

# Patient Information Book

Current as at 30 March 2021



Time



Care



Experience



**Dr Nicola Kettleton-Butler**

MBBS, FRACGP, B.Sc App  
Practice Principal / Owner



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Our commitment to  
your safety and care

## Welcome to Saltwater Medical

Please take the time to read this booklet. It provides important information about the services we offer, our practice policies and how to best access our care.

*Thank you for sharing in our vision of providing exceptional health care without compromise.*

Saltwater Medical is a family-owned, private billing general practice offering a broad range of **evidence-based medical services**, all delivered with personal care and your long-term health in mind.

**Our service has been purposefully designed to offer a higher quality of care by using the following approach:**

- + All our doctors are experienced, consultant-level GPs with a caring and thorough manner;
- + Generous appointments—while most other practices offer 6-15 minute Standard Consultations, ours are a generous 20 minutes;
- + We pride ourselves on doing all we can to run on time;
- + We put a focus on providing excellent service, delivered by a professional, well-trained team; and
- + We have a state-of-the-art, well-equipped, welcoming and comfortable facility.

We are passionate about providing healthcare without compromise to our valued patients and we are very mindful of the trust you have placed in us to care for your health.

**We strongly encourage you to read this booklet to understand our practice policies and how best to access our care.**

**With our best wishes, we warmly welcome you to our practice!**



**Dr Nicola Kettleton-Butler**

MBBS, FRACGP, B.Sc App  
Practice Principal / Owner



**Ms Jen Kettleton-Butler**

MBA (EXEC), Dip Mgt, Adv Cert. Design  
Practice Director / Owner



Some things deserve more  
time and attention.



Time

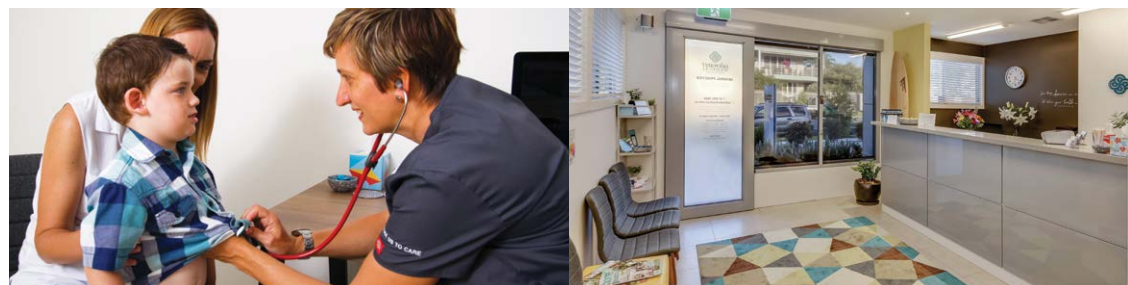


Care



Experience

*We believe your health is one of them.*



We are a boutique, family-owned general practice with deep family ties to Caloundra reaching back over 100 years. As proud locals, we are honoured to continue a family tradition of service and commitment to our community.

## About our Doctors

Our doctors are independent medical practitioners who have been hand picked to join our team based on their clinical expertise and their fit with our practice values and vision. They are all highly trained Consultant GPs and Fellows of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. They are responsible for their clinical decisions regarding patient care and the practice provides them with a facility and a framework of administrative and nursing support.

## New Patient Appointments

We warmly welcome new patients to the practice, who will be booked into a 40 minute time slot for their first visit (**Long Consultation - Item 36**). This allows your doctor the time to take a thorough history, perform any relevant examinations and attend to your medical concern in a comprehensive manner. We find the vast majority of our new patient consultations take between 20-40 minutes. However, if your initial consultation takes less than 20 minutes, or more than 40 minutes, you will be billed accordingly. Please see our fee schedule for more details.

All appointments are confirmed 24 hours prior to your consultation. If we are unable to confirm your appointment (either by SMS or phone call) it will be cancelled. New patients who confirm their appointment, but who fail to attend without giving four hours' notice, will be charged a non-attendance fee equal to the initial consultation fee, and they will be unable to rebook until this fee is paid (see our non-attendance policy on page 9).

## Standard Consultations

**Our consultations are billed according to the time taken with your doctor, or in some cases, the complexity of the procedure or service being provided.**

After your initial visit, our most common appointment type is called a **Standard Consultation (Item 23)** which is generally suitable for existing patients presenting with a single issue.

