

PIER STREET MEDICAL CENTRE SURGERY INFORMATION

2008 Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Victoria General Practice of the Year

Update 05/07/16

Dr LARRY LIGHT
Dr SHADE OKEDARA
Dr KATE STRASSER
Dr CHOO-YIN YEK
Dr RICHARD KAM
Dr CEINWEN GRAYSON
Dr METALE BISWAS

125 Pier Street
Altona 3018
9398 3711

.....

• **PSMC WEB SITE** – <http://pierstreetmedicalcentre.com.au>.

• **WEEKDAY HOURS** We are open between 8.30am and 6.00pm.

• **AFTER HOURS, WEEKENDS & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS**

We are open on Saturdays between 8.30am and 12 noon and closed on Sundays and Public Holidays. Dr. Light is available 24 hours a day for after hours medical advice by ringing 9429 5677 (our **after hours service**) and asking for him. Dr Okedara is often similarly available.

• **BOOKING SYSTEM**

We book consultations at **15 minutely intervals** and do our best to keep to these times to prevent inconvenient delays to you. When urgent situations arise these have to take precedence over booked patients, which can't be anticipated, creating unforeseen delays. This rarely occurs. ***There are some ways you can help our system work better.***

1. If you anticipate your consultation will be longer than 15 minutes please inform our staff on making your appointment. You can then be booked in for a 30 or 45 minute consultation without inconveniencing patients booked in after you. **Out of pocket costs for longer consultations are only slightly more than for shorter consultations.**

Some examples of this are...

- Full insurance examination
- Travel health
- Multiple problems
- Chest pain requiring a cardiogram
- Emotional problems

2. If you can't keep an appointment let us know, so your appointment can be given to someone else. Please **give at least 4 hours notice.**

3. Please turn up on time for appointments. If you are late it is inconvenient for those patients booked in after you. If you want to be certain of not having to wait, book your appointment for the first available appointment of the morning or afternoon i.e. 8.30am or 2.30pm weekdays, 8.30 am Saturdays. (Saturday start times will vary depending which doctor is rostered)

A way of **decreasing your waiting time** is to **ring us prior to your appointment & check if we are running to time.** This would especially apply to the frail elderly or parents with young children who quickly get bored in the waiting room (we have a children's play area).

• **REMINDER CALL SERVICE**

We offer a reminder service for advanced appointment booking. Patients who have pre booked appointments 3 months or more in advance will be notified via telephone/SMS 1 week prior to the appointment. We require confirmation by phone call at least 4 hrs prior to the appointment time. In the event that no confirmation has been made after an SMS and 2 phone calls, the appointment may be given to another patient.

• **URGENT CONSULTATIONS**

We reserve **four** 15 minute **appointments** for each doctor per session to enable acutely ill patients to be seen the same day. **There are up to 16 such reserved appointments each day.** You need to ring in early for these. If these appointments have been taken you may have to see a doctor who is not your preferred GP. All doctors at PSMC keep detailed records enabling easy ongoing management by whichever doctor you see.

• **PAYMENT FOR FIRST CONSULTATION**

We request payment by cash, credit card (we don't accept American Express) or eftpos at the time of first consultation for all new patients to our practice.

• **REDUCED FEES FOR PENSIONERS, HEALTH CARE CARD HOLDERS & CHILDREN**

We **don't Bulk Bill**, however we **give Pensioners, HCC Holders & children under 16 years a 24% reduction** for our most commonly charged fee, a 15 minute consultation. Such patients will be **\$26.95** out of pocket if paid at the time of consultation. **Your Medicare rebate can be electronically placed into your bank account.** Please ask our staff how this can be done.

• **MEDICARE/WORKCOVER/TRANSPORT ACCIDENT COMMISSION**

We expect patients to take responsibility for their own accounts and therefore don't bill third parties such as Medicare, Workcover and TAC. **In these situations after paying your account keep your receipt so that you can be reimbursed by the above third parties.**

• **FEE STRUCTURE**

A list of our common fees is on our notice board. A more comprehensive list is available on request from our front desk staff. Unpaid accounts over 90 days are automatically referred to a debt collector.

• **ACCOUNT FEES**

An account fee of **\$8.50** is added to the cost of the consultation for Private patients and **\$6.00** for Pensioners & HCC holders, if payment is not made at the time of consultation.

• **PRESCRIPTION CHARGES**

When ordering prescriptions, a minimum 5 working days' notice is required otherwise there is a **\$12.50** fee. There is **no Medicare rebate for these charges.** These fees can be avoided by making sure you have enough prescription repeats until your next consultation. Our doctors should prescribe enough repeats to cover you until your next consultation and if they don't you won't be charged. Our computer system records which GP wrote the prescription, when and how many repeats were organised as well as the time it took.

