

## Visiting Medical Officers Welcome and Information Pack

**Summary** The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to advise LHDs of the new VMO Welcome and Information Pack

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**Distributed to** Ministry of Health, Public Health System, Divisions of General Practice

**Audience** All Clinical and Administration Staff;General Practice;Visiting Medical Officers;Directors of Medical Services, Medical Locum Managers, Medical Workforce Units, Medical Administration, Clinical Staff, Emergency Departments;All Public Health System Staff

## **VISITING MEDICAL OFFICER WELCOME AND INFORMATION PACK**

### **PURPOSE**

The Visiting Medical Officer (VMO) Welcome and Information Pack provides important information that is relevant to VMOs on their engagement.

### **KEY INFORMATION**

The VMO Welcome and Information Pack can be provided to VMOs on their engagement.

The Pack includes two documents:

1. The Welcome and Information letter provides VMOs with information on NSW Health expectations, supervision and teaching, provision of care, mandatory training, generally expected conduct, safety culture, insurance, inpatients and non-inpatients, dispute resolution, and payment for services;
2. The Policy Reference Sheet provides information and links to other significant clinical policies, procedures and practices.

The standard wording of the Welcome and Information letter is not to be amended.

LHDs can add additional policy references relevant to the district to the reference sheet.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. The Welcome and Information letter
2. The Policy Reference Sheet

## Welcome and Information Summary

Congratulations on your appointment as a Visiting Medical Officer. As one of our senior doctors, you will play a very important role in the provision of care to our patients and as a member of our clinical team. Your contribution as a clinical expert, supervisor, teacher and mentor is greatly valued.

The purpose of this document is to provide you with additional information on some key NSW Health policies, and a range of important practices, policies, processes and expectations applicable in your Local Health District (LHD). While some aspects are included in your contract of appointment, the following are also important to both the culture and the operations of our clinical services.

NSW Health expectations:

- The CORE set of values are used to inspire positive interactions in the workplace: Collaboration, Openness and Respect in the workplace is encouraged to create a sense of Empowerment for people to use their knowledge, skills and experience to provide the best possible care to patients and their families and carers.
- Participate in individual performance reviews will occur each year in accordance with the Ministry of Health and Local Health District policies.
- Where applicable contribution to your Department's research is important, through:
  - Contributing data
  - Participating in clinical trials
  - Sharing studies collegially and collaboratively with other members of the Department

Supervision and Teaching (where applicable):

- Where you are responsible for inpatient care and/or consultation services, it is envisaged that routine ward rounds will be conducted during the normal working hours of your junior medical staff.
- You will need to ensure appropriate medical records are documented and there is appropriate handover of actions required to nursing staff or others rostered on at the time of the round.
- As part of your supervision and teaching role, feedback to trainees and junior medical staff is to be constructive, evidence based and given in an appropriate and collegial manner.
- Participation in ensuring your Department provides an environment suited to undergraduate and postgraduate training is part of this. This may involve preparing for, and participating in, reviews of training facilities by relevant training authorities and specialist medical colleges.

Provision of Care

- We want you to work cooperatively and collegially to achieve the common goal of patient safety, putting the needs of our patients and your Department at the forefront.

- Where practice rooms are maintained it is desirable that these will be local to the hospital to enable discharged patients to access local services.
- Morbidity and Mortality Meetings and Multi-Disciplinary Team Meetings are important for patient care and it is expected that you will attend these meetings on a regular basis.
- In relation to maintaining professional standards and quality of care, any concerns or complaints are to be escalated through reporting pathways established by your Department, the Hospital and the Local Health District.

#### Mandatory training

- All Mandatory Training modules, as designated for Medical Practitioners, are to be completed.
- PHOs will provide opportunity for VMOs to undertake mandatory training within paid time.
- For more information on mandatory training visit:  
<https://www.heti.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/my-health-learning/mandatory-training/mandatory-training-modules>

#### Generally Expected Conduct

- Compliance with the Code of Conduct is a mandatory requirement.
- Patients, other members of staff, and other visiting practitioners are to be treated with courtesy and respect.
- There is no tolerance for bullying, harassment, discrimination or undermining the professional standing of colleagues. Compliance with the culture of zero tolerance for bullying, harassment or discrimination against students and trainees is required.

