

Practice Connect

Latest news and updates

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WA Primary Health Alliance: Resumption of face to face in practice meetings

After significant consultation and discussion within our organisation, WA Primary Health Alliance is moving to a hybrid or flexible way of working.

This means that while the majority of our staff will continue to work remotely, from September, we will be opening our metropolitan and country offices for meetings, collaboration and other tasks.

We will also be resuming face to face visits with general practices when it would be beneficial to meet at the practice rather than meet virtually.

However, we will continue to engage with you virtually where this is practical and useful, for example where people are located in multiple places.

Safety has always been and will continue to be our highest priority, so you can be assured that we will be putting in place a number of safeguards to protect our staff, your practice staff and your patients. More details will be provided in due course.

These safeguards and our other systems and processes will mean we can quickly respond by walking back our strategy and implementing tighter controls, if community spread of COVID-19 arises in WA.

Our practice support team will continue to support you and are available to answer your questions at any time, either individually or through Practice Assist by calling 1800 2 ASSIST or emailing practice.assist@wapha.org.au

You can read our detailed FAQ [here](#).

PIP QI: A reminder to practices

A brief reminder to all practices participating in the Practice Incentives Program (PIP) Quality Improvement (QI) that a new quarter commenced on 1 August. To be eligible for this quarter, practices must undertake continuous quality improvement and share data with WAPHA at least once each quarter.

If you have any questions, ***please visit the updated Practice Assist FAQ page*** or speak with your Primary Health Liaison or Comprehensive Primary Care Facilitator.

EPrescribing Update

The rollout of ePrescribing continues and WA Primary Health Alliance are supporting practices with this process. If you are interested in joining a Community of Interest, please contact the Digital Health Team via ehhealth@wapha.org.au.

The Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) has created a range of resources for practices to support their patients and these may be requested via the [Practice Assist website](#). For updates on the status of ePrescribing across Australia, see the [ADHA website](#).

New Practice Support Resources: Quality Improvement Register & Quality Improvement PDSA Log

To help your practice save time with the documentation of quality improvement activities and to have these listed in the one place for your practice staff to access. The Primary Care Support Team have created two new resources to assist your practice in recording quality improvement activities.

The '[Quality Improvement Register](#)' template and '[Quality Improvement PDSA Log](#)' template (plan, do, study, act) log have been designed to help you document the changes you have implemented in practice. These will be helpful in tracking the progress and outcomes against each of the activities, and importantly highlight to practice staff the key priority areas the practice is working towards.

We understand that each practice will have their own systems and approach to recording quality improvement activities as per the RACGP 5th Edition Standards on Quality Improvement (QI Standard 1). With this in mind, these resources may be used as a guide to create a tool that best suits your practice needs or an opportunity to review current documentation processes you have in place.

If you would like support in using these tools please contact your Primary Health Liaison, Comprehensive Primary Care or Health Care Home Facilitator



Practice Assist Resource Library

As part of our support for general practices, Practice Assist maintains a library of useful resources in our [Practice Assist Resource Library](#). These resources range across different topics from GP Accreditation, Practice Incentives Program, to the latest in resources around COVID-19.

At present we are reviewing and updating all of our resources to ensure that we have current, accurate and useful information available when needed.

Our most recently updated resources include:

Business Management

- [Hazard Observation and Identification Template](#)
- [Managing No-Show Patients](#)

COVID-19

- [COVID-19 Action Plan](#)
- [Medicare MBS Covid-19 GP Mental Health Treatment Plan Additional Services](#) [\(new\)](#)

Digital Health

- [Preparing for My Health Record](#) [\(updated\)](#)
- [Troubleshooting Video Consultations](#) [\(updated\)](#)

Human Resources

- [Employment Contracts and Agreements](#) [\(updated\)](#)
- [The Australian Government Fair Work Ombudsman](#) [\(updated\)](#)

General Practice Accreditation

- [Doctors Bag Checklist](#)
- [Spills Kit Checklist and Method for Cleaning Spills](#)
- [Vaccine Potency Checklist for Managing a Power Failure](#)

