

**WAKEFIELD GARDENS SURGERY
EMAIL POLICY (PATIENT VERSION)**

1. Email correspondence with patients

Generally, Wakefield Gardens Surgery (WGS) discourages email communication with patients for patient safety and privacy reasons, however telehealth and COVID-19 has increased our reliance on digital communication.

Email is not an encrypted form of communication. If the patient contacts WGS via email with a specific request, permission to reply by email is assumed. If information or documents are to be sent to the patient, verbal consent is sought for each instance.

Typically, email is useful for administrative type communication, and should not be used for clinical communication unless this has previously been discussed with your doctor.

Emails from patients will be treated as per our phone message system and will be actioned within 7-10 working days. Patients are advised that NO urgent requests are to be conveyed via email. Patients are advised to make an appointment with a doctor for any urgent matters.

We DO NOT take appointment bookings or cancellations via email. You can book or cancel appointments online via HotDoc <https://www.hotdoc.com.au/medical-centres/ainslie-ACT-2602/wakefield-gardens-surgery/doctors>

2. Email correspondence with other health professionals

Our preferred method of corresponding with specialists and allied health is via secure electronic messaging (e.g. HealthLink). This is an end-to-end encrypted and secure messaging platform.

We will send letters via electronic fax, which is secure and hosted via servers in Australia.

On occasion, the health professional has no alternative to email, and we may communicate via this method.