



Winter Newsletter 2026



Welcome to our Winter Newsletter.

As the cooler months have arrived, winter is a good time to look after your health, stay up to date with vaccinations and book any important check-ups.

June is the ideal time to get ready for peak winter illness season. Vaccination remains one of the best ways to reduce the risk of serious illness from influenza, COVID-19 and for some eligible older adults, RSV.

- Book your flu vaccination if you have not already done so.
- Ask your Doctor whether you are due for a COVID-19 vaccination.
- Speak with your Doctor about whether RSV vaccination is recommended for you.

If you would like to book an appointment for a vaccination, chronic disease review, preventive health check or to discuss any symptoms that are concerning you, please contact the practice.

Medicare Assignment of Benefit



You may have heard about changes to the Medicare Assignment of Benefit being discussed in the press over the last few weeks and wondered how this impacts you and your appointment with your Doctor.

If you are bulk billed for your appointment with your Doctor you are effectively assigning your Medicare benefit to that Doctor. For the next 12 months verbal consent to assign this benefit will remain in place, meaning that things really continue as normal for now.

Over the next few months Enduring Assignment of Benefit will be introduced for patients that are registered with MyMedicare. That means that you can complete a form once and you have assigned your benefit on an ongoing basis to that practice, without having to give consent each time.

We will keep you updated as things change.

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

June is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month, providing a valuable opportunity to talk about one of the simplest ways to look after your long-term health. Bowel cancer screening can detect early changes before symptoms develop, and early detection significantly improves treatment outcomes. The good news is that screening is quick, easy and can be done in the comfort of your own home.

The National Bowel Cancer Screening Program offers free home screening kits to eligible Australians aged 45 to 74 every two years. The test is non-invasive, requires no special preparation and only takes a few minutes to complete. Despite its simplicity, it is a highly effective tool in identifying people who may benefit from further investigation.

If you receive a bowel screening kit in the mail, we encourage you **not** to put it aside for "another day". Completing the test is a small step that can have a big impact on your health and wellbeing. If you have questions about bowel cancer screening, a family history of bowel cancer, or concerns about symptoms, your GP is always happy to discuss the most appropriate screening options for you.

If you haven't received your free bowel screening kit, click on this link to order your kit. Link [Free Home Test Kit](#)



Jeans for Genes Day 2026 – Thursday 6 August

Jeans for Genes Day raises vital funds for children and families affected by genetic conditions. By supporting this important cause, you're helping fund life-changing research, improve treatments, and provide essential support services.

If you'd like to make a difference, donations can be made by visiting the [Jeans for Genes website](#). Every contribution, big or small, helps support a brighter future for those impacted by genetic disorders.

The Terrigal and Avoca Beach Medical Centres will be taking part in this initiative, so keep an eye out for us wearing our jeans on 6th August!

Thank you for your support.



After Hours Appointments

We are pleased to announce that Saturday appointments can now be booked from Monday of the same week. Where possible, please book your appointment online.

Please note that Saturday consultation fees are higher than Monday to Friday fees with some fees rebateable from Medicare.



We understand that Saturday appointments are more convenient for many people and we hope that being able to book earlier will help you plan your weekend in advance.

Please note that some Saturday appointments will continue to be available for same-day booking only. For these appointments, our phones open at 8:30 am on Saturdays.

Important: Our Saturday phone service is **only for booking Saturday appointments**. If you need to book an appointment for another day, please book online or call us during the week. For general enquiries, we also ask that you contact us on a weekday so our team can assist you more effectively.

New Monday Evening Appointments at Terrigal

From **August**, our **Terrigal practice** will begin offering **selected Monday evening appointments**.



We know that weekdays can be busy, making it difficult to see a doctor during standard consulting hours. We hope these extended hours will provide greater flexibility, help with urgent healthcare needs and make it easier to plan your appointments around work and family commitments.

Monday evening appointments will be available to book online soon.

Staff News



Growing Families

We're delighted to share some wonderful personal news from our team. Over the past few months, three of our staff members have welcomed new babies into their families.

Jessica Babic (Receptionist) welcomed baby Matilda in February. 

Alex Burge (Nurse) welcomed baby Orlando in March. 

Dr Renee Pope (GP) welcomed baby Charlotte in April. 

We extend our warmest congratulations to them and wish them and their growing families happiness, health and many special moments together.



Supporting Mental Health Awareness

We're proud to share that Dr Karen Douglas completed the 3,307 Push-Ups Challenge, which ran from 3–26 June 2026, to help raise awareness and support better mental health outcomes for all Australians.

The challenge encouraged participants to complete 3,307 push-ups over 24 days, highlighted the importance of mental health and helped to spark conversations about wellbeing in our communities.

Well done Karen for taking on this challenge and supporting such an important cause.

We hope you've enjoyed this edition of our newsletter. We'll be back soon with more health tips, practice updates and seasonal advice.