

General practice respiratory clinics: winter 2022 communications pack

Melbourne's hospitals are under pressure. Surges in COVID-19, influenza, and other respiratory viruses could overload the hospital system in 2022.

It is crucial that we direct people with mild respiratory issues to a general practice this winter. Where practices and other health services are not equipped to see such patients face to face, GP respiratory clinics can – and they now operate at many locations across metropolitan Melbourne.

Visit nwmpnhn.org.au/gprcs for more information, locations and booking links.

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Contacts

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Key messages

- People with mild respiratory symptoms should be directed to a GP – not a hospital.
- If a person’s regular GP is not able to see them face to face, appointments are available at general practice respiratory clinics (GPRCs).
- Clinicians at GPRCs provide comprehensive face-to-face assessments and immediate illness management support for anyone with respiratory symptoms.
- [Appointments are available](#) for anyone including babies, infants, children and adults.
- Respiratory issues include:
 - COVID-19 (book ahead)
 - influenza and cold symptoms such as a cough, runny nose, sore throat or fever
 - asthma
 - hay fever
 - chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
 - emphysema
 - pneumonia
 - mild shortness of breath*.
- If you or your child are feeling unwell and your usual GP is not available, visit a GPRC to see a clinician face-to-face. You will receive early diagnosis and treatment to keep you well and out of hospital.
- GPRC services are available to people with or without a Medicare card, at no cost to the patient. Some clinics are open after-hours and on weekends.
- To ensure continuity of care, the GPRC will share information with a consenting patient’s usual GP.
- Visit nwmpnhn.org.au/gprcs for more information, including booking links, opening hours and a map of all GPRCs in metropolitan Melbourne.
- GPRCs do not provide asymptomatic or pre-travel testing.

**If you have severe trouble breathing, blueness around the mouth, chest pains, or pain in your arms or jaw, call triple zero (000) for urgent help.*

Newsletter/website content

Article 1

Target audience: health services

GP respiratory clinics offer face-to-face treatment, ease pressure on hospitals

Do you have patients, clients, staff, or other visitors who could benefit from face-to-face assessment for any sort of respiratory issue?

Does your service lack capacity or adequate PPE to manage patients with respiratory symptoms?

General practice respiratory clinics (GPRCs) now operate at many locations across Melbourne through partnerships between primary health networks and the Victorian and Australian Governments.

GPRCs are designed to take the pressure off hospitals by giving patients access to face-to-face assessment of respiratory symptoms (including COVID-19), testing and immediate treatment close to where they live.

Bookings are readily available – there is no waiting in line.

Who can access a GPRC?

Anyone of any age with a respiratory issue can [book an appointment](#) at a GPRC.

A Medicare card is not essential, and the service is free. Most clinics are open after-hours and on weekends.

GPRCs are for people with:

- COVID-19 (call ahead)
- influenza and cold symptoms such as a cough, runny nose, sore throat or fever
- asthma
- hay fever
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- emphysema
- pneumonia
- mild shortness of breath*.

Please help inform staff and patients visiting your facilities of this urgent request. These resources are available to help you:

- [Posters](#)
- [Social media tiles](#)
- [Social media messages \(.pdf\)](#)

Visit nwmphn.org.au/gprcs for more information including booking links, opening hours and a map of all GPRCs in metropolitan Melbourne.

**If you have severe trouble breathing, blueness around the mouth, chest pains, or pain in your arms or jaw, call triple zero (000) for urgent help.*

Article 2

Target audience: general public

Cold, flu or COVID? Please see your GP or a GP respiratory clinic this winter

If you turn up to a hospital unannounced, you will likely be waiting many hours to see a doctor – and placing more pressure on a system that is close to breaking point.

So, when Melbourne’s winter chill makes your nose run, your eyes water or your throat ache, book an appointment with your GP – or a GP respiratory clinic.

During the colder months we must all help protect our hospitals so that they can look after people who are critically unwell.

If you have mild COVID-19, flu, cough or cold symptoms, a GP is the best health professional to quickly provide you with the care you need. If your usual GP can’t see you face to face, appointments are available at [general practice respiratory clinics](#) (GPRCs).

GPRCs operate at many locations across metropolitan Melbourne. They are free for people of all ages – with or without a Medicare card. Most clinics are available after hours and on weekends.

Clinicians at GPRCs provide comprehensive, face-to-face assessments and immediate support for anyone with respiratory symptoms to manage their illness. This includes anyone with:

- COVID-19 (call ahead)
- influenza and cold symptoms such as a cough, runny nose, sore throat or fever
- asthma
- hay fever
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- emphysema
- pneumonia
- mild shortness of breath*.

Visit nwmphn.org.au/gprcs for more information including booking links, opening hours and a map of all GPRCs in metropolitan Melbourne.

