

# Practice Connect

## Latest news and updates

### In this edition:

- Encourage patients to see their GP about Mental Health
- WA Mental Health Week
- Wellbeing support at hand during stressful times
- 2020 Pertussis Webinar
- Useful resource: Pneumococcal Vaccination Schedule Decision Tree
- Practice Assist Resource Library
- PIP QI: A reminder to practices
- HealthDirect Extended
- SARS-CoV-2 Testing Criteria #14 – 2 October 2020
- Extended: EMHS to improve communication with general practice
- Calling GP mentors in rural practices for the John Flynn Placement Program
- New Cancer Australia resource for optimal and timely investigation of lung cancer symptoms
- NPS MedicineWise update
- Information about HealthPathways
- COVID-19 HealthPathways updates
- WA Rural Health Conference 2021 Early bird registrations are NOW OPEN
- Allocation of surgical masks
- Health Promotions
- Education and training

## Encourage patients to see their GP about Mental Health

The upcoming WA Mental Health Week (October 12-17), is a reminder that general practice is a great place for people to start a conversation about their mental health.

WA Primary Health Alliance is again partnering with the WA Association for Mental Health to sponsor Mental Health Week, and key to this is the provision of promotional postcards throughout WA communities encouraging people to talk their GP about their mental health. Practices can access social media posts and other resources to download and share at [thesocialpresskit.com/see-your-gp](https://thesocialpresskit.com/see-your-gp)

For more information and to find out other ways to get involved, visit [mentalhealthweek.org.au/](https://mentalhealthweek.org.au/)



## #SeeYourGP Campaign

## WA Mental Health Week 10 to 17 October 2020

### Mental Health Week Starts This Saturday

Mental Health Week starts this Saturday, 10 October which is also World Mental Health Day.

This year **WA Mental Health Week** theme is **Strengthening Our Community – Live, Learn, Work, Play**, as the aim is to increase mental wellbeing in WA communities.

The events of recent times have brought the social determinants of mental health into sharp focus across all of our communities, and it's important to take this opportunity of community awareness to bring attention to the need to safeguard people's mental health during and after the COVID-19 crisis has passed.

In 2020, the aim is to boost mental wellbeing in WA communities by:

- Encouraging each of us to support and look out for one another
- Promoting mental health literacy and self-care tips
- Raising awareness of mental health issues and reducing stigma associated with seeking support.

Events are being held across metropolitan and country Western Australia including comedy events, picnics, concerts, talks and arts events. Click [HERE](#) for the full list of activities.

### Get involved

There are many ways to get involved in Mental health week; attend an event, host an event or morning tea. Morning Tea cookies and cupcakes are available to order through a list of [official suppliers](#).

Resources such as posters, social media banners, and activity calendars can be downloaded [HERE](#).



### Wellbeing support at hand during stressful times for WA general practice teams

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](mailto: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.

## 2020 Pertussis Webinar

### 'What is new in pertussis vaccination?'

The Immunisation Coalition's annual pertussis update for healthcare professionals was held on September 16th, 2020. The event was presented by Angela Newbound and provided the latest information on pertussis vaccination guidelines for 2020.

A recording of this webinar is available [here](#), and the [slide presentation](#) for this webinar is also available.

## Useful resource: Pneumococcal Vaccination Schedule Decision Tree

Changes to the NIP pneumococcal vaccination schedule came into effect from July 1 2020. The recommendations regarding pneumococcal vaccination dosage and timing have been updated for adults and people with conditions that increase their risk of disease. There are no changes to the universal infant schedule for 13vPCV. The list of conditions that increase the risk of pneumococcal disease has also been revised and simplified.

The [Pneumococcal Vaccination Schedule Decision Tree](#) is a useful resource for vaccination providers.

The decision tree should be read in conjunction with the [NIP Pneumococcal vaccination schedule from 1 July 2020](#).