Practice Incentives Program

- [PIP After Hours Incentive](#)
- [PIP eHealth Incentive](#) [\(updated\)](#)
- [Procedural GP Payment](#) [\(updated\)](#)
- [Rural Loading Incentive](#) [\(updated\)](#)
- [Teaching Payment](#) [\(updated\)](#)
- [Workforce Incentive Program](#) [\(updated\)](#)

Medicare Benefits Schedule

- [Closing the Gap PBS Co-Payment Measure](#)
- [Healthcare Identifiers Service](#)
- [HPOS and PRODA](#)
- [MBS Cardiac Imaging Services for General Practice](#)
- [Pharmacy Dispensing in a Rural or Remote General practice](#)
- [Reciprocal Health care Agreements](#)

Programs and National Schemes

- [Patient Assisted Travel Scheme Fact Sheet](#)
- [Viewing Air Information in My Health Record](#)

To see all of our resources, and more please visit our [Practice Assist Resource Library](#) webpage.

The Practice Assist team values your feedback, if you have a new idea for a resource or feedback on a current resource, please email this through to practiceassist@wapha.org.au.

Wellbeing support at hand during stressful times

Professional and personal pressures can arise for general practice teams at the best of times, let alone during a global pandemic.

To support GPs and practice staff to look after themselves and take the necessary steps to support their wellbeing, WA Primary Health Alliance is offering three free confidential counselling sessions via its Wellness Program.

Provided through AccessEAP, and available to all WA-based general practice staff, the program offers confidential sessions with a counsellor who can offer information and assistance in navigating the COVID-19 response as well as other personal and professional issues.

Issues that can be addressed during counselling sessions include:

- Preparing for major life changes
- Changes at work
- Changes within family (marriage, new baby, divorce/separation)
- Goal setting for professional or personal life
- Developing new strategies for handling stress at work or at home
- Or simply to have someone to speak to about any of life's inevitable challenges



To book a confidential phone or video counselling appointment, you can call AccessEAP anytime on 1800 818 728.

You will need to identify as a WA Primary Health Alliance member.

GPs and practice staff can also contact Practice Assist by calling 1800 2 ASSIST or emailing practice.assist@wapha.org.au with any questions about the program.

For more information please visit the Practice Assist [COVID-19 Well-being and Support](#) webpage.

Immunisation & Cancer Screening Updates

Breastfeeding and immunisations

Vaccination of breastfeeding mothers is generally safe. Besides protecting the mother from vaccine-preventable diseases, some vaccines given to a breastfeeding mother also provide passive immunity to the baby. Melbourne Vaccine Education Centre (MVEC) has developed a new [reference page](#) that details different vaccines and scenarios for consideration when vaccinating a mother who is breastfeeding.

Vaccinations for individuals with Rheumatic Disease

There is a new patient information sheet developed by the Australian Rheumatology Association and Arthritis Australia on vaccinations in rheumatic disease.

The sheet has been written for people with certain types of arthritis (known as rheumatologic conditions) to provide general information about vaccination. It can be viewed [here](#).

Media Release - Essential childhood immunisation reaches record new high

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, says Australia's childhood immunisation rates have risen to record levels, with coverage for all five year olds now at 94.77 per cent. Immunisation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have increased even more. All six categories made positive gains, with coverage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children at five years 96.90 per cent. This is higher than the national coverage rate for all five-year-old children. One-year-old and two-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander coverage rates also jumped significantly. The two-year-old rate climbed to above 90 per cent for the first time since December 2014, increasing to 90.03 per cent.

Read the [full media release here](#).

Australian Immunisation Handbook tip: Injection site reactions (ISRs)

Injection site reactions (ISRs) are one of the most common adverse events following immunisation. ISRs include pain, itching, swelling or redness around the site of injection. Most ISRs are mild and usually last for 1–2 days. However, some ISRs can be more severe with swelling extending from joint to joint (e.g. shoulder to elbow) and can often be confused with cellulitis. ISRs do not require antibiotics or antihistamines. Treatment should focus on symptom relief with oral pain relief and cold compress as required. ISRs may occur after administration of any vaccine but are more common after booster doses of diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTPa/dTpa). They are not a contraindication to further vaccination with the same or another vaccine.

