

Practice Connect

Latest news and updates

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Good News Story: Ensuring healthcare access in country towns

Rural Health West looks back on the year that was

In a time where a lot of things were unpredictable, the Rural Health West Workforce Solutions team worked hard to ensure rural and remote areas continued to have access to quality healthcare.

Throughout the 2019-2020 financial year, the team recruited 118 nurses, midwives, dentists and allied health professionals and 43 GPs across rural WA. Rural Health West Workforce Solutions Manager Zeta Welch said she was particularly proud of the team's success in filling solo GP roles in Three Springs, Kununoppin and Wongan Hills.

"Finding the right person for a solo GP role can require an extensive search and collaboration with shires, local residents, WA Country Health Service and prospective applicants."

The team has worked hard to build relationships with stakeholders, particularly with rural doctors who may be looking to relocate or are ready to take on their own practice.

"Those efforts paid off when recruiting for these roles and meant those communities experienced minimal disruption to medical services," Zeta said.

Building relationships with employers and universities has also paid dividends with the team placing a record number of health graduates over the past year.

"Over the years, Recruitment Consultant Brooke Wilson has had a presence at university career days to talk about opportunities in the country," Zeta said.



Good News Story: Ensuring healthcare access in country towns (cont...)

“She generally takes along a rural physiotherapist, occupational therapist or dentist to demystify living and working in the bush and dispel the worry that new graduates will find themselves out of their depth.

“New health graduates are highly employable, and many receive multiple job offers, so employers need to offer an attractive overall job package.

“Brooke has spent time working with rural practices so they understand how to best structure a role and package that will suit and attract a new graduate.

“A few bigger employers have developed excellent graduate programs that include mentoring, supervision and upskilling, and we work with smaller employers to implement key aspects of these.”

Work done with the Western Australian Allied Health Interested in Bush Experience (WAALHIBE) Student Rural Health Club has improved the visibility of rural health roles with students and has encouraged more of them to consider careers in their country.

“I think today’s health students better understand the benefits of working in the country and the massive jumpstart it can give their careers – exposure to diverse patients and presentations, work in multidisciplinary teams and the chance to explore WA,” Zeta said.

“Rural exposure gives new graduates genuine confidence in their clinical skills and knowledge which has a lasting impact on their careers.”



Relocating to Karratha and then to Geraldton through Rural Health West’s recruitment program, The University of Western Australia’s graduate Hira Rind said a move to rural WA offered her opportunities not experience by many graduate dentists in the city

Photo credit: Kate Ferguson



WAPHA Practice Support Year in Review 2020

What a year it has been in primary care. The year 2020 has seen some rapid changes to the way we all operate and required general practices along with us at WA Primary Health Alliance to adapt quickly.

Some highlights for 2020 have included:

- ✧ Practice Assist received 2555 enquiries for 2020 with 46% being around COVID-19.
- ✧ We have published 25 editions of Practice Connect in 2020, including a COVID-19 Special Edition and our 100th Edition of the newsletter. Practice Connect has over 1800 subscribers.
- ✧ Our website has grown, with an additional 18 pages developed for COVID-19.
- ✧ The review of our resource library is progressing well with over 70% of our resources being reviewed and up to date.
- ✧ Delivery of programs to general practice through the Comprehensive Primary Care (CPC) program such as Social Work in GP, Pharmacists in GP, Emergency Response Planning Tool and the Medical Practice Assistant program.
- ✧ Our practice support staff consisting of Primary Health Liaisons, Practice Assist and Comprehensive Primary Care Co-ordinators provided information and support to practices across WA. This year topics of support have been around the COVID-19, PIP QI, Practice Management and many others.
- ✧ Country based Practice Support Staff have spent over 110 hours travelling to meet with practices around topics such as Quality Improvement, Data and Digital Health.
- ✧ Our Digital Health Team have been involved in many changes over 2020, including Telehealth and ePrescribing. Continuing to work with practices on My Health Record saw a steep rise in uploads of Shared Health Summaries by 370% and Document Views of 850%.

