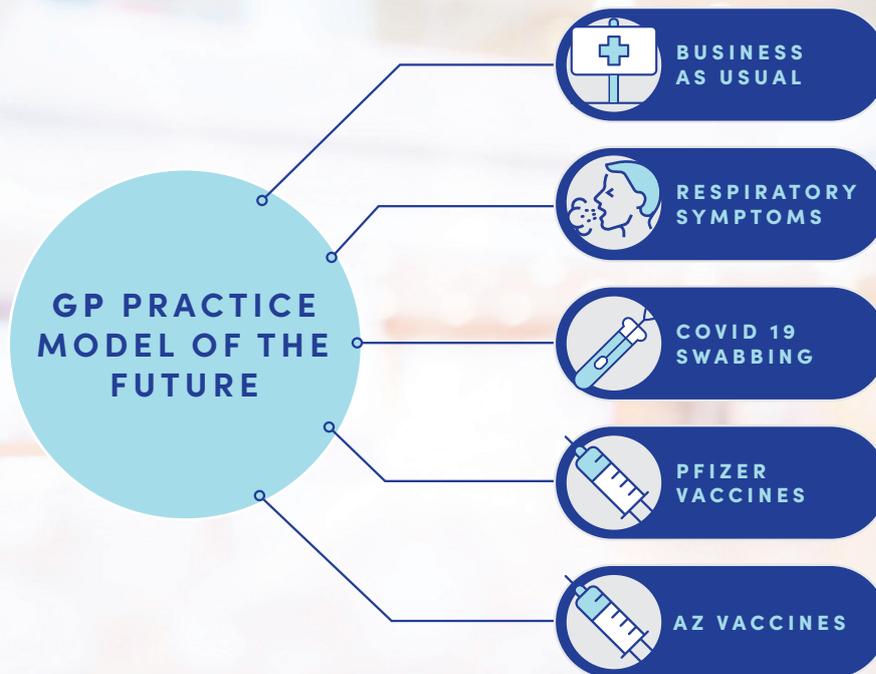


# General Practice Model of the Future

This is a guiding document for General Practice to manage workforce  
and business viability in virtual and physical situations.



## MODEL OVERVIEW

This guide is intended to be a resource to help support General Practice with managing workforce and business viability in virtual and physical situations during a COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.

Risk mitigation and effective pandemic and emergency response planning are vital in ensuring General Practices can continue operating and remain financially viable during an outbreak of COVID-19, and the principle of dividing the workload into “5 streams” and implementing a Team A and Team B pattern of work is also paramount to sustaining the overall staff effort at a heightened level and for longer periods.

### **The following measures should be considered when implementing the “5 stream” - Team A and Team B pattern of work;**

- Engage the team to determine what measures to implement, ensuring it is a whole of team approach that is communicated internally and externally to patient.
- Team/clinical meeting to be held virtually.
- Utilise different areas of the practice for each team and have **Team A** conduct telehealth appointments + **Team B** face to face appointments.
- You may also want to consider **Team A** conducting telehealth appointments whilst working from home whilst **Team B** continues face to face within the practice
- See patients ‘outside’ and/or only see them in the clinic for minimal time.
- Ensure teams are split evenly so all types of appointments can be carried by both teams.
- Where applicable, ensure patients have designated GP noted in file.
- Educating patients on clinic set up (structure/ rationale behind the implementation of Team A and Team B), emphasising that it is to keep everyone safe. Inform patient that they may not see their regular GP if urgent appointment is required.
- Where applicable, consider extending care plans and conducting reviews instead of creating new plans (patient may spend less time in practice).
- Nurse follow up visits (715/chronic disease management) can also be done virtually. This time should be utilised to implement contingency planning with patients to ensure they are able to take adequate care of themselves and have access to resources required.
- Be conscious of how long clinicians are in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and consider rotating staff into isolated rooms so they can take off their PPE and do telehealth.
- Allocate breaks and have a designated staff member to ensure staff members are taking adequate breaks from PPE.
- Consider turning phones off to ensure staff members takes a break away from the phone.
- Consider all auxiliary team members (cleaners etc) and whether they require splitting into teams.
- Formulate plan for surge workforce (staff members may be unavailable to work at short notice should they be required to isolate or become unwell).
- Ensure at least two people in the practice know how to complete all tasks (e.g., cold chain, changing phone messages etc).
- Ensure telephone forwarding is in place so all calls do not need to go through reception.
- Utilise outdoor space so that patients are not waiting in the waiting room. Consider implementing concierge staff at the front door to welcome patients and ensure they check in using the QR code.
- Ensure all staff members are aware of security available (e.g., duress alarm) and the escalation pathway for distressed/aggressive patients.

## GP PRACTICE MODEL OF THE FUTURE

### STREAM 1 - ! Consider seeing these patients at the **start** of the day



BUSINESS AS USUAL

- Health assessment clinics in half-day sessions
- Chronic disease management with team-based care - consider doing bulk of the information gathering via telehealth, finalise information and conduct biometric measures in practice
- Utilise digital health (eReferral, ePrescribing, eRequesting, My Health Record)
- Reach out to pathology to see if they can do in-home visits
- Continue to implement preventative health (e.g., cancer screening, smoking cessation counselling, immunisations under the National Immunisation Program etc).

### STREAM 2 - ! Consider seeing these patients at the **end** of the day



RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS

- Develop scripts for staff to screen patients when they make an appointment.
- Screen patients again on arrival e.g., symptoms, temperature.
- Provide patients with face mask and hand sanitiser.
- Direct a patient who is unwell with symptoms to a separate room or to wait in their car.
- Implement strict individual (hand/cough/illness) and environmental hygiene.
- Equip and protect staff with appropriate PPE and physical controls (screens and barriers) to prevent workplace infection
- Access [Hunter New England Health Pathways](#) or [Central Coast Health Pathways](#) for further information on managing respiratory presentations during COVID-19.

### STREAM 3 - ! Consider seeing these patients at the **end** of the day



COVID 19 SWABBING

- Develop scripts for staff to screen patients when they make an appointment.
- Screen patients again on arrival e.g., symptoms, temperature.
- Provide patients with face mask and hand sanitiser.
- Direct a patient who is unwell with symptoms to a separate room or to wait in their car.
- Implement strict individual (hand/cough/illness) and environmental hygiene.
- Equip and protect staff with appropriate PPE and physical controls (screens and barriers) to prevent workplace infection.
- Appropriately qualified GP or Nurse to conduct COVID-19 swab onsite and or provide advice/details to patient on the nearest testing clinic OR arrange for a home swab for close contacts who are isolating at home and are unable to present to a drive-through collection centre.
- Access [Hunter New England Health Pathways](#) or [Central Coast Health Pathways](#) for further information on COVID-19 testing guidelines and advice.

### STREAM 4 - ! Consider having vaccine clinics **before/after usual practice hours** and **on the weekend**



PFIZER VACCINES

- Please refer to the PHN's "[COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Toolkit](#)"

### STREAM 5 - ! Consider having vaccine clinics **before/after usual practice hours** and **on the weekend**



AZ VACCINES

- Please refer to the PHN's "[COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Toolkit](#)"

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HUNTER NEW ENGLAND  
AND CENTRAL COAST  

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