[WWW.PRACTICEASSIST.COM.AU](http://WWW.PRACTICEASSIST.COM.AU)

## Practice Assist Resource Library: Editable PDF resources

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 our resources to ensure that we have current, accurate and useful information available when needed.

As part of this review we have produced our Templates and Checklists in Editable PDF format. This means the practices can add information relevant to their practice. These templates and checklists can also be used as a source for practices developing their own practice specific resources.

### Business Management

- [Hazard Observation and Identification Template](#)

### COVID-19

- [Primary Healthcare Service COVID-19 Checklist](#)
- [Medicare MBS Covid-19 Telehealth Services GPs & OMPs \(updated\)](#)
- [Medicare MBS Covid-19 Telehealth Services Nurse Practitioners \(updated\)](#)
- [Medicare MBS Covid-19 Telehealth Services Mental Health \(updated\)](#)
- [Medicare MBS Covid-19 Telehealth Services Chronic Disease \(updated\)](#)
- [MBS Covid-19 Telehealth Services Quick Guide GPs \(updated\)](#)
- [MBS Covid-19 Telehealth Services Quick Guide OMPs \(updated\)](#)
- [MBS Covid-19 Telehealth Services Quick Guide Nursing & Allied Health \(updated\)](#)
- [Covid-19 Financial Support Measures for General Practices \(updated\)](#)

### Digital Health

- [My Health Record - General Practice Workflow \(new\)](#)
- [My Health Record - GP Urgent Care Workflow \(new\)](#)
- [My Health Record - Patient Journey \(new\)](#)

### Programs and National Schemes

- [Childhood Immunisation Quality Improvement Activity](#)
- [National Immunisation Program - Pneumococcal vaccination schedule \(new\)](#)

### Human Resources

- [GP Orientation Checklist \(new\)](#)
- [Health Workforce Classifications \(new\)](#)
- [Sponsoring International Workers \(new\)](#)

### General Practice Accreditation

- [Clinical Risk Management System Template \(new\)](#)

### Quality Improvement

- [Quality Improvement Register Template](#)
- [General Practice PDSA Plan Template](#)
- [PIP QI Measures Tracking Table by Practitioner](#)
- [PIP QI Measures Tracking Table](#)
- [Quality Improvement PDSA Log Template](#)

We would appreciate your feedback on this new editable pdf format for practice use, please email [practiceassist@wapha.org.au](mailto:practiceassist@wapha.org.au) with ideas and comments.

## PIP QI: End of quarter reminder to practices

The Practice Incentives Program (PIP) Quality Improvement (QI) quarter will be ending on 31 October. Practices must ensure they have met the requirements of the PIP QI program in order to be eligible for payment, including the requirement to share data at least once each quarter. Practices have until the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month to share data with WAPHA. Any data shared after this date will not be accepted for this quarter. If your practice has not shared data at least once this quarter, please contact your Primary Health Liaison or Comprehensive Primary Care Facilitator urgently.

For further information, please speak with your Primary Health Liaison or Comprehensive Primary Care Facilitator, or alternatively please contact Practice Assist on [1800 2 ASSIST](tel:18002ASSIST) or [practiceassist@wapha.org.au](mailto:practiceassist@wapha.org.au)

## HealthDirect Extended

The Australian Department of Health has extended the healthdirect Video Call COVID-19 GP Program to 31 March 2021. We encourage you to continue using this secure video consulting platform which has been purpose-built for primary health settings.

This extension provides a seamless continuation of service for those already using it. For GPs in private practice wanting to start using the service, please [register](#) for a free license. For GPs in ACCHOs wanting to start using the service, please [register](#) for a free license.

To date, over 175 practices in West Australia have been using the platform to hold video consultation with their patients. Recent research by [ConnectGroups](#), funded by WA Primary Health Alliance, has shown that patients have benefited from the use of telehealth as a way to continue receiving appropriate care from their health providers at a time when face-to-face appointments may not be appropriate.