#### Safety Culture

- We place high importance on the work health and safety of all workers, patients and visitors. It is important that you maintain awareness of your own safety and your colleagues' safety.
- There is an expectation that all VMOs participate in and contribute to safety and quality activities.

#### Insurance

- VMOs and HMOs must, prior to commencing work provide evidence of indemnity cover for any private work they may undertake or be required to undertake by a public health organisation, at public hospitals including as part of an on-call roster.
- NSW Health and Treasury Managed Fund (TMF) provide medical indemnity for public patient and private paediatric inpatient cover to all VMOs and HMOs who have a current, valid service contract with a public health organisation. TMF medical indemnity coverage is available to VMOs providing service as an individual practitioner or through their practice company. TMF may also provide insurance cover for private patients in certain circumstances. Public

liability Insurance and professional indemnity insurance is required for all VMO practice companies.

#### Private Inpatients

- All eligible persons have the choice to be treated as either public or private patients in NSW public hospitals whether they hold private health insurance or not. Where the patient elects to be treated as a private patient it is hospital staff's responsibility to promptly inform you of the election so that arrangements may be made.
- Time spent attending to private patients may not be billed to the Local Health District
- The VMO is responsible for applying for a location Medicare Provider Number which is ordinarily required for the billing of private patients
- The VMO may choose to 'no gap' private patients or charge an out-of-pocket fee, and may wish to notify hospital administration of their preference with respect to private emergency patients. It is the VMO's responsibility to register with Private Health Insurers' gap schemes should they wish to 'no gap' private patients.

#### Non-Inpatient services (outpatients)

- You may elect to enter into a licence agreement with the District to provide privately referred non-inpatient services to patients. Participation is voluntary.

#### Dispute Resolution

- In the first instance, it is generally best to raise issues related to your VMO contract with your supervisor or Director of Medical Services

#### Payment for Services

- VMOs must claim for payments using the VMoney system. For more information go to: <http://www.ehealth.nsw.gov.au/programs/corporate/vmoney>
- VMO claims are expected to be submitted regularly for payment.
- Claims delayed by more than 12 months will be subject to discounting provided 28 days' notice is given by the District.

The attached Reference Sheet provides information and links to other significant clinical policies, procedures and practices with which you should become familiar.

If you need any clarification about your role or our expectations, please do not hesitate to contact your hospital/service Director of Medical Services and/or General Manager.

# VMO Reference Sheet

Below are references to a sample of policies, procedures, guidelines and other tools to assist VMO orientation. Some policies have associated procedures or guidelines or LHDs may have developed specific implementation guides. To access the full range of documents please visit the '**Policy, Procedure and Guideline (PPG) Directory**' on your LHD's website.

VMOs reappointed should review policies as they are regularly updated.

## NSW Health Policies, Procedures & Guidelines

**Clinical handover:** PD2009\_060  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2009\\_060.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2009_060.pdf)

**Clinical Procedure Safety:** PD2017\_032  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2017\\_032.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2017_032.pdf)

**Code of Conduct:** PD2015\_049  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2015\\_049.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2015_049.pdf)

**Complaint management policy:** PD2006\_073  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2006\\_073.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2006_073.pdf)  
and GL2006\_023  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/GL2006\\_023.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/GL2006_023.pdf)

**Managing Complaints and Concerns about Clinicians:** PD PD2018\_032  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2018\\_032.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2018_032.pdf)

**Consent to medical treatment – patient Information:** PD2005\_406  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2005\\_406.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2005_406.pdf)

**Coroners Cases and the Coroners Act 2009:** PD2010\_054  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2010\\_054.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2010_054.pdf)

**Donation, Use and Retention of Tissue from Living Persons:** PD2016\_001  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2016\\_001.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2016_001.pdf)

**Easy guide to clinical practice improvement. 2002:**  
[http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/286052/cpi-Easyguide.pdf](http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/286052/cpi-Easyguide.pdf)

**Using Resuscitation Plans in End of Life Decisions** PD2014\_030  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2014\\_030.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2014_030.pdf)

**Health Care Records - Documentation and Management:** PD2012\_069  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2012\\_069.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2012_069.pdf)

