

REFERRAL GUIDELINES

Orthopaedic Clinic

Head of Unit: Brad Crick

Referrals: Referral addressed to named head of unit is preferred.

E-referral using the GP Referral Template located within the Mastercare Referralnet system is preferred. For faxed referrals: *fax 97881879*.

Clinic overview:

The orthopaedic Clinic provide assessment and management of general adult orthopaedic conditions:

- **Osteoarthritis** – all joints of the upper and lower limbs excluding hands
- **Shoulder conditions** – rotator cuff pathology, instability, pain/stiffness, A/C joint problems
- **Elbow conditions** – pain/stiffness/locking
- **Wrist and hand conditions** – degenerative OA, post traumatic wrist
- **Foot and Ankle conditions** – pain and deformity
- **Hip and Knee conditions** - Inflammatory arthritis, post traumatic arthritis, avascular necrosis, joint instability
- **Previous arthroplasty hip and knee** – loosening, wear, infection
- **Bone and soft tissue tumours**

Categories for Appointment

	Clinical Description	Timeframe for Appointment
Emergency	Based on clinical judgement e.g. immobile, unable to self-care, sepsis, joint infection	Refer to Emergency Department Or call to discuss 9784 7155
Category 1 Urgent	Possible malignancy, severe pain and debilitation, carer or unable to work	0-3 months
Category 2 Routine	Minimal effects on Activities of Daily Living, not a carer and condition not requiring time off work	Variable as per triage Consultant

IMPORTANT:

The following referral information is mandatory:

Referral:

- Date of referral
- Speciality
- Referring practitioner name
- Provider Number
- Referrer's signature

Patient Demographic:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Postal address
- Contact numbers
- Medicare Number
- Interpreter Required

Clinical:

- Reason for referral
- Duration of symptoms
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- Past medical history
- Current medications
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Preferred:

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HEAD OF UNIT
Brad Crick

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ENQUIRIES

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Reviewed: August 2023

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Eligibility Criteria

Peninsula Health catchment area preferred.

Adults with general orthopaedic conditions.

Click on links below for criteria for referral to public hospital specialist clinic services - Statewide Referral Criteria – In effect from 1st November 2023

- [Osteoarthritis of the knee | src.health.vic.gov.au](http://src.health.vic.gov.au)
- [Osteoarthritis of the hip | src.health.vic.gov.au](http://src.health.vic.gov.au)
- [Other knee conditions | src.health.vic.gov.au](http://src.health.vic.gov.au)
- [Other hip conditions | src.health.vic.gov.au](http://src.health.vic.gov.au)

Results of all recent and relevant investigations, specifically x-rays, ultrasound and MRI reports. **Plain x-rays need to be less than 6 months old at time of referral.**

Exclusions and Alternative referral options

Children - can be referred to Monash Health or Royal Children's Hospital

NB Acute hip and knee conditions/injuries in children over the age of 15 years can be managed if appropriate at Peninsula Health after assessment in the Emergency Department.

- **Spinal or Back Conditions** - can be referred to Monash Health or other provider
- **Hand Surgery Conditions**- can be referred to Plastic Surgery or other provider. (define hand surgery)
- **Fractures** - can be referred to Fracture clinic after acceptance of referral by Orthopaedic registrar or Emergency Department for emergency care.

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Key Referral and Triage information

Results of all recent and relevant investigations, specifically x-rays, ultrasound and MRI reports. **Plain x-rays need to be less than 6 months old at time of referral.**

GP referrals are triaged by Orthopaedic Consultants

- Accurate Triage for urgency is assisted by GP referral information;
 - Diagnosis
 - History and duration of complaint
 - Symptoms and severity of complaint
 - Details of conservative treatment to date
 - How condition affects Activities of Daily Living
 - Social history e.g. employment or carer status how the complaint affects ability to work or be a carer directly affects triage
 - Imaging results (**plain x-rays results < 6months old**)
 - Stipulation of new patient/complaint or review patient for same complaint (review patients for same complaint seen earlier).
- Orthopaedic Screening Clinic:
 - Patients may be required to attend an **Orthopaedic Screening Clinic** run by an advanced musculoskeletal physiotherapist for further triage, assessment and management advice (e.g. referral to physiotherapy) prior to being seen in Orthopaedic Outpatients, particularly for hip, knee and shoulder complaints.
 - After assessment the patient will be categorised for surgical review or discharged from Screening Clinic with patient consent.
 - If patients are discharged from the physiotherapy clinic (with patient consent) but then experience a recurrence of symptoms or a change of circumstances within 12 months they will be seen for review with no disadvantage from initial date of referral. If this occurs outside 12 months a new GP referral is required
- Different orthopaedic issues can be given different triaging time frames and can be referred to different surgeons. Although this can mean the patient needs to attend two appointments, it ensures they are managed by the correct surgeon for each issue.

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Minimum Referral Information Required

Please note, referral cannot be processed if minimum information is missing

- Referring practitioner name, provider number and signature.
- Date of referral
- Patient's name, address, date of birth, Medicare number and phone number.
- Clinical details and reason for referral
- Relevant medical history
- Medications
- Allergies
- Results of all recent and relevant investigation
- Results of all recent and relevant investigations, specifically x-rays, ultrasound and MRI reports.

Results of all recent and relevant investigations, specifically x-rays, ultrasound and MRI reports. **Plain x-rays need to be less than 6 months old at time of referral.**

Please provide an updated scan prior appointment as below:

- Hip and Knee updated X-Ray less than 6 months
- Shoulder updated X-Ray and Ultrasound less than 6 months
- Foot and Ankle updated X-Ray less than 6 months if requested

Clinic information

Orthopaedic Clinics:

- Tuesday and Friday (except public holidays)
- Outpatient Area 1, Hastings Road, Frankston Hospital.
- Fax 97881879 Phone 9784 2600

Please Note; The referral should not be given to the patient to arrange an appointment. No appointments can be made over the phone. Once a referral has been received the patient is notified by mail of the date and time of their appointment

Community Assessment and Management Information for Specific Conditions

GPs are encouraged to have patients trial conservative treatment, especially Physiotherapy, before referral to, or while waiting to be seen in the Orthopaedic Specialist Clinic.

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Hip and Knee:

- **Osteoarthritis / Inflammatory Arthritis / Post Traumatic Arthritis / Avascular Necrosis**
 - History and examination
 - X-rays (AP pelvis & lateral including weight bearing/standing views)
 - Physiotherapy
- **Previous Total Hip and knee replacement Infection, Loosening**
 - X-Rays (AP pelvis and lateral including weight bearing/standing views)
 - Translucency on XR investigations

Shoulder:

- **Rotator cuff tendon pain / stiffness in the shoulder including frozen shoulder / AC joint problems**
 - History and examination including neurological examination
 - X-rays (AP & lateral shoulder)
 - U/S scan
 - Consider pathology FBE, ESR & CR
 - Physiotherapy
 - If Osteoarthritis/Rotator cuff/AC Joint -Consider Ultrasound guided Cortisone injection
 - If Frozen -Consider hydrodilatation injection
- **Recurrent dislocation of shoulder / shoulder instability**
 - History and examination particularly neurological examination
 - X-rays (AP & lateral shoulder)
 - Physiotherapy
 - Consider pathology FBE, ESR

Elbow:

- **Elbow Painful / Stiffness / Locking**
 - History and examination
 - Consider FBE, ESR & CRP if inflammation suspected
 - Physiotherapy
 - Standard X-Rays
- **Tennis / Golfer's Elbow**
 - History and examination
 - Physiotherapy
 - Support Tennis elbow strap
 - Cortisone injection

Wrist:

- **Degenerative Conditions OA**
 - History and examination
 - Consider FBE, CRP/ESR
 - Standard X-Ray

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- **Post Traumatic Wrist**

- History and examination
- Consider FBE,CRP/ESR
- Standard X-Ray

Ankles and Feet:

- **Arthritis**

- History and examination
- X-Ray(AP and lateral ankle/foot including weight bearing/standing views)
- Physiotherapy
- Consider Cortisone Injection

- **Pain and deformity in forefoot including Bunions & Pain and instability in Hind foot**

- History and examinations
- X-Ray(AP and lateral foot including weight bearing/standing views)
- Check Tibialis posterior
- If forefoot -Consider steroid Injection for intermetatarsal bursa/neuroma
- If Hind foot - consider steroid injection
- Podiatrist
- Orthoses
- Physiotherapy

- **Achilles Tendon Pathology**

- History and examination
- X-Ray (AP and Lateral ankle/foot including weight bearing/standing views)
- Ultrasound of achilles
- Physiotherapy
- Avoid steroid injection
- Orthoses-Heel cup/raise

- **Plantar Fasciitis**

- History and examination
- X-Ray
- Physiotherapy
- Consider steroid injection
- Orthoses

Bursitis:

- **Pre-patella bursitis, trochanteric bursitis & Olecranon bursitis**

- History and examination
- Xray
- Acute/inflammatory, consider aspirating for diagnosis
- If chronic consider cortisone injection
- Pathology investigation FBE,ESR,CRP

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- Physiotherapy

Bone and Joint Infection

- History and examination
- Xray/CT scan
- Pathology investigation FBE,ESR,CRP

Bone and soft tissue tumours

- History and examination
- CT/US
- FBE,U&E,ESR,CRP,LFT
- Pathology investigation Do not needle biopsy

Symptomatic Prostheses (including joint replacements), Rods, Plates, Screws or Pins

- History and examination ,pain/prominent metal/ulceration
- X-Ray- translucency or lysis around implant
- Refer back to original provider/surgeon

Further information

To send in further information regarding the patient once the referral has been accepted, please or fax 9788 1879

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