HealthDirect hold [weekly webinars](#) on the use of the platform for those practices wishing to understand how it may be used, and the Digital Health Team at WAPHA are available to support with the setup of the system for all GPs in West Australia. For more information, or to request access to the platform, please see [Practice Assist](#).

## SARS-CoV-2 Testing Criteria #14 – 2 October 2020

New information from Department of Health WA regarding testing requirements for people arriving in WA from interstate is available [here](#).

More information is available in the [COVID-19 Assessment and Management HealthPathway](#).

## Extended: Help the East Metropolitan Health Service 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 GPs about their experience of communicating with our public hospitals, and what needs to be improved. Their feedback is essential to target action to the issues that matter to them most.

**To date we have had 108 responses**, however, we are still keen to hear from GPs who have had ANY patients attend one or more of Royal Perth, Bentley, Armadale, Kalamunda or St John of God Midland Public Hospitals in the past 12 months.

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

Find out more and provide feedback [here](#) by 5pm, Monday 12 October.

## Calling GP mentors in rural practices for the John Flynn Placement Program

Practices in remote or rural communities are invited to consider hosting a John Flynn Placement Program (JFPP) scholar.

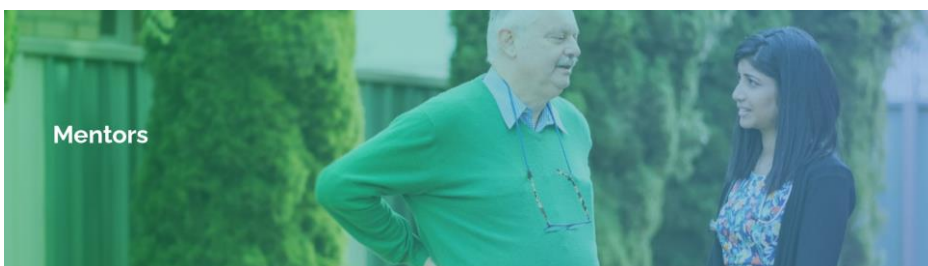
Mentoring a JFPP scholar is a chance for rural practices and GPs to share the professional and lifestyle benefits that go with rural clinical practice with the next generation of rural doctors.

The program requires a GP in a rural practice to act as a mentor to a medical student for a total of eight-weeks over the three or four years of their tertiary studies.

Returning to the same practice each year, the JFPP provides the opportunity to pass on skills, life lessons and develop the knowledge of your allocated student who is interested in rural practice and keen to learn directly from a mentor.

For more information please visit the [website](#) or contact Deni Campbell at [deni.campbell@ruralhw.com.au](mailto:deni.campbell@ruralhw.com.au) or 08 6389 4500.

Please visit the website link for more information <https://www.jfpp.com.au/mentor>



## New Cancer Australia resource for optimal and timely investigation of lung cancer symptoms

Diagnosing lung cancer at an earlier stage leads to better outcomes for patients, however diagnosis can be challenging. Symptoms such as cough or shortness of breath are often non-specific, and imaging results are not always definitive.

General practitioners play a key role in the identification of lung cancer, as the majority of patients first present to primary care settings. In the three months leading to diagnosis, patients will often see a GP four or more times before a diagnosis of lung cancer is made.

**Investigating symptoms of lung cancer: a guide for all health professionals** (the Guide) is designed to assist general practitioners to investigate symptomatic people with suspected lung cancer and support their early and rapid referral into the multidisciplinary diagnostic pathway. The Guide provides a systematic, step-by-step approach to identify the most appropriate course of action for symptomatic patients that reflects current, high-quality best-practice evidence. The Guide and supporting **Evidence Report** highlight recommendations for appropriate investigation and optimal referral timeframes, because timeliness is critical in the diagnosis of lung cancer.

The Guide has been officially recognised as an Accepted Clinical Resource by The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and has received endorsement from 11 other clinical and consumer colleges and organisations.

For more information, visit [canceraustralia.gov.au/ISLCGuide](http://canceraustralia.gov.au/ISLCGuide).

