

# Practice Connect

## Latest news and updates

### In this edition:

- TGA response to AstraZeneca
- WAPHA continuing to support general practice to respond to COVID-19
- Extension of Telehealth Services & HealthDirect Video Call System
- My Health Record and COVID
- Digital Health Fact Sheet
- COVID-19 Vaccine Suitability Assessment Service MBS Item Numbers Factsheet
- Stay up to date with COVID-19 Vaccine Developments
- COVID-19 HealthPathways Updates
- 2021 Influenza Vaccination Allocations
- Influenza Vaccination 2021
- Immunisation Coalition's 2021 Meningococcal Disease Webinar
- MedicineInsight from NPS MedicineWise
- GP Urgent Care Network Pilot– MEDrefer DATA UPLOADS
- Shifting the paradigm – a holistic view of overweight and obesity
- Go beyond with Practice to Practice
- My Asthma Guide (updated)
- EMHS: My Outpatient Appointment Guide
- Wellbeing support at hand during stressful times for WA general practice teams
- Health Promotions
- Practice Assist Resource Library
- Education and training
- Practice Management Workshop

## TGA response to overseas AstraZeneca vaccine precautionary measures

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is aware that some European countries have paused vaccination with the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine after reports of blood clots following vaccination.

The TGA advises that a link between blood clots and the AstraZeneca vaccine has not been confirmed.

To 11 March 2021, the TGA has received no reports of blood clots following use of the AstraZeneca ChAdOx1-S vaccine in Australia. Extensive international experience does not indicate an increased risk of blood clots associated with the vaccine.

Blood clots are considered 'adverse events of special interest', which are closely monitored in Australia and by overseas regulators.

If the TGA detects a safety concern they will take rapid action to address it and provide information to the public.

Read the full TGA advice [here](#)



## WAPHA continuing to support general practice to respond to COVID-19

WA Primary Health Alliance continues to support WA GPs, general practice staff and other primary health care providers to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, most recently supporting the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines in Western Australia.

We received an overwhelming response to the Expression of Interest to participate in Phase 1b of the rollout, with more than 75% of WA's general practices applying.

Many of those practices are now preparing for week 1 of the **Phase 1b of National COVID-19 Vaccination rollout** from Monday 22 March, when they will be offering free vaccinations to their own patients **eligible** for vaccination in this phase and other eligible people in the community who wish to book an appointment.



WAPHA is committed to providing timely and useful information and support in the lead up to and throughout Australia's biggest and most complex vaccine campaign in the nation's history. This includes additional staff and phone lines for our Practice Assist service, webinars, thrice weekly e-news updates and bespoke support where required.

The **Practice Assist COVID-19 information page** continues to provide access to the latest information and resources and you can also stay up to date by **subscribing** to our COVID-19 GP Update and COVID-19 Immunisation Updates.

### General Messaging for All Practices

To assist your practice with the COVID-19 1B rollout and the increased demands this may be putting on your practice and staff, we have put together the following **'general messages'** that you may find useful to use within your practice for messaging to patients, particularly on the front desk:

- Our practice is experiencing a high volume of calls about the COVID-19 vaccination program.
- All eligible Australians will have the opportunity to have the vaccination in the coming months.
- This is a staged approach and for Phase 1b, a number of West Australian practices are coming on board in the next 4 weeks.
- Phase 1b is for the over 70's, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders over 55, adults with a specified medical condition, healthcare workers and critical high-risk workers.
- **For participating practices:** for existing patients, we will be contacting our eligible patients when it is timely, about booking an appointment. If you are not a current patient, please ensure you have first checked your eligibility at [covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/](https://covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/) or by calling the National Coronavirus and COVID-19 Vaccination Helpline on 1800 020 080. As appropriate for your practice – patients can provide your details and we will contact you when it is timely about booking an appointment.

- **For non-participating practices:** To determine if you are eligible, visit the eligibility checker [covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/](https://covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/) and if you are eligible, it will indicate where you can get the vaccination – please check regularly as more practices come on board.
- If you would prefer not to use the online option, call the National Coronavirus and COVID-19 Vaccination Helpline on **1800 020 080**.
- Please be patient - the vaccination roll-out will go slowly at first while supply is secured and practices come on board, but rest assured, all eligible Australians will have the opportunity to have the vaccination in the coming months.