Our **Standard Consultations** are booked into 20 minute time slots, which is quite generous compared to many other practices, who typically book their **Standard Consultations** into time slots anywhere between 6 to 15 minutes.

We find that 20 minute **Standard Consultations** are more realistic and that our longer appointments help us to run on time. It also allows our patients to better manage and understand their health issues without feeling rushed.

However, you may need a longer appointment if you have multiple complex issues, mental health concerns, or you need a care plan, a procedure, nursing support (e.g. vaccinations or dressings) or, if you have multiple people needing to be seen. Please discuss with reception to ensure you make the appropriate length appointment/s. **If the appropriate time has not been booked we may need to schedule another appointment.**

Appointments are essential as we are unable to accommodate walk-ins.

## What sort of appointment should I book?

**Booking the correct length of consultation helps us to give you the high quality service you deserve. It also helps us to run on time.**

We appreciate your help in booking your appointments using the information below as a guide. If you're not sure what type of consultation to book, please speak with our reception staff who will be happy to assist.

- **Standard Consultation** (20 minutes) - Suitable for a single standard issue e.g. ear infection, urinary tract infection, colds/flu or pap-smears etc.
- **Long Consultation** (40 minutes) - Suitable for new patients, existing patients with complex issues (e.g. mental health), or multiple issues.
- **Care Plans** (40 minutes) - For patients requiring a plan for Medicare subsidised psychology or allied health services.
- **Childhood Immunisations & Procedures** - Please call reception to book these services as nursing support and treatment room access is required.



**Your appointment time is held especially for you and we make every effort to run on time.**

Your punctuality is appreciated as it assists us to run on time for you and our other patients. We require 4 hours notice if you need to cancel. We are fully booked each day, so giving us reasonable notice of your cancellation allows us to offer your appointment to other patients who are needing to see a doctor that day (see page 9 for more information).

Fees apply for late/non-attendance or late cancellations and may result in the inability to book further appointments.

## Same day / urgent appointments

Our phones open at 7.30am Monday-Friday. We hold a limited number of 'On-the-Day' appointments each day for existing patients experiencing acute issues. These appointments are not published online and you need to call the practice as early as possible and be triaged into one of them.

**If you are experiencing an emergency please call 000.**

## Billing Policy

Because of our generous length appointments and our focus on providing you with a high level of care, **we are unable to bulk bill for our services.**

However, we do provide discounted fees for children under 13, Healthcare card holders, DVA card holders and Pension card holders (DVA patients will need to use a Medicare card to access a rebate).

**Payment is required upon completion of your appointment.**

We endeavour to be fully transparent with patients about our fees which are required to cover the cost of delivering our high quality service. See over page for a list of fees for our most common services. Please feel free to ask our reception team or your doctor about any aspect of our billing policy.



# Fee schedule

As at 6 September 2021 | \*Concession/DVA card holders and children under 13 qualify for our discounted fees (DVA patients need to use a Medicare card to obtain a rebate).

**Our service has been purposefully designed to provide you and your family with high quality care.**

We offer generous appointments with experienced consultant GPs who have a caring and thorough approach. We also provide a state-of-the-art facility and support you with excellent service, delivered by a well-trained, professional practice team. Our fees are reviewed and updated each year.

