



Primary Options
for
Acute Care



St John
first to care

POAC ST JOHN PATHWAY FAQs

The POAC St John pathway provides St John ambulance officers with an option to transport suitable patients to their GP/medical home or an Accident & Medical Centre with POAC funding all costs associated with the visit.

Q: What is the POAC St John Pathway?

A: If the patient has a non critical condition, the paramedic has an option to transport patients to either their Medical Home (GP) or the closest A&M clinic with the total cost being funded by the Primary Care Options for Acute Care (POAC) service.

Q: Who has been involved in developing this pathway?

A: St John, POAC, GPs, ED clinical directors, A&M clinics, Primary Healthcare organisations (PHOs)

Q: Who can be treated within the pathway?

A: All patients who are transported by St John to either their own General Practice or to an A&M, including ACC patients. The funding covers the entire cost of that episode of care including the initial consultation and ACC surcharges.

The patient will still be responsible for paying any St John Ambulance fee (as they normally would).

Q: How will the decision be made on where to transport the patient?

A: The paramedics will assess the patient to determine that they are suitable for the pathway based on agreed clinical guidelines and whether the patient can safely be managed in a primary care setting.

If the patient is suitable to be managed by a GP, their own General Practice should be considered as the first option provided the patient can identify them. Prior contact with the practice is essential and ambulance personnel should speak directly to a doctor or nurse to discuss the patient.

The patient may alternatively be taken to an accredited A&M facility.

Q: Can the patient self transport under this pathway?

A: Yes. If the patient has suitable transport and can safely make their way the paramedic may recommend this as an option. The patient needs to present to a medical facility within four hours in order for the cost to be funded by POAC.

Q: How will the medical facility know that the patient is under this pathway?

A: The ambulance crew will reference POAC on the patient record form (PRF)

Q: What is different about this pathway?

A: Patients who call St John and who have conditions that can be managed just as well or better managed in primary care will be taken to a primary care facility instead of an ED. This option ensures that patients receive the appropriate care in the ideal place. This will encourage patients to reconnect with their medical home and will help reduce the growing pressure on hospital EDs.

Q: Why is this pathway beneficial to GPs?

A: It promotes continuity of care at the patients' medical home. The medical home will (where appropriate) be the first option for the paramedic and the A&Ms are committed to ensuring care is transferred back to the medical home as soon as clinically feasible.

The GP should always be the first port of call for patients, unless it is a medical emergency. Patients receive the benefits of greater continuity of care, population health measures such as proactive immunisations and cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk assessments and other support for the management of chronic conditions.

Q: What happens if a patient is accepted by the practice but subsequently requires transport to ED as their condition has changed or deteriorated?

A: If subsequent transport to the ED is required, the POAC service will fund this. Contact POAC directly to arrange the transport.

Q: How is a POAC claim made?

A: The POAC claiming process remains exactly the same. Submit the referral in the usual manner; it is important to ensure that it is marked as a St John initiated referral (rather than GP), to ensure you can claim for the total episode of care.

POAC will fund ALL costs that would normally have been payable by the patient from the time of arrival. This includes all ACC surcharges, Radiology Fees and After Hour Fees.

ACC claims should follow usual ACC processes with POAC paying the surcharge you will normally have charged the patient.

Q: How can I find out more information?

A: Go to the POAC website: www.poac.co.nz or email poac@easthealth.co.nz