## NPS MedicineWise update

### **WEBINAR Opioid prescribing: strategies for GPs to optimise chronic non-cancer pain management and minimise harms**

Thursday, 15 October 2020 (7:00 – 8:30 pm AEDT) (4.00 – 5.30pm AWST)

Discussion points for this webinar are based on feedback from over 450 GPs who completed an NPS MedicineWise health professional survey on what they wanted to know about following recent reforms to opioid prescribing.

A panel of top Australian experts who specialise in the areas of chronic pain management and opioid dependence, will join together to discuss three key themes:

- Considerations when trialling opioids for chronic non-cancer pain
- How to identify patients at increased risk of harm, and strategies for minimising harm
- Appropriate strategies and practical ways to support patients during the opioid tapering process



Following the 1-hour presentation and discussion, panel members will be available for a further 30-minute live Q&A session with webinar participants.

**Accreditation: RACGP approval pending, ACRRM accreditation pending**

For further information please [visit the web page](#).

## Important information about HealthPathways

The HealthPathways WA site is now mobile-friendly!

Your normal login details or access method will continue to work, but you **will need to log in again** with your usual username and password, due to a change in domain names. **Make a note of these details** or contact the HealthPathways WA team via phone on 08 6272 4926, or email on [healthpathways@wapha.org.au](mailto:healthpathways@wapha.org.au) if you do not know them.



Your existing bookmarks and links will continue to work but will be redirected to the new domain at <https://wa.communityhealthpathways.org>. For seamless use, you may wish to update your bookmarks and/or re-download any desktop or mobile icons and ensure your browser is up to date.

See instructions on [how to download a quick-link icon to your mobile](#) android or iOS device, or [how to add an icon to your desktop](#).

The new site has now been optimised for mobile devices, meaning all pages shift and adjust the content depending on the device you are using (desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or mobile). This will ensure optimum access to HealthPathways content no matter where you are consulting from and may help improve connectivity for those whose practices may have slow desktop internet speeds. There is a “classic” HealthPathways site, with identical content, running parallel to the mobile-friendly version for anyone who prefers it (select an interface preference by clicking on the three dots at the top right of the screen on the new site).

If you need more assistance with this transition, contact the WA HealthPathways team via phone on 08 6272 4926, via email on [healthpathways@wapha.org.au](mailto:healthpathways@wapha.org.au).

## COVID-19 HealthPathways Updates

The following content updates have now been published on the HealthPathways website:

- **COVID-19 Assessment and Management:**
  - Added information regarding testing for COVID-19 as per Western Australia testing criteria effective as of the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2020.
- **COVID-19 MBS Items** and **COVID-19 Telehealth** pathways have been updated to include information in the clinical editor’s note about the extension of telehealth services until 31 March 2021



## WA Rural Health Conference 2021 | Early bird registrations are NOW OPEN



**RURAL HEALTH WEST** | **WA Rural Health Conference 2021**  
**LESSONS FROM PAST DISASTERS**  
27 and 28 March 2021 | PAN PACIFIC PERTH

Concentrating on learnings and effects from the recent disasters that have impacted both Australia and the world, and how we can prepare for future adversities. Particular emphasis will be on dealing with the aftermath of natural disasters such as bushfires, floods and of course COVID-19.

Travel support to attend the conference is available for medical professionals, nurses and midwives who work and live in rural Western Australia and their partners.

We encourage the partners and family of attending delegates to register for the Family Program and enjoy the weekend in Perth.

Please visit the [conference website](#) for full details.

## 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](mailto:Stockpile.Ops@health.gov.au).

## Health Promotion Events

### Breast Cancer Awareness Month is 1 to 31 October 2020

October, Australia's Breast Cancer Awareness Month, provides an opportunity for us all to focus on breast cancer and its impact on those affected by the disease in our community.