• **EFTPOS**

We have an EFTPOS facility which accepts most **credit and debit cards** (not American Express) but doesn't provide cash.

• **MISSED APPOINTMENTS**

A charge equal to the cost of the missed appointment is made for patients who fail to give adequate notice. GST is payable on this fee.

• **WHY WE DON'T BULK BILL**

We believe the minimum consultation time to allow us to practise quality medicine is 15 minutes for a familiar patient & 30-45 minutes for new patients. We believe bulk billing is incompatible with the practice of high quality medicine because it encourages high through put brief consultations for two reasons. Medicare rebates are not indexed and don't rise parallel to cost of living adjustments so are too low to allow 15 minutely bulk billed consultations and maintain profitability. The current fee for service schedule provides the same fee for a 5½ minute or 19½ minute consultation. Running costs (wages, equipment, rent, power, self education, insurance etc.) in general practice are of the order of 55% so bulk billing GPs need to see 6-8 patients/hour to maintain profitability. Our gross takings would be higher if we bulk billed everyone and saw 6 patients per hour rather than the 4 patients per hour that we currently see.

• **FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES**

If you are finding it difficult to pay our accounts please inform our staff (by letter or phone if you wish) or the doctor in the privacy of the consulting room. We would prefer to maintain our relationship with you and **reduce your fee** until your financial situation improves rather than lose you as our patient.

• **OTHER LANGUAGES SPOKEN & INTERPRETER SERVICE**

Yoruba (Nigerian), Cantonese, Mandarin. If you require an interpreter service please let us know when making your appointment. Our practice encourages patients to utilise the free Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) Ph: 131 450. The TIS is available via telephone at the time of consultation or at PSMC if 48 hours notice is given. Further information about the TIS is available on the TIS website. An interpreting service is available for patients who are deaf and use Australian Sign Language (AUSLAN). Contact the National AUSLAN Interpreter Booking and Payment Service (NABS) on 1800 246 945 or visit the NABS website for further information.

• **UNWELL PEOPLE SITTING IN THE WAITING ROOM**

- If you are unwell & have recently returned from overseas tell our staff immediately as you may require isolation away from the waiting room.
- If you cough or sneeze please place your hands over your mouth to prevent the spread of germs.
- Masks are available on the waiting room counter. Don't feel embarrassed to use one to prevent the spread of your germs. Prior to leaving the surgery place it in the waiting room rubbish bin and wash your hands.

• **THE CONSULTATION**

- Be organised. Have a list if necessary. A long list will require a 30 minute appointment & possibly a follow-up appointment.
- Don't leave it until the end of the consultation to raise new or important issues.
- Bring in a list of any naturopathic or "across the counter" medication you are taking.

• **YOUR MEDICAL RECORD**

Is a confidential document that always remains the property of Pier Street Medical Centre. If you transfer to another clinic it may be copied in part or whole for appropriate continuation of your care.

• **PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT OUR STAFF**

Petra Held is our Practice Manager. **Anna Lim-Liaw, Sharyn Butler, Tara Rolff and Lorie Sawicki** are our receptionists. **Sue Johnstone and Sonja Berryman** are our nurses and are able to help you with dressings, ear syringing, cardiograms, removing sutures, childhood & travel vaccinations etc. All staff are able to help you with sensible advice regarding general health matters, appointments, prescriptions, referral to specialists, test results and accounts.

• **PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT OUR ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS**

Chelsea Morley (Exercise Physiologist) provides clinical exercise therapy to a range of patients at Pier Street Medical Centre. Exercise Physiology revolves around the development of exercise and rehabilitation programs to assist patients in the management of their illness and disability.

Exercise Physiology is suitable for the following conditions.

1. Diabetes
2. Weight Management
3. Muscular-skeletal aches and pains
4. Neurological Conditions – Multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, Stroke
5. People at risk of falls
6. Chronic lung conditions eg emphysema
7. Arthritis
8. Lymphoedema and Cancer
9. Cardiac Conditions
10. Hypertension

Karen Thorne (Diabetes Educator). Karen's sessions help explain your diabetes and its associated complications. He provides individually tailored practical strategies and motivation to improve glucose levels and health outcomes e.g. update your glucometer, insulin injection techniques, medication review etc. All sessions are communicated to your doctor for continuity of care. You can access this service privately at a cost or through a care plan, paid for by Medicare. Ask at reception for more details.

Maree Brinkman is an **Accredited Practising Dietitian/Nutritionist and Nutritional Epidemiologist**. As a dietitian Maree has a broad range of knowledge and experience in many areas of diet including: healthy weight management, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, gastrointestinal problems, vitamin/mineral deficiency, dietary issues with the ageing process, healthy eating to prevent and manage chronic disease and optimising nutritional intake for cancer patients. From a research perspective, Maree is particularly interested in the relationship between diet and disease with the main focus of her work directed towards nutrition and cancer epidemiology. Maree likes to combine her work as a researcher with her clinical practice with the aim of providing the best available evidence-based and personal nutritional advice.