## Extension of Telehealth Services & HealthDirect Video Call System

The Australian Government **announced** that it will extend support for telehealth services and care, along with MBS-subsidised telehealth to 30 June 2021.

Along with this announcement, we are also pleased to announce the extension of the healthdirect Video Call COVID-19 GP Program to 31 December 2021. This provides free Video Call access for general practitioners working in private practice and/or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs).

- The Department of Health has extended the healthdirect Video Call COVID-19 GP Program to 31 December 2021.
- For GPs in private practice wanting to start using the service, please **register** your practice. For GPs in ACCHOs wanting to start using the service, please **register** for access.
- RACGP CPD accredited training in healthdirect Video Call is now available for your practice

### RACGP Accredited Training

In collaboration with the RACGP, healthdirect is offering CPD courses that support GPs and Practice Managers to use Video Call more confidently and effectively. The following free courses are run by healthdirect RACGP Education Activity Representatives:

- **Essential Video Call training 1 hour 2 CPD points for RACGP or 1-hour ACCRM credit**

This module is for GPs new to Video Call and covers the basic functionality of the platform. The course will also suit Practice Managers who may be implementing telehealth into their practice workflows. [Register here for essential training](#)

- **Advanced Video Call training 1 hour 2 CPD points for RACGP or 1-hour ACCRM credit**

This module covers more advanced use of the platform. The course will also suit Practice Managers and anyone interested in how Video Call can reshape the provision of services to patients or clients. [Register here for advanced training](#)

For further information, or to register for access to the platform, please contact the [healthdirect Video Call team](#) or the [WAPHA Digital Health Team](#)

## My Health Record and COVID

As the rollout of the COVID vaccinations gathers pace, timely access to details on the immunisation status of a consumer can be invaluable. My Health Record can provide access for both clinicians and consumers to their immunisation record as contained on the Australian Immunisation Record and includes details of COVID vaccinations. Within General Practice, immunisation records can be found on the Medicare Overview, alongside details of PBS medications and all MBS items claimed for an individual.

Support for healthcare providers to access the immunisation record via My Health Record is available from the [Australian Digital Health Agency](#) or via the [Digital Health Team](#).

Consumers can access their My Health Record, including their immunisation record, via MyGov, and further support is available via the [My Health Record website](#) or the 24/7 freephone helpline on 1800 723 471

## Digital Health Fact Sheet

With Digital Tools such as My Health Record, ePrescribing, Secure Messaging and Telehealth increasingly being used in General Practice, the Digital Health Team continue to provide support and education on how these may best be integrated into your practice. The new [Digital Health fact sheet](#) gives guidance on setting up and using a number of different tools. Further support and training is available via [ehhealth@wapha.org.au](mailto:ehhealth@wapha.org.au) or via Practice Assist.

## COVID-19 Vaccine Suitability Assessment Service MBS Item Numbers Factsheet

From March 2021, 16 new MBS items will be available to enable GPs and suitably qualified health professionals to assess patients for their suitability to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. The MBS COVID-19 vaccine suitability assessment service is free to Medicare-eligible patients and the MBS items must be bulk billed. The full Medicare factsheet including examples of how the items can be used, can be found [here](#).

We have created a Quick Guide for practices to use. It can be found [here](#) or in our [Resource Library](#).

Further information on MBS items for COVID-19 can be found at [HealthPathways – COVID-19 MBS Items](#).



## Stay up to date with COVID-19 Vaccine Developments

### WA Supplementary COVID-19 vaccination training module for health providers

All certified immunisation providers wanting to participate in the COVID-19 vaccination program in WA are required to complete the following training *PRIOR* to engaging in the administration of COVID-19 vaccines.

1. Australian Government [COVID -19 Vaccination training program](#)
2. [WA Supplementary information](#) (module) for health professionals

The WA Supplementary module is mandatory for providers working under the [COVID-19 Structured Administration and Supply Arrangements \(SASA\)](#)

Medical Practitioners (GPs) and registered Nurse Practitioners do not need to work under the authority of a [SASA](#) as they can independently order and administer vaccines. However, it would be beneficial to complete the short WA supplementary module as it will provide some WA specific information that is not captured in the Australian Government COVID-19 Vaccination training program (approx. 10 minutes).

The [VaccinateWA](#) training module is only for WA Health immunisation providers. This module provides an overview of the system used to administer and record the delivery of the COVID-vaccine at a WA Health COVID-19 vaccination clinic.

