Justice Health and
Forensic Mental Health Network

Justice Health NSW Policy

Patient Self Referral for Health Assessment in the Adult Ambulatory Care Setting

Issue Date: 04 January 2024

Together for
Healthier Tomorrows

Patient Self Referral for Health Assessment in the Adult Ambulatory Care Setting

Policy Number 1.362

Policy Function Continuum of Care

Issue Date 04 January 2024

Next Review Date 04 January 2027

Risk Rating High

Summary This policy outlines the arrangements for patients in Adults Ambulatory Care settings to access the Health Centre for health matters.

Responsible Officer General Manager, Primary Care

Applies to
- ☐ Administration Centres
- ☐ Community Sites and programs
- ☒ Health Centres - Adult Correctional Centres or Police Cells
- ☐ Health Centres - Youth Justice Centres
- ☐ Long Bay Hospital
- ☐ Forensic Hospital

CM Reference POLJH/1362

Change summary
- Patient Advice Cards can be returned to the patient via CSNSW in sealed envelopes with patient's name and MIN. Needs to be negotiated locally with CSNSW Governor or Manager of Security
- Removed 'non urgent' from policy title and throughout policy.

Authorised by Chair, Policy Steering Committee

Revision History

#	Issue Date	Number and Name	Change Summary
4	January 2024	1.362 Patient Self Referral for Health Assessment in the Adult Ambulatory Care Setting	• Patient Advice Cards can be returned to the patient via CSNSW in sealed envelopes with patient's name and MIN. Needs to be negotiated locally with CSNSW Governor or Manager of Security • Removed 'non urgent' from policy title and throughout policy.

3	October 2017	1.362 Patient Self Referral for Health Assessment in the Adult Ambulatory Care Setting (Non Urgent Issues Only)	• Minor updates
2	March 2014	1.362 Patient Self Referral for Health Assessment in the Adult Ambulatory Care Setting (Non Urgent Issues Only)	• Inclusion that locked boxes must be placed in accommodation areas to ensure unfettered access. • Inclusion in policy that patients may also hand self referral forms in at Health Centre. • Reminding staff to use PAS waiting list clinical priorities definition guide when determining the clinical priority.
1	August 2012	1.362 Patient Self Referral for Health Assessment in the Adult Ambulatory Care Setting (Non Urgent Issues Only)	• New policy

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Printed copies of this document, or parts thereof, must not be relied on as a current reference document.

Always refer to the electronic copy for the latest version.

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1. Preface

This policy outlines the arrangements for patients in the adult ambulatory care settings to access the Health Centre for health concerns. Justice Health and the Forensic Health Network (Justice Health NSW) is committed to providing timely and appropriate patient centred health care within the adult ambulatory care setting.

Patients can notify Justice Health NSW staff to a health concern or to request an appointment with specific health stream at an adult correctional centre by:

- Justice Health NSW JUS060.600 *Patient Self-Referral* form
- Patient Enquiry and Self-Referral Service (PERS)
- Knock-up in cell
- Local alternative processes

The Justice Health NSW JUS060.600 *Patient Self-Referral* form is designed to provide patients with a means of alerting Justice Health NSW staff to medical matters or to request a medical appointment at an adult correctional centre. The forms are filled in by the patient or their representative and placed in locked boxes which must be located in the accommodation areas to allow unfettered access. To ensure confidentiality, only Justice Health NSW staff have access to these locked boxes. The forms may also be delivered directly to the Health Centre by the patient or handed to a Justice Health NSW staff member. For any variances from this policy because of correctional centre functionality, the Nursing Unit Manager (NUM) must complete a local safe work practice and ensure patients information is kept confidential.

The Patient Enquiry and Self-Referral Service (PERS) offers patients an alternative to completing the patient self-referral form. Patients can call a dedicated phone line to make a self-referral to see a clinician. The service operates state-wide, Monday to Friday between 8.00am to 4.00pm and can be accessed (free of charge in custody) on the Common Auto Dial List (CADL).

