



# WHY CHOOSE A DAY HOSPITAL?

## PATIENT INFORMATION

### What is a day hospital?

A day hospital is a medical facility, not attached to an inpatient hospital. Patients are admitted and discharged on the same day to undergo their surgical, diagnostic or medical procedure.



Some day hospitals have an extended license for 23 hours. This provides extended recovery time for more complex procedures.

Free standing day hospitals are purpose designed and built to accommodate the specific medical specialties offered to their patients.

There are over 300 private standalone day hospitals in Australia making a significant contribution to the Australian healthcare system. Recent statistics indicate that well over 60% of admissions to private hospitals were same day hospitalisations.

### Why choose a day hospital?

There are many benefits to having your treatment in a day hospital. Patients having their treatment in a day hospital are usually otherwise fit and healthy, minimizing the risk of complications.

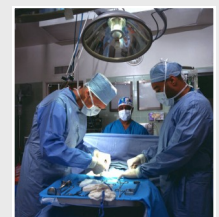
- Treatment is tailored to the specific needs of the patients and usually involves a pre admission interview (usually by telephone) which assists in determining the care to be provided. At discharge, written discharge instructions are reviewed with the patient and their relative/escort and after discharge, a follow up post treatment phone call is usually made to ensure that the patient's recovery is progressing well and answer any questions the patient might have.
- Your admission time is usually scheduled 30-60 minutes prior to your procedure, so there is only a short waiting period prior to your treatment.
- The average day hospital stay ranges from 2 to 6 hours. This short length of your time in the day hospital reduces the risk of complications, such as infection, due to the limited exposure to the hospital environment. Complications, such as deep vein thrombosis and pressure injuries, are less likely due to the relatively short time you are immobilised during your day hospital admission.
- For children and the elderly the brief exposure and personalised friendly atmosphere of a day hospital helps to reduce any anxiety or stress that may be experienced in a large hospital institution.
- Day hospital staff are competent and experienced in the particular specialties offered, which results in efficient high quality care in a friendly environment.
- Patients are able to return to the comfort of their own home on the day of surgery or in the case of the more complex procedures within 23 hours of their admission.
- Due to the advances in surgical technology and anaesthesia, recovery from procedures performed in day hospitals and subsequent return to normal activities occurs relatively quickly.
- For uninsured patients, day hospital costs are lower compared with overnight facilities due to their lower overheads.

Further information can be found on the Australian Day Hospital Association website [www.adha.asn.au](http://www.adha.asn.au).

### What procedures can be carried out in day hospitals?

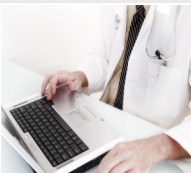
There are a wide variety of specialties available in the day hospital sector including:

- Cardiac-diagnostic
- Pain Management – Hyperbaric chamber treatment
- Dermatology Centres for the treatment of skin cancers and other skin diseases
- Ear, Nose and Throat conditions in both adults and children
- Endoscopy for the diagnosis of conditions of the bowel and oesophagus
- General surgery including hernia repair , laparoscopy as well as many other procedures for both adults and children
- In vitro fertilization
- Gynaecology procedures such as laparoscopy and curette
- Chemotherapy
- Dialysis



- Eye centres offering removal of cataract, treatment for squints and many other eye conditions.
- Orthopaedic centres offering a wide range of procedures including arthroscopy and associated procedures, some shoulder procedures and surgical procedures to the feet including surgery for bunions.
- Plastic/Reconstructive surgery
- Oral surgery, such as surgical implants and removal of wisdom teeth
- Urology centres undertaking diagnostic procedures and vasectomy
- Cosmetic surgery

### How can I access a day hospital?



Patients admitted to day hospitals, typically, have been referred by their GPs to a medical specialist. In the case of patients referred to an Endoscopy Centre they may not see a medical specialist until the day of the procedure. If patients wish to be treated in a day hospital, it is important that they ask their GP to refer them to a medical specialist who works in a day hospital. A list of licensed day hospitals can be found on the Department of Health's website for each state.

Many day hospital websites will have their accredited medical specialists listed, which allows patients to identify a suitable specialist at a day hospital in their vicinity. If medical specialists are not listed, patients can call the day hospital and ask for a list of doctors who are accredited to work there. All day hospitals who hold membership with the Australian Day Hospital Association (ADHA) are licensed with their state department of health and accredited with an approved accreditation body. A list of member day hospitals can be found on the ADHA website [www.adha.asn.au](http://www.adha.asn.au) under "About ADHA".

### Which patients can access day hospitals?

Most day hospitals have contracts with all the major health funds, so patients will be able to use their health insurance to cover all or part of their hospital account depending on the patient's individual health insurance cover. Many day hospitals have agreements with the Department of Veteran Affairs to treat eligible veterans. Patients having treatment under workers compensation insurance can often be treated in day hospitals. Patients without health insurance may choose to have their treatment at a day hospital and pay the hospitals fees to avoid long waiting lists in the public sector.

### When I see the specialist what questions do I ask?

Ask if your treatment can be performed in a day hospital and for the procedure name and MBS number as this information will be necessary when contacting your health fund to confirm your cover. The specialist will provide you with the day hospital admission information and documentation.

### Will my private health insurance cover my day hospital care?

- This depends on the type of cover you have.
- There may be one or several exclusions on your policy, ie specific exclusions such as for example pregnancy, cardiac surgery etc.
- There may also be restrictions on your policy where specific treatments are only partially covered. Some restrictions cover you for treatment in a public hospitals and not a private hospital or the restriction may not cover the total cost of your treatment.
- Waiting times for specific treatments may need to be considered.
- Some health insurance fund policies will have an excess on the policy that lowers the annual premium. Depending on the type of excess, you may be required to pay it once per year ie at one hospital admission and not at subsequent admissions, or you may be required to pay it on each admission.
- Other policies attract a co-payment on admission to hospital which would normally be paid on every admission.
- Co-payments and Excesses are not determined by the hospital, these are related to the individual patient's health insurance policy and are paid at the time of admission to hospital.
- It is important to check with your health fund regarding your level of cover.
- The day hospital will conduct an eligibility check prior to your admission and advise you of any out of pocket expenses which you will be responsible for.



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