

Do I need a doctor's referral?

A doctor's referral is NOT required to use the service.

Are there any risks with Podiatry treatments?

For some treatments the Podiatrists use sharp instruments. There is a risk that these instruments may cut healthy skin and cause some bleeding. If this occurs the cut will be dressed and you will be told how to look after the wound. All sharp instruments are sterilized before use to reduce the risk of infection.

Charges and Fees:

\$10.00 for pensioners/health care card holders and \$15.00 for others.

Children under the age of 18 are free.

Please discuss any difficulties in meeting these client fees with the treating health professional.

There may be extra charges if you require orthotics/insoles or nail surgery under anaesthetic.

How long does an appointment take?

You need to allow at least an hour for your first appointment and at least 30 minutes for subsequent appointments.

Cancellations:

If you need to cancel your appointment please contact the clinic on 50339390 as early as possible.

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Podiatry Department

Working to enhance the foot health of the community



The **focus** of the department is to:

- Increase the knowledge & skills of individuals & communities around foot health and mobility
- Encourage individuals to self manage their own foot health
- Prevent lower extremity amputations (LEAP)
- Provide interventions that reduce pain and prevent long term disability



Swan Hill
District Health
my hospital

What is a Podiatrist?

A Podiatrist is an allied health professional who has special skills and knowledge in assessing, diagnosing and treating disorders of the feet & legs. Podiatrists usually study for 3-4 years. They study about the whole body, but specialize in foot and leg problems. They have special knowledge of rheumatological, vascular and musculoskeletal problems. The Podiatrists at the hospital also have special skills in managing the feet of people with diabetes.

Can I use the Podiatry service?

All members of the Swan Hill community are able to attend the Podiatry Service for an initial consultation. At this appointment the Podiatrist will ask you questions about your general health, and the concerns you have with your feet. After the Podiatrist has finished their assessment, they will discuss with you options for how you can best manage your foot problems.

How Podiatry at Swan Hill District Health works:

When you contact the Podiatry Department for an appointment you will be asked to fill out a form with information about your general health and your foot problems. The Podiatrist will then assign a priority for your problem. This priority is based on how likely your foot problem is to result in you needing to have an amputation as a result of your foot problem. Reception staff will then contact you when an appointment becomes available.

After the initial consultation the Podiatrist will advise you if we can provide you with on-going care. You will be given a letter that explains what we can provide for you.

The Podiatry department sees clients with different problems on different days.

What Podiatry can not provide?

Podiatrists do not provide pedicures. The Podiatry service at the hospital is unable to provide general nail cutting for healthy feet.

Lower Extremity Amputation Prevention Program:

Looks after people with diabetes or other medical conditions that have diagnosed high risk feet. This service works with these people to help prevent ulcers occurring and prevent amputation becoming necessary.

Generally people have a high risk foot when they have neuropathy—poor feeling—causing them not to feel damage to their feet, or ischaemia meaning the blood flow to the feet is so poor wounds are slow to heal.

The program also works with people who have healed ulcers or have had amputations caused by having high risk feet.

Wound Clinic:

Provides care to people who have chronic foot wounds and ulcers. A foot ulcer is a sore on the foot usually caused by trauma, and made worse by neuropathy and/or ischaemia.

Diabetes Assessments:

All people with diabetes are encouraged to have their feet examined by a Podiatrist once a year. This examination involves checking for nerves and feeling, blood supply and circulation, identifying any foot problems and advising how these problems can best be managed.

Children's Clinic:

Provides assessment and treatment for children under 16 years of age experiencing a range of foot problems, including painful feet, intoeing, growing pains, knock knees, flat feet, and plantar warts (Verrucae).

Nail Surgery Service:

Provides treatment of ingrown toenails under local anaesthesia to relieve pain and stop the nails ingrowing.

Short Term Clinic:

Provides assessment and treatment for people experiencing foot pain (heel spurs, aching feet and legs, ankle problems etc.) due to how the feet move. Clients are usually seen for 6-12 weeks and then discharged. Strategies used include footwear changes, exercises and orthotics.

Low Risk Foot Service:

Provides care to people who have painful corns and calluses. This service is designed to educate people with minor foot problems; its aim is to keep feet healthy and reduce pain levels as much as possible.