Consultation Type	Regular Fee	Discount Fee*	Medicare Rebate	Out of Pocket
<b>Standard Consultation</b> (Item 23) Up to 20 minutes Suitable for a single standard issue e.g. ear infection, urinary tract infection, coughs and colds or pap-smear etc.	\$92	\$69	<b>\$39.10</b>	\$52.90 (Reg) \$29.90 (Disc)
<b>Long Consultation</b> (Item 36) Between 20-40 minutes Suitable for a complex issue, or for patients with a list of multiple issues.	\$158	\$126	<b>\$75.75</b>	\$82.25 (Reg) \$50.25 (Disc)
<b>Prolonged Consultation</b> (Item 44) Greater than 40 minutes For patients requiring a prolonged consult, likely for chronic disease management or multiple complex issues.	\$222	\$190	<b>\$111.50</b>	\$110.50 (Reg) \$78.50 (Disc)
<b>GP Mental Health Treatment Plan</b> (Item 2715) Between 20-40 minutes For patients requiring a co-ordinated plan from a GP in order to access Medicare subsidies to see a psychologist.	\$158	\$126	<b>\$94.75</b>	\$63.25 (Reg) \$31.25 (Disc)
<b>Review of GP Mental Health Treatment Plan</b> (Item 2712) Between 20-40 minutes For patients requiring a review of an existing plan in order to access further Medicare subsidies to see a psychologist.	\$158	\$126	<b>\$74.60</b>	\$83.40 (Reg) \$51.40 (Disc)
<b>Treatment Room, Consumable and Vaccine Fees</b> Various procedures attract a fee to cover the cost of nursing support and consumables: • Biopsy \$20 • Simple Excision \$30 • Complex Excision \$42 • Basic Dressing \$7 • Complex Dressing \$12 • Private Flu Vaccine \$23 • Iron Infusion \$30 • Implanon \$20 • Mirena/IUD \$13				

Consultation Type	Regular Fee	Discount Fee*	Medicare Rebate	Out of Pocket
<b>GP Management Plan &amp; Team Care Arrangement</b> (Complex/ Chronic Disease) (Item 721 & 723) Between 20-40 minutes For complex and chronic disease management requiring a GP Management Plan & Team Care Arrangement to access Medicare subsidies to see Allied Health professionals for up to 5 sessions (calendar year).	\$312	\$302	<b>\$269.05</b>	\$42.95 (Reg) \$32.95 (Disc)
<b>Review of GP Management Plan and / or Team Care Arrangement</b> (Item 732 each) Between 20-40 minutes For review of an existing GP management plan and / or Team Care Arrangement.	\$95 (per review)	\$90 (per review)	<b>\$74.95 (per review)</b>	\$20.05 (Reg) \$15.05 (Disc) (per review)
<b>Iron Infusion</b> For patients requiring IV iron administration by the doctor. Fully supervised by the practice nurse with all treatment room consumables included. <b>Please note:</b> Ferinject (the iron) needs to be prescribed at a prior consult and filled at a pharmacy before your procedure.	\$319	\$286	<b>\$75.75</b>	\$243.25 (Reg) \$210.25 (Disc)
<b>Insertion of Mirena or Copper IUD</b> For the insertion of an IUD contraceptive device. <b>Please note:</b> the IUD needs to be prescribed at a prior consult and filled at a pharmacy prior to your procedure. We can also remove and insert, or just remove IUDs - please see your GP for the details of these procedures.	\$319	\$286	<b>\$123.10</b>	\$195.90 (Reg) \$162.90 (Disc)
<b>Excisions   Appointment length varies</b> Fees vary depending on the complexity of the procedure and the histopathology result (the Medicare rebate varies according to this result). On the day of your procedure there will be a treatment room fee, with the account for your actual procedure put on hold until the result is returned. Unless otherwise advised, the fee for your procedure will be the medicare rebate + \$80.00, payable when the result is advised (normally at the appointment to remove sutures).			Varies depending on the result	\$80 unless otherwise advised

**We appreciate full payment upon completion of your appointment and you can pay by cash, credit card or debit card.**

**Medicare rebates can often be received on-the-spot.** To save you the hassle of a separate claims process, once you have paid your account we can often help you claim your rebate on-the-spot\* using our TYRO machine and a debit card (not a credit card).

Alternatively, we can send your rebate claim to Medicare for online assessment and they will usually deposit it into your Medicare-linked bank account within 48 hours.

Or, you can take the receipt to Medicare or use the MyGov app to claim your rebate.

\* Some item numbers for less common procedures and appointments are not able to be claimed using our Tyro machine and need to be further assessed by Medicare before they will pay a rebate.

## Our services

We can assist in all areas of general medicine, including those listed below. The list is not exhaustive though, so if you've got a medical concern, we're sure to be able to help.

