

Patient Information: Why choose a day hospital?

What is a day hospital?

- A day hospital is a medical facility, not attached to an inpatient hospital. Patients are admitted and discharged on the same day to undergo their surgical, diagnostic or medical procedure.
- Some day hospitals have an extended license for 23 hours. This provides patients with extended recovery time for more complex procedures.
- Free standing day hospitals are purpose designed and built to accommodate the specific medical specialties offered to their patients.
- There are over 300 private standalone day hospitals in Australia making a significant contribution to the Australian healthcare system. Recent statistics indicate that well over 60% of admissions to private hospitals were same day hospitalisations.

Why choose a day hospital?

There are many benefits to having your treatment in a day hospital. Patients having their treatment in a day hospital are usually otherwise fit and healthy, minimising the risk of complications.

- Treatment is tailored to the specific needs of the patients and usually involves a pre admission interview (usually by telephone) which assists in determining the care to be provided.
- Admission time is usually scheduled 30–60 minutes prior to a procedure, so there is only a short waiting period prior to treatment.
- The average day hospital stay ranges from 2 to 6 hours. This short length of your time in the day hospital reduces the risk of complications, such as infection, due to the limited exposure to the hospital environment. Complications, such as deep vein thrombosis and pressure injuries, are less likely due to the relatively short time you are immobilised during your day hospital admission.
- For children and the elderly the brief exposure and personalised friendly atmosphere of a day hospital helps to reduce any anxiety or stress that may be experienced in a large hospital institution.
- At discharge, written instructions are reviewed with the patient and their relative/escort and a follow up post treatment phone call is usually made to ensure that the patients recovery is progressing well and answer any questions the patient might have.

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For further information visit www.dayhospitalsaustralia.net.au

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Why choose a day hospital? (continued)

- Day hospital staff are competent and experienced in the particular specialties offered, which results in efficient high quality care in a friendly environment.
- Patients are able to return to the comfort of their own home on the day of surgery or in the case of the more complex procedures within 23 hours of their admission.
- Due to the advances in surgical technology and anaesthesia, recovery from procedures performed in day hospitals and subsequent return to normal activities occurs relatively quickly.
- For uninsured patients, day hospital costs are lower compared with overnight facilities due to their lower overheads.

Procedures performed in day hospitals

Within the current private stand-alone day hospital sector the types of services that are delivered include:

- Cardiac Catheterisation
- Chemotherapy
- Cosmetic Surgery
- Dental
- Dermatology / skin cancer / skin diseases
- Dialysis
- Ear, Nose & Throat
- Endoscopy
- General Surgery
- Gynaecology
- Haematology/oncology
- In Vitro Fertilisation
- Laparoscopic Surgery
- Oncology
- Ophthalmology
- Oral/Maxillofacial
- Orthopaedic
- Pain Management
- Paediatric Surgery
- Plastic Surgery
- Sleep Disorders
- Urology

How can I access a day hospital?

- Patients admitted to day hospitals typically have been referred by their GPs to a medical specialist. In the case of patients referred to an Endoscopy Centre they may not see a medical specialist until the day of the procedure. If patients wish to be treated in a day hospital, it is important that they ask their GP to refer them to a medical specialist who works in a day hospital. A list of licensed day hospitals can be found on the Department of Health's website for each state.
- Many day hospital websites will have their accredited medical specialists listed, which allows patients to identify a suitable specialist at a day hospital in their vicinity. If medical specialists are not listed, patients can call the day hospital and ask for a list of doctors who are accredited to work there.
- All day hospitals who hold membership with Day Hospitals Australia are licensed with their state department of health and accredited with an approved accreditation body. A list of member day hospitals can be found on our website www.dayhospitalsaustralia.net.au

Which patients can access day hospitals?

Most day hospitals have contracts with major health funds, so patients will be able to use their health insurance to cover all or part of their hospital account depending on their individual health insurance cover. Many day hospitals have agreements with the Department of Veteran Affairs to treat eligible veterans. Patients having treatment under workers compensation insurance can often be treated in day hospitals. Patients without health insurance may choose to have their treatment at a day hospital and pay the hospitals fees to avoid long waiting lists in the public sector.

When I see the specialist what questions do I ask?

Ask if your treatment can be performed in a day hospital and for the procedure name and MBS number as this information will be necessary when contacting your health fund to confirm your cover. The specialist will provide you with the day hospital admission information and documentation.

Will my Private Health Insurance cover my day hospital care?

- This depends on the type of cover you have.
- There may be one or several exclusions on your policy, for example pregnancy, cardiac surgery etc.
- There may also be restrictions on your policy where specific treatments are only partially covered. Some restrictions cover you for treatment in public hospitals and not private hospitals, or the restriction may not cover the total cost of your treatment.
- Waiting times for specific treatments may need to be considered.
- Some private health insurance policies will have an excess on the policy that lowers the annual premium. Depending on the type of excess, you may be required to pay this once per year ie at one hospital admission and not at subsequent admissions, or you may be required to pay it on each admission.
- Other policies attract a co-payment on admission to hospital which would normally be paid on every admission.
- Co-payments and excesses are not determined by the hospital, these are related to the individual patient's health insurance policy and are paid at the time of admission to hospital.
- It is important to check with your health fund regarding your level of cover.
- The day hospital will conduct an eligibility check prior to your admission and advise you of any out of pocket expenses which you will be responsible for.



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