Visit the [COVID-19 vaccination information for health providers](#) page to keep up to date with the latest on health provider training requirements.

It is the responsibility of the participants to print out a certificate upon successful completion of each module to provide evidence when requested.

### Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) Clinical guidance on use of COVID-19 vaccine in Australia in 2021 (v2.0)

This [clinical guidance](#) is for COVID-19 immunisation providers and program staff and is based on currently available data. It provides recommendations on the use of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine Comirnaty and the AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine. It will be updated as new information and vaccines become available.

### COVID-19 Vaccine - Update to consent form

The consent form for COVID-19 vaccinations has been updated. As of March 15, 2021. It now captures the individual's name and Medicare number on each page.

View the [updated consent form](#).

## Patient Fact Sheet: COVID-19 vaccination – After your AstraZeneca vaccine

A [patient fact sheet](#) about what to expect after being given the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccination has been released. This is a useful resource for patients to take home with them after they receive their COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine.

## Information on the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine for the general public

This [information sheet](#) provides useful information on the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine. It is a useful resource to distribute to patients who are looking for more information on the vaccine.

## COVID-19 HealthPathways Updates

The HealthPathways team are pleased to announce that the following pathway has recently gone live:

- **Preparing for COVID-19 Vaccination:**
  - This pathway is about preparing practices and staff to provide COVID-19 vaccinations and is for patient education and preparation before vaccination.

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

- **COVID-19 Vaccination Information** - Information has been restructured via category to make it easier to navigate and new resources have been added, including:
  - The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) advice on relative timing of administering influenza and COVID-19 vaccines.
  - WA Department of Health - COVID-19 Vaccination Safety Surveillance factsheet under roll-out and practice preparation information.
  - Australian Government Department of Health - Communication materials and patient resource on common questions for Aboriginal people.
- **COVID-19 Impact on Clinical Care - Added a new section, 'Immunisation' to include information** on:
  - COVID-19 vaccine safety surveillance and reporting of AEFI to WAVSS.
  - ATAGI advice on the relative timing of administering seasonal influenza vaccine in 2021.
- **COVID-19 MBS Items:**
  - Updated to include the MBS COVID-19 Vaccine Suitability Assessment Items and the MBS COVID-19 Vaccine Suitability Assessment Service Factsheet.
- **COVID-19 Assessment and Management:**
  - Updated to align with the latest clinician's alert and testing criteria, effective from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2021.

HealthPathways will continue to update pathways as new information and resources become available. To access HealthPathways please email the HealthPathways team at [healthpathways@wapha.org.au](mailto:healthpathways@wapha.org.au)

## 2021 Influenza Vaccine Allocations

Pre-allocation responses in the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) portal have now closed. The information submitted has been sent to the WA Department of Health for approval.

If you completed a submission for your practice you will receive an email when the final allocation numbers for your over 65 vaccines are available to view in the WAPHA portal and you will also receive an email from the distributor confirming your delivery information.

Allocations for the other cohorts will be confirmed in the following weeks

The final allocation numbers apply to the fortnightly deliveries over the first six weeks of distribution of the Influenza Vaccines. After this time you will be able to access further supplies through the [WA Health online vaccine ordering system](#).

For those who missed completing a submission for your practice, **we will be contacting you** to confirm details for the WA Health Department, for allocations during the initial six weeks of distribution of the Influenza Vaccines.

Please note, practices are still able to order private stock as per your normal process.

Further information and FAQ's are available on the Practice Assist [2021 Government-Funded Influenza Immunisation Program for General Practice](#) page.

## Influenza Vaccination - 2021

### 2021 WA Influenza Program information session

The Immunisation Program is inviting all WA immunisation providers to the 2021 WA Influenza Program update session. This year we will be hosting the event via Microsoft Teams. The following FAQs will provide more information:

What are the event details?

- **Date:** 22 March 2021
- **Time:** 8:30am-10:35am
- **Where:** Online via Microsoft Teams

Do I need to register to attend?

- Anyone interested in attending the online session **must register**. The Microsoft Teams meeting link is available in the event registration.
- Register early as spots will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis with a maximum of 300 attendees.
- For wider participation, where possible, we encourage attendance via a shared link from a conference/meeting room instead of individual computers/mobiles.

Can I get a certificate of attendance?