- Women's health, including IUD insertion and removal
- Children's health and vaccinations
- Seniors' health
- Diabetes care and asthma management
- Over 75 health assessments
- 45-49 year old health checks
- Mental health care plans
- Travel vaccinations and advice
- Chronic disease management
- Gender & sexual identity (LGBTIQ friendly)
- Expert skin checks & dermatology
- Sexual Health and STI screening
- Iron infusions and B12 injections
- Musculoskeletal and sports injuries
- Minor procedures and excisions
- Aviation Medicals
- Lactation and newborn baby consultations

## Emergencies

If you are experiencing an emergency (e.g. shortness of breath, chest pain, sudden numbness/weakness, confusion, altered speech) please dial 000 or attend the nearest hospital. The nearest hospital to our practice is:

**Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH)**  
Doherty Street, Birtinya, QLD, 4575

## Minor Injuries and Illness Clinic

If you are unable to secure an 'On-the-Day' appointment with us and the issue is acute, you could present to the Minor Injury and Illness Clinic (MIIC). This is a walk-in, government-funded health service designed to treat patients with non-life threatening issues who can't get an appointment on the day with their regular GP (e.g. broken bones, lacerations, minor burns, mild illness).

The MIIC is open 8.00am to 4.00pm, 7 days a week and is located in the former Caloundra Hospital Emergency Department on West Tce, Caloundra.



## Our practice has a no smoking policy

As per government tobacco laws there is to be no smoking inside our practice nor within 4 metres of the front door.



## Non-attendance, late cancellations, punctuality and confirmation policy

We take pride in delivering high quality healthcare which is why your appointment time is booked and held especially for you.

**If you no longer require your appointment or cannot attend, please provide at least 4 business hours' notice of your cancellation.**

We are fully booked each day and resource our practice accordingly, so giving 4 business hours' notice of a cancellation allows us to offer your appointment to other patients on the waiting list.

Failure to attend an appointment or notify us of your cancellation within 4 business hours of your appointment will incur a non-Medicare rebatable fee (\$88 for a standard appointment or \$153 for a long appointment).

**Repeated late or non-attendance may result in the inability to book further appointments.**

We pride ourselves on running on time (barring medical emergencies) so your punctuality is also appreciated. If you arrive unreasonably late for your appointment you may need to reschedule and a fee may also apply.

## Delays

We understand your time is valuable which is why we have designed our service to address the common reasons why many GPs run late. This means we proactively work with patients to schedule appointments into realistic time slots (we appreciate your assistance with this). We also have a policy of never double booking our appointments. Despite our best efforts we occasionally experience unavoidable delays due to medical emergencies. In these circumstances we appreciate your understanding and will make every effort to communicate with you about known delays.

## Telephone policy

Most medical issues are best dealt with in a face-to-face consultation with your GP. Because our doctors are usually consulting with patients in scheduled appointments, they are unable to receive or return patient phone calls (or emails). We encourage you to schedule an appointment at a convenient time if you need to discuss issues with your doctor.

**Telehealth consultations** - a telehealth consult can be arranged, however these need to be booked and will be charged in accordance with our fee schedule (in some, but not all instances, a Medicare rebate may be available).

If you elect to make a telehealth appointment please be aware that some conditions may still require a subsequent face-to-face visit, which will also be charged in accordance with our published fee schedule.

# How we manage your test results and imaging reports at Saltwater Medical



## Why is my doctor referring me for tests?

Your doctor may send you to a pathology or imaging provider to undertake tests. At other times they may send tissue samples to a histology lab after a procedure has been performed e.g. excisions and biopsies. These tests are designed to assist with the ongoing management and diagnosis of your health issue. In some cases they may attract an out-of-pocket cost and you will need to confirm these costs with your chosen provider.

## What can I expect after I've had the tests?

Once you've had the tests, scans, x-rays or procedure at the practice, the imaging, pathology or histology providers will send the results/reports through to the practice. Your doctor checks for results each day they are in the practice (please note some doctors work part time). We run computerised systems to ensure results are always checked by your doctor in a timely fashion (or by another doctor if your usual GP is away for an extended period of time).

## How long before my doctor gets the results?

Time frames vary depending on the type of test. As a general rule of thumb, most results are back at the practice within 2-3 days, however some tests do take longer to process.

**PLEASE NOTE** - Even though your result may be with us at the practice, it may not have been checked yet by your doctor as they will likely be consulting with other patients when it arrives. Your doctor will usually check results during breaks or at the end of each day they are consulting at the practice.

## Will I be contacted with the results?

That depends on your result.

