



# Primary Options *for* Acute Care

**Auckland, Counties Manukau & Waitemata**

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## April 2011 Newsletter

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For all you who are new to the world of POAC, it is perhaps time to provide a brief overview of what POAC is all about.

The POAC service offers general practice an alternative to referring their patients acutely to hospital. A range of services are available to support your patient to be cared for in the community. These include extended GP services, IV therapy, Diagnostics, Respite Care, Home Help, Transport and more.

The service is very flexible and packages of care are tailored to meet the needs of each individual patient. The more common reasons for referral are for IV management of Cellulitis, investigation of DVT, Dehydration and Respiratory conditions. We do however encourage considering POAC for other conditions in situations where the alternative option would be an urgent referral to the hospital. If in doubt, please call us to discuss on (09) 535 7218.

## Accessing Diagnostics

POAC is available to fund a number of urgent diagnostic services, including X-Ray, Ultrasound and some CT Scans.

X-Ray requests may be referred directly to a community radiology department and prior approval from POAC is not necessary. It is a good idea to phone ahead to ensure that reporting is going to be available urgently but no appointment is generally required. **Remember, we do not fund for non urgent investigations or for follow up Chest X-Rays.**

Ultrasound and CT Scan requests are organised by the POAC coordinator. Please phone POAC on 09 535 7218 to discuss your requests. Every effort is made to find an appointment for your patient that is timely and in a convenient location. If transport is required, please let us know so this can be arranged.

If faxing or submitting your referral electronically, please ensure to phone the POAC office to have an appointment arranged as due to the number of referrals received this will not automatically be actioned.

Where a patient presents after hours, please provide the patient with a radiology request form and phone the POAC office on the next business day to coordinate an appointment.

## Informed Patients

It is important that your patients are well informed of their options when referring to the POAC service. A patient information brochure attached to the POAC referral form and this should be provided at the time of consultation. This provides the patient and their family something to take home and refer to should it be required.

Also available are patient brochures with advice on Cellulitis and DVT Investigation.

These are available on our website [www.poac.co.nz](http://www.poac.co.nz) or a supply can be sent out upon request.

## Processing of outcomes and claims

We are getting a number of phone calls regarding reminder notices which are sent out each month with a list of claims which have not been completed. This list will include all recent claims which you can continue to send through as you normally would, in your own time. If there are any older claims, please check if these have been sent and if you have any queries then phone us to discuss.

For those who refer electronically, please make sure you submit the 'Outcome'. Many practices are not submitting any claims at all and some are submitting invoices but not the outcome. It is very important that the outcome be submitted so we can close the claim and include this in our reporting.

If you have referred to POAC only for diagnostic investigations and do not have any further claim, we do still require the completed claim form to be sent through. You are entitled to charge an administration fee of \$15.50 with every referral.

If you are having difficulty with claiming processes and would like some advice or training, please email [deannaw@easthealth.co.nz](mailto:deannaw@easthealth.co.nz)

## POAC Clinical Policies

Due to potential patient safety implications, POAC does not fund for the investigation of suspected acute appendicitis or testicular torsion, unless recommended by the relevant on call Registrar or Consultant.

POAC clinical policies have been developed by the Regional Clinical Governance Group to ensure safe practice for patient's under the POAC service. These are available online at [www.poac.co.nz](http://www.poac.co.nz)

**?PE → ADMIT**

**Urgent notice !**

All cases of suspected Pulmonary Embolism should be referred to the hospital and will not be funded by POAC.

## Need Help?

For more information on the POAC service, including how to claim, clinical guidelines and other resources, visit our website [www.poac.co.nz](http://www.poac.co.nz)

If you would like to book in time for a staff member to visit for education and training, please contact Deanna Williams, [deannaw@easthealth.co.nz](mailto:deannaw@easthealth.co.nz) or phone (09) 535 7218.