The National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) have an injection site reaction factsheet [here](#).

11 years of HPV vaccine surveillance affirms safety

A new large-scale study analysing surveillance data over 11 years has affirmed the safety of quadrivalent human papillomavirus (4vHPV) vaccine among both boys and girls.

The study led by authors from NCIRS and the University of Sydney examined all adverse events following immunisation with 4vHPV vaccine reported to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) from 2007 to 2017. The analysis did not reveal any new or concerning safety issues. [Read more here](#).

Consultation for the review of the National Cervical Screening Program Self-Collection Policy

On behalf of the National Cervical Screening Program (NCSP), the Australian Government Department of Health (the Department) is leading a consultation process on potential changes to the NCSP Policy. We are seeking views from the NCSP sector on proposed policy modifications that will give all NCSP participants a choice to screen using either a self-collected or a clinician-collected sample. Both options would be accessed through a healthcare provider. At this stage, no formal decision to change NCSP policy has been made. The purpose of this consultation is to seek views from the sector on how such a policy change will impact stakeholders. The advice received will inform any future implementation plans.

To participate in the consultation process please fill out the online survey [here](#). Submissions close on Friday 11th September 2020.

Overview of Community Health nursing services available to parents

Community health nurses monitor and promote the health, wellbeing and development of children by engaging with parents through a series of scheduled contacts. The first 'universal' contact occurs in the child's first 14 days, with subsequent contacts at eight weeks, four months, 12 months and two years.

All parents are also offered access to the following free, evidence-based groups to support optimal child health and development:

- **Early Parenting Group (birth to eight weeks)**
- **A Solid Start (from four months)**
- **Triple P (three to eight-year olds)**
- **Kindy Talk (provided at schools when children start kindy)**

Additional services, known as 'universal plus' child health services, are provided in addition to the universal contacts for families requiring assistance with an identified child health or development issue or a parenting issue impacting on the child, for example, additional breastfeeding support or sleep interventions. A further three Universal Plus parenting support groups are available to those with specific needs:

- **Circle of Security (four months to six years)**
- **Let's Sleep (six to 12 months)**
- **Triple P Program (three to six-year olds)**

Parents can be encouraged to find more information and to book into a group by visiting healthywa.wa.gov.au/parentgroups.

Hepatitis C primary care study

Platinum C - Hepatitis C study

Safe, highly curative, short course, direct acting antiviral (DAA) therapies are now available to treat chronic hepatitis C. DAA therapy is freely available to all adults chronically infected with the hepatitis C virus (HCV) in Australia. However, since the introduction of funded DAA treatment, uptake has been suboptimal.

Researchers from University of Sydney and the Telethon Kids Institute with funding from WA Health are looking to engage GPs in a hepatitis C treatment registry study called PLATINUM C. The PLATINUM C Study aims to facilitate the prescribing of direct-acting antiviral (DAA) therapy and collect information on real-world outcomes of individuals treated for hepatitis C.

If your practice is interested in being part of the study, please contact [Jessica Ramsay](#) for further information.

For further information on Chronic Hepatitis C, please also visit the [HealthPathways Chronic Hep C pathway](#).

Help the EMHS to improve communication with general practice

GPs play a vital role in caring for patients, connecting with public hospital services when required, and continuing care following discharge or outpatient review. The East Metropolitan Health Service (EMHS) wants to hear from you about your experience of communicating with our public hospitals, and what needs to be improved. Your feedback is essential to target action to the issues that matter to you most.

Feedback obtained through the will identify where hospitals have improved their communication with GPs and what requires further attention and help increase access to public hospital services.

GPs can find out more and provide their feedback through [Primary Health Exchange](#) by 5pm, Monday 21 September.

