



# Practice Connect



**Practice Assist**  
Strengthening general practice in WA

24 October 2017

## Latest news and updates

### Medicare Benefits Schedule changes

Based on the recommendations of the Medicare Benefit Schedule (MBS) Review Taskforce, the Australian Government Department of Health has announced the following key changes to be implemented by 1 November 2017 as follows:

- Increasing the MBS rebate for selected procedures performed by general practitioners (GPs)
- Removal of the administrative block to allow patients to claim MBS rebates for consultations with GPs during the 'aftercare' period
- Blocking claiming of MBS items for subsequent attendances with any items in group T8 (surgical operations) that have an MBS fee of \$300 or more
- Changes to gastroenterology services
- Changes to MBS items for obstetrics services
- Changes to ear, nose and throat MBS items 41674, 41789, 41793 and 41801
- Changes to spinal x-ray services
- Changes to bone densitometry services

Additional changes to colonoscopy MBS items will take effect from 1 March 2018. Please note all changes are subject to the passage of legislation. Detailed fact sheets can be found here:

<http://health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/MBSR-government-response-1>.

### Enrolled nurse survey

The Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association (APNA) has developed a survey to gain a better understanding of enrolled nurse supervision in practice so they can support members to implement meaningful supervisory arrangements.

Complete the survey before 31 October 2017 and have a chance at winning \$100 worth of APNA Online Learning.

The more nurses who take part, the better it represents the reality of the workforce.

To take the survey please visit the following webpage:

<http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3662854/Enrolled-Nurse-Supervision-Survey-2017>.

#### In this edition:

- [Medicare Benefits Schedule changes](#)
- [Enrolled nurse survey](#)
- [Urgent medicine recall](#)
- [HealthPathways update](#)
- [Digital Health update](#)
- [Free interpreting service for GPs and medical specialists](#)
- [Medicare Benefits Schedule: Charging for consumables](#)
- [World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Day - 15 November 2017](#)
- [New Medication Management App](#)
- [Telehealth survey](#)
- [Palliative Care in General Practice evaluation](#)
- [Education and Training](#)
- [Health Promotion Events in November](#)

#### Key dates:

- 31 October: ePIP quarter closes.
- 1 November: changes to MBS.
- 1 December: National Cervical Screening Program renewal.

1800 2 ASSIST (1800 2 277 478) | [support@practiceassist.com.au](mailto:support@practiceassist.com.au) | [www.practiceassist.com.au](http://www.practiceassist.com.au)



WA Primary Health Alliance is supported by funding from the Australian Government under the PHN Program.

Rural Health West is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and the WA Country Health Service.

# Urgent medicine recall

## Gentamicin Injection BP 80mg in 2mL Steriluer® AUST R 11376

Pfizer has advised that following an internal investigation, the following ten batches of **Gentamicin Injection BP 80mg in 2mL Steriluer®** are being recalled as they may contain higher than expected intrinsic constituent (histamine) in the finished product.

If you have any unused Gentamicin Injection, check your stock and quarantine any products from the affected batches.

For more information, contact Pfizer Australia on 1800 999 543.

Presentation	Product Code	Batches / Expiry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Gentamicin 80mg/2mL as sulfate injection BP ampoule 10 and 50 packs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>08060080 (10 pack)</li><li>0800180 (50 pack)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A115 / 30 November 2017</li><li>A115A / 30 November 2017</li><li>A115B / 30 November 2017</li><li>A129 / 31 December 2017</li><li>A297 / 31 May 2018</li><li>A316 / 31 August 2018</li><li>A318 / 31 May 2018</li><li>A342 / 31 July 2018</li><li>A394 / 31 October 2018</li><li>A448 / 31 December 2018.</li></ul>

## HealthPathways update

HealthPathways WA have now reached **331** live pathways. The most recently published pathways are:

- Acute Paediatric Gynaecology
- Colposcopy Providers
- Falls Prevention and Assessment
- Mental Health in Children and Adolescents
- Non-acute Paediatric Gynaecology
- Non-acute Pain Specialist Assessment
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Pain Management Advice
- Panic Disorder in Children and Adolescents
- Postherpetic Neuralgia (PHN)
- Selective Mutism in Children
- Separation Anxiety Disorder in Children
- Social Anxiety Disorder (Social Phobia) in Children and Adolescents
- Trauma in Children and Adolescents

The recently published 'Falls Prevention and Assessment Pathway' is useful resource to reduce the risk of falls in older adults. The pathway advises how to assess a patient's falls risk and how to manage the patients risk factors. It also provides GPs with clear referral information and criteria to enable easy referral of patients for an assessment by a falls service, to a community exercise program for older adults, or another community provider as appropriate.