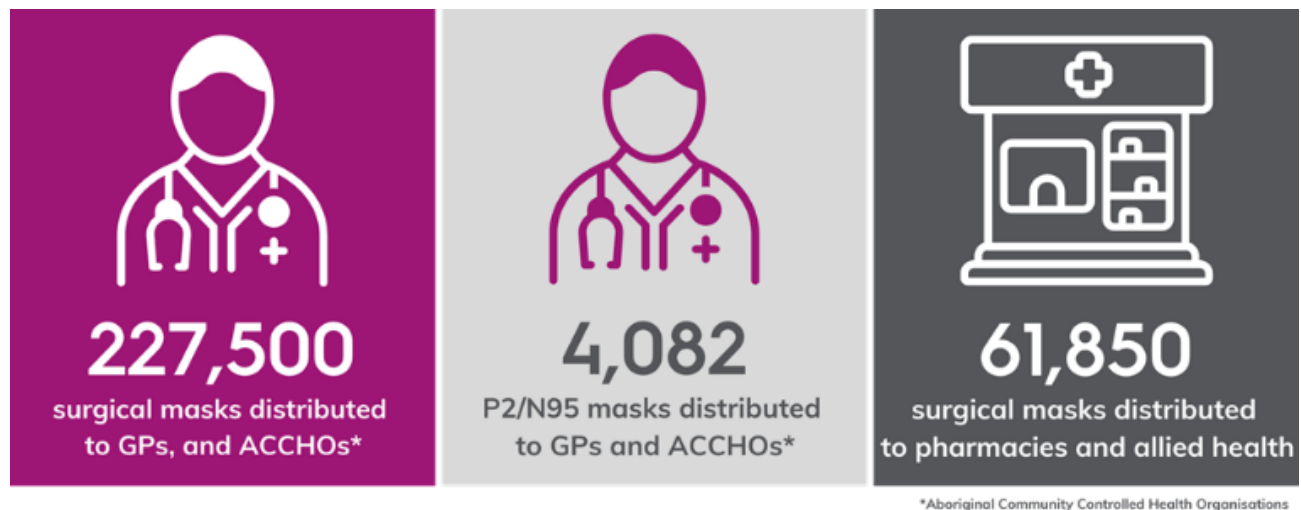
To assist general practices, we also provided training across the year. Much of this training was delivered virtually in the new COVID - 19 environment. Topics of training were both COVID and non-COVID related. Including:

- ✧ COVID – 19: Sustainability Business Viability and Keeping the Doors Open
- ✧ COVID – 19 Telehealth
- ✧ Infectious Diseases – Clinical Information for General Practices
- ✧ Mental Health Impacts of Pandemic Experience
- ✧ Future Proofing Flu Season
- ✧ COVID -19: Staying Safe in General Practice
- ✧ Happy or Not
- ✧ Emergency Response Planning Tool
- ✧ Practice Leadership Advantage Leadership Program
- ✧ Private Virtual Mentoring Leadership Program
- ✧ Coaching General Practice





WA Primary Health Alliance and Practice Assist are continuing to distribute PPE from the national stockpile to primary care in Western Australia. To date we have distributed:



We look forward to continuing to work with primary care providers to improve health equity through better access and outcomes for Western Australians in 2021. "**Better Health, Together**".

Merry Christmas from the Practice Assist team

Festive wishes from the team at Practice Assist, may we take this time to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a safe holiday over this period.



Please be advised of our Christmas closure over the festive period for 2019/2020.

Festive period hours & closures	
Thursday 24 December	Normal opening hours
Friday 25 December	Christmas Day
Monday 28 December	Christmas closure
Tuesday 29 December	Christmas closure
Wednesday 30 December	Christmas closure
Thursday 31 December	Christmas closure
Friday 1 January	Christmas closure
Monday 4 January	Normal opening hours resume



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.

These are some of our new and updated resources in our [Resource Library](#).