- Yes. If you have registered to attend, as outlined above, you must send a request for a certificate by emailing: [Immunisation.Education@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:Immunisation.Education@health.wa.gov.au) following the event.

Will the update be recorded and made available?

- The session will be recorded for those unable to make it. A link to the recording will be sent in a Vaccine Update after the event.

## WA Health influenza web pages updated

Please refer to the updated information regarding the [WA Influenza Immunisation Program](#) for 2021.

## WA Immunisation Schedule change

Please be advised that the [2021 WA Immunisation Schedule](#) has recently been updated to reflect 2021 seasonal influenza vaccines. Please ensure that the new schedule dated 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021 is printed out for use in your practice and that old schedules are disposed of to avoid confusion.

## WA Online Influenza module – 2021

All Immunisation Providers participating in 2021 Influenza immunisation program are encouraged to complete the revised [Online Influenza Module](#). This module takes approximately 2 hours to complete and a certificate is awarded for successful completion.

## Mandatory AIR Reporting of Influenza Vaccines

Mandatory reporting of all influenza vaccines to the [Australian Immunisation Register](#) is effective from 1 March 2021 in accordance with the [Australian Immunisation Register Amendment \(Reporting\) Rules 2021](#).

## The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) advice on seasonal influenza vaccines in 2021

ATAGI has developed advice for immunisation providers regarding the administration of 2021 seasonal influenza vaccines.

It includes information about:

- the influenza vaccines available for use in Australia in 2021, by age
- influenza virus strains included in the 2021 seasonal influenza vaccines
- timing of vaccination, including timing of influenza and COVID-19 vaccines
- vaccination for pregnant women
- eligibility for influenza vaccines funded under the National Immunisation Program (NIP)
- medical conditions that are associated with an increased risk of influenza complications.

This resource can be accessed [here](#).



## **Immunisation Coalition Webinar -Influenza Vaccination in 2021**

**Wednesday 31 March 2021**  
**3.00pm – 4.00pm WST (6:00pm – 7:00pm AEDT)**

The Immunisation Coalition's annual update on Influenza Vaccination for GPs, Immunisation Nurses, Pharmacists, and other immunisation professionals. Healthcare Professionals (HCPs) have an important role in prompting patients to consider the benefits of influenza vaccination and addressing concerns about efficacy and safety.

This webinar will provide the latest information on influenza vaccines for 2021, as well as everything you need to know about influenza and vaccination during the COVID-19 vaccine rollout in Australia. Presented by Angela Newbound - Immunisation Education Consultant.

Register for the webinar [here](#).

## **Save the Date: National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) Webinar - COVID-19 and 2021 Influenza Vaccines: The how, what, why and when**

Date (TBC): Wednesday 31 March 2021  
Time: 9.30am – 11am WST (12:30 pm – 2:00 pm AEDT)

Speakers to be confirmed  
Check the [NCIRS Seminar/Webinar page](#) for details once this event is confirmed

## **Immunisation Coalition's 2021 Meningococcal Disease Webinar**

**The Immunisation Coalition's annual Meningococcal Disease update for healthcare professionals was held on February 24, 2021.**

Topics Covered:

- What causes Meningococcal Disease?
- Transmission of the disease
- Possible progression pathway of disease
- Meningococcal Disease in Australia
- Vaccination recommendations and risk factors
- Catch up programs
- Vaccine effectiveness and safety
- Management of Meningococcal Disease

The webinar recording can be viewed [here](#)

## MedicineInsight from NPS MedicineWise

### MedicineInsight from NPS MedicineWise

Has your practice considered MedicineInsight from NPS MedicineWise?

MedicineInsight is a data program that aims to support quality improvement in general practice and post-market surveillance of medicines. It was established by NPS MedicineWise with funding from the Australian Government.

The program draws monthly de-identified, longitudinal data from consenting general practices across Australia. The data is pooled and presented to participating practices in clinical summary reports. The reports support quality healthcare decisions at local, regional and national levels.

If you are interested in finding out more about MedicineInsight, talk to your NPS MedicineWise Educational Visitor or call Nicole Humphry at WAPHA on 08 6272 4921 (email [nicole.humphry@wapha.org.au](mailto:nicole.humphry@wapha.org.au)).



Further information is available on the NPS MedicineWise website <https://www.nps.org.au/about-us/services/health-insights/medicineinsight>.