2. Policy Content

2.1 Mandatory Requirements

- To allow Justice Health NSW staff to triage patients, the JUS060.600 *Patient Self- Referral* form and Patient Enquiry and Self-Referral Service should only be used by patients for health matters that are not urgent and are not medical emergencies.
- Patients who are from a non-English speaking background and patients who have literacy difficulties are to be able to access health services. The JUS060.600 *Patient Self- Referral* form has been adapted to accommodate these patients.

2.2 Implementation Roles & Responsibilities

- The Network Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services is responsible for the strategic oversight of this policy.
- Nurse Managers and Nursing Unit Managers in Health Centres and in the Integrated Care Service are responsible for:
    - Coordinating care within their facilities; and

- Ensuring supplies of JUS060.600 Patient Self-Referral form are regularly checked and replenished as required.
- Ensuring patients are aware of how to access health services this includes the PERS

- Registered Nurses (RN's) or Enrolled Nurses (EN's) in Health Centres and in the PERS are responsible for triaging and assessing patients

3. Procedure Content

3.1 Patient Self-Referral Form

- All Health Centres must adopt a procedure to ensure all patients have access to a JUS060.600 Patient Self-Referral form. This can be via the wing or pod officers or placed in health information pamphlet racks in the Health Centre.
- All new receptions and patients transferred into the correctional centre are to be verbally advised of the Patient Self-Referral form and its intended purpose. Local procedures for location of the forms and where to place them must also be explained to the patient.
- Completed JUS060.600 Patient Self-Referral forms must be:
  1. Returned to a central locked box or boxes (but may be delivered directly to the Health Centre or handed to a Justice Health NSW staff member as well). The locked boxes must be cleared by Justice Health NSW staff daily. The keys to the locked boxes should be kept in the key lock/safe in the Health Centre. Only Justice Health NSW staff may have access to these keys.
  2. Triaged by a Nurse. Patients must be placed on the appropriate clinician's wait list on PAS and given a clinical priority. The Nurse must use the PAS waiting list clinical priorities definition from 4.032 *Prioritising Patients on Waitlists* as a guide when determining the clinical priority. This is especially relevant for the clinical stream waitlist priorities, for example custodial mental health.

	Priority Level	Definition
Urgent	**1**	**For patients whose health condition is deteriorating and requires attention within one [1] to three [3] days.**
Semi-Urgent	2	For patients where lack of immediate intervention may result in an adverse outcome and requires attention within three [3] to fourteen [14] days.
Non-Urgent	3	For patients who are stable but will require attention within fourteen [14] days to three [3] months.
Routine	4	For patients who are stable but require intervention within twelve [12] months.
Follow up	5	For patients requiring a follow up review with no specific timeframe.

- The Nurse must:

1. Document the date the form is received and sign the bottom of the JUS060.600 Patient Self-Referral form.
2. Enter the patient on the appropriate clinician's wait list on PAS.
3. Add an entry in the Progress Notes section of the JHeHS record acknowledging receipt of the JUS060.600 Patient Self-Referral form.
4. Ensure the JUS060.600 Patient Self-Referral form is uploaded as a scanned document in the patient's JHEHS Health Record, and

- The Nurse should, if possible:
  1. Complete a Patient Advice Card regarding the patient's self-referral which advises:
     - The patient has been placed on the waiting list to see a relevant health professional as soon as possible. Refer to the Patient Advice Card in Appendix 1; or
     - Justice Health NSW does not manage requests related to lifestyle issues (such as requests for a vegetarian diet, request to get shoes out of their property or for an extra mattress / pillow). Refer to the Patient Advice Card in Appendix 2.

       The patient advice card is completed by the Nurse and the patient provided with feedback regarding receipt of their referral form if possible. This can be either with a copy of their referral or a Patient Advice Card advising them that their form has been received and will be processed according to urgency as determined by the Justice Health NSW staff.