Business Management

- [Moving Premises or Changing Business Name \(updated\)](#)

Clinical Resources

- [Managing Drug Seeking Behaviour \(new\)](#)

COVID-19

- [MBS COVID19 GP Mental Health Treatment Plan additional services \(updated\)](#)

Digital Health

- [My Health Record - General Practice Workflow \(new\)](#)
- [My Health Record - GP Urgent Care Workflow \(new\)](#)
- [My Health Record - Patient Journey \(new\)](#)
- [Computer and Information Security Resource and Training \(updated\)](#)
- [Data Cleansing Activities and Tools \(updated\)](#)

Practice Incentives Program

- [What is the Practice Incentives Program? \(updated\)](#)

Programs and National Schemes

- [Childhood Immunisation Quality Improvement Activity](#)
- [National Immunisation Program - Pneumococcal vaccination schedule \(new\)](#)
- [National Cancer Screening Programs \(updated\)](#)
- [MCDC Immunisation Provider Assistance Fact Sheet \(new\)](#)
- [AIR Data Quality User Guide \(new\)](#)
- [AIR 010A Report User Guide \(new\)](#)
- [Supporting and understanding delegations in HPOS to enable access to the Australian Immunisation Register \(new\)](#)

Nurses in General Practice

- [Nurses in General Practice \(updated\)](#)

Human Resources

- [GP Orientation Checklist \(new\)](#)
- [Health Workforce Classifications \(new\)](#)
- [Sponsoring International Workers \(new\)](#)
- [What is the Remote Vocational Training Scheme? \(updated\)](#)

General Practice Accreditation

- [Break the Chain - Infection control poster \(updated\)](#)
- [TIS National Multilingual Poster \(new\)](#)
- [Your 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene Poster \(updated\)](#)
- [Respectful and Culturally Appropriate Care Policy \(new\)](#)
- [Open Disclosure Policy Template \(new\)](#)
- [Australian Privacy Principles Fact Sheet \(updated\)](#)
- [Privacy and Confidentiality Agreements \(updated\)](#)
- [Free Interpreting Services for Medical Practitioners \(new\)](#)
- [Retention and Destruction of Medical Records \(updated\)](#)
- [Clinical Handover Policy 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 our resources for use in your practice use, please email practiceassist@wapha.org.au with ideas and comments.

WWW.PRACTICEASSIST.COM.AU



New MBS items for care recipients in RACF

From 10 December 2020 until 30 June 2022, new Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items will be available for care recipients in residential aged care facilities (RACF's) to support the mental and physical health of residents affected by the COVID-19 pandemic or the measures taken to contain its spread.

Patients in RACF's will now have access to the Better Access to Mental Health Care Initiative. This includes access for up to 20 individual psychotherapy sessions where their GP or psychiatrists determines they would clinically benefit from additional mental health support. This will ensure that all aged care residents can access Better Access initiative the same way as people living in the community.

The new MBS items for residents in a RACF's replicate the existing face to face and telehealth items for allied health chronic disease management plan services, indigenous follow up services for eligible patients who have received a health assessment, and group assessment services. There will also be new temporary residential aged care facility MBS items that permit residential care recipients to access up to 10 services per calendar year for selected physical therapy services, including exercise physiology, occupational therapy and physiotherapy.

See [MBS online](#) for further details and stay tuned for Practice Assist Factsheets on the changes coming soon.

COVID-19 HealthPathways updates

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

COVID-19 Assessment and Management:

- Updated information and link to the COVID-19 testing criteria effective as of November 30, 2020 and updated the following resources:
 - [Presentation for testing fact sheet for returned travellers](#)
 - [Self-isolation Information for Returned Travellers, Close-contacts and Those Tested for COVID-19](#)
 - [Testing of hotel quarantine staff](#)
 - [Freight and Logistic Drivers FAQ](#)

Newly Localised Pathways

- [Pre-exposure Prophylaxis \(PrEP\) for HIV](#)
- [Post-exposure Prophylaxis \(PEP\) FOR HIV](#)
- [Paediatric Wrist Fracture Assessment](#)
- [Endometriosis](#)
- [Chronic Pelvic Pain](#)
- [Termination of Pregnancy Follow-up](#)



To access HealthPathways please contact your WAPHA Practice Support team member or email the HealthPathways team at healthpathways@wapha.org.au.



South West syphilis outbreak alert

Dr Marisa Gilles Public Health physician South West

Syphilis is back

Infectious syphilis cases are increasing significantly in the South West area and at the end of October the South West was declared a syphilis outbreak region by the Chief Health Officer of WA.

