

NSW Alcohol Interlock Program

Practice Managers and Receptionists: Consultations during the program

Overview of the NSW Alcohol Interlock Program

- Alcohol interlock devices are mandatory for people convicted of middle range, high range, repeat and other serious drink driving offences in NSW.
- An interlock is an electronic breath testing device linked to a vehicle's ignition system. Program participants must provide a breath sample that the interlock analyses for the presence of alcohol. If a positive sample is detected, the vehicle will not start.
- The program puts participants in contact with their GP at up to three different stages of the program to help them with their drinking behaviour:
 1. **Before they enter the program**
 2. **During the program**
 3. **Towards the end of the program.**

This information sheet relates to **Stage 2**. The involvement of GPs is essential to support the rehabilitative opportunities of the program.

Why is this patient attending?

This patient is currently on the interlock program and is attending because Roads and Maritime Services has recommended that they visit a doctor as part of the program.

How long should the appointment be?

Most doctors prefer a 20-30 minute appointment. Sometimes a second appointment is needed.

Does the doctor have to send anything back to Roads and Maritime?

No. This consultation is only to help the patient.

Resources for this consultation

1. **Drink-less Program resources**
(University of Sydney) including the ten question AUDIT questionnaire for the patient to complete
 - An **Alcohol Awareness Kit** which includes a more visual form of the Drink-less 'Handycard', which may be useful for patients from a non- English speaking background
2. **Alcohol Dependence Checklist:**
 - This checklist is included in the Stage 2 information sheet for General Practitioners
3. **A letter to the patient**
from Roads and Maritime outlining the patient's interlock readings
 - The patient is recommended to provide the doctor with this letter to help inform the consultation.

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If the doctor is short of time, can I speed things up?

Some doctors like the patient to complete the questionnaire from the Drink-less resources (see box above) in the waiting room. However, some patients may not be comfortable with written English. To avoid embarrassment, you can ask the person if they are happy to fill in the questionnaire, or would prefer the doctor to ask the questions.

Can this be billed to Medicare?

Yes. This visit is a therapeutic consultation so it can be billed under Medicare. Most GPs bill this as a level C consultation (item 36).