Any patients alerting Justice Health NSW to a condition via a JUS060.600 Patient Self-Referral form that clinically could be a medical emergency (for example (but not limited to) chest pain or shortness of breath) must be seen immediately. Justice Health NSW must ensure that patients are aware of the correct process for all urgent or serious health related issues (refer to Justice Health NSW policy 1.010 *Access to Patients – Medical Emergencies*). For any medical emergencies during after hours, it is the responsibility of CSNSW to call for an ambulance.

3.2 Patient Self-Referral Service

- All Health Centres must ensure patients have access to the Patient Self-Referral Service via a CADL.
- All new receptions and patients transferred into the correctional centre are to be verbally advised of the Patient Self-Referral Line CADL Line 5 form and its intended purpose.
- Patient Self-Referral via the PERS service must be:
  1. Triaged by a Nurse. Patients must be placed on the appropriate clinician's wait list on PAS and given a clinical priority. The Nurse must use the PAS waiting list clinical priorities definition as a guide when determining the clinical priority.
- The Nurse must:
  1. Document the patient's health concerns and plan of care in the eProgress notes in JHeHS.
  2. Enter the patient on the appropriate clinician's wait list on PAS.

- The Nurse must inform:
  - The patient has been placed on the PAS waiting list to see a relevant health professional and what the timeframe is to be seen.
- Any patients alerting PERS to a medical emergency (for example (but not limited to) chest pain or shortness of breath) must be seen immediately as per the PERS procedure.

3.3 Multiple self-referrals

Patient's may submit multiple self-referrals for the same health concern or if they have not been seen within their priority timeframe. All self-referrals must be reviewed for the potential need to re-prioritise the patient if their condition changes, they are outside their initial timeframe to be seen, or additional relevant information is received.

Staff should review all relevant information including eProgress notes and previous self-referrals for a change in condition, and if possible, speaking to the patient. For patients who are outside their timeframe, the length of time they are overdue and have been waiting should also be considered. Clinicians should also consult with ROAMs for guidance if needed. Patient should also be informed that their self-referral has been reassessed via a patient advice card or verbally if calling the PERS.

Patients should also be advised to only submit a new self-referral if there is a change in their condition and be reassured that they will be seen.

4. Definitions

Must

Indicates a mandatory action to be complied with.

Should

Indicates a recommended action to be complied with unless there are sound reasons for taking a different course of action.

Patient Enquiry and Self-Referral Service

Patient Enquiry and Self-Referral Service (PERS) is a state-wide service that offers patients access to a health professional to voice any health concerns, enquiries, or complaints.

5. Related Documents

Legislations	
Justice Health NSW Policies, Guidelines and Procedures	1.010 *Access to Patients – Medical Emergencies* 1.225 *Health Assessments in Male and Female Adult Correctional Centres and Police Cells* 1.262 *Medical and Nursing Certificates (Adults)* 4.032 *Prioritising Patients on Waitlists*

	Clinical Applications Business Process Patient Enquiry and Self- Referral Process *PAS Quick Step Guides*
Justice Health NSW Forms	JUS060.600 *Patient Self-Referral*
NSW Health Policy Directives and Guidelines	
Other documents and resources	

Appendix 1 – Patient Advice Card: Self-referral form



Thank you for your patient self-referral form for the health centre.

You have been placed on a waiting list to see the relevant health professional and you will be seen as soon as possible.

Please do not submit multiple referral forms for the same health problem unless there is a change or deterioration in your health from when you have put in your first form.

If you are transferred to another correctional centre you do not need to complete another patient self-referral form for this health problem at your new centre as your referral will be transferred with you.

