

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. *Waiting Times at the Practice* – We recognise that it is frustrating when you are not seen promptly at the time of your appointment. Each appointment is booked for 15 minutes which should be enough time for our skilled GPs to diagnose a condition and suggest an appropriate treatment. Sometimes patients present with complex or recurring problems and these may cause the GP to run over time. We hope that all patients understand that this is the nature of the service we provide and that your GP may occasionally ask you to return for a follow-up visit if you need more than 15 minutes. We also encourage patients to book a double appointment if they are aware that they will require more than 15 minutes of the GP's time. Patients should also understand that our GPs support the St John Ambulance crews and may be called out to an emergency – this also can cause a delay for their patients who have booked appointments.
2. *Phoning the GP directly*– While our GPs are at Greenwood Health they are usually busy seeing patients and we try to avoid interrupting their consultations. A nurse should be available to take your query and will take a message asking the GP to return your call if they cannot help you themselves. If patients cannot physically attend the practice and have an established relationship with the GP then they can ask for a telephone consult which will generally be charged for, at the rate of \$30 per 15 minutes for a Registered Patient.
3. *Affordability* – Greenwood Health remains one of the cheapest practices in the Nelson Bays area apart from those practices that receive a Very Low Cost Access subsidy from the government. Central Medical receive this subsidy (allowing them to charge less than Greenwood Health) but after we applied for this on behalf of our patients, the rules were changed. The government decided it would only give the subsidy to practices whose patients were predominately “High Needs”. The government is increasingly aware that it is “not fair” and unacceptable that the “rich” patients at Central pay less than the “poor” patients at Greenwood and we expect them to remedy this situation in the near future.
4. *After Hours service* – The Motueka GPs provide a comprehensive After Hours service. All After Hours calls are diverted to a “nurse triage” service where a nurse will assess the patient's health needs and decide whether the patient can wait until the next working day or needs to see a GP urgently, in which case they will contact the on-call GP and arrange for them to see you. The Motueka GPs are happy to see all patients needing their attention but the triage nurses (based in Auckland) sometimes appear to be trying to limit access to our doctors. The Nelson Bays Primary Health Organisation (PHO) pays for this service and we are in ongoing discussion to get the service improved. If you have any examples of an inadequate service then please forward these to our Practice Manager so that he can share them (anonymously) with the PHO and we can ensure that the service is improved.