## Digital Health update

The Australian Digital Health Agency has issued advice for all healthcare providers regarding a vulnerability that has been discovered relating to wireless connectivity.

## What has happened?

Security researcher, Mathy Vanhoef, has identified a vulnerability in the Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA) protocol. This is currently the most common protocol used for securing wireless networks, and is considered the most secure protocol currently available. The vulnerability identified potentially allows a malicious attacker to gain access to unencrypted information traversing the wireless network, and make changes to the information (for example inserting malicious content into a non-malicious website connection).

## What is the impact?

All devices that connect to wireless networks are vulnerable, and it is highly recommended that all wireless devices including equipment and computers are updated to patch this vulnerability. Until patches are released and applied, all unencrypted communication that occurs over a wireless network (including email communication, as it is generally unencrypted) should be considered unsecured.

## What should practices do?

**Please view the following attachment for recommendations on how to reduce WPA vulnerability.**

[http://www.wapha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/171024\\_WPAVulnerability.pdf](http://www.wapha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/171024_WPAVulnerability.pdf)

For more information download the Security Alert briefing here: <http://www.wapha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Security-Alert-171017-01-WiFi-critical-vulnerabilities-in-WPA-and-WPA2.pdf>.

Additionally, you can also contact the Australian Digital Health Agency on 1300 901 001.

## Free interpreting service for GPs and medical specialists

Working with professional interpreters is essential to ensuring medical practitioners are able to communicate effectively with their patients.

General practitioners and other approved medical specialists can access a free professional interpreter through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) when delivering Medicare-rebateable services to anyone with a Medicare card.

The TIS website can be accessed here: <https://www.tisnational.gov.au/>.

Nursing and practice support staff working with practitioners registered with TIS National can also access the service using the same client code.

The TIS is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year. To access this free service, complete the client registration form which can be found here: <https://tisonline.tisnational.gov.au/RegisterAgency>.

For more information contact TIS National Language Policy Liaison team on [tis.lpl@border.gov.au](mailto:tis.lpl@border.gov.au) or by calling 1300 575 847.

## Medicare Benefits Schedule: Charging for consumables

### Practice Question:

*Our practice is not currently charging patients for items used in the treatment room such as suture packs, dressings and bandages. Are we able to charge our patients to re-coup these consumable costs?*

### Response:

A general practitioner may charge a *private patient* a fee for dressings, bandages or a treatment room fee to assist in cost recovery of these items when they have been purchased by the practice for the benefit of their patients.

Patients need to be informed in advance that this fee is not covered by the Medicare Benefits Scheme (MBS) and as such, a rebate is not available.

However, the MBS states that when a general practitioner *bulk bills* a patient for a service, the practitioner is accepting the relevant Medicare benefit (the rebate) as full payment for the service.

Additional charges in association with that service cannot be raised. This includes but is not limited to:

- any consumables that would be reasonably necessary to perform the service, including bandages and/or dressings;
- record keeping fees;
- a booking fee to be paid before each service; and
- an annual administration or registration fee.

The only exception to this is where the patient is provided with a vaccine or vaccines from the practitioner's own supply held on the practitioner's premises.

For the full explanation see the Medicare Benefits Schedule here:

<http://www9.health.gov.au/mbs/fullDisplay.cfm?type=note&q=GN.7.17&qt=noteID&criteria=bulk%20bill>.

## World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Day - 15 November 2017

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) affects one in seven Australians aged 40 or over, and is the second leading cause of avoidable hospital admissions. While there is currently no cure for COPD, evidence shows that there are things you can do to breathe easier. Early diagnosis and disease management programs such as pulmonary rehabilitation can reduce the burden of COPD, improve quality of life, slow disease progression, reduce mortality and keep people well and out of hospital. Symptoms of lung disease tend to creep up slowly and people often automatically adjust their daily activities to accommodate or reduce their symptoms rather than getting help.

Raising the awareness of COPD will help drive early detection of this disabling disease.

Remember: Breathlessness is not a normal part of ageing and should not be ignored. There are many opportunities to get involved in raising the awareness through the following links:

To help you raise awareness of COPD in your practice, Lung Foundation Australia will provide a promotional pack of World COPD Day materials when an event is registered. Visit

[www.worldcopdday.lungfoundation.com.au](http://www.worldcopdday.lungfoundation.com.au)

## New Medication Management Application

Dementia Training Australia (DTA) has released a new mobile device application (app) to assist staff involved in medication management to provide quality use of medicines for people living with dementia. The Medication Management app is based on popular hard-copy quick reference cards that were also developed by DTA. To watch a video of the app please visit the following website:

<https://vimeo.com/236863472>.

The app has two sections.