Ingrid Sturmev (Psychologist) Ingrid is an experienced psychologist dealing in a broad range of mental health and life adjustment issues. Her approach allows people to clarify what they may need to change about themselves, their circumstances or their relationships and to feel burdens lift by not only experiencing empathy and understanding but by better managing their own emotions and changing habitual behaviours that don't work for them or others. She emphasises action – thinking about things and doing things differently to get a different result - even in the most emotional areas of life. She also assists people to accept what cannot be changed and make the most of life in the face of personal tragedy and the larger forces that oppress and threaten and side track us. Ingrid has built a particular reputation in Melbourne as an expert in intimate and family relationships through 15 years specialist work with Relationships Australia.

Nicholas Barnes (Podiatrist) - Nick has over 6 years of experience in private practice. He has a strong background in biomechanics and sports injuries including diagnosis and management of foot, leg, back, hip, knee and ankle injuries, as well as recovery following surgery. Nick understands your foot function, helping him prescribe you the right orthotic if required and suggest appropriate footwear for your arch profile.

Nick also helps to treat painful toenails, corns, calluses, bunions and is here to give good advice for your lower limb. He is well trained in diabetic management and has a keen interest in systemic health. Additionally, Nick is trained in Western Medical Acupuncture, Foot Mobilisation Techniques and has a strong interest in pediatric pain, alignment & walking disorders.

• **SUMMARY OF THE SPECIAL INTERESTS OF OUR DOCTORS**

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Asthma/Respiratory Medicine | 5. Paediatrics | 8. Preventive Medicine |
| 2. Allergy | 6. Psychological Health | 9. Heart Disease |
| 3. Diabetes | 7. Blood pressure | 10. Travel Medicine |
| 4. Women's Health (contraception, pregnancy, menopause) | 11. Surgical Procedures | |

• **PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT OUR DOCTORS**

Dr Light is a visiting physician to the **Department of Allergy, Immunology & Respiratory Medicine** at the Alfred Hospital and has special interests in allergic disease, asthma, heart disease, preventive and psychological medicine. He is a member of the Australasian Menopause Society and the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy. Dr. Light can visit you if you are admitted to the Alfred hospital.

Dr Okedara practises in an educational/interactive manner. She has special interests in Women & Children's Health and Mental health.

Dr Kate Strasser takes a holistic and educational approach to the well-being of each of her patients and has a special interest in sexual health

Dr Choo-Yin Yek enjoys meeting and looking after people of all ages, especially young families with young children. Other interests include preventative care, working with the elderly and mental health care.

Dr Richard Kam has a friendly and empathetic manner. He is well equipped in dealing with all aspects of General Practice, and has further qualifications in Skin Cancer Medicine and Surgery through the Skin Cancer College Australasia. He enjoys seeing young families, treating the elderly and managing joint and muscular problems.

Dr Ceinwen Carlsson takes an interest in all aspects of her patients' health. Dr Carlsson has a special interest in women's health and is a caring and understanding General Practitioner.

Dr Metale Biswas is the newest member of the PSMC team. Metale is a UK trained GP and is looking forward to starting her career in Australia with PSMC. Dr Biswas is a caring and understanding General Practitioner who takes an interest in all aspects of her patients' health needs and wellbeing. She enjoys caring for Patients of all ages and has special interests in women's health and preventative health.

• **VOCATIONAL REGISTER**

All our doctors are vocationally registered, which requires them to undergo regular postgraduate education, independently assessed by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

• **PRACTICE ACCREDITATION**

PSMC is an accredited practice implying the highest clinical and administrative standards recognised by our peers.

• **HOME VISITS**

For patients too ill to attend the surgery we are able to organise home visits.

• **AFTER HOURS ARRANGEMENTS**

Please call the National home Doctor Service on 94295677, if you require medical assistance outside our normal opening hours of 8.30am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday and 8.30am to 12.30pm on Saturdays.

• **RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITY VISITS**

We are able to continue our relationship with you if you are admitted to local RACF's.

• **TELEPHONE ACCESS TO GP'S**

Doctors may be contacted by phone however if the doctor is consulting a message will be taken by our staff who will inform you when the doctor will be able to return your call. In an emergency you will always be put through to a doctor.

• **YELLOW FEVER VACCINATION CENTRE FOR THE WESTERN SUBURBS**

PSMC is a Yellow Fever Vaccination Centre. Dr. Richard Kam is responsible for these vaccinations.

