

Virtual Emergency Department Advice Service for GPs - Factsheet

The Virtual ED service has been developed by Metro North HHS to provide Brisbane North GPs with access to emergency medicine specialist advice over the phone (or via video conference).

The Virtual ED consultant will be able to advise on alternatives to an emergency department attendance such as:

1. specialist advice to help manage your patient in the community
2. Support in the facilitation of access to services including community-based services provided by the hospital e.g. Nurse practitioner, Hospital in the Home (HITH), direct ward admission in known patients, if deemed more appropriate.
3. Provide advice for cases potentially involving COVID-19.

In **acute emergencies which are life threatening and where immediate ED transfer is required it is important to continue to use QAS as usual.** The Virtual ED is not intended to be used in these situations

- This service will only be available for GPs within the Metro North HHS catchment area **and is not available to the public.** It is possible to consult with the patient, if they are present.
- If your patient is or has been under the care of a MNHHS facility, our consultants will have access to existing online clinical information systems (Viewer etc).
If not, a virtual ED registration will take place.

How do I access the service?

It will operate initially between **0800 and 17.30 Monday to Friday**. Eventually the service will operate 0800-2300 7 days per week. You will be notified of any changes via the Brisbane North PHN GP Bulletin.

To connect with the service call **1300 847 833**

You will be connected to an Emergency Nurse who will ask for the following information:

1. **Your name & your phone number (in case disconnected).**

2. The patient's name, date of birth, hospital number (if available) and brief description of the problem.

3. The practice phone number.

If urgent advice is required or the Emergency Consultant is currently available, you will be immediately transferred to them. During busy times there may be a wait to speak to the consultant.

- If it appears a face to face consultation is required, the Virtual ED team will send you an email with a Microsoft Teams™ appointment link for your consultation provided you have a computer with a camera or smartphone. Other VC platforms could be used.
- While the consultation is taking place, the Virtual ED staff will contact your practice for further patient details required to complete the registration of the patient.
- At the conclusion of the consultation, a plan will be agreed to and documented.
- The following day you will be contacted via email for feedback about the service and the patient will be contacted if necessary.
- If Face to Face Consultation is required, you will need a Laptop, Computer, or Smart device (Free Microsoft Teams App will be required).

Just some examples of possible situations where Virtual ED may be of assistance: (not an exhaustive list)

- Young patients with no co-morbidities with non-life threatening conditions
- Patient without serious clinical features
 - Viral Gastroenteritis
 - Low back pain
 - Vasovagal syncope
 - Low risk RACF patients
 - Minor sports injuries incl minor head injuries
 - Viral illness (including COVID-19)
 - Vertigo
 - Asymptomatic hypertension
 - Resolved TIA
 - DVT
 - Urinary tract infection
 - Soft tissue infections