

Information Sheet – GP clinic at Mabel Park State High School

For school staff

Helping students access the healthcare they need

Mabel Park State High School will have a doctor (GP) from UQ Health Care offering a clinic at the school in 2019. This will ensure students receive the health advice and treatment they need to reach their full potential.

This brochure provides information about the UQ Health Care GP Clinic.

Can young people consent (agree) to medical treatment?

Queensland law is clear about when young people can consent to medical treatment:

- Young people who are mature minors can consent (agree) to their own medical treatment.
- Young people who are not mature minors cannot consent (agree) to their own medical treatment.

As is the case in GP clinics anywhere, the GP attending Mabel Park will assess if a young person is a mature minor with respect to the problem for which they are seeking treatment.

What is a mature minor?

Mature minors are young people under the age of 18 years who are deemed capable by a GP of seeking and obtaining health care for their particular issue. To give informed consent, a young person must understand what the treatment involves, what it is for, why it is needed and why it applies to them. The young person must also understand the risks associated with the treatment and be aware of the other options available, as well as the consequences of not receiving treatment.

How does the GP assess whether a student is a mature minor?

When the GP decides whether a young person can consent (agree) to medical treatment, they will consider:

- Age
- Maturity in other areas of their life
- Independence – whether they live at home with a parent or carer, or support themselves

- How serious the treatment is
- The young person's understanding of why the treatment is needed, what it involves, treatment options, things that might go wrong (like side effects from drugs, or other complications), and consequences of non-treatment.

What if the student is not a mature minor?

Any student at Mabel Park State High School who wants to make an appointment with the GP Clinic can do so. The GP will then decide if the student is a mature minor with respect to the problem they are seeking treatment for. The decision regarding whether a young person is a mature minor may vary for different issues. For example, the GP may decide the student is mature enough to consent to treatment for a health condition such as asthma, but may not be mature enough to discuss risks and benefits of antidepressant medication.

If the GP decides the student is not a mature minor, they must get consent from the parent or carer before medical treatment is provided.

Can parents or carers attend appointments with the GP as support?

Yes, parent and carer involvement is encouraged if the young person consents.

Can teachers or other young people accompany the student to appointments?

This will need to be considered on a case by case basis, in consultation with the young person seeking the medical treatment. The young person will need to consent to this occurring

What if a parent or carer doesn't want their child to see the GP?

Parents will be informed about the GP Clinic through the usual school communication channels.

If a parent informs the school that they do not want their child to access the GP Clinic, the Principal or Deputy Principal should consider whether the student is a mature minor for the purposes of seeing the GP. They should also consider the reasons the parent has given. The Legal and Administrative Law Branch can be contacted for further advice.



Children's Health Queensland
Hospital and Health Service



If a young person attends the GP and is considered a mature minor by the GP, they can consent to their own treatment without the consent of their parent or carer. If the young person is not a mature minor, the GP will seek consent for medical treatment from a parent or carer prior to proceeding with any treatment.

The aim of this program is to improve access to primary health care for students. School staff should encourage parents and carers to discuss the following points with their children:

- Young people are able to seek medical treatment from a GP. Depending on their level of maturity and their medical issue, this may be done with or without the consent of their parents or carers.
- GPs, including the GP at Mabel Park, encourage parents or carers to be involved when required, or with the consent of the young person. This is the same as any general practice in the community.

What can schools disclose to parents and carers?

In accordance with privacy obligations, school staff must not disclose to a parent or carer that their child has visited the GP, or has made an appointment with the GP, unless it is with the consent of the young person, or there are some other legal reasons for the disclosure of this information, for example, the student is not a mature minor.

Will the GP share information with the rest of the wellbeing team?

Conversations between the GP and the young person will be confidential and not shared with others (including the wellbeing team at the school) unless:

- it is with the consent of the young person (if they are a mature minor), or his/her parents or carers (if the young person is not a mature minor); or
- the disclosure is otherwise permitted or required by law.

The following are examples of when the GP may share information with the wellbeing team at the school:

- The young person consents to the disclosure.
- The disclosure is necessary to prevent a serious threat to public health, safety or welfare – e.g. the young person has an infectious disease and the disclosure is necessary to limit or prevent the

impact that this may have on others in the school community.

- The disclosure is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious and imminent threat to any person's health, safety or welfare, such as:
 - *The young person is at imminent risk of harming or hurting themselves; or*
 - *The young person is at imminent risk of harming or hurting others.*

When can a young person get their own Medicare card?

Young people can apply for their own Medicare card when they turn 15 years of age. They need to complete an application form and provide identification, such as a student card or birth certificate, as well as details about the card they are transferring from.

What does Medicare disclose to parents and carers?

If the student's name is on their parent's Medicare card or the student has a duplicate card, parents will usually have access to their child's Medicare records. If the student is **over** the age of 14 years, then Medicare does not need the student's permission to disclose information about past visits to a GP. It is important that students are aware their parents can access this information through Medicare. This is also covered in the **Information Sheet** for students.

How often will the general practitioner attend the school?

The GP will attend the school once a week during school term in 2019.

Where will students' medical records be kept?

The medical records will remain the property of the GP's base clinic – UQ Healthcare Meadowbrook.

Will the GP make referrals to other services?

Yes. It is anticipated that referrals will be an important part of this program **but this is done with consent of the student**

How do we manage consent if the young person is in out of home care?

If the young person is a mature minor, he or she can consent to their own medical treatment.

If the young person is not considered a mature minor by the GP, consideration will be given to relevant Court Orders and living arrangements. Consent to medical treatment should be made by a person with parental responsibility. If a young person has been placed in Out-of-Home Care as a result of the Children's Court order, the order will determine who has parental responsibility. The school may have a copy of an instrument of authorisation enabling the carer to make certain decisions.

If it is not clear who has parental responsibility for the young person, the relevant child protection office will be able to assist.

What if the young person moves schools? What happens to their medical records?

The young person's medical records will remain the possession of the GP's base clinic – UQ Healthcare Meadowbrook.

If a young person moves schools, they (if they are a mature minor) or their parents or carers (if they are not a mature minor) may request their information is transferred to another GP. This reflects what currently occurs in the broader community. This is important and encouraged, so that continuity of care is promoted across all the health providers a young person sees.

For more information please email or visit:

gp@mabelparkshs.eq.edu.au

<https://www.uqhealthcare.org.au/>

<https://mabelparkshs.eq.edu.au/Facilities/Pages/MP-Clinic.aspx>