



KEEPING YOU IN CIRCULATION



Geelong Vascular Service

30 March 2020

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COVID-19 RESPONSE

As we all face the health and financial implications of the current Corona virus pandemic, at Geelong Vascular Service we extend our sympathy to everyone struggling to manage.

We provide this note to explain what is happening in our service, and how we are able to offer ongoing support to our patients and healthcare referrers.

Geelong Vascular Service - Clinic Appointments:

We continue to provide an essential service to our patients with arterial and venous disease, but do so within the constraints imposed on surgical service more broadly. We pride ourselves on providing a safe and hygienic environment at all times, and have made changes to ensure this standard continues to be applied.

- **Consulting:** A/Prof McClure remains available to see any patients in the clinic who have a scheduled appointment, with the exception of anyone with symptoms of an upper respiratory illness. On booking an appointment, patients are asked about the possibility of them being in contact with COVID-19. Those at risk are advised to seek the opinion of their general practitioner.
- **Patient care:** Patients are requested to attend appointments on their own, unless they are accompanying a minor or other dependent. We have limited the space in our waiting room, and have staggered appointment times, but some attendees may be asked to wait in their car until they can be seen. All patients presenting to the clinic are asked to wash their hands in the bathroom, and apply a hand sanitizer on arrival.
- **Staff:** All staff will practice social distancing, use hand sanitizer before, during and after all interactions, and will disinfect all surfaces after contact on them is made. Face masks are worn at all times, but no staff member will be permitted at work if ill with a respiratory condition.

Geelong Vascular Ultrasound – Diagnostic imaging studies:

We continue to provide this essential service, and apply all the same precautions to preventing viral spread as applies to our Specialist consultations. Urgent follow-up scans, and assessment of acute emergencies – painful legs, stroke symptoms, deep vein thrombosis, and the like – should proceed as planned. Routine disease or post-treatment surveillance imaging may be deferred on discussion with our secretarial staff. As is our usual practice, pensioners and healthcare card holders are bulk billed for studies.

To minimize unnecessary contact, please fax or email referrals so our staff can allocate suitable appointment times. Unfortunately, walk in patients cannot be accommodated at this time. All patients need a booked appointment time.

Geelong Laser Vein Clinic – ambulatory lower limb vein treatment:

At this stage our laser vein clinic continues to operate as normal; cases not cancelled as they are in hospital to provide bed availability and resources for inpatient care of COVID-19 patients. Treatment for patients with respiratory symptoms will be deferred until they are completely well. All other patients, who are restricting their activity to what is essential, can travel to and from our centre by vehicle and continue to practice recommended social distancing behaviour after their treatment. Please do not hesitate to discuss treatment bookings with our secretarial staff.

Advice to Health Care providers:

- A/Prof McClure is available to provide urgent advice whenever it is required. Please feel free to contact him through the rooms in business hours, or on his mobile after hours. Mobile contact is available through the switchboards of St John of God Hospital or University Hospital Geelong.
- Patient referrals can be sent by referralnet, by fax (03 52292819), or by email (geelongvascular@grvs.com.au).

We all share responsibility to follow the Government’s directives at this time, and appreciate that changes to our activity may occur as this advice is updated. We are all in this together, and are very happy to field your calls and offer you our help if you have any anxiety about managing your vascular health.

With kind regards

A/PROF DAVID NEALE McCLURE

M.B.,BS.(Melb), M.S. (Melb), F.R.A.C.S., F.R.A.C.S. (Vascular)

Vascular and Endovascular Surgeon

Appointments and all enquiries can be made by contacting **GEELONG VASCULAR SERVICE** on 03 52290024. Further information is available on our website: www.geelongvascular.com.au