- The first provides recommendations and information relating to the optimal use of antipsychotic medications for responsive behaviours when all non-drug strategies have failed.
- The second section details medications that may adversely affect cognition. This may be useful when exploring reasons for changes in cognition in people with dementia who are using these medications.

The information is presented in a straightforward, easy to navigate format to ensure its usefulness in all aged care environments.

Search your app provider for 'DTA Medications' and look for the orange DTA icon. The PC version is available from: <https://www.dementiatrainingaustralia.com.au/>.

## Telehealth survey

The South Metropolitan Health Service (SMHS) is developing a three-year Telehealth Strategic Plan and would like to better understand the needs of GP's.

SMHS would like your input into how Telehealth can be used to improve the delivery of health care for you and your patients and gain a better understanding of key barriers and key enablers to build a way forward.

Telehealth refers to the use of information and communication technologies to transfer and exchange medical information over a distance. It can include:

- A patient consultation via video conferencing with a clinician at another location;
- Transmission of images such as photos of wounds or scans of broken bones
- Remote monitoring of personal health data such as blood pressure

To assist with this research for the Telehealth Strategic Plan, please visit the following website to complete the short questionnaire: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XCNVBT9>.

## Palliative Care in General Practice evaluation

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Western Australia is conducting interviews and feedback sessions as part of a study and evaluation of community-based end of life care in Australia.

They are seeking the assistance of GPs to participate in short interviews or small group sessions in Perth to discuss the provision of end of life care and palliative care in general practice. The focus of the project is on any issues experienced by GPs in providing care for patients in their last 12 months of life. These interviews and small group sessions will be carried out within your practice at a time convenient to you (such as lunch time or after work), or any other specified location that you prefer.

The duration of the sessions is approximately 30 minutes and will be carried out from 1 November 2017 through to 31 January 2018 (excluding the Christmas/New Year break).

If you would like to join us or are interested in finding out more about the study, please contact Professor Angus Cook at [angus.cook@uwa.edu.au](mailto:angus.cook@uwa.edu.au) or on 08 6488 7805.

## Education and Training

### Drug testing trial information sessions – 31 October

Following the Australian Government's announcement that Mandurah would be the third and final location to trial drug testing of job seekers, an information session will be held on Tuesday 31 October. Staff from the departments of Social Services, Human Services and Employment will be in attendance to provide more information about how the trial is expected to run, and answer any questions.

For more information on this announcement, view the media release

<https://christianporter.dss.gov.au/media-releases/mandurah-to-benefit-from-drug-testing-trial-and-new-10-million-treatment-fund>

**Date:** Tuesday, 31 October  
**Time:** 6.00pm for medical and health professionals (approximately 1 hour duration)  
7.30pm general public  
**Venue:** The Sebel Mandurah, Banksia Room  
1 Marco Polo Drive, Mandurah  
**Registration:** Email [drugtestingtrial@dss.gov.au](mailto:drugtestingtrial@dss.gov.au) or telephone (02) 6146 5874

### Understanding and Responding to Perinatal and Infant Mental Health within the Primary Health Care Setting – 2 November

This event will focus on the definitions and practice of perinatal and infant mental health as well as recognising, assessing and responding to mental health concerns, discussing referral processes and the benefit of HealthPathways. This event is offered to GPs who practice within the City of Joondalup and Wanneroo.

**Date:** Thursday, 2 November  
**Time:** 5:00pm – 8:00pm  
**Venue:** The Breakwater, Hillarys Boat Harbour  
**Cost:** Free  
**Registration:** To register, please view the following flyer <http://www.wapha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/PIMH-GP-Training-Flyer.pdf>

## Principles of Immunisation catch up webinar – 8 November

Hosted by the Australian College of Nursing (ACN), this webinar cover topics such as obtaining immunisation histories, available resources, processes for calculating catch up schedules, catch up for <10 year old's, catch up for >10 year old's and case studies.

**Date:** Wednesday, 8 November  
**Cost:** ACN Member \$55.00; Non-ACN Member \$60.50.  
**Registration:** To register, please visit the following website: <https://www.acn.edu.au/vaccine-storage-and-cold-chain-management-0>.

## Getting started with My Health Record webinar – 9 November

This webinar will cover Australia's current health landscape, the need for digital health, an introduction to the Australian Digital Health Agency and the National Digital Health Strategy, benefits and an overview of privacy legislation and security features of My Health Record and, an introduction to the registration process for a healthcare organisation and individual providers.

**Date:** Thursday, 9 November  
**Time:** 1:00pm – 2:00pm AWST  
**Registration:** To register, please visit the following website: <http://omnovia.redbackconferencing.com.au/landers/page/f6b824>

## Cervical screening update and HealthPathway launch – 14 November

WAPHA, Cancer Council WA and WA Cervical Cancer Prevention Program invite you to attend this event with presentations from Professor Ian Hammond and Dr Linda Kohler on the new cervical screening guidelines. This activity has 2 Category 2 QI&CPD points and 1 PDP point attached.

