced. Please call us instead to make any arrangements."
- Ask **every** patient making an appointment at the clinic if they are currently experiencing cold or flu symptoms. If YES proceed to ask additional questions as below to identify patients who may be at risk of COVID-19 infection or of other serious illness.

Additional questions

- How unwell are you? Fever, cough, shortness of breath.
- Have you recently travelled overseas? Where and how long ago?
- Have you been in contact with a confirmed case of Coronavirus?
- Do you have any other concerns that you might have Coronavirus?

- If the patient appears to be significantly unwell, escalate the call to the treating GP or practice nurse, or ask the patient to hang up now and ring 000
- If YES to any of the above questions escalate the information to the treating GP or practice nurse for acceptance of appointment or alternative arrangements.
- Notify the patient they will be contacted as soon as possible with further advice.
- If required, consider booking a long appointment for these patients

Management of patient contact from arrival

- Advise patient to call and notify reception when they have arrived. If possible, patients should wait in their car or outside of the clinic **until the doctor is ready and a room is vacant**
- Advise patient to observe cough etiquette, respiratory, and hand hygiene at all times
- Arrange for the patient to be met outside of the clinic and to be fitted with a surgical mask.
- The person meeting the patient should wear a surgical mask, avoid close contact with the patient, limit time of contact, and thoroughly wash their hands after handing the mask to the patient.
- Once the room and doctor are ready the patient can be called in.
- The patient should not be made to wait in the waiting room and should be directed straight to the allocated room for assessment. Where possible, the practice should have a dedicated room for the assessment of patients at risk of COVID-19 infection.
- After the consultation, the patient is to leave the building without stopping at reception area. They are to take their mask with them, and arrangements should be made so they can settle account over the phone or later.
- The patient should be reminded to observe cough etiquette, respiratory, and hand hygiene at all times
- After the patient leaves – clean and disinfect any surfaces that may have been touched by the patient (door handles, reception desk, etc)
- Restock Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in each Doctor's room kit regularly as needed
- If the patient has been directed to a pathology collection centre for testing, ensure the centre is notified in advance so infection control measures can be implemented.
- The patient is not to take public transport to travel to the pathology collection centre, if alternative arrangements cannot be made contact your local public health unit or emergency department for advice.