## GP Urgent Care Network Pilot– MEDrefer DATA UPLOADS

The GP Urgent Care Network Pilot has reached its 18 months of operation milestone and WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA), thanks you for your participation in the pilot project.

The Collaborative Health Analysis and Statistical Modelling (CHASM), which includes the University of Western Australia (UWA) Division of General Practice, is ready to complete the third piece of ethics approved evaluation on the pilot. This is a significant project milestone and will inform future pilot development by allowing us to test our assumptions and consider enhancements.

WAPHA is aware that practices and their staff will be preparing for the COVID-19 vaccination rollout and therefore are requesting that all GP Urgent Care patients' consultations are uploaded to MEDrefer by **Friday 19 March 2021**, prior to the vaccine rollout to alleviate any undue additional pressures that have been placed on general practice.

### Benchmark Group Training

There are some places available for various training sessions across Perth Metro, South West and Country Regions, consisting of online learning, face to face workshop delivery and post program student survey and summary.

Information is available on the [GP Urgent Care WAPHA](#) webpage.

If you have any questions or queries, please contact Cheryl Bell Project Officer, GP Urgent Care Network Pilot Project: 0429 126 925 or [Cheryl.Bell@wapha.org.au](mailto:Cheryl.Bell@wapha.org.au)

## Shifting the paradigm – a holistic view of overweight and obesity

With over 70 per cent of Western Australian adults and 25 per cent of children with a body mass index classified as overweight or obese, there is no single or simple solution to this complex issue that affects all of us.

Obesity isn't just an issue of weight. The 4 March was World Obesity Day, highlighting the importance of understanding the root causes of obesity and what we need to do to address them.

We know there are strong social, biological and environmental drivers of obesity that are often outside of a person's control and the shame, stigma and personal blame individuals can carry often acts as a barrier to seeking support. The narrative is shifting from one of personal responsibility to one of shared responsibility.

As a key partner in the [WA Healthy Weight Action Plan 2019-2024](#), WA Primary Health Alliance is working on initiatives to address weight management in primary care. One of the initiatives is a centralised website housing tools, resources and education, to support general practice to play a more central role in helping people to manage their weight. With a focus on health in a holistic and person-centred way, this initiative acknowledges the long-term relationship GPs have with their patients and their ability to see the complete picture.

One of the resources to be included on the website will be an education package tailored towards general practice clinicians (GPs, practice nurses and dietitians) to provide upskilling and increase clinician confidence in engaging in meaningful and sensitive conversations with patients about their weight, the complexity of overweight and obesity and how to work with patients at the centre of treatment and provide ongoing support.

Through empowering clinicians with the skills and resources to understand the drivers and barriers to achieving and maintaining a healthy body weight, and tools to help engage patients and guide them on their journey, we are hoping to drive long-term change.

Local consultation was undertaken in Phase 1 of the project to uncover the barriers and enablers general practice clinicians encounter. Through face-to-face interviews with GPs, practice nurses, dietitians and exercise physiologists, some common themes emerged.

### Key themes

**Responsibility:** General practice clinicians feel they are in an ideal position to talk to their patients about weight and provide ongoing support, however, feel they lack the skills needed to raise the topic and lack evidence-based interventions to assist their patients in weight management.



**Cost and time:** Cost and time are barriers to weight management, for both general practice clinicians and consumers of weight management interventions. Clinicians feel weight management services should be funded under the MBS, and current funding arrangements are insufficient to provide adequate time and suitable weight management options tailored to the individual.

**Motivation:** General practice clinicians feel they are well-placed to foster motivation in their patients; however, patients need to have a certain level of motivation to be successful in managing their weight.

**Weight management interventions:** A lack of accessible and cohesive services to refer patients for dedicated weight management interventions was identified. General practices had mixed feelings about engaging in tailored weight management interventions, with some practices managing in-house and others preferring to refer to external parties.

**Mental health:** A major theme in consumer data was mental health as a barrier to maintaining a healthy weight, how weight is tied to body image, the prevalence of disordered eating in individuals with overweight and obesity and the stigma, shame and self-blame associated with overweight and obesity. It is important both general practice clinicians and patients are aware of the role mental health can have in weight management. These findings are informing the development of the website and the tools, resources and education to be included.

Find out more about the consultation and findings in the *Weight Management in General Practice - Phase 1 Report*.

