



Western Health Diabetic Outpatient Clinic Referral Guidelines for GPs

Most patients with diabetes can be well managed in the community, but in situations such as poor diabetic control, specialist care at hospital outpatients may be required.

When referring for an appointment at diabetes outpatients, it is important to note that referral information is used in two ways: initially, to appropriately triage patients to the most appropriate appointment date, and secondly, to inform the doctor seeing the patient at the appointment. For example, referrals which clearly show the reasons for referral and outline recent management are triaged to the appointment date which is clinically indicated (this may be 1-3 months), while those which are lacking information are generally assigned appointments as 'next available' (this may be approximately 6-9 months).

Patient eligibility	Investigations required	Referral requirements
<p>Patients with poor diabetic control</p> <p>NB: Patients with diabetes whose major reason for referral is NOT diabetes should be referred to the relevant outpatient clinic.</p>	<p>To ensure referrals are triaged appropriately referrals must include the following results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haemoglobin a1c (Hb a1c) • Urea creatinine & electrolytes • Urinary albumin (12 or 24 hour specimen preferred) • Fasting lipids and glucose levels 	<p>Ensure referrals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient name, address, telephone, date of birth and language spoken • Whether the patient has Type 1 or Type 2 Diabetes • Approximate date of diagnosis • Relevant co morbidities (e.g. retinopathy, neuropathy, nephropathy) • Medication list • Medications or treatments attempted in the past <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the VSRF is strongly encouraged • Fax referrals to 8345 6856
<p><i>Urgent diabetic conditions are beyond the scope of these guidelines. Any patients with severe metabolic derangement (such as ketoacidosis or lactic acidosis) should be referred to the Western Hospital Emergency Department.</i></p> <p><i>Patients with newly diagnosed Type 1 diabetes who are unwell should also be referred to the Emergency Department, but if not acutely unwell we recommend contacting the endocrine registrar via switchboard 8345 6666 who will arrange for the patient to see the diabetes educators and to begin insulin.</i></p>		

Please note referrals that do not provide adequate information for triaging may be returned with a request for further information. Western Health Outpatients strongly encourage the use of the Victorian State-wide Referral Form (VSRF). Copies can be downloaded from www.gpv.org.au.