The cases are predominately detected in vulnerable populations, including Aboriginal (44%), people that are experiencing homelessness and people who inject drugs. Of concern are the women of reproductive age because of the risk of congenital syphilis if they do not get detected and treated during their pregnancy. There have been two cases of congenital syphilis in Perth in 2019 including one stillbirth, both in women from vulnerable groups who contracted syphilis during pregnancy which was not diagnosed until the time of delivery. We need to be hyper vigilant in pregnant women to prevent this happening in the South West.

What does this mean for your practice? Test, test, test

GPs should test for syphilis in all persons attending for diagnosis and treatment of any STI, or where screening for STIs is indicated. Other high-risk groups should be offered opportunistic screening for STIs, including syphilis.

All pregnant women should be screened for syphilis at the booking appointment and women from high risk groups should also be screened at 28 weeks, 36 weeks and at delivery.

All women of childbearing age diagnosed with syphilis require a pregnancy test.

How do you treat syphilis?

Infectious syphilis (< 2 years duration) should be treated with benzathine benzylpenicillin (Bicillin® L-A) injection 2.4 million units (1.8 gm) IM stat, one 1.2-million-unit syringe into each buttock intramuscularly.

Syphilis of longer or unknown duration should be treated once weekly for three weeks if not already treated in the past.

Benzathine benzylpenicillin is available as a [Doctor's Bag \(external site\)](#) item.

WACHSSouthwestCommunicableDiseaseControl@health.wa.gov.au can also assist with the provision of benzathine benzyl penicillin.

Syphilis serology (including RPR) should be repeated at the time of treatment and then be checked at 3-, 6- and 12-months post-treatment.

Detailed treatment information is available in the [Silver book](#) (WA STI/BBV management guidelines) and via [HealthPathways](#).

Please let your public health unit know of any new case of syphilis. Contact tracing is critical!

All cases should be [notified](#) promptly to the Department of Health. [Contact tracing](#) should commence straight away. WACHSSouthwestCommunicableDiseaseControl@health.wa.gov.au can assist with contact tracing.



Under-dosage of Benzathine benzylpenicillin G (Bicillin L-A®)

Due to an incorrect update in Best Practice software it is recommended that practices using Best Practice review prescriptions and administration history for all individuals prescribed routine long acting benzathine benzylpenicillin G (Bicillin L-A®) since March 2019.

A Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) update required Pfizer to re-label benzathine benzylpenicillin (Bicillin L-A®) from milligrams to international units. An error in Best Practice software prescribing occurred when the previous 900mg/2.3ml dose was incorrectly replaced with the 600,000 unit/1.17ml dose instead of the correct equivalent of 1,200,000 units/2.3ml dose. This may have resulted in under-dosage for some patients.

Best Practice has issued a notification to their users recommending ceasing the current prescription and creating a new prescription for the appropriate value until this is resolved in their December update.

The WA Country Health Service has issued the following alerts regarding this issue in relation to syphilis see [attached communiqué](#) and acute rheumatic fever see [attached communiqué](#).

WAPHA recommends that practices using Best Practice software review their patient records to identify any patients that may be affected.

NPS MedicineWise

NPS MedicineWise are posting regular 15min podcasts to help Health Professionals stay up to date with the latest evidence for medicines, tests and treatments, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The latest episode is Episode 20: Medicines for COVID-19 – where did we land? In this episode NPS MedicineWise CEO Adj A/Prof Steve Morris catches up with Executive Director of the National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce A/Prof Julian Elliott. They discuss how 2020 played out in terms of the top medicines that were touted as treatments for COVID-19, the emerging areas of evidence, and how clinicians on the ground have been applying the living guidelines.

Find it on the NPS MedicineWise website: <https://www.nps.org.au/podcast/episode-20-medicines-for-covid-19-where-did-we-land>

Government-Funded Vaccine Provider Accounts - Planning for the 2020/21 Holiday Season office closure

Details of the holiday season closure including ordering and delivery dates for metro and regional areas of WA have been emailed to immunisation providers. For closure dates/delivery dates please refer to the WA Health Online Ordering site ([TOLL](#)) for information specific to your area.

