

CHOOSING TO BE A PRIVATE PATIENT



Peter Mac
Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
Victoria Australia

Peter Mac is a specialist, public health cancer care hospital that offers a wide range of cancer treatments and services to patients who come from Victoria, interstate and sometimes overseas. At admission, you will be asked if you have private health insurance and if you would like to be admitted as a private or public patient.

What does it mean to be a public patient?

If you choose to be a public patient, you:

- Need to have a valid Medicare card.
- Are treated and cared for by a doctor assigned to you (chosen) by Peter Mac. This doctor can change across visits; however, a senior consultant (specialist) always oversees them.
- May need to pay for some hospital services. Our friendly staff will explain this to you.

What does it mean to be a private patient?

Choosing to be a private patient at Peter Mac gives you more options. As a private patient, you:

- Can choose the doctor you want to be treated by as long as they have an agreement to treat private patients at Peter Mac.
- Can choose to be treated by our assigned doctor and then elect to be admitted as a private patient under this doctor's care.
- Do not have to pay any private health insurance excess fees. Peter Mac will cover this or any co-payment required by your private health fund.

- Have no 'out of pocket expenses' for most services such as pathology and radiology.
- Your private health insurance payment goes straight to the hospital. We use this to buy services and equipment and improve the services we provide to the cancer community.
- Receive support from our **Private Patient Liaison Officer**. Support includes hassle free billing and answering all your questions about your private patient accounts.

Does being private or public change your patient wait times?

No. Waiting times for appointments or treatments are **not** based on the health cover you have.

What about medication costs?

All patients, both public and private, will need to pay for their medications on discharge.

Pension cards, health care cards and safety net numbers can apply when buying your medications. If you hold any of these cards, please be sure to have these details with you.

What services are not covered by private health insurance?

There are some services **not** covered by private health insurance.

You will **not** be reimbursed for any of the following costs:

- PeterMac@Home nurse service.
- Telephone calls from your hospital phone that are not local. To make long distance calls you will need to buy a phone card from our front reception desk.
- Purchase or hire costs for any aids or equipment to make your home safer.

What bills will you receive?

We will send your Peter Mac bills directly to Medicare and/or your private health insurance.

Sometimes, we need to send our private patients to other hospitals for special tests. If this happens, you may receive a bill from the other hospital. If this happens, you simply need to send these bills to Peter Mac's Private Patient Liaison Officer.

Our Private Patient Liaison Officer will claim them directly from Medicare and/or your private health insurance for you.

Common questions from patients

“Can I use my private health insurance in a public hospital?”

- Yes, you pay for your private health insurance and it is your right to choose when and where you would like to use it.

“I only have basic health insurance; can I still choose to be a private patient?”

- Yes, some basic covers do cover you for inpatient treatment. Our Private Liaison Officers will confirm your coverage with your private health fund.

“If I am admitted as a public patient can I change this over and become a private patient?”


- Yes, simply ask to see our Private Patient Liaison Officer who will answer all your questions and help you change from public to private.



How to contact us

If you have any questions about this information or on being a private patient, please contact our Private Patient Liaison Officer:


- Monday to Friday
- 8:30am – 4:30pm

 (03) 8559 6087 or (03) 8559 6087

 privatepatientliaison@petermac.org

For general admission queries, please call the Admissions Office:

- Monday to Friday
- 6:30am – 8:00pm
- Saturday and Sundays
- 9:00am – 4:30pm

 (03) 8559 5020

In the event of an emergency, please dial **000** for an ambulance or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.