



Seachange Paediatrics

Terms of Reference

The website at www.seachangepaeds.com.au (**Website**) is owned and operated by Seachange Paediatrics Pty Ltd having its principal place of business at Gather Health Suites Unit 4-5/247 David Low Way Peregian Beach QLD 4573 “**Seachange**”, “**we**”, “**us**” or “**our**”.

We provide paediatric clinical services patients. “**you**” or “**your**” refers to any user of our Website or our services and includes where the context permits guardians or families of patients.

These terms of reference together with our **Privacy Policy** (together with our **Terms of Reference**) set out the terms and conditions that apply to your use of the Website or any of our services accessible to you either through us directly or by your general practitioner.

Please read these Terms of Reference carefully before accessing or using the Website or any of our services.

Should you continue to use this Website or accept our services, you are agreeing to comply with and be bound by our Terms of Reference. Should you not agree to our Terms of Reference, please do not use our Website or our services. We may immediately terminate these Terms of Reference or any services with respect to you, or generally cease offering or deny access to the services or any portion thereof, at any time for any reason.

Privacy

We take your privacy very seriously and any health or personal information will be managed in accordance with Privacy Act (1988) requirements and our **Privacy Policy**. Please avoid disclosing confidential or clinical information via email or our contact form and speak to one of our reception team.

When booking an appointment and proceeding with the establishment of a file for your child you have indicated your consent that any private health care information provided to staff will be managed in accordance with our **Privacy Policy**. Prior to your initial appointment with our paediatrician, you will be required to sign a patient consent form. If you have any questions or concerns or wish to opt out of any contact channels such as SMS or email, please let the reception staff know.

The collected information regarding your child is important in the provision of quality health care. We will use the information provided about you and your child’s personal details and medical history to assess, diagnose, treat and pre-emptively address your child’s health care needs. More details of how your personal information will be used can be found in our **Privacy Policy**.

Please be aware that email is not a secure form of communicating confidential, sensitive or clinical information. Any email correspondence from our offices may be password protected for privacy and security reasons.



Anti-harassment, Anti-bullying and Anti-discrimination

We value and respect our patients and their families and aim to work together to improve children's wellbeing. We also have an obligation to our employees to protect their right to be treated with dignity and respect, and it is incumbent on all employees and patients visiting our practice to treat others the same way.

We are committed to:

- providing a workplace free of all forms of harassment, bullying and discrimination, as prescribed by Commonwealth and state legislation and in accordance with our **Bullying, Harassment and Anti-discrimination Policy**;
- meeting its legislative obligations relating to discrimination, and will take all reasonable, practicable steps to provide and maintain a working environment free from behaviours and actions that may be harassment, bullying and discriminatory.

We expect respectful behaviour and communication with any of our staff, whether the communication is face-to-face, on the telephone, or via email.

We have a **zero-tolerance** policy in regard to aggressive, abusive or threatening actions by any individual towards our staff, doctors or other patients. Repeatedly harassing our reception staff will also not be tolerated.

If you are unsure what constitutes a breach of our behaviour expectations, please review our **Bullying, Harassment and Anti-discrimination Policy**.

If any individual breaches this **Bullying, Harassment and Anti-discrimination Policy**, we reserve the right to terminate the interaction immediately. We further reserve the right, if necessary, to terminate our professional interactions with that individual or the relevant patient.

We also reserve the right to refuse to accept a referral, or to terminate a patient's care at any time, based on abusive or threatening behaviour towards any of our staff, by a patient or their parent or carer, even if this interaction occurs by telephone.

Cancellation/non-attendance

All cancellations are required to be notified to the practice 2 business days (Mon-Friday) prior to the scheduled appointment time, to avoid being charged a cancellation fee. If you cancel an appointment at late notice, or do not attend a booked appointment, we are unable to re-fill the appointment timeslot thereby losing out on patient care. It also means that the doctor incurs wasted costs and expenditure for that unattended appointment.

In the situation of either late cancellation, or non-attendance, you will be charged a **fee of 50% of the consultation fee for that appointment**. Please note that:

- any cancellation fee is not eligible for a rebate from Medicare.