The final vaccine deliveries for 2020 will be made in accordance with your scheduled day (during the fortnight period Monday 7 to Friday 18 December 2020). Deliveries resume the week commencing Tuesday 5 January 2021.



New process for reporting 2020 seasonal influenza vaccine expiry

Important message to all immunisation providers from the Vaccine Orders Team: Immunisation Program, Communicable Disease Control Directorate | Department of Health

For 2020 seasonal influenza vaccine expiry, a new **on-line form** will be used for providers to report all government-funded influenza vaccines that are discarded due to expiry.

As varying influenza vaccine products were supplied with different expiry dates, you may need to complete the **on-line wastage form** more than once.

The **Cold chain breach and vaccine wastage report form** has been updated to reflect this change, and should continue to be used to record CCB incidents and non-influenza expiry.

We take this opportunity to remind immunisation providers to ensure staff continue to manage the rotation of non-influenza vaccine products within your fridge, to ensure the shortest shelf life are used first. This will reduce vaccine wastage due to expiry.

For further guidance please visit https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Cold-chain-management

New Zostavax® resource

The WA Department of Health has developed a new resource for patients receiving the Zostavax® vaccine. The Zostavax® vaccine is funded under the National Immunisation Program for people aged 70 to 79 years; the **Australian Immunisation Handbook** provides the current guidance on vaccine screening.

Health professionals are reminded that, on rare occasions, disseminated varicella-zoster virus infection can occur in patients following administration of Zostavax® vaccine. Patients should be advised to seek medical attention if they become unwell after receiving Zostavax®, and to ensure that they mention their vaccination history to their treating health professional.

This resource will be shipped out automatically with any future Zostavax orders. To order this new fridge magnet resource, you will need to visit the WA Health **online publication ordering system** and search for 'Zostavax'. Your order will be delivered within ten (10) working days.

New resource now available: Supporting and understanding delegations in HPOS to enable access to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)

This new resource provides support and information for immunisation providers to assist them in understanding delegations in HPOS to enable access to the Australian Immunisation Register for nurses and other support staff. It can be found **here**.

This resource can also be found **here** on the Practice Assist website.



Do you provide immunisations? Do you transport vaccinations or receive them in your workplace? Do you work in rural or remote settings?

Central Australian Rural Practitioners Association have made a training video and are looking for feedback.

Please view the video [here](#) (7 minutes) and then complete the 13 questions which take less than 3 minutes to answer. Click [here](#) for the survey.

This evaluation has ethics approval from the Northern Territory Department of Health and Menzies School of Health Research HREC 2020-3807.

If you have any concerns, please contact Tobias Speare - Flinders University - Centre for Remote Health

Telehealth in Australian primary care survey dissemination

A collaborative research team from Bond University, the University of Wollongong, University of Notre Dame Australia and Sydney University, is conducting a survey of GPs, Nurses and Allied health professionals' experiences in using telehealth during COVID-19.

GPs, Nurses and Allied health professionals working in primary care are invited to participate in the survey to share your experiences of using telehealth during COVID-19, along with understanding how telehealth was used in your practice, its barriers and facilitators, and thoughts about future uses in this short 10 minute survey. [Take the survey here](#).

AIR site changes: Addition of vaccine serial number

A new field to capture vaccine serial number was added to the AIR site on 16 December 2020.

The addition of this field will support the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines across Australia and assist Commonwealth, State and Territory governments to track all vaccines administered to the public as outlined in the [Australian COVID-19 Vaccination Policy](#).

It is not mandatory for vaccination providers to record vaccine serial numbers at this time. Further advice about recording COVID-19 vaccines on the AIR will be provided soon.



Stay up to date with COVID-19 Vaccine Developments

2020 has seen the emergence of the SARS-CoV-2 virus bringing with it significant health implications. Listed below are several websites and podcasts designed to keep both healthcare providers and the general public up to date with developments occurring around the upcoming COVID-19 vaccination program in Australia.