**Infection Prevention and Control Policy:** PD2017\_013  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2017\\_013.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2017_013.pdf)

**Incident management policy:** PD2014\_004  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2014\\_004.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2014_004.pdf)

**Medication handling in NSW Public Hospitals:** PD2013\_043  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2014\\_004.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2014_004.pdf)

**Open Disclosure Policy:** PD2014\_028  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2014\\_028.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2014_028.pdf)

**Prevention and Management of Workplace Bullying in NSW Health:** PD2018\_016  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2018\\_016.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2018_016.pdf)

**Prevention of Venous Thromboembolism (VTE):** PD2014\_032  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2014\\_032.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2014_032.pdf)

**Recognition and management of patients who are clinically deteriorating (DETECT):** PD2013\_049  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2013\\_049.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2013_049.pdf)

**Resolving Workplace Grievances:** PD2016\_046  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/Pages/doc.aspx?dn=PD2016\\_046](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/Pages/doc.aspx?dn=PD2016_046)

**Safe prescribing – approved abbreviations: see** PD2013\_043 Section 4.4  
<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/publications/recommendations-for-terminology-abbreviations-and-symbols-used-in-medicines-documentation/>

**User-applied Labelling of Injectable Medicines, Fluids and Lines:** PD2016\_058  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2016\\_058.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2016_058.pdf)

**Waiting time and elective surgery policy:** PD2012\_011  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2012\\_011.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2012_011.pdf)

**Visiting Medical Officer (VMO) Claims Auditing:** IB2013\_055  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/IB2013\\_055.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/IB2013_055.pdf)

## Visiting Medical Officer (VMO) Claims Management

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/careers/conditions/Documents/vmo-claims-audit-tool-guide.pdf>

## LHD Policies, Procedures & Guidelines

**[Insert relevant document titles and links]**

## Determination, Indemnity Contract, Performance Review

Visiting Practitioner Appointments in the NSW Public Health System: PD2016\_052  
[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2016\\_052.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2016_052.pdf)

## Credentialing & Delineating Clinical Privileges for Senior Medical Practitioners & Senior Dentists

[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2019\\_011.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2019_011.pdf)

## Occupational Assessment, Screening and Vaccination against Specified Infectious Diseases: PD2018\_009

[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2018\\_009.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2018_009.pdf)

## Visiting Medical Officer (VMO) Performance Review Arrangements: PD2011\_010 (local versions are also used in some facilities)

[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2011\\_010.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2011_010.pdf)

Professional Support for Regional Practitioners:  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/careers/conditions/Awards/FeeForServiceDetermination.pdf> and  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/careers/conditions/Awards/SessionalDetermination.pdf>

## Remuneration - Visiting Medical Officers:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/careers/conditions/Pages/V.aspx>

## Visiting Medical Officers - Rural Doctors' Settlement Package Hospitals Indexation of Fees 1/8/2018:

[https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/IB2018\\_033.pdf](https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/IB2018_033.pdf)

## Visiting Medical Officer - Model Service Contracts

- [Fee-For-Service Contract - Rural Doctor Package Hospitals](#)
- [Form of Fee-For-Service Contract with Practice Company - Rural Doctor Package Hospitals](#)
- [Model Fee-For-Service Service Contract](#)

- [Model Fee-For-Service Service Contract - Practice Company](#)
- [Model Sessional Service Contract](#)
- [Model Sessional Service Contract - Practice Company](#)

## Other Useful Links

Australian Safety and Quality Commission:  
<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/>

NSW Health Policies and Guidelines:  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/Pages/default.aspx>

NSW Medical Council: <https://www.mcsw.org.au/>

Australian Health Practitioners' Regulation Agency (AHPRA) [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au)

Clinical Information Access Portal (CIAP)  
<http://www.ciap.health.nsw.gov.au/index.html>

The Clinical Excellence Commission (CEC)  
[www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au)

The JMO Well Being and Support Plan – Plan to support the health and wellbeing of our junior medical workforce and provide greater assistance to our junior doctors when burnout and other mental health issues do arise.  
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/workforce/culture/Pages/jmo-support-plan.aspx>

## Further Information

**[insert contact person e.g. clinical governance]**