Royal Perth Bentley Group – Discharge of Outpatients not booked or planned for further review

A routine audit has identified patients previously been seen in Royal Perth or Bentley outpatients who do not have any further appointments booked or planned with that speciality but have not formally had their outpatient care discharged from our database.

Letters will be sent to the recorded GP of any patient who will be discharged under this audit. Patients will receive a letter if their last outpatient appointment with that speciality was in the past two years. If your patient requires further outpatient care that was not envisaged at the time of last outpatient review, please re-assess the patient and send an updated referral to the Central Referral Service.

NPS MedicineWise update – Pharmacists sessions on Paediatric Asthma

NPS MedicineWise is offering two (2) free, online small group educational sessions for Pharmacists in WA via ZOOM.

These sessions will focus on important differences between diagnosing and managing asthma in preschool and school-age children, and how children's asthma differs from that of adults.

Information and resources provided as part of this educational visit

- Discussion covers the latest guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of paediatric asthma
- Advice on when regular preventer treatment is required and how to optimise different preventer options for the two age groups
- Patient resources on spirometry and inhaler technique
- Information on the updated Adult asthma guidelines

You can self-record this educational visit as part of your CPD portfolio.

To book your place, please complete the details in the attached form.

Help your patients be MEDICINEWISE during COVID-19

NPS MedicineWise has information and resources to promote being Medicinewise, as well as regularly updated evidence-based information on COVID-19 topics. We encourage you to share and use these resources with your patients and communities.

- **Medicines Lists:** Download in English and ten other languages.
- **Choosing Wisely 5 Questions:** Download in a handy format – five questions patients can ask their doctors.
- **Medicines Line:** Consumers can dial 1300 MEDICINE to ask questions about medicines.
- **MedicineWise app:** Patients can download this app to keep track of their medicines.
- **COVID-19 hub:** Regularly updated pandemic info for health professionals and consumers.



For further information, visit the [NPS MedicineWise Hub](#) website.



GP Urgent Care Network

Network Pilot Project Review and Discussion Webinar

The GP Urgent Care team held its first Network Pilot Project Review and Discussion Webinar on 13th August 2020, facilitated by Dr Mike Civil, with presentations from Dr Babu GP, Practice Nurse Sarah Mugglestone RN, Richard Varhol WAPHA and Sharon Safstrom RACGP WA.

Thank you to Dr Mike Civil for facilitating the evening, and the presenters for their valuable insights and experience of the network pilot.

The feedback from participants and stakeholders was very positive and encouraging, with great examples of practice experience with positive impacts for the clinical teams and the patients.

Education Events

- **Lunch and Learn Session** - Save the date 24th Sept 2020 @12.30pm Topic GP Urgent Care Network "Marketing your Practice."
- **RACGP Urgent Care: Peer group learning workshops** - The Urgent Care Peer Group Learning (PGL) activity is designed to maximize the benefits of working and learning together in a peer group educational setting. These activities utilise peer support, interaction and reflection to enhance clinical competence, knowledge, skills, attitudes and performance of practices on specific urgent care topics. To express your interest in this workshop [Click Here](#)

Campaign Resources

The Department of Health has provided WAPHA with links to the campaign and materials for the Network of Surgeries to access. Details of the campaign across the Perth metropolitan area and Bunbury region can be found [Here](#).

Included are some great campaign materials you could be utilising for your practices on surgery TVs and print for your surgeries.

GP Urgent Care members of the Network should check [News and Alerts](#) on this site for information about up and coming events.



Contact

If you require any further information, please email: urgentcare@wapha.org.au or you can call the Project Officer Cheryl Bell on 0429 126 925.

HealthPathways Update

Expression of Interest: Mental Health Criteria Working Group- Adult Community Mental Health Services

Expressions of interest are now open for General Practitioners to participate in the Mental Health Criteria Working Group. HealthPathways WA is partnering with Metropolitan Health Service Providers to create referral criteria for Adult Community Mental Health Services in Perth metro. These criteria will provide referring clinicians with an understanding of the scope and limitations of services and will be published on HealthPathways WA. The working group will be held on the 15th of September 2020 at 7am until 9am, the venue is Technology Park Function Centre.