NCIRS COVID-19 vaccines: Frequently asked questions

The National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) have developed a COVID-19 related web page that answers some of the most frequently asked questions about COVID-19 vaccines. They will be updating this page regularly. The page can be viewed [here](#)

Australian Government COVID-19 vaccines hub

Do you find you have patients asking questions about COVID-19 vaccines? The Australian Government Department of Health has developed a news and information hub for Australians about the development, approval process and plans for COVID-19 vaccines. The information hub can be accessed [here](#)

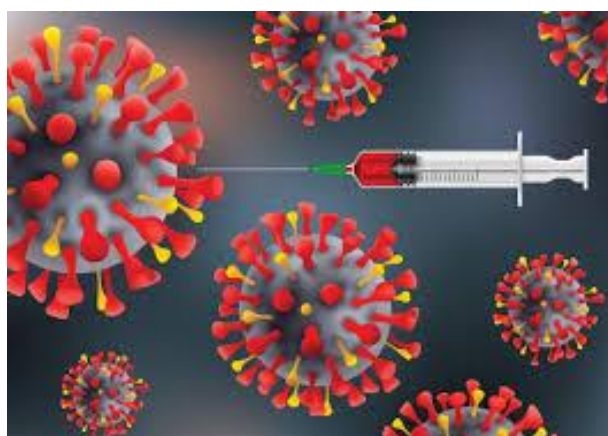
TGA COVID-19 vaccines resource hub

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has developed a dedicated COVID-19 vaccines resource page.

This page will be regularly updated to keep consumers, health professionals and sponsors informed of the latest developments. Access the resource hub [here](#)

Road to a COVID-19 vaccine podcast

Over the past 7 months, the Melbourne Vaccine Education Centre have presented a COVID-19 vaccination podcast delving into the global pursuit of a safe and effective vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The podcasts explore this complicated and multi-faceted process through interviews with a variety of national and international vaccine experts. Listen to all the previous episodes from this podcast series that explores the global pursuit to find a safe and effective vaccine to prevent COVID-19 with experts from Australia and abroad. Listen [here](#)





ANU – Clinician Survey on COVID for policy impact

The ANU Medical School's Academic Unit of General Practice is leading the Australian arm of an international research for policy project. This rolling survey is taking place in the USA, Canada, Australia and NZ.

They are hoping to track the response and capacity of primary care practices to deal with COVID-19 as well as the ongoing impact of the pandemic on "usual" general practice.

The survey takes **< 5 minutes** to complete, take the survey [here](#).

DVA Resources to support veterans

In light of the recent Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force (IGADF) Afghanistan Inquiry, the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) have compiled a comprehensive list of support services that are available to veterans and their families needing assistance at this time.

The DVA is encouraging health professionals to display posters and flyers highlighting the confidential counselling services to the community and providers supporting veterans.

For more information and the access downloadable posters and flyers click [here](#).



EOI - Healthy Weight in General Practice Clinical Content Working Group

As a part of the [WA Healthy Weight Action Plan](#), WA Primary Health Alliance(WAPHA) is developing a web-based platform, housing tools and resources to enable General Practice clinicians to provide weight management detection and intervention services to their patients. The project focusses on improving accessibility to existing weight management tools and resources and developing resources where there are gaps, with a focus on practice quality improvement.

WAPHA is establishing a GP Clinical Content Working Group to guide the selection and development of resources and tools to inform project deliverables. This Working Group is anticipated to run until mid-2021.

Participation in this working group is invited from Psychologists, Dietitians GP's and Practice Nurses, and paid as per WA Primary Health Alliance's Paid Participation Policy. Members will be asked to undertake some work between meetings.

Please express your interest **before COB Thursday 24th December 2020**, by clicking [here](#).

For further information click [here](#), or contact Kate Iwanowski via [email](#) or call 08 6272 4992



NHMRC – Alcohol guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol

Alcohol is the most widely used drug in Australia. People drink alcohol for a range of reasons and in different social and cultural contexts, but alcohol can cause harm to the person who drink and sometimes to others around them.

The National Health and Medical Research Council 'NHMRC' has guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol. The guidelines provide health professionals, policy makers and the Australian community with evidence-based advice on the health effects of drinking alcohol. They also help people make informed decisions about how much alcohol they drink, if any.