### Next steps

Phase 2 of the project is currently underway, involving the establishment of a clinical content working group to decide on the specific tools and resources that will be included in the website. The group is made up of health system and consumer representatives as well as clinicians such as GPs, practice nurses, dietitians and psychologists working in the area of overweight and obesity, and disordered eating.

The website is expected to launch in the third quarter of 2021.

For more information email [healthyweightprojects@wapha.org.au](mailto:healthyweightprojects@wapha.org.au) or visit <https://www.wapha.org.au/health-professionals/healthy-weight-gp-project/> to keep up-to-date as the project progresses.

## Go beyond with Practice to Practice



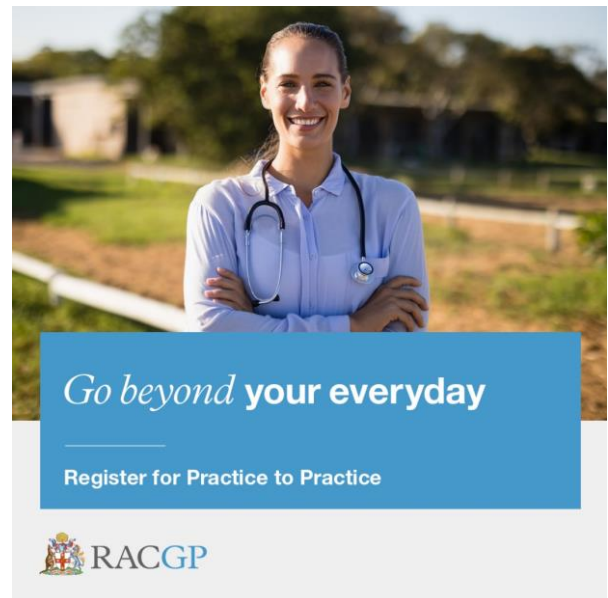
Have you wondered what it's like to work in general practice in a world quite different to your own? You can now get a taste for life as a GP in a contrasting urban or rural community as part of an innovative new practice exchange program.

The RACGP has launched Practice to Practice, a pilot program that connects general practices in diverse geographical areas to grow locum pools, increase peer support, enhance professional development and provide a greater service offering for patients. Practice to Practice encourages GPs to go beyond their every day and try life and work in a different practice setting.

General practices all over Australia can participate in Practice to Practice. Whether you're based in an urban, regional, rural or remote area, the program has benefits for you, your teams and your patient community. It can help address workforce shortages in rural areas and encourage professional development as you encounter new clinical challenges not common in your own practice.

Though the program is designed to link practices, it can also help individual GPs connect with a practice in a different area.

Registrations are now open for the pilot which will run from 1 March – 31 December 2021. Places are limited. To find out more, visit the [RACGP Practice to Practice website](#).



## National Asthma Council of Australia - My Asthma Guide (updated)

National Asthma Council Australia has been updating the "Managing asthma during the COVID-19 pandemic" page on the *Australian Asthma Handbook* regularly. Most recently, they've published advice on [COVID-19 vaccination for people with asthma](#). This advice may change as more evidence merges and this information is updated.

# East Metropolitan Health Service Patient Guide– “My Outpatient Appointment: Is a phone or video appointment suitable for me?”

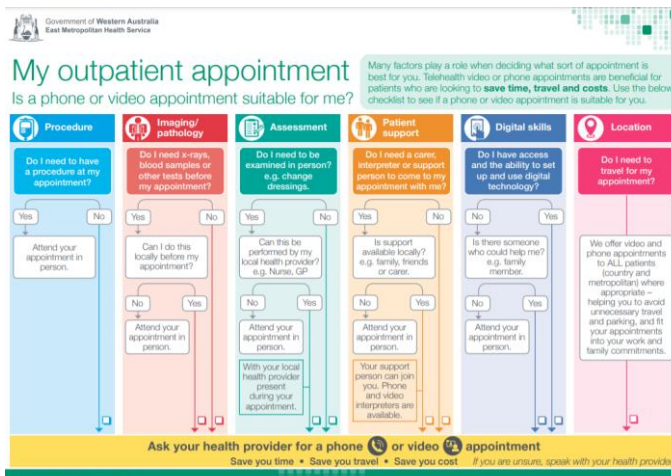
East Metropolitan Health Service has developed a resource to help patients consider if a video or phone appointment is suitable for them.