**If you have severe trouble breathing, blueness around the mouth, chest pains, or pain in your arms or jaw, call triple zero (000) for urgent help.*

Article 3

Target audience: councils/maternal child health services, kindergartens and other childcare providers

Cold, flu or COVID? GP respiratory clinics can provide face-to-face treatment for babies, infants, children, and the childcare workforce

Melbourne's hospitals are under pressure.

Flu season is here, COVID-19 is continuing to circulate, and we are seeing higher levels of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and other respiratory viruses than at any time since 2019.

It is crucial that we direct people with mild respiratory issues to the right care this year, without placing unnecessary pressure on hospitals.

Children and parents with runny noses, a scratchy throat, a sore ear, itchy eyes, a mild cough, or other cold, flu or COVID-like symptoms should see a GP.

If their usual GP can't see them face to face, appointments are available at [general practice respiratory clinics](#) (GPRCs), which operate at many locations across metropolitan Melbourne. They are free for people of all ages – with or without a Medicare card. Most clinics are available after-hours and on weekends.

Please save hospitals for emergencies only.

Please help inform childcare workers and parents visiting your facilities of this urgent request. These resources are available to help you:

- [Posters](#)
- [Social media tiles](#)
- [Social media messages \(.pdf\)](#)

Visit nwmpnh.org.au/gprcs for more information including booking links, opening hours and a map of all GPRCs in metropolitan Melbourne.

If you or your child has severe trouble breathing, blueness around the mouth, chest pains, or pain in the arms or jaw, call triple zero (000) for urgent help.

Posters

The following posters are available to download, print and display at your location. If you require printed copies, please contact peita.price@nwmphn.org.au

Posters for patients and visitors

- [Poster 1: Girl being swabbed \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Poster 2: Older man \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Poster 3: Man coughing \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Poster 4: Older woman with breathing device \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Poster 5: Young girl with fever \(.pdf\)](#)
- [All 5 posters \(.pdf\)](#)



Posters for staff in health services

- [Poster 1: Boy with mask \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Poster 2: Girl being swabbed \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Poster 3: Older man with mask \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Poster 4: Older woman with breathing device \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Poster 4: Man coughing \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Poster 6: Woman coughing \(.pdf\)](#)
- [All 6 posters \(.pdf\)](#)



Social media tiles and posts

Social media tiles

- [Tile 1: Girl with fever \(.png\)](#)
- [Tile 2: Boy with runny nose \(.png\)](#)
- [Tile 3: Woman coughing \(.png\)](#)
- [Tile 4: Man coughing \(.png\)](#)
- [Tile 5: Man with tissue \(.png\)](#)
- [Tile 6: Older woman with breathing device \(.png\)](#)
- [Tile 7: Older man on couch \(.png\)](#)
- [Tile 8: Older man with asthma \(.png\)](#)
- [Tile 9: Older man coughing \(.png\)](#)



Suggested social media posts

Do you need to see a doctor for cough, cold, COVID or flu symptoms? If you can't see your usual GP, free appointments are available at GP respiratory clinics across Melbourne. Find your closest: nwmpnh.org.au/gprcs

If you have a sore throat, a persistent cough or a runny nose, please book an appointment with your GP or a GP respiratory clinic. Find a clinic near you: nwmpnh.org.au/gprcs

Do you need a plan to manage your asthma this winter? Your local GP respiratory clinic can give you a free, comprehensive, face-to-face assessment and help you stay well during the colder months. Visit nwmpnh.org.au/gprcs to find your closest clinic.

Hacking cough? Sore throat? Runny nose? If you're unwell this winter, your local GP respiratory clinic can see you face to face and give you a treatment plan to feel better. Visit nwmpnh.org.au/gprcs

If have cold, flu or COVID symptoms this winter, please don't go to hospital unless it's an emergency. Your GP is the best health professional to give you advice – please book an appointment with them. If your usual GP isn't available, free appointments are available at your nearest GP respiratory clinic: nwmpnh.org.au/gprcs

Not sure if it's a cold, COVID or the flu? Your local GP respiratory clinic can give you a test and a treatment plan to get you better. Visit nwmpnh.org.au/gprcs

If you need an updated plan to manage your asthma, bronchitis or COPD, a GP respiratory clinic can help. Visit nwmpnh.org.au/gprcs

Melbourne's hospitals are under pressure. Emergency departments are warning that surges in COVID-19, influenza and other respiratory viruses could be catastrophic for our health system this winter. If have a cough, cold, flu or COVID symptoms, please don't put more pressure on our

hospitals. Book an appointment with your GP, or at a GP respiratory clinic near you:
nwmpnh.org.au/gprcs

We acknowledge the peoples of the Kulin nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our work in the community takes place. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



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