This page describes the guidelines' recommendations and includes resources available to apply them in daily life.

The full guidelines and underpinning evidence documents are available on our [alcohol publication page](#).

[View resources here](#)

NHMRC
BUILDING A HEALTHY AUSTRALIA

Alcohol Guidelines

Australian guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol

1: HEALTHY ADULTS
Drink no more than 10 standard drinks a **week**

AND
no more than 4 standard drinks on **any one day**

to reduce the risk of harm from alcohol.
The less you drink, the lower your risk of harm.

2: CHILDREN AND PEOPLE UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE
Should not drink alcohol

to reduce the risk of harm from alcohol.

3: WOMEN WHO ARE PREGNANT OR BREASTFEEDING
Should not drink alcohol

to prevent harm from alcohol to their unborn child or baby.

www.nhmrc.gov.au/alcohol



NHMRC – Alcohol guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol (cont)

Guideline 1: Reducing the risk of alcohol-related harm for adults

To reduce the risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury, healthy men and women should drink no more than 10 standard drinks a week and no more than 4 standard drinks on any one day. The less you drink, the lower your risk of harm from alcohol.

Guideline 2: Children and people under 18 years of age

To reduce the risk of injury and other harms to health, children and people under 18 years of age should not drink alcohol.

Guideline 3: Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding

A. To prevent harm from alcohol to their unborn child, women who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy should not drink alcohol.

B. For women who are breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol is safest for their baby.

The Australian guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol and the underpinning evidence documents are available on the NHMRC [alcohol publication page](#).

You can read the full [media release](#) here.

For further information contact the NHMRC alcohol@nhmrc.gov.au

 LIGHT BEER 425 ml 2.7% alc/vol	 MID STRENGTH BEER 375 ml 3.5% alc/vol	 FULL STRENGTH BEER 285 ml 4.9% alc/vol	 REGULAR CIDER 285 ml 4.9% alc/vol
 SPARKLING WINE 100 ml 13% alc/vol	 WINE 100 ml 13% alc/vol	 FORTIFIED WINE (e.g. sherry, port) 60 ml 20% alc/vol	 SPIRITS (e.g. vodka, gin, rum, whiskey) 30 ml 40% alc/vol

The standard drink is defined in the Australia and New Zealand Food Standards Code.


www.nhmrc.gov.au/alcohol




GP Urgent Care Updates

The **Summer Burst Media Campaign** has launched across Perth Metro and the South West and will run until the end of January 2021. We encourage all practices in the pilot to ensure their online bookings and your webpages are activated as an option for patients to book a 'GP Urgent Care' appointment.

Monthly MEDrefer Reminder

Practices are required to run a report on the GP Urgent Patients seen for the month of December and ensure the patients information is submitted through MEDrefer as a requirement for the Pilot.

Training for GP Urgent Care Practices

Benchmark Group EOI Now Active for 2021

Ten planned training sessions will be available across Perth Metro, South West and Country Regions from February 2021, consisting of online learning, face to face workshop delivery and post program student survey and summary.

- Wound Closure
- Peripheral Intravenous (IV) Cannulation Program
- Cast application and immobilisation – non accredited
- Wound management

CTEC, Medical School - University of Western Australia:

CTEC have been commissioned by WAPHA to facilitate a series of one day wound closure and wound management courses.

Planned training sessions:

- Course Two – 12 places per course - 20 February 2021
- Course three and Four – 12 places per course dates TBC

All training information is available on the [WAPHA GP Urgent Care](#) webpage.

For further information please email urgentcare@wapha.org.au or call 0429 126 925





Better Health, Together – Staying Connected with Telehealth

In this month's [Better Health, Together video](#), WA Primary Health Alliance CEO, Learne Durrington sits down with ConnectGroups CEO, Antonella Segre to talk about our partnership to develop [Stay Connected with Telehealth](#), a three-month program to raise awareness, educate and increase the use of telehealth among people diagnosed with a chronic condition. For further information and resources see the [ConnectGroups website](#).



