

Patient Self Referral for Health Assessment in the Adult Ambulatory Care Setting (Non urgent Issues Only)

Policy Number 1.362

Policy Function Continuum of Care

Issue Date 6 October 2017

Summary This policy outlines the arrangements for patients in Adults Ambulatory Care settings to access the Health Centre for non-urgent health matters

Responsible Officer Executive Director Clinical Operations

Applicable Sites

- Administration Centres
- Community Sites (e.g. Court Liaison Service, Community Integration Team, etc.)
- Health Centres (Adult Correctional Centres or Police Cells)
- Health Centres (Juvenile Justice Centres)
- Long Bay Hospital
- The Forensic Hospital

Previous Issue(s) Policy 1.362 (Mar 2014; Aug 2012)

Change Summary

- Inclusion that locked boxes must be placed in accommodation areas to ensure unfettered access.
- Inclusion in policy that patients may also hand in self-referral forms in at the Health Centre.

TRIM Reference POLJH/1362

Authorised by Chief Executive, Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network

1. Preface

This policy outlines the arrangements for patients in the adult ambulatory care settings to access the Health Centre for **non-urgent** health matters only. Justice Health & the Forensic Health Network (JH&FMHN) is committed to providing timely and appropriate patient centred health care within the adult ambulatory care setting.

The JH&FMHN JUS060.600 *Patient Self-Referral* form is designed to provide patients with a means of alerting JH&FMHN staff to non-urgent medical matters or to request an appointment with specific health staff members. JH&FMHN JUS060.600 *Patient Self-Referral* form are not to be used to alert JH&FMHN to conditions that are urgent or medical emergencies. The forms are filled in by the patient or their representative and placed in locked boxes which must be located in the accommodation areas to allow unfettered access. To ensure confidentiality, only JH&FMHN staff have access to these locked boxes. The forms may also be delivered directly to the Health Centre by the patient.

2. Policy Content

2.1 Mandatory Requirements

- To allow JH&FMHN staff to triage patients, the JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* form should only be used by patients for non-urgent health matters.
- Patients who are from a non-English speaking background and patients who have literacy difficulties are to be able to access health services for non-urgent issues. The JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* form has been adapted to accommodate these patients.

2.2 Implementation Roles & Responsibilities

- Network Director of Nursing and Midwifery is responsible for the strategic oversight of this policy.
- Nurse Managers and Nursing Unit Managers in Health Centres are responsible for:
 - Coordinating care within their facilities; and
 - Ensuring supplies of JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* form are regularly checked and replenished as required.
- Registered Nurses (RN's) or Enrolled Nurses (EN's) in Health Centres are responsible for triaging and assessing patients.

3. Procedure Content

- All Health Centres must adopt a procedure to ensure all patients have access to a JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* form. This can be via the wing or pod officers or placed in health information pamphlet racks in the Health Centre.
- All patients housed in adult ambulatory care settings who require access to the Health Centre for non-urgent health matters are to fill in a JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* form.

- All new receptions and patients transferred into the correctional centre are to be verbally advised of the Patient Self-Referral form and its intended purpose. Local procedures for location of the forms and where to place them must also be explained to the patient.
- Completed JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* forms must be:
 1. Returned to a central locked box or boxes (but may be delivered directly to the Health Centre as well). The locked boxes must be cleared by JH&FMHN staff daily. The keys to the locked boxes should be kept in the key lock/safe in the Health Centre. Only JH&FMHN staff may have access to these keys.
 2. Triage by an RN or EN. Patients must be placed on the appropriate clinician’s wait list on PAS and given a clinical priority. The RN or EN must use the PAS waiting list clinical priorities definition as a guide when determining the clinical priority.

	Priority Level	Definition
Urgent	1	for patients whose health condition is deteriorating and requires attention within one [1] to three [3] days.
Semi-Urgent	2	for patients where lack of immediate intervention may result in an adverse outcome and requires attention within three [3] to fourteen [14] days.
Non-Urgent	3	for patients who are stable but will require attention within fourteen [14] days to three [3] months.
Routine	4	for patients who are stable but require intervention within twelve [12] months.
Follow up	5	for patients needing review but within no specified time frame.

- The RN must:
 1. Document the date the form is received and sign the bottom of the JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* form.
 2. Enter the patient on the appropriate clinician’s wait list on PAS.
 3. Add an entry in the Progress Notes section of the Health Record acknowledging receipt of the JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* form.
 4. Ensure the JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* form is placed in the patient’s Health Record behind the Episode Divider as a contemporaneous record, and
 5. Ensure a Patient Advice Card regarding the patient’s self referral is completed which advises:
 - The patient has been placed on the waiting list to see a relevant health professional as soon as possible. Refer to the Patient Advice Card in [Appendix 1](#); or
 - JH&FMHN does not manage requests related to lifestyle issues (such as requests for a vegetarian diet, request to get shoes out of their property or for an extra mattress / pillow). Refer to the Patient Advice Card in [Appendix 2](#).
 - The Advice card must be placed in an envelope with the patient’s name and MIN number and returned to the wing or pod where the patient is accommodated.

- Any patients alerting JH&FMHN to a condition via a JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* form that clinically could be a medical emergency (for example (but not limited to) chest pain or shortness of breath) must be seen immediately. JH&FMHN must ensure that patients are aware of the correct process for all urgent or serious health related issues (refer to JH&FMHN policy [1.010 Access to Patients – Medical Emergencies](#)). For any medical emergencies during after hours, it is the responsibility of CSNSW to call for an ambulance.

4. Definitions

Must

Indicates a mandatory action to be complied with.

Should

Indicates a recommended action to be complied with unless there are sound reasons for taking a different course of action.

5. Legislation and Related Documents

JH&FMHN Policies,
Forms and Guidelines

[1.010 Access to Patients - Medical Emergencies](#)

[1.225 Health Assessments in Male and Female Adult Correctional Centres and Police Cells](#)

[1.262 Medical & Nursing Certificates \(Adults\)](#)

JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral*

[PAS Quick Step Guides](#)

PAS Waiting List Protocol

APPENDIX 1 Patient Advice Card Regarding Their Self Referral Form



Health
Justice Health &
Forensic Mental Health Network

Thank you for your Patient Self Referral form for the Health Centre. (consider rewording)

You have been placed on a waiting list to see the relevant health professional and you will be seen as soon as possible.

Please do not submit multiple referral forms for the same health problem unless there is a change or deterioration in your health from when you have put in your first form.

If you are transferred to another Correctional Centre you do not need to complete another Patient Self Referral form for this health problem at your new centre as your referral will be transferred with you.

APPENDIX 2

Patient Advice Card Regarding Non Placement on a Waiting List



Health
Justice Health &
Forensic Mental Health Network

Justice Health and the Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&FMHN) do not manage these requests.

We are unable to see you regarding this lifestyle matter. Please discuss your request with Corrective Services NSW / the private operators' staff.

APPENDIX 3

Flowchart of the Patient Self Referral Form

Aim: To facilitate a clear pathway for patients to identify concerns and access health care in the Health Centres by the use of the JH&FMHN JUS060.600 *Patient Self Referral* form.