Appendix 2 – Patient Advice Card: Non-Placement on Waiting List

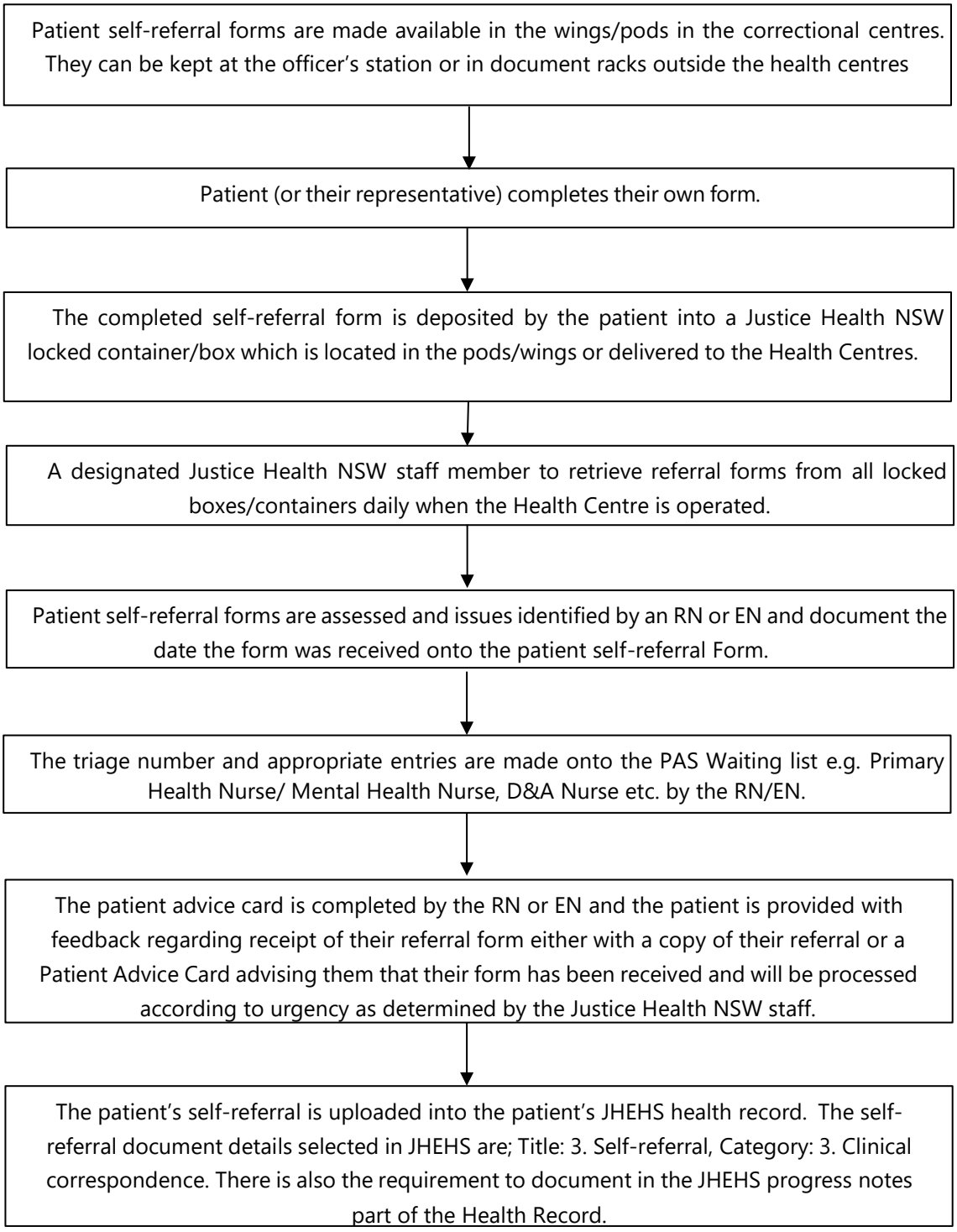


Justice Health and the Forensic Mental Health Network (JHFMHN) do not manage these requests.

We are unable to see you regarding this lifestyle matter. Please discuss your request with Corrective Services NSW / the private operators' staff.

Appendix 3 – Flowchart of the Patient Self-Referral Form

Aim: To facilitate a clear pathway for patients to identify concerns and access health care in the health centres by the use of the Justice Health NSW JUS060.600 Patient self-referral form.



Appendix 4 – Patient Enquiry and Self-Referral Service Business Process

