



Information Sheet: Home-visit Service

General Information

Primary Care Psychology offers a bulk-billed, home-visit psychology service to assist patients who are unable to attend consultations at a medical clinic on a regular basis. Common impediments to attendance include physical illness or disability, lack of transportation, financial hardship, or emotional state.

In practice the most common patient groups we see for home visits are:

- Older adults (65+)
- People with a chronic physical illness or disability
- Patients recently discharged from hospital

We also see many people outside these categories who are suffering from depression, anxiety, eating disorders, etc, or people who simply can't afford the added cost (\$30) of regular consultations at a medical clinic.

In these latter instances we will request that the initial consultation take place at the Primary Care Psychology clinic in order to assess suitability for the home-visit service. The factors we consider in assessing suitability include the nature of the psychological issue, any history of aggression, violence, self-harm or substance misuse, the age of the patient, and relationship to the Home Supervisor (see below). We have strict criteria to protect the safety of our home visit psychologists, and often we will suggest that the first six sessions are conducted at the Primary Care Psychology Clinic unless the safety of the psychologist can be assured beyond reasonable doubt.



Home-Visit Mandatory Requirements

Primary Care Psychology is only able to offer a home-visit service by ensuring the safety of our psychologists. We take the following precautions to prevent putting our psychologists into any potentially dangerous or ethically compromised situations. Patients who cannot adhere to these requirements should choose our low-cost, psychology clinic option instead.

The following four mandatory requirements must be met for every home visit consultation:

1. Presence of a Home Supervisor in the household for the duration of the consultation

A Home Supervisor is a person of maturity and authority who is able to supervise the behaviour of the patient if required. This is usually a parent or carer. The Home Supervisor must greet the psychologist at the door and must be available in the household for the duration of the session (usually 60 minutes). The Home Supervisor does not need to remain in the same room as the patient during the consultation, unless requested by the patient.

2. Home-visit consultation room

The room in which the consultation takes place should have at least two chairs, be somewhat tidy, free from distractions (television, radio, etc), and afford some degree of privacy. Usually these consultations occur in a patient's living room or study. Consultations in a bedroom are not appropriate unless the patient cannot get out of bed because of a physical injury or disability. Patients who are feeling severely depressed must get out of bed for the consultation or, alternatively, the Home Supervisor must be present throughout the session.

3. Patient hygiene and standard of dress

Patients are usually much more relaxed in their home environment than at a medical clinic. However, sometimes the absence of formality has led some patients to forget to shower or dress appropriately. We ask that patients strive to maintain at least a minimal level of hygiene and dress code – even a quick shower and a tracksuit will do! Please use common sense, but an open-shirt, bare top, or nightgown ('nightie') is not appropriate.

4. Please be ready at the designated time

Our home-visit psychologists run on a tight schedule and must drive considerable distance between appointments. Therefore they must leave at the end of the designated appointment time even if you were late to start. Of course if the psychologist is late then s/he will extend your appointment time if possible.

Thank you for respecting these basic requirements.



What do I need to do now?

1. If you require a bulk-billed (no fee) Medicare service then please read the attached Medicare Information Sheet and follow the instructions.
2. Those wishing to use private health insurance (instead of Medicare; by law it is not possible to use both) will need to ring their insurance company to check their level of cover and the amount that can be claimed per session. Our fee for a home-visit is \$80 per hour, and, on average, clients with *extras cover* can usually claim approximately \$50 per session (the exact amount and maximum number of sessions varies by insurance company). Please ensure you contact your insurance company to determine what forms need to be brought along to the session for your psychologist to complete.
3. For WorkCover, TAC, and Victims of Crime claims please contact your funding organisation to determine what paperwork needs to be processed by your psychologist at the conclusion of each session.
4. Ring 9553-8838 or email carepsych@gmail.com to book a time for your first appointment.
5. Read the attached *Consent Form* (you do not need to sign this form if you have any questions).
6. Complete the attached form *Registration Form – Home Service*.
7. Have your *Consent Form* and *Registration Form* ready for your first appointment, together with any other relevant paperwork (e.g., GP referral and Mental Health Care Plan, Insurance Report Form, etc).