• **VACCINATIONS**

We perform all child and adult vaccinations including Whooping Cough, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), Hepatitis A & B, Chicken Pox, Meningitis and H. Influenza. **Childhood immunisations are charged at the scheduled fee and there are no out of pocket costs associated with having your child immunized.** Annual Influenza & Pneumococcal vaccination is recommended for all patients over 65 years. Some of these vaccines are paid for by the State & Federal Government.

• **OVERSEAS TRAVEL CLINIC**

We are able to give the latest advice regarding the need for vaccination & malaria prevention prior to overseas travel. Please **book in for a ½ hour appointment** & bring your travel itinerary as well as a list of previous vaccinations. We receive regular computer updates with the latest vaccination requirements for all countries.

• **MINOR SURGICAL PROCEDURES INCLUDING SKIN CANCERS**

We perform procedures such as **suturing wounds**, removing **ingrown toenails**, **skin cancers**, **moles** and **cysts**, plaster for **broken bones** and liquid nitrogen for **warts and keratoses**. We are able to digitally photograph & measure skin lesions to see if they are changing with time. These are saved in your electronic file.

- **STERILISATION AT PSMC** We use an autoclave which ensures that all instruments used for procedures are appropriately sterile. This is regularly calibrated both "in house" and by external auditing.
- **SPECIAL TESTS** We are able to perform **cardiograms** (E.C.G.), **lung function** tests, **blood sugar tests** and **pregnancy tests** on site. Additional costs are charged for some of these services.
- **PATHOLOGY COLLECTION** Healthscope provides on site pathology collection from 8am to 12pm weekdays only. **Maritza** organises the tests for Healthscope.
- **TEST RESULTS** Please ring in for test results between 1.30pm and 2.30pm. **It is important that you take responsibility for checking that your test results are normal. NEVER ASSUME THAT YOUR TEST RESULTS ARE NORMAL BECAUSE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN CONTACTED BY US.**
- **RECALL/REMINDER SYSTEM** We use a computerised recall system to remind you of tests that require performing at a later date e.g. **smear tests, mammograms, bowel & ovarian cancer screening tests, annual skin & prostate cancer checks, bone density tests, annual physical examination** etc. Please tell us if you wish to be reminded about a future test or consultation date. If you don't wish to be on our recall system please inform our staff.
- **PREVENTIVE MEDICINE TESTING** If you have a relative with **breast, ovarian, bowel, prostate or skin cancer, diabetes, high cholesterol, heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke or haemochromatosis** we recommend **annual preventive tests**.
- **CHANGE IN FAMILY MEDICAL HISTORY STATUS**
Please inform us of any **changes in your family history**, especially in first degree relatives (parents, brothers, sisters & children). If one of your first degree relatives develops bowel, prostate, skin or breast cancer, has a heart attack or develops diabetes, severe depression or haemochromatosis this could increase your risks of developing a similar condition. If we are aware of this we can regularly screen you for these problems.
- **REFERRALS TO SPECIALISTS**
If you are referred to a specialist we will give you the specialist's telephone number so that you can **organise your own appointment** to suit yourself. **Once your appointment is made please contact our Surgery immediately** so a referral letter can be organised for you to take to the specialist without undue delay. **Please don't leave this to the last minute**. We need at least 5 working days' notice for a referral letter to be organised otherwise there will be an \$12.50 charge. It is your responsibility to check with the specialist's rooms as to the charging policy. Your GP may be able to advise you further on specialist charges.
- **MOBILE PHONES** Please use commonly accepted courtesy and turn off your mobile phone on entering our Medical Centre. If you forget and your mobile phone rings whilst in consultation with the doctor please don't carry on a conversation.
- **COMPLAINTS / SUGGESTIONS** If you have any **suggestions** on how we can improve our service or any complaints about us please let us know. Please ask reception for a complaints form. All complaints are responded to in a timely manner. If you leave our surgery because of unhappiness without telling us **we can't take appropriate action to rectify the problem**. Please feel free to use our **Suggestion Box** which is on the reception counter to communicate with us. If after discussion with us you feel your complaint was not handled to your satisfaction then you may wish to raise the matter with the Health Services Commissioner on 8601 5200.
- **PSMC PRIVACY POLICY** Your medical record is a confidential document. It is the policy of this practice to maintain security of personal health information at all times and to ensure that this Information is only available to authorised members of staff. Strict confidentiality is maintained within this practice. Breach of confidentiality by our staff is the only absolute cause for instant dismissal. Discussion about patient problems by doctors within the practice may occur at medical staff meetings which ultimately benefits patient management. A copy of our Privacy Policy is kept at the front desk for your viewing.
- **GREEN POLICY**

We aim to minimise our carbon footprint by having the following in place.

- Dual flush toilets
- Policy of turning off all possible electrical equipment at wall switch when not in use
- Recycling all used paper & plastic
- Using only rechargeable batteries where possible
- Working towards a paperless practice