### Abnormal results - we WILL contact you

- You will hear from us if your results are abnormal.
- In most cases, if your results are abnormal you will be contacted by our nurse to arrange a follow up appointment to discuss with your doctor.
- Follow up appointments are charged at normal rates and are required because you may need further tests, prescriptions, referrals, or to discuss a plan for the ongoing management of your health issue.
- A follow up appointment enables your doctor the necessary time to support you in maintaining and coordinating your long-term health, which is our primary concern.
- In very limited cases you may be called directly by your doctor or our nurse to be advised of your result.
- If your tests reveal an urgent or serious issue the test provider will call your GP directly to flag the result and we will contact you as a matter of urgency.

### Normal results - we WILL NOT contact you

- You will not hear from us if your results are normal.
- Your doctor will mark them off in our system as 'checked' and no further action will be taken.
- If you have not heard from us it is because your result is normal.
- If you would still like to discuss your results you are welcome to make a follow up appointment.
- Exception: Normal cervical screening results will be forwarded by mail, usually within 2-3 weeks.

## Why can't reception tell me my results?

**For privacy and safety reasons your results will not be communicated to you over the phone by our reception staff.**

Our reception staff are brilliant administrators but they are not clinically trained to interpret your results or to provide you with medical advice. They do not have full access to your chart, nor do they know how many tests you were sent for.



**IMPORTANT** - If you do not hear from us after your test but you are still experiencing symptoms please make a follow up appointment with your doctor. Your test result may have been normal but the issue may be caused by something else. If you are experiencing an emergency or your symptoms are getting worse please call 000 or attend the nearest emergency department.

## Recalls, reminders and confirmations

Patients will be **recalled** for a follow up appointment where clinically indicated by a test, imaging result or other circumstances considered relevant by your doctor (see our detailed results policy on pages 10-11).

We use a **reminder** system which prompts you by letter (or an SMS) to schedule an appointment for recurring issues like skin checks, cervical screening and immunisations. To opt out of reminders please advise our staff.

We use an SMS **confirmation** system and require you to reply to confirm your attendance 24 hours prior. If you do not respond to confirm, or we cannot reach you, your appointment may be cancelled and offered to another patient.

## Disability facilities

Our practice is designed for easy wheelchair access and we have a wheelchair available to assist you if required. Should you have special needs please discuss them with our reception staff who will be happy to assist.



## Prescriptions

A consultation is generally required for prescriptions, as this enables your doctor to properly monitor your health and check the medical condition for which the script is being written.

### Repeat scripts without a consultation - online request service

In limited circumstances, for existing patients of the practice, your doctor may be willing to write a repeat prescription without a consultation. There is a \$30 fee for this service to cover the administrative costs and the doctor's time to check your chart and record notes. There is no Medicare rebate available for this service.

Generally speaking, your doctor may be happy to write a repeat prescription if they've seen you within the last 3-6 months (depending on the condition) and if the medication has been previously prescribed at our practice.

**If you would like to request a repeat prescription without a consult, please visit our website (click on online services) to submit a request. Please allow 48 hours for requests to be processed as they are written in and around the doctor's consulting sessions.**

**Please ensure you manage your scripts to ensure you don't run out at the last minute - it is very difficult to squeeze patients in or turn around requests without at least 48 hours notice.**

### Drugs of dependence prescribing policy

For your safety, our doctors will not prescribe S8 drugs or drugs of dependence to new patients or via an online repeat prescription request.

## Medical certificates

Patients need to have a consultation with a Doctor to obtain a medical certificate. By law we are not permitted to backdate medical certificates. To avoid further fees and/or delays, if you require a medical certificate, please ask at the time of your consultation.

## Referrals

So that we can properly monitor your health and meet our ethical and legal responsibilities **a consultation is required for all referrals.**

Writing a comprehensive referral takes time which is why a consultation is required. The consultation enables your GP to compile an up-to-date medical history and other information about your condition which will help you get the most out of your appointment with the specialist.

A referral is a legal document that enables you to claim benefits from Medicare, so it is important that you obtain your referral **before** your specialist appointment. It is illegal to backdate referrals or to write one without first having had a consultation with the patient. It is also important for you to ensure you have your referral organised well before your specialist appointment as we are generally fully booked each day so it is difficult to facilitate last minute requests.