Nominations now open for our LGBTIQ+ Stakeholder Reference Group

WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) achieved Rainbow Tick accreditation in 2019, demonstrating our commitment to ensuring people of diverse sex, sexuality and/or gender have access to safe, inclusive and culturally appropriate primary health care.

As part of our maturing inclusive practice, WAPHA is establishing an LGBTIQ+ Stakeholder Reference Group to inform, guide and support our work.

We are calling for expressions of interest from experts in the field of LGBTIQ+ health service delivery and/or those with lived experience to provide insight and input to inform activities that improve and strengthen WAPHA's inclusive practice and influence the practice of our stakeholders.

If that sounds like you, find out more and nominate [here](#).

Nominations close 31 January 2021.





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 with any questions about the program.

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



Treating Alcohol and other Drugs in Primary Care (TADPole), Small Group sessions

The Treating Alcohol and Drugs in Primary Care (TADPole) program is funded by the WA Primary Health Care Alliance (WAPHA) with the primary aim of increasing the capacity of the WA primary care workforce to provide alcohol and drug treatment and support.

From February 2021 the TADPole team will be delivering interactive small group lunch sessions for GPs and practice nurses on alcohol addiction and prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, including information regarding parent child attachment from an Aboriginal culturally appropriate framework.

Lunch will be provided for this CPD activity which will attract 2 points as part of the RACGP CPD program.

For further information view the [flyer here](#) for full details and register your interest today!

TADPOLE - Managing pain: a team approach

This interactive accredited activity provides opportunities for collaboration and an understanding of a variety of professional perspectives on pain assessment and management. Participants invited to this event include GPs, practice nurses, occupational therapists, addiction counsellors, psychologists, pharmacists and neurological nurses.

View the [flyer here](#).





Setting up a contact register – COVID-19

While general practices are not among those businesses required by the WA Government to maintain a contact register, they are encouraged to do so.

The WA Government has provided a [SafeWA guide for business](#) that includes the necessary steps to set up a contact register.

The use of the free SafeWA contact register app is encouraged, because it is easy to use, hygienic, protects patrons' privacy and is efficient for contact tracing. However, a paper-based register is also a possibility.

To ensure inclusive access, businesses opting to use the app must also have a manual method of registering visitor details, such as a paper-based register.

The WA Government has developed a [suggested format for businesses](#) to use for paper-based registers.



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.



Education and training

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

Webinars

Managing pain: a team approach

Presented by TADPole

Saturday 6 March

Cervical Screening for nurses

Presented by Sexual Head Quarters (SHQ)

Multiple dates

FPAF Certificate in Reproductive and Sexual Health for Doctors

Presented by Sexual Head Quarters (SHQ)

Monday 15 and Friday 19 March

Rural Emergency Advanced Clinical Training (REACT+)

Presented by Rural Health West

Thursday 25 to Friday 26 March

Toxicological Emergencies Workshop

Presented by Rural Health West

Friday 26 March

Practice Management Workshop

Presented by Rural Health West

Sunday 28 March

WA Rural Health Conference 2021

Presented by Rural Health West

Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 March

Certificate in Sexual and Reproductive Health (Nursing)

Presented by Sexual Head Quarters (SHQ)

Monday 10 to Thursday 13 May

Contraceptive Implant training for Nurses

Presented by Sexual Head Quarters (SHQ)

Thursday 13 May

Rural Remote Retrieval Weekend 2021

Presented by Rural Health West

Thursday 13 to Sunday 16 May

Rural Anaesthesia Down Under Conference 2021

Presented by Rural Health West

Sunday 13 to Wednesday 16 June

2021 Wound Management Workshops: Rural

Presented by Clinical Design Solutions

Multiple dates (rural WA)

The Business of General Practice – EOI

Presented by RACGP WA

EOI for event in 2021

Online Training

NEW – Foundations of Spirometry in Primary Health Care

Presented by APNA

GP Framework for Child Mental Health Assessment

Presented by Emerging Minds

Diabetes in Practice for Nurses

Presented by Diabetes Qualified

COVID-19 Infection Control Training

Presented by Department of Health

Chronic Disease Mgmt Healthy Ageing Program

Presented by APNA