- the cancellation fee must be paid before any further services are provided by our practice.
- administration staff are **not** able to make the decision to waive this cancellation fee.
- The doctor may not be able to issue repeat prescriptions in the absence of an attended appointment.

Any final decision to consider waiving the cancellation fee is made by the doctor in their sole discretion and only in extenuating circumstances where notice of non-attendance was unavoidable.

We try to assist our families with reminders of appointments via SMS. However, we ask that you make clear note of your appointment date at the time of making the appointment as it is your responsibility to manage this and to contact us to make changes if you are no longer able to attend your scheduled time.

It is your responsibility to diarise follow-on appointments and to allow sufficient time for that appointment prior to the expiry of prescriptions or medication.

If you do not reply to SMS reminders, your appointment may be cancelled without further notice.

Illness

We cannot see children (or parents) at the practice who are unwell on the day of their appointment. If you or your child has a fever, cough, sore throat or are generally unwell, please contact our reception staff. We may be able to set up a telehealth consultation on the day. Please do not cancel these appointments without speaking to reception staff first as it may be difficult to reschedule in a timely manner.

We will continue to follow the advice of QLD Health during any changes related to the COVID-19 Pandemic or other health advice.

If you are unwell but your child is well, and you choose for a relative to bring the child please ensure you are contactable as additional clinical information may be required which the relative is unaware of.

Separated parents

Breakup of marriage and parenting relationships is a common occurrence in our society. During and following this process, children (particularly those with special developmental needs) may have vulnerabilities and may require extra consideration around their care.

We prefer to see both parents who are sharing the care and decision making for their child. Conflict and communication breakdown within families can limit collaboration with health care providers and impact optimal treatment outcomes for the child. It is an expectation



that separated parents work together respectfully and cooperatively regarding the care of their child. Decisions regarding a child's medical treatment (e.g. whether to commence medication or start intervention therapy) should be made jointly by both parents wherever possible.

The purpose of this policy is to outline our philosophy to ensure that the best interests of your child are always prioritised.

For each child, our practice management software identifies a 'nominated' parent, who is often the parent making the appointment. Communication regarding that child, by default, is addressed to that parent. Our software does not allow documents to be sent to both parents automatically.

Our expectation:

- If the appointment is made by one parent, it is the responsibility of this parent to inform the other parent, invite them to attend, and provide feedback to them.
- It is the parents' obligation to provide our reception team with a copy of any relevant legal documents or court order.
- Clinic reports will be sent to the parent who attends the appointment and it is the responsibility of that parent to forward to other parent. We do not have the capacity to provide separate feedback to each parent but welcome both parents to attend appointments.
- If one of the parents is unable to attend in person it may be possible to include them in the consultation over video/phone. Please advise reception and Dr Hogg if this is the case.

Either parent or legal guardian can:

- schedule an appointment with their child,
- be present at their appointment,
- request a copy of their reports,

unless there is a court order restricting their involvement in their child's care. If this is the case, please emphasize this with reception staff so this can be appropriately documented on the patient file.

However, we do not have the capacity to make complex individualised arrangements, but we try our best to accommodate two individual circumstances for the benefit of the child where this is reasonable and achievable.

Payment is to be made on the day of the child's appointment. If there is legal agreement that requires the other parent to pay all or part of the treatment costs, it is the attending parent's responsibility to settle account and collect reimbursement from the other parent.



Where there is significant conflict, the doctor reserves the right to limit their services until dispute has been resolved. If necessary, your doctor may discharge a family from their services if the conflict is disruptive to the clinic or impedes the care of the child.

We do not take referrals where the purpose of the assessment is to generate information for legal decision making around custody issues of parental separation.

We try our best to accommodate all family circumstances. Please help us to provide the best care for your children by providing all information regarding your family situation at your first appointment with us.

Unattended children

It is our general preference to meet with you and your child together and include your child in the consultation. This also allows us a limited opportunity to formulate an assessment of your child's reactions, interaction, and developmental abilities.

Our administrative staff are **not** able to provide childcare or to supervise your child. If you know there is material you would like to discuss without your child being present in the consultation room, please prepare for this **by arranging for a suitable adult to attend the consultation with you**, so that they can be with your child as they wait.