

Dear Practice

Re: A New Direction for WA Primary Health Alliance's General Practice Support and Development

There is no doubt that COVID-19, coupled with the Australian Government's ambitious primary health care reform agenda, will change clinical and business models of general practice into the future. WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) is committed to supporting general practice as the cornerstone of successful primary health care and the key to ensuring we have a high-quality, equitable and sustainable health system in Western Australia.

In response to the new primary health care landscape, WAPHA has restructured our general practice support teams. This entails significant change to our staffing, the way we deliver practice support and our strategy for general practice development and innovative models of primary care. Our new structure has been driven by the impacts of COVID-19 and the Australian Government's primary health care reform strategy including:

- The 10 Year Primary Health Plan which will have significant impact on GPs in areas such as Voluntary Patient Registration, block funding, telehealth and further incentives for quality improvement;
- The MBS Review which has made recommendations focused on transparency of cost and quality of MBS services, allowing patients to make informed choices about their care, promoting team based models of care and exploring non fee for service funding models, and
- Codifying the role of general practice in emergency and disaster planning and responses recognising the centrality of general practice in the COVID-19 and bushfire responses.

The future of primary care is person centred with strong emphasis on data driven, quality improvement in general practice. We will see increasing focus on incentivisation for activated patients who are formally enrolled with a single practice. This provides both opportunity and challenge in considering new ways of practising your craft and running your business.

To support you and your practice teams in responding to the changes ahead, and to emerging policy change, we will continue to work closely with you to improve our model of general practice support, innovation and development.

WAPHA's Primary Care Innovation and Development team will continue to operate in a face to face delivery format where this is optimal and where your practice has indicated a preference to work with us on a quality improvement exercise. Increasingly though, for practice support activities, we will build infrastructure and expertise in using virtual options such as telephone and video practice support and on-line portals and resource hubs. This will ensure our resources and activities are accessible to all practices across WA and will better respond to your preferences for how and when our services are delivered.

I, and my team, look forward to working with you in our collective response to the modernisation of primary health care consistent with the goals and priorities you have for your practice and your patients. **We will embed WAPHA's new structure for general practice support, innovation and development by 1st July 2021 and will continue to update you and your practice staff as regards these changes and what they mean for you.**

Yours sincerely
Bernadette Kenny
General Manager Primary Care Innovation and Development