The “My Outpatient Appointment: Is a phone or video appointment suitable for me?” checklist is available on the “For Patient and Visitors” pages on the [Royal Perth Hospital](#), [Bentley Health Service](#) and [Armadale Health Service](#) websites.

GPs are welcome to use this resource and share it with their patients.

When referring patients, please discuss with your patients their preference for a video or phone appointment. If they wish for appointments to be provided virtually, please indicate this on the referral. Please include the patient’s email and mobile phone on the referral as this will assist in booking video and phone appointments.

If you or your patient would like you to also be present at their video or phone appointment, and you are able to do so (pending confirmation of time), please also include this in the referral. The site telehealth team will endeavour to book appointments to suit you and your patient to attend together.



The patient can physically attend your practice and you virtually attend together (which is helpful if a clinical examination may be required) OR your patient and you can attend virtually from different locations.

## 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 or local bushfire.

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 when booking.**

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.

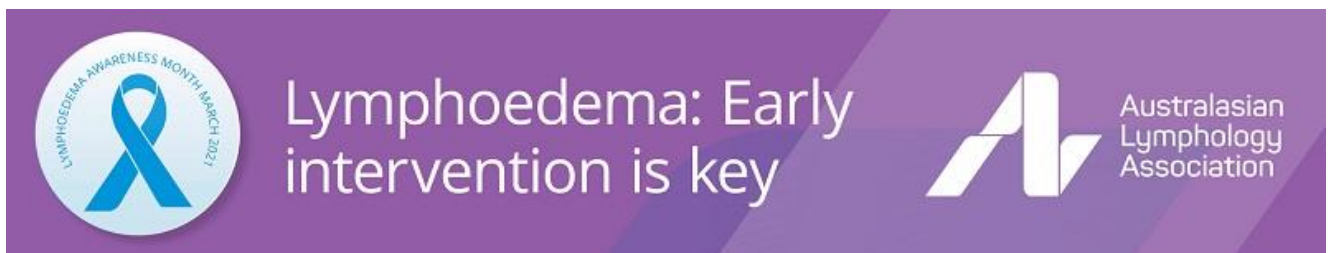
## Health Promotion Events

### March is Lymphoedema Awareness Month

Lymphoedema, a permanent swelling that occurs due to a disruption or deficiency of the lymphatic system, is a known potential side effect of cancer treatment; however, there is still a lack of awareness of the condition in the community. Many people treated for cancer are unaware that they are at risk of developing lymphoedema.

The Australasian Lymphology Association (ALA), the peak body for lymphoedema management, research and education in Australia and New Zealand, is this year using Lymphoedema Awareness Month to promote early intervention for lymphoedema, which should include education, assessment, monitoring, physical activity and compression management. They are also seeking for patients to have a better understanding of the signs of lymphoedema, with early diagnosis and commencement of treatment leading to better outcomes. For this reason, they have developed a pamphlet to support raising awareness.

The 2021 Lymphoedema Awareness Month poster, and patient pamphlets are available on the ALA website <https://www.lymphoedema.org.au/education-&-resources/lymphoedema-awareness-campaign> or printed versions can be requested by emailing [membership@lymphoedema.org.au](mailto:membership@lymphoedema.org.au)



Coming up soon...	
World Down Syndrome Day	March 21
Multiple Birth Awareness Week	March 21-28
World Tuberculosis Day	March 24
Go Blue for Autism	April 2
World Health Day	April 7
World Parkinson's Day	April 11
Wear Green for Premmies	April 13
World Immunisation Week	April 24-30



## 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.

Here are some of our new and updated resources:

### Clinical Resources

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

### COVID-19 Resources

- [MBS COVID-19 Vaccine Suitability Assessment Items \(new\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccination Checklist \(new\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Checker \(new\)](#)

### Digital Health

- [Digital Health Services Fact Sheet \(new\)](#)

### Medicare

- [MBS Items Frequently Used in General Practice Cheat Sheet \(updated\)](#)
- [CDM Allied Health Group Services in RACF's \(new\)](#)
- [CDM ATSI Allied Health in RACF's \(new\)](#)
- [CDM Allied Health in RACF's \(new\)](#)
- [CDM GP or OMP in RACFs \(new\)](#)
- [Mental Health Treatment Plans \(MHTPs\) in RACFs \(new\)](#)
- [MBS Attendance Items in RACFs Fact Sheet \(new\)](#)

