

Doctors Access Project

INTRODUCTION PACK



Thank you for your registration to
be part of our Doctors Access List!

DHASWA are pleased to welcome you as a crucial member of our Doctors Access List and the DHASWA team. Your name and contacts detailed will be displayed on our website [here](#). We also have registered psychologists who have similarly committed to doctor access.

The Doctors' Health Advisory Service Western Australia (DHASWA) is an independent not for profit association that aims to improve the health and

wellbeing of WA doctors and medical students.

DHASWA offers a range of services, including our two major services:

1. The Doctors Access Program (DAP), with a Doctors Access List to help doctors receive general practice care.
2. The 24/7 Advice Line: a triage, support, advice and referral service, including priority referral pathways to mental health and other specialist services in some cases.



ABOUT

What is expected of me as a **DOCTOR ON THE DOCTORS ACCESS LIST (DAL)?**



MINIMUM REQUIREMENT

There is no minimum commitment, but our DAL is underpinned by prioritising doctors-patients. Timely availability for new doctor or medical student patients is necessary for our list to be effective. Statistics indicate doctors click once or twice on the DAL, so we have a critical window to catch doctors.

We generally advise capacity for a doctor to be seen within a week of request. This may be coordinated with colleagues; we appreciate many of our doctors work part time. If a doctor requires more urgent care than is actionable, the contact details for the 24/7 Advice Line should be given so Advice line doctors might expedite care if necessary.

Most members of our established DAP community will see an acute presentation or a new doctor in distress within 3 days and where this is not possible, have an agreed system of shared care with an alternate colleague in their practice.

Should your availability change; We can easily facilitate temporary or permanent removal from the DAL.

YOUR RECEPTION STAFF

Please make sure your reception/management is aware you are accepting and prioritising doctors or “DHASWA/Doctors Access List referrals.” Have an established method to book patients, especially if you do not use online booking platforms, or are not accepting new patients.

TREATING FELLOW DOCTORS: DHASWA CAN SUPPORT YOU

Many doctors feel hesitant about treating their colleagues, and that is completely understandable. However, it is important to remember that, just like any patient, doctors deserve compassionate, professional care. Remember, you are the expert in General Practice and provide an objective perspective.

Our experienced GP team and our network of GP colleagues with the Doctors Access Program is here to support you. You can contact us via the 24/7 Advice Line with any questions about managing your doctor-patients, or if you need help navigating complex cases. You can also direct the person to call us direct as part of your safety netting.



About the **DHASWA 24/7 ADVICE LINE**

We get approximately two hundred calls a year, answered by a panel of five GPs who are experienced in doctors' health. Our goal is to return all calls within 4 hours. Eighty percent of calls are returned within an hour. The majority of calls advise seeing their GP within a week – this is where you come in! After initial triage, support and problem solving, we can use internal referral pathways to access urgent psychiatry,

psychology, occupational health, drug and alcohol and inpatient services according to clinical need.

JOIN OUR WHATSAPP

We have a network of DAP doctors on WhatsApp, monitored by DHASWA's management team, where you can engage with experienced colleagues for advice or peer support.



Does DHASWA provide

DOCTORS' HEALTH

TRAINING?

RECOMMENDED

We suggest all DAL practitioners complete: "A Healthy Medical Profession - Caring for Ourselves and Our Colleagues"

- This DRS4DRS module is a 2-hour CPD-accredited course, covers key aspects of managing doctor-patients, including the unique dynamics involved, practical tips and self-care.
- The DRS4DRS site has further resources for particular groups of doctors.
- There are a number of webinars available from the RACGP, via the "good GP."
- Our website provides reference resources and a list of articles written by DHASWA members.
- The Doctors' Health Alliance houses recordings of all presentations at the 2020 Doctors Health Conference, podcasts and a number of other resources.
- Each of these sites can take you through to our sister state Doctors' Health Services, and you can explore their education resources.

DHASWA HAS PLANS FOR IN PERSON AND WEBINAR-BASED EDUCATION THIS YEAR, AS WELL AS A PEER INTERACTION NIGHT. STAY TUNED!



FAQ

CAN I CHANGE MY STATUS OR REMOVE MYSELF FROM THE LIST?

Yes, contact us anytime if you can no longer volunteer your services and we will remove you directly.

HOW MANY DOCTORS CAN I EXPECT TO REQUEST MY CARE?

We currently have approximately fifty doctors on the list, and we find that our members have varied numbers of clients dependent on their area of practice. Most see at most five new doctor-patients per year.

AM I REQUIRED TO BULK BILL ALL DOCTORS?

DHASWA does not influence or advise on your billing practices. On the website there are a variety of options available to you to consider, as well as by arrangement if you are unsure. Please ensure your billing practices will not adversely affect your earnings and wellbeing, or ability to remain on the DAL. Many practices will privately bill fellowed doctors and provide reduced fees for earlier career stage doctors and medical students, with some practices providing no-gap consults for medical students or those who are not able to work clinically. Or you may consider a combination of billing practices dependent on the consult type, length or complexity.

Make sure you discuss your preferred approach with your doctor – patient about this so there is no confusion on either side.



BUT WHAT IF THERE IS STILL RISK TO THE DOCTOR'S PATIENTS?

As GPs we are still ethically concerned about risk to patients and others. This assessment and management of risk is a tricky situation. Our 24/7 Advice Line is very happy to assist your decision -making in these scenarios. MDO advice is also particularly important. If the doctor removes themselves from risk to patients, there is no need to consider this ethical reporting.

WHAT ABOUT IF I GET A NOTIFIED DOCTOR TO THE MEDICAL BOARD?

This is an extremely stressful situation, so ensuring safety of the patient is paramount. The patient should contact their MDO if they have not. An immediate plan management of their wellbeing should be initiated. This is particularly relevant as the Medical Board appreciate demonstration of insight and risk management planning initiated by the notified doctor. This can lead to better outcomes and reduced restrictions. This is a stressful time for the patient, and you – please feel free to ask us for advice and assistance. We have an understanding of reporting and the Medical Board Processes.

ARE THERE RESOURCES FOR DOCTORS STRUGGLING WITH A WORK-RELATED PROBLEM, OR MEDICAL CONDITION?

Our [Personal Health Resources for Doctors, Medical Students and their families in WA/PDF](#) has a number of potential support services for doctors and medical students. If you need further assistance, please contact the DHASWA team.

WHAT IS A DOCTOR FRIENDLY PRACTICE

A “doctor friendly” practice is one that provides safe and accessible care options for doctors and medical students contacting the establishment or referred to by our Advice Line. This is not a one size fits all but tailored to the practice’s resources and needs. This generally includes being able to see an urgent patient within 1-2 days, and planning for chronic care arrangements for doctors. Doctor- friendly practices also take referrals for urgent GP reviews identified by our 24/7 Advice Line GPs.

Practices receive education on the DHASWA services, access pathways and how to safety net at risk patients. Procedures for accommodating doctor-patients are established and mutually agreed on by DHASWA and the practice.

We advertise our doctor friendly practices, and their practitioners on our website by the label above.

If you would like to get involved with the DHASWA at a workplace, organisational or committee level, please contact our manager.

DIFFICULT DOCTORS

Just like patients, there are a subset of doctors who present difficulties. In our experience, these are the exception and not the rule. Doctors are most often grateful for your care. For advice, get in touch with us. Other resources could include written contracts, Scriptcheck, liaison with local pharmacies for restricted dispersions and working along with other MDT members to form management plans. Workplaces may be involved, and in this case consider if Occupational Health would be of assistance.

Always remember your MDO is there for advice if you feel the relationship has become damaged by a doctor-patient’s behaviour – you are allowed to end relationships. We do ask that you provide the necessary hand over of needs to another colleague, if possible.

In addition, if you have a difficult doctor consult you wish to debrief on-call our Advice Line – speak to a doctor who understands the pressures!

THANK YOU!

Thank you again for your enlistment on our
Doctors' Access List.

FURTHER QUESTIONS? CONTACT US:

For non- urgent queries, advice, or to discuss
specific cases, contact the DHASWA team:

DHASWA Manager
manager@haswa.com.au

Visit us at: www.dhaswa.com.au

URGENT MATTERS

Call the 24/7 Advice Line on 08 9321 3098



Supporter



Department of
Health

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