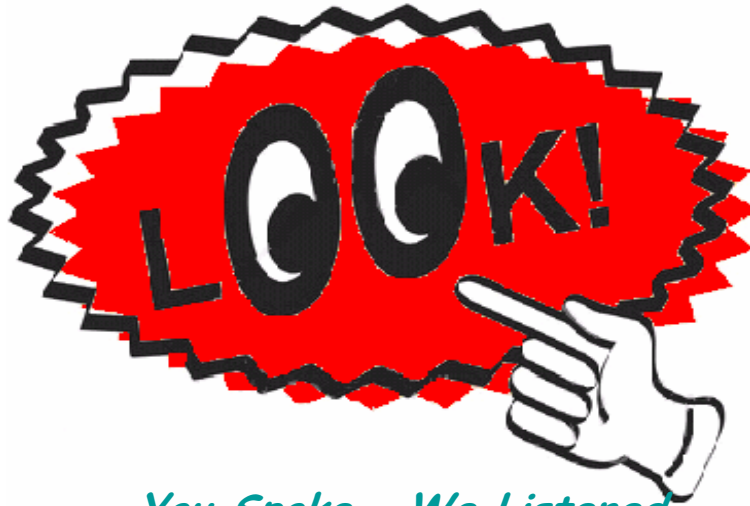


Renmark  
Medical Clinic



DEDICATED TO HIGH QUALITY HEALTHCARE

JUNE 2011



*You Spoke - We Listened  
We're Changing to Improve our Service to You*

We have listened to customer feedback on our appointment system and in particular frustration at getting a guaranteed time to see your doctor of choice. All patients are of equal importance to us and it is unfair to randomly select some to get appointments ahead of others. To be fair to all the following process will apply when you call:

*We can make you a booking "with Dr Smith or Dr Muecke but will not be until....." (it may be some time ahead) If you require urgent medical attention before that appointment, you will be offered an appointment with the duty doctor of the day OR if your problem is not urgent you will be offered an earlier appointment with another doctor.... The doctors in our clinic work as a team and if unique issues arise in your consultation the doctor is able to consult with Dr Smith or Dr Muecke as required.*

Questions You May Have:

*Q: Why can't I get to see my favourite doctor whenever I want?*

A: Some of our doctors have been in the practice for 20 years or more and naturally have built up a large number of patients who have seen them many times - there is limited amount of consulting time available and the potential "demand" exceeds "supply" by 200—300%. It is primary health care best practice for the available time that Senior Doctors have to be applied in the most effective way. That is why Dr Muecke and Dr Smith not only consult but provide in-house advice for other doctors.

*Q: Why don't Dr Muecke and Dr Smith just spend more time consulting?*

A: All consultations are important but relatively few are urgent. Our Senior doctors have a number of genuinely urgent demands on their time including delivering babies (80+ a year), attending the Renmark Paringa District Hospital for emergency presentations (the next callout could be for someone you love!!), participating in the River Docs Emergency Department roster that services Renmark amongst other towns after hours, assisting in operations, attending Aged Care facilities etc.

PLEASE TURN OVER



**Q: I need to see Dr Smith or Dr Muecke because they know my history.**

A: Renmark Medical Clinic has comprehensive computerised medical records for all patients that all doctors can access and quickly come up to speed with relevant patient history. Many consultations are for one-off treatment issues unrelated to previous history. We value all our doctors but need to be wary of "burning them out" - no one wants Dr Smith or Dr Muecke to become GRUMPY Doc Martin's!



**Q: Why aren't there more Australian-trained doctors in Country SA?**

A: A good question to ask your politicians (who will blame each other!) - Reality is medical workforce planning has never been good at anticipating and matching demand and there is lack of incentives to draw metro graduates to rural areas. We value and are grateful that our International Medical Graduates have chosen Renmark over more than 40+ other country towns that are crying out for doctors. It is vital the Community involves and embraces all medicos that work in Renmark. They have extensive clinical experience in their own right - the Australian system has many aspects that are new/don't exist to such an extent overseas i.e. Centrelink, Workers Compensation, Medicare, Remote Mental Health support etc. but once they are orientated to these they have the full set of skills required.

**Q: It is so hard to get an appointment at all!!**

A: That was true but we have undergone a strong recruitment campaign and since January this year have progressively added 3 new doctors with a 4<sup>th</sup> about to start consulting in June which means we will have double the number of doctors we had a year ago. Already in that time an additional 3,000 consultations have been undertaken and in the second half of the year that will grow to 8,000 additional appointments available. We expect soon anyone wishing to see a doctor will get a consult no later than 48 hours after calling and in the majority of cases on the day or the next day. We find our new doctors quickly build up their own following.

**Q: I have a chronic condition and can't get regular treatment**

A: A bonus of the expanded workforce is we will shortly be able to look at expanding the range of treatments we can offer the Renmark Community. These include:

- better management of chronic diseases such as asthma and diabetes
- offering preventative programs such a skin clinics
- improving the number of PAP smears and Men's Health
- increasing service range to the Aboriginal Community

**Q: Can you send me a reminder of my booking?**

A: We are investigating the use of SMS technology to do so as more people have mobiles than landlines nowadays. There is also a relatively high number of "no-shows" especially for appointments made well in advance. These hurt our ability to provide services and we would really appreciate the public keeping appointments or cancelling in advance so others don't unnecessarily miss out.

#### **FEEDBACK:**

*We responded to the patient surveys conducted in June 2010 and will be seeking a new round of feedback in the latter part of 2011. We welcome any feedback in the interim and your ideas on how we can further improve services. Please send your comments and ideas to:*

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[Chris.Shotton@renmarkmedical.com.au](mailto:Chris.Shotton@renmarkmedical.com.au)

*And a response will be sent within 7 days.*

*Thank You!*