Commitment to a HealthPathways Working Group consists of:

- Attendance at a two-hour meeting in person (please note if the situation changes due to COVID-19 this event will be held virtually).
- One hour to undertake a pre or post activity (the details will be provided at a later stage).


HealthPathways WA

The working group will be held in the morning. In recognition of your contribution and time taken away from usual practice, remuneration will be offered at \$120 + GST per hour (\$360 + GST in total) + travel time and expenses for which an invoice template will be provided. You are also eligible for 6 CPD Activity points (formerly Category 2 QI&CPD points) through RACGP or PDP hours through ACRRM.

GPs are encouraged to submit an expression of interest via the [Project site](#). An invitation to participate in the working group will be sent to selected GPs. For more information please email the HealthPathways team at healthpathways@wapha.org.au.

COVID-19 in Residential Aged Care Facilities Pathway is now available on HealthPathways

A reminder that information relating to COVID-19 for GPs based on information including the WA Department of Health latest testing criteria is listed and regularly updated on HealthPathways WA website.

New COVID-19 pathway is now available on HealthPathways

The [COVID-19 in Residential Aged Care Facilities](#) pathway is now live and contains information for assessing and managing a suspected or confirmed case in a residential aged care facility.

COVID-19 HealthPathways Updates

The following content updates have now been published:

- **COVID-19 Telehealth:**
 - Information has been added about the legislative requirements for GPs and Other Medical Practitioners (OMP) for providing telehealth as of July 20, 2020, along with an Australian Department of Health COVID-19 Telehealth Items Guide resource. These updates can be found in “the new temporary MBS telehealth items” drop down section.
- **COVID-19 MBS Items:**
 - Updated clinical editor’s note to include information on the additional MBS (Better Access) psychological sessions for eligible patients.

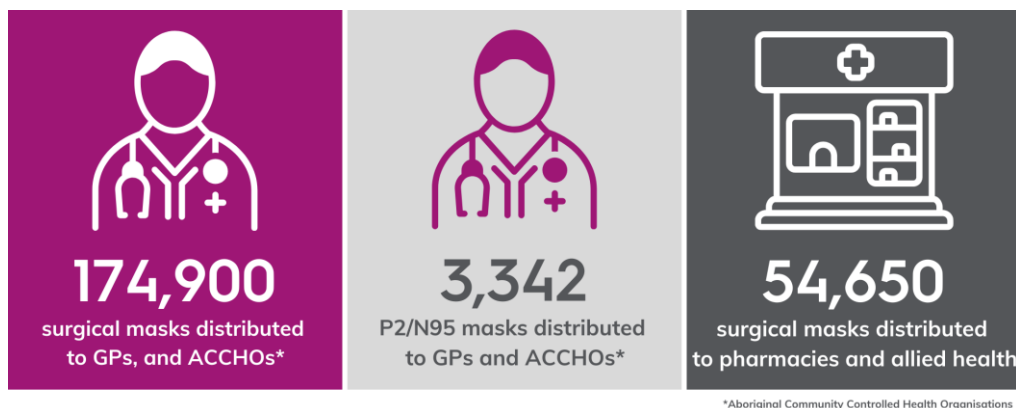
Allocation of surgical masks from the National Medical Stockpile

WA Primary Health Alliance continues to operate a significant logistical strategy to distribute masks during the COVID-19 pandemic to general practices, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, pharmacies and allied health practices that meet the criteria of the [Department of Health Tranche 4 guidelines](#).

For mask requests, visit the [Practice Assist website](#).

Please note, re-orders will not be accepted within five business days (Mon-Fri) of the previous request, except in exceptional circumstances.

Please send all general queries in relation to the National Medical Stockpile to Stockpile.Ops@health.gov.au.



Palliative Care Information and Support Line

Palliative Care WA Pilot Phone Support Service

In May this year, Palliative Care WA began a pilot phonenumber service called the *Palliative Care Information and Support Line*. Funded by WA Health the service has been set up to help the community by providing non-clinical information, resources and support with:

- advance care planning
- support services
- palliative care; and
- grief and loss.