Breast cancer remains the most common cancer among Australian women (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer). Survival rates continue to improve in Australia with 89 out of every 100 women diagnosed with invasive breast cancer now surviving five or more years beyond diagnosis.

Take the time this month to find out what you need to know about **breast awareness** and share this important information with your family, friends and colleagues.

Finding breast cancer early provides the best chance of surviving the disease. Remember you don't need to be an expert or use a special technique to check your breasts.



Changes to look for include:

- A **new lump** or **lumpiness**, especially if it's only in **one breast**
- A **change** in the **size** or **shape** of your breast
- A **change** to the **nipple**, such as **crusting**, **ulcer**, **redness** or **inversion**
- A **nipple discharge** that occurs without squeezing
- A **change** in the **skin** of your breast such as **redness** or **dimpling**
- An **unusual pain** that doesn't go away.

Most changes aren't due to breast cancer but it's important to see your GP without delay if you notice any of these changes.

[More information on breast changes](#)  
[View a short breast changes video](#) (YouTube)

Find out more risk and breast cancer on the Australian Government Cancer Australia [Breast Cancer Risk Factors website](#).

Find out more about breast cancer in [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women](#).

Coming up soon...	
World Sight Day	October 8
Bleeding Disorders Awareness Week	October 11-17
Headspace Day	October 11
World Arthritis Day	October 12
National Nutrition Week	October 15-21



## Education and training

Visit our Webinars & Workshops page at [www.practiceassist.com.au](http://www.practiceassist.com.au) for the events calendar.

### Webinars

**Managing mental health presentations in general practice**

Presented by RACGP  
Tuesday 13 October

**Ecological impacts from birth to adulthood**

Presented by WAPHA  
Tuesday 13 October

**COVID-19 Webinar Series: Topic 2 "Treatments that have worked and those that have not"**

Presented by the Immunisation Coalition  
Wednesday 14 October

**Team Based Advance Care Planning and Palliative Care for General Practice**

Presented by Pasce  
Thursday 15 October

**Skin Cancer Diagnosis**

Presented by RACGP  
Saturday 17 October

**Pilbara Health Professionals Network – Newman**

Presented by PHPN  
Thursday 22 October

**Registrar series: Medicare update**

Presented by RACGP  
Thursday 22 October

**Real women, real care: managing the interface between primary specialist care for young women**

Presented by KEMH in partnership with WAPHA  
Saturday 24 October

**Anxiety and Panic Attacks**

Presented by Women's Health & Family Services  
Tuesday 27 October

**COVID-19 Webinar Series: Topic 3 "Vaccine development: where we are up to and what are reasonable expectations"**

Presented by the Immunisation Coalition  
Wednesday 28 October

**Pilbara Health Professionals Network – Karratha**

Presented by PHPN  
Wednesday 28 October

**Environmental health: how climate change affects health and healthcare**

Presented by RACGP  
Thursday 29 October

**Pilbara Health Professionals Network – Port Hedland**

Presented by PHPN  
Thursday 29 October

**GP Invitation: 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian Consensus on the Prevention of Osteoporosis Fracture in RACFs**

Presented by AIMSS & University of Melbourne  
Friday 30 October

**Menopause Essentials Update Workshop**

Presented by Australasian Menopause Society  
Saturday 14 November

**TADPole Alcohol Education Event: Does my patient have a drinking problem?**

Presented by ECU and WAPHA  
Saturday 14 November

**2020 Practice Management Education Day**

Presented by AAPM  
Thursday 12 November

**Virtual Data & Analytics in Healthcare**

Presented by Public Sector Network  
Thursday 12 November

**WA Rural Health Conference 2021**

Presented by Rural Health West  
Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 March

### Online Training

**COVID-19 Infection Control Training**  
Presented by Department of Health

**Chronic Disease Mgmt Healthy Ageing Program**  
Presented by APNA

**Advanced Skills Training AOD - GPs**  
Presented by RACGP

**STI Testing in Primary Care**  
Presented by ASHM