## We respect your privacy

Our practice collects personal patient health information and safeguards your confidentiality and privacy in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy Act (1988). If you would like to obtain a copy of our privacy policy or if you have any questions, please contact our Practice Director.

## Keeping your information current

Please let us know if any of your information has changed since your last visit and we'll be happy to update your record.

**This is especially important if you have changed address or contact details, have received an updated Medicare card, or if custody arrangements or your health status have changed.**

## Communicating with us

You can contact our practice by phone or fax.

You are also welcome to drop in and speak to our reception staff at any time.

Due to security and privacy reasons, we strongly discourage the use of email or social media to transmit your private health information to us. Email is the digital equivalent of sending a postcard and can be easily intercepted.

**We will not use email or social media to send your health information to anyone, including yourself.**

We will only respond to general enquiries via our social media channels.



## Home visits and after hours medical services

Home visits are available in limited circumstances for existing patients of the practice. Please discuss this with your doctor. After hours healthcare is provided by the National Home Doctor Service. If you require medical attention outside of our consulting hours, please call 13 74 25.

## Zero tolerance for violent or aggressive behaviour

For the safety of our staff and patients we have zero tolerance for violent, disrespectful or aggressive behaviour at our practice.

Anyone who acts in this manner will be asked to leave and the police may be called.

Violent, disrespectful or aggressive behaviour will also result in the inability to continue to attend as a patient of our practice.



## Feedback and complaints

Our goal is to provide high-quality, personal and caring health services.

If you have any concerns, a complaint, suggestions, or even a compliment, please feel free to have a discussion at any time with our Practice Director.

We genuinely wish to hear from you if you are dissatisfied in any way with the service you have received so that we can resolve your issue in person.

If you wish to make a complaint, please contact our Practice Director.

If you prefer to contact the Office of the Health Ombudsman the contact details are:

**Office of the Health Ombudsman**  
PO Box 13281, George Street,  
Brisbane, QLD, 4003  
Telephone: 133 646  
[www.oho.qld.gov.au](http://www.oho.qld.gov.au)

## Interpreter Service

We can arrange for an interpreter or other third party to be present if needed during a consultation with our doctors. Please advise reception if this is required.

## Top Tips for Safe Health Care

**What you need to know for yourself, your family or someone you care for.**

The Australian Council for Quality and Safety in Health Care has produced a booklet designed to help consumers, their families, carers and other support people get the most out of their health care.

Being actively involved, and working in partnership with healthcare providers, can help ensure you get the care that is right for you.

The booklet can be found at the link below and we encourage you to use the information in it as a guide when you talk to your doctor and healthcare providers, including nurses, pharmacists, specialists, allied health and mental health workers.

**You can download the booklet here:**

<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/publications-and-resources/resource-library/top-tips-safe-health-care>



## We celebrate diversity in our community and create a welcoming and inclusive space for all people



Saltwater Medical acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live - the Kabi Kabi people. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respect to them and their cultures and to their Elders both past and present.



Saltwater Medical is a safe and welcoming place for the LGBTIQ community. We pay our respects to the leaders and trailblazers who have worked to support the improved health and wellbeing of their communities. We celebrate the extraordinary diversity of people's bodies, genders, sexualities and the relationships that they represent.







Some things deserve more time and attention

*We believe your health is one of them*

## Opening Hours

**Monday to Thursday 7.40am–5.00pm**

**Friday 7.40am–4.00pm**

We are closed on weekends and public holidays.

We also close each year between Christmas and New Years Day.

### Same day appointments - our phones open at 7.30am Monday-Friday

We reserve a limited number of 'On-the-Day' appointments for existing patients experiencing acute issues who need to see a doctor that day.

These appointments are not published online so you need to call the practice as early as possible to be triaged into one of them.

**Appointments are essential as we do not take walk-ins.**

**If you are experiencing an emergency please call 000  
or go to the nearest emergency department.**



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### Our focus is on high quality evidence-based medicine

We value safety and quality which is why we have invested in systems and processes that comply with those set by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP). At Saltwater Medical, we always strive for continual improvement in line with evidence-based best medical practice.

 7 Fourth Avenue, Caloundra, QLD 4551

 (07) 5301 9828 |  (07) 5329 4604

**[www.saltwatermedical.com.au](http://www.saltwatermedical.com.au)**



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