Our highly skilled phone line responders are there to support families, carers and individuals through these sometimes confronting and time-consuming processes.

The Palliative Care WA website also has details of upcoming education events for families, carers, individuals and medical professionals.

This WA service is available 9am to 4:30pm 7 days a week.
 Call: 1800 573 299 or visit the website: palliativecarewa.asn.au



PalliativeCare
 WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Health Promotion Events

Dementia Action Week 2020 is September 21-27



Dementia. A little support makes a lot of difference.

Dementia affects close to half a million Australians. That number is set double in the next 25 years.

Many Australians will start experiencing the impact of dementia amongst their own family and friends in the coming years.

The concept for Dementia Action Week 2020 has been developed in consultation with Dementia Advocates, who have a lived experience of dementia. The stories and voices that will feature across Dementia Action Week are real.

Dementia Australia's research and engagement with advocates shows that there is a prevailing attitude that people living with dementia are overwhelmingly very old, frail and living in care. That once diagnosed with dementia, people have a complete loss of independence – and ultimately a very sad life.

These misconceptions lead to judgements about capacity and condescending behaviours. These mistaken beliefs cause significant discrimination against those living with dementia.

Dementia Action Week 2020 will demonstrate that many people living with dementia can continue to live well for many years after their diagnosis - and live rich and active lives.

Community organisations, partners and supporters will be able to amplify the campaign activities and messages by sharing the provided content across their own channels and networks throughout the week.

As part of Dementia Action week, Dementia Australia will be releasing a new tip each day on how we can help people living with dementia live well.

As a supporter of Dementia Action Week, you can [register to receive your campaign kit](#) containing:

- A social media MP4 and supporting text for a new tip each day to share with your community and networks. This will be delivered the day before launch.
- A campaign poster, featuring the broader campaign
- A campaign poster, featuring a summary 7 tips to help people living with dementia live well

Coming up soon...	
National Stroke Week	August 31-September 7
Childhood Cancer Awareness Week	September 1-30
Big Heart Appeal	September 1-30

Education and training

Visit our Webinars & Workshops page at www.practiceassist.com.au for the events calendar.

Webinars

AOD Connect: A Project ECHO Community of Practice for RACGP members

Presented by RACGP
Every Thursday evening

Online mental health case discussion and peer support group for GPs

Presented by Black Dog Institute
Multiple dates

Type 2 diabetes workshop “DESMOND”

Presented by Diabetes WA
Multiple dates

ACRRM Webinar: ePrescribing Q&A

Presented by ACCRM
Thursday 27 August

Social prescribing, a script for better living

Presented by Consumers Health Forum of Australia
Monday 31 August

Manage your online reputation: SEO, Listings, Google Reviews, Facebook

Presented by AAPM
Tuesday 1 September

Respiratory health in a changing climate

Presented by WAPHA and RACGP
Tuesday 1 September

AAPM Virtual Education – Reception/Admin Workshop

Presented by AAPM
Wednesday 9 September

Understanding teenage boys

Presented by RACGP
Thursday 10 September

Improving Patient Outcomes and Experience

Presented by the Public Sector Network
Thursday 10 September

Psychological distress in primary health care nurses

Presented by APNA
Wednesday 16 September

The Cutting Edge: Proceduralist Obstetrics and Gynaecological Skills

Presented by Rural Health West and CTEC
Friday 2 October

The Cutting Edge: Managing Skin and Soft Tissue Injuries

Presented by Rural Health West and CTEC
Friday 9 October

Registrar series: Medicare update

Presented by RACGP
Thursday 22 October

Environmental health: how climate change affects health and healthcare

Presented by RACGP
Thursday 29 October

Online Training

Prepare for ePrescribing – free online course

Presented by Australian Digital Health Agency

COVID-19 Infection Control Training

Presented by Department of Health

Chronic Disease Management and Healthy Ageing Program

Presented by APNA

Advanced Skills Training AOD - GPs

Presented by RACGP