### Nurses in General Practice

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

### Programs and National Schemes

- [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 \(new\)](#)
- [Recall and Reminder Letter template for cervical screening and follow-up \(new\)](#)
- [Cervical Screening Flowchart \(new\)](#)

### General Practice Accreditation

- [Privacy and Confidentiality Agreements \(updated\)](#)
- [Free Interpreting Services for Medical Practitioners \(new\)](#)
- [Retention and Destruction of Medical Records \(updated\)](#)
- [Clinical Handover Policy Template \(new\)](#)

If you have an idea for a new resource or feedback on our current resources, please email [practiceassist@wapha.org.au](mailto:practiceassist@wapha.org.au) with ideas and comments.

## Reminder of ADHA training

The Australian Digital Health Agency continue to provide webinars on the use of My Health Record in General Practice. These interactive webinars include practical demonstrations on the use of MHR in Best Practice, Medical Director, Communicare, Zedmed and Genie as well as sessions targeted at Practice Managers to support with compliance requirements and data quality. To book onto a session, visit the [site here](#). If you book onto a session and are unable to attend, you will still be able to access a recording of the session to view at a time that suits you.

## Education and training

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

### Webinars

**Learn how to assess and manage concussion**  
Presented by Australasian College of Sport & Exercise Physicians  
Multiple dates March to June 2021

### Workshops

**Cervical Screening for nurses**  
Presented by Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ)  
Multiple dates

**South West 'Young Professionals' Health Summit**  
Presented by South West Health Professionals Network  
Saturday 20 March

**STI and BBV Nursing: Management and Care**  
Presented by ASHM  
Tuesday 23 March and Wednesday 24 March

**Clinical Update Session – Contraception**  
Presented by Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ)  
Tuesday 23 March

**Unplanned pregnancy counselling Training**  
Presented by Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ)  
Tuesday and Wednesday 23-24 March

**COVID-19 Vaccination and the path ahead**  
Presented by AAPM  
Thursday 25 March

**Rural Paediatric Forum 2021**  
Presented by Rural Health West  
Friday 26 March

**Rural Psychiatry and Mental Health Forum 2021**  
Presented by Rural Health West  
Friday 26 March

**Skin cancer for clinicians**  
Presented by RACGP WA  
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

**Basic Life Support**  
Presented by RACGP WA  
Thursday 8 April

**Midwest-Gascoyne Health Professionals Network Launch**  
Presented by Midwest-Gascoyne Health Professionals Network  
Thursday 22 April

**Neurological Emergencies Workshop**  
Presented by Rural Health West  
Friday 7 May

**Certificate in Sexual and Reproductive Health (Nursing)**  
Presented by Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ)  
Monday 10 to Thursday 13 May

**Contraceptive Implant training for Nurses**  
Presented by Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ)  
Thursday 13 May

**Paediatric Emergencies and Clinical Healthcare Scenarios (PEaCHS)**  
Presented by Rural Health West  
Friday 21 May

**Toxicological Emergencies**  
Presented by Rural Health West  
Friday 21 May

**Rural Remote Retrieval Weekend 2021**  
Presented by Rural Health West  
Thursday 13 to Sunday 16 May

**Obstetric Emergencies**  
Presented by Rural Health West  
Friday 11 June

## Education and training

**Rural Anaesthesia Down Under Conference 2021**  
Presented by Rural Health West  
Sunday 13 to Wednesday 16 June

**Rural Obstetrics and Gynecology Forum 2021**  
Presented by Rural Health West  
Friday 18 to Sunday 20 June

**2021 Wound Management Workshops: Rural**  
Presented by Clinical Design Solutions  
Multiple dates (rural WA)

### Online Training

**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

**Electronic Prescribing online training**  
Presented by ADHA



**Sunday 28 March 2021 | 9.00am to 12.00pm | Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre**

Presented by Practice Assist, a joint initiative of Rural Health West and the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA), this workshop will provide participants with the knowledge, skills and support networks to build viable and sustainable businesses in rural Western Australia.

### Topics Covered:

- Digital Health Information and guidance on Telehealth, ePrescribing, and My Health Record
- Quality improvement Why is it important, including “Plan Do Study Act” activity
- Navigating the COVID-19 Vaccination Roll Out Where to find resources and information needed
- Q&A session Participants’ questions regarding the day-to-day operations of rural general practice

**REGISTER HERE FOR THE PRACTICE MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP**