

Dear Parent/Guardian/Carer,

As you may be aware, our school was selected to participate in the Victorian Government's Doctors in Secondary Schools program.

As part of this program, an adolescent-trained GP from Southern Cross Medical Centre will be operating on school grounds each Thursday to provide free access to primary health care for secondary students at our school.

You can support the success of this program by talking to your child about the program and encouraging them to access the GP if they need primary health care. Students will be able to access the GP themselves, or you can make appointments for them by contacting the Wellbeing Team. You are welcome to attend consultations with them, if/when required.

What will the GP do?

The GP will provide students with the same services as the kind normally provided by GPs in the community, including seeing students about their physical and mental health, and sexual and reproductive health issues. GPs may also make referrals to other health services as required.

The GP will bulk bill consultations through Medicare, so there will be no out-of-pocket expenses for this service for your family.

The program is intended to provide better access to primary care for secondary school students. Therefore, parents, carers, guardians, and other family members are not able to use this service at this time.

Accessing the GP:

Generally, all students can make an appointment to see the GP. Victorian law is clear on how and when students can consent for medical treatment by a GP:

- Students who are mature minors can consent to their own medical treatment
- Students who are not mature minors cannot give consent to their own medical treatment.

Mature minors are students under the age of 18 years who are deemed capable of seeking and obtaining health care for their particular medical issue. The GP will assess if a student is a mature minor with respect to the issue for which they are seeking medical treatment.

If the GP considers your child is a mature minor, they may see them without you. If the GP thinks your student is *not* a mature minor, your consent will be sought if the student wishes to progress with the treatment.

More information is included in the information sheet at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/doctors-secondary-schools.aspx>.

If you have any concerns or questions about the Doctors in Secondary School program, you can discuss them with Debbie Edwards.