

# Practice Policy

Last updated: 12 November 2025

This policy outlines how Rural Psychiatry ("we", "our", "us") provides specialist psychiatric services to patients ("you", "your"). It applies to all care delivered via telehealth or limited in-person services. By booking or attending an appointment, completing forms, or communicating with us, you accept this policy.

## 1. About our service

- **Model of care:** We provide telehealth consultations to eligible patients across Australia. You are responsible for ensuring privacy and a stable internet connection during appointments.
- **Service area:** Due to Medicare restrictions under item 294, we do not provide services to patients who reside in, or whose referring GP is located in, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT).
- **Clinical scope:** Assessment, diagnosis, and management of a range of mental health conditions in adults and young people, including mood disorders, anxiety, bipolar affective disorder, psychotic disorders, and related general psychiatric conditions. Services are provided only to adults aged 18 years and over.
- **Exclusions:** We do not assess or treat ADHD, do not issue or recommend Schedule 8 (stimulant) medications or permit requests, and do not provide medico-legal, NDIS functional capacity, fitness for work, or WorkCover/TAC assessments.
- **Service continuity:** From time to time, Dr Matthew Brazel may take periods of leave. During such times, the service and associated inbox (admin@ruralpsychiatry.com.au) may be unattended. Messages and enquiries will be reviewed and actioned once the service resumes. Urgent clinical matters should be directed to your GP or local emergency service during these periods.

## 2. Referrals & eligibility

- A valid GP referral (or specialist referral where applicable) is required for Medicare benefits.

- Referrals must include the reason for referral, relevant clinical history, current and past medications, allergies, and your contact details.
- **Medicare items:** Assessments will be billed under items 291, 296 or as clinically appropriate, with the 294 rural item loading number.
- We may decline or defer referrals where a presentation or request falls outside our clinical scope, or where regulatory, geographical, or safety constraints apply.

### 3. Appointments, forms & communications

- **Pre-appointment requirements:** All pre-assessment forms and requested documents must be completed and submitted at least 3 business days before your appointment.
- **Telehealth platform:** Appointments are conducted securely via a secure video link. You are responsible for ensuring a private setting and stable connection.
- **Support person:** You may invite a support person if arranged in advance.
- **Between appointments:** Administrative queries should be sent to [admin@ruralpsychiatry.com.au](mailto:admin@ruralpsychiatry.com.au). Clinical queries may require a review appointment for safety and documentation. We do not provide clinical advice via text or social media.

### 4. Fees, bulk billing & attendance

- **Bulk billing:** Rural Psychiatry is a bulk billing practice. No fees are charged for appointments covered under eligible Medicare items.
- **Non-attendance:** If you fail to attend an appointment without good reason, future bookings may be cancelled at our discretion.
- **Cancellation fee:** If you cancel with less than 3 business days' notice or do not attend without good reason, a \$50 fee will apply.
- **Rebooking after non-attendance:** Patients who miss an appointment without good reason must pay the \$50 non-attendance fee before another appointment can be scheduled.

### 5. Cancellation & rescheduling policy

We ask all patients to respect appointment times and provide adequate notice if changes are needed.

- **Notice period:** At least 3 business days' notice is required to cancel or reschedule.
- **Late cancellations / non-attendance:** A \$50 fee applies for cancellations or missed appointments without good reason. Compassionate consideration may be granted on a case-by-case basis.
- **Repeat cancellations:** Frequent cancellations or no-shows may result in restricted future bookings or discharge from the service.

### 6. Respectful behaviour (zero-tolerance)

We are committed to maintaining a safe and respectful environment. Any form of

abuse, harassment, threats, or disrespectful behaviour towards staff will not be tolerated. We reserve the right to terminate services or cancel appointments if behaviour compromises safety.

## 7. Privacy, confidentiality & use of AI

We manage patient information in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs).

- **Information collected:** Personal identifiers, contact details, clinical and psychiatric history, assessment notes, reports, and correspondence.
- **Purpose of collection:** To provide clinical care, coordinate with referrers, manage bookings, and meet professional and legal obligations.
- **Information sharing:** Reports and updates are routinely shared with your referring GP for coordinated care. We may disclose information without consent if required by law or if there is a serious or imminent risk to yourself or others.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** We may use AI tools for administrative or documentation support (e.g. report formatting, de-identification). These tools are used in compliance with the APPs, applying data minimisation and security measures. No AI tool is used for autonomous clinical decision-making.
- **Data security:** All electronic records are encrypted with restricted access. Physical files, if any, are securely stored. Access is limited to authorised personnel.

## 8. Reports, timeframes & communication

- Comprehensive reports are generally sent to you and your GP within up to 14 days of the assessment, depending on complexity.
- Administrative emails are typically responded to within 2–5 business days, excluding periods when the service is unattended due to leave.

## 9. Patient responsibilities

- Provide accurate, complete information and update us of any changes (e.g. medications, GP details, address).
- Ensure a private, confidential space for telehealth.
- Seek emergency help via 000 or your local hospital in urgent situations.

## 10. Website & digital terms

Our website may use cookies and analytics tools to improve functionality. You can manage cookies via your browser settings. We are not responsible for third-party links or content.

## 11. Complaints & feedback

Feedback can be directed to [admin@ruralpsychiatry.com.au](mailto:admin@ruralpsychiatry.com.au). If unresolved, patients may contact the Health Services Commissioner in their relevant state or territory.

## 12. Limitation of liability & disclaimer

To the extent permitted by law, we are not liable for indirect or consequential losses. Liability for any non-excludable condition is limited to re-supply of the service or reimbursement of its cost. Website or general information provided outside of consultations is not a substitute for medical advice.

## 13. Updates & governing law

This policy may be updated periodically. The version and date above reflect the latest review. This policy is governed by the laws of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and relevant Commonwealth legislation.

### Rural Psychiatry

Providing accessible specialist psychiatry to rural and remote Australia via secure telehealth.

**Contact:**

Email: [admin@ruralpsychiatry.com.au](mailto:admin@ruralpsychiatry.com.au)  
(Physical correspondence not accepted)

### Policies

[Practice Policy](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[My Health Record Policy](#)

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