

OUR BILLING EXPLAINED

Ashburton Family Practice is a private billing practice and full payment of fees are expected on the day of consultation. Fees are payable by credit card or EFTPOS. Accounts are unfortunately not able to be given.

A Medicare rebate may apply to consultation fees and at the time of payment, if applicable, the practice can apply for your rebate to go directly into the bank account you have nominated with Medicare. Or you can ask for a printout of the receipt and claim yourself with Medicare.

The Australian Medical Association fee structure forms the basis of our billing policy, and our fees reflect the time taken and degree of complexity in each consultation.

The Practice sees itself as providing excellent health care to patients who seek out the type of service that is provided at the practice.

Please also note that our general practitioners are independent contractors and can set fees that are higher than our practice fees. Please enquire with reception regarding the fees for your general practitioner at the time of booking particularly for procedures.

FEES

All patients are seen on a fee for service basis. All Health Care Card and Pension Card holders will incur a reduced out of pocket fee.

At present, our Gold Card veterans are bulk billed under the DVA agreement.

Full details of our weekday and weekend fees and charges are displayed at reception and can be accessed on our website or by asking our reception staff.

Please note if you have not attended the practice for a face to face appointment in the last 12 months you will not be eligible for a Medicare rebate.

Additional services like dressings, procedures, immunisations may attract further fees, please speak to your general practitioner or our reception staff for further details

When our practice is closed, after-hours bulk-billed home visits are provided by National Home Doctor Service for our registered patients.

Cancellation or late fees may be charged – please contact the practice if you are running late or are unable to attend your appointment.

Our fees are reviewed at the end of each financial year.

FAQ

1. What is bulk billing?

Bulk billing means that the practice is paid directly by Medicare, on behalf of the patient. This means that the amount paid for each medical service is the amount set by the Australian Government. Note that some consultations such as occupational and WorkCover consultations are not covered at all by Medicare and will need to be paid for privately at the time of consultation.

2. Do you bulk bill?

Some services are bulk billed, including childhood immunisations, chronic disease care plans and Government funded health assessments. As part of our practice commitment to improving mental health in our community, mental health care plans are also bulk billed.

3. Why don't you bulk bill everything?

Unfortunately, the consultation fee set by the Government through Medicare does not reflect the true cost of delivering high-quality medical care. A portion of the Medicare rebate received by the general practitioner is also allocated to the practice to cover essential operating expenses—often leaving the doctor with only a limited amount for their time, expertise, and the quality of care they provide.

4. Why would I choose to pay a private fee rather than go to a bulk billing clinic?

Because of the low value the Australian Government places on primary care and General Practitioners as discussed above, bulk billing clinics will often need to see more patients in an hour, often need patients to come back to get test results and may not be able to spend as much time addressing your medical needs. At Ashburton Family Practice we value your time as much as ours. We aim to keep waiting times to a minimum, we do our best to offer same day appointments for urgent matters, we have an excellent recall and test result notification system, so our patients do not need to return for follow up appointments unless medically necessary, and our excellent staff and service philosophy ensure your experience is as pleasant as possible.

We value our general practitioners and think they are worth more than the small value the Government puts on their service.

We want to attract and maintain the very best General Practitioners and maintain a very high-quality service.

At the same time our General Practitioners have the discretion to bulk bill when there is a genuine need, or they see fit, however this is entirely up to their discretion.