**Date:** Tuesday 14 November 2017  
**Time:** 7.00am to 8.30am  
**Venue:** WA Primary Health Alliance, 2-5, 7 Tanunda Drive, Rivervale 6103  
**Cost:** Free – breakfast included  
**Registration:** Metro GPs - <https://waproject.healthpathways.org.au/Events/CervicalScreeningUpdateCPDNov2017.aspx>.  
Country GPs – please contact your local WAPHA team.

## Vaccine Storage and Cold Chain Management webinar – 21 November

Hosted by the Australian College of Nursing (ACN), this webinar covers topics on vaccine storage and cold chain management principles, management of cold chain breaches, annual self-audits and the NSW health educational module and resources.

**Date:** Tuesday, 21 November 2017  
**Cost:** ACN Member \$55.00; Non-ACN member \$60.50.  
**Registration:** To register, please visit the following website: <https://www.acn.edu.au/vaccine-storage-and-cold-chain-management-0>.

## 2017 annual Paediatric update for General Practitioners – 25 November

The course is designed to provide updates in current best practice in paediatric medicine to assist GPs in a practical way in their day-to-day practice. The program is intended for GPs and other interested health workers who are involved in the care of children and adolescents with acute and chronic conditions.

**Date:** Saturday, 25 November  
**Time:** 8:50am – 5:40pm  
**Venue:** Lecture Theatre, Level 1 Sydney Children’s Hospital High St, Randwick NSW 2031  
**Cost:** Tickets range from \$70 - \$180  
**Registration:** To register, please view the following flyer <http://www.wapha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Annual-Paediatic-GP17-FINAL.pdf>

### Privacy breach legislation webinar – 30 November

Hosted by Avant and the Australian Association of Practice Managers (AAPM), this webinar aims to help health service organisations understand the changes to the privacy legislation in relation to data breach and the implications to a practice environment, ways to prevent privacy breaches and appropriate responses to deal with privacy breaches.

**Date:** Thursday, 30 November  
**Time:** 10:00am – 11:00am AWST  
**Cost:** AAPM Members \$20.00; Non-AAPM Members \$40.00  
**Registration:** To register, please visit the following website:  
<https://aapm.memnet.com.au/MemberSelfService/EventBooking.aspx?selectedEventId=350>.

### Cervical cancer screening update events – October & November

The renewal of the National Cervical Screening Program is due to commence on 1 December 2017. To help health professionals increase their knowledge about the upcoming changes and the latest information and evidence on the renewal, there are a variety of seminars, events, training, online courses and participate in webinars available. For further information please see the attached calendar of events <http://www.wapha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/171019-National-Cervical-Screening-Program-Renewal.pdf>

### New record-keeping and payslips course

Developed by Fair Work Australia, this free online course will provide small businesses guidance on record-keeping, advice on what to keep in payslips, the legal obligations under the Fair Work Act, practical tips on setting up and maintaining a record-keeping system and links to resources and further information.

For further information and to complete the course please visit the following website:  
<http://fairwork.cls.janison.com/auth/login/?returnUrl=%2Fmylearning%2Fdashboard%2Findex>.

# Health Promotion Events in November

Is your practice looking for a health promotion activity for your practice? Each month we provide a list of upcoming health promotion activities for the next month along with resources and contact details.

## **National Cervical Cancer Awareness Week – 13 – 19 November**

This year, the Australian Cervical Cancer Foundation are encouraging women to make a commitment to get up-to-date with their cervical screening and to paint their nails orange in support of cervical health awareness. This website contains information on cervical screening changes, what is happening throughout the week and a checklist for women who are under screened.

Website: <https://accf.org.au/media-news/national-cervical-cancer-awareness-week>

## **World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Day – 15 November**

This year the Lung Foundation Australia is helping to increase awareness of COPD and reduce the stigma associated with lung disease by encouraging the community to get involved in a number of activities and events. This website contains COPD resources and information on symptoms, risks and treatment as well as how to register an event.

Website: <http://worldcopdday.lungfoundation.com.au/>

## **National Skin Cancer Action Week – 19 – 25 November**

With more than 2000 people dying from skin cancer year and approximately more than \$1 billion is spent treating skin cancer each year, preventing skin cancer is more important than ever. Skin Cancer Action Week is a time to remind Australians to take care of their skin by regularly checking their skin and engaging in ways to reduce your skin cancer risk. This website contains resources and information on how to prevent skin cancer.

Website: <http://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/campaigns-and-events/national-skin-cancer-action-week.html>