



COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS OF MEDICAL COLLEGES

ENSURING RESIDENTS OF AGED CARE FACILITIES RECEIVE CONTINUED ACCESS TO GP and SPECIALIST MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1 May 2020

The Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC) acknowledges the enormous responsibility that residential aged care facilities take on in looking after the care needs of their residents. Individual circumstances need to be considered, but a generally agreed approach to matching the needs of the residents with the recommended guidelines will help ease anxiety of all concerned.

All general and specialist medical practitioners adhere to the requirements regarding the prevention of the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and this includes the use of personal protective equipment where necessary. Aged care facilities follow guidelines regarding the prevention and management of COVID-19.

Residents in aged care are an extremely complex and vulnerable population. The facility where they live should continue to permit a resident access to medical appointments in the non-inpatient setting during the current pandemic. This includes attending to the necessary pathology and other investigations to support such appointments. The facility should call in advance to confirm the appointment and ensure the resident wears a protective face mask and remains at a safe distance from any other person in the room. In some cases, the MBS Telehealth option is available.

All of Australia's medical facilities have put in place the necessary measures to ensure their patients are safe. This includes following the advice from Australia's Chief Medical Officer about when to use protective equipment. Therefore, residential aged care facility residents should not need to self-isolate after attending medical appointments in a non-inpatient setting, and should be able to continue to take meals in communal areas.

Dr Kym Jenkins, CPMC Chair.

CPMC is the peak forum for all 15 specialist Medical Colleges in Australia, 13 are co-located in New Zealand.

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