

## Practice Connect Latest news and updates

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## Changes to State-run vaccination clinic eligibility for West Australians

From Tuesday June 8, State-run clinic bookings opened to Western Australians aged over 30 and over.

Western Australia is fast tracking the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination program, offering the vaccine to all eligible Western Australians who are 30 years of age and over.

Those aged between 30 and 49 will receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at State-run clinics, and people aged 50 and over will continue to receive the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.

Read more here.



## Updated COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout through General Practice onboarding pack with new information

A new version of the COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout through General Practice onboarding pack is now available. This version replaces the previous version released on 14 March. All sections contain new or updated information.

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WA Primary Health Alliance is supported by funding from the Australian Government under the PHN Program. Rural Health West is funded by the Australian Government and WA Country Health Service.





## Two GP Respiratory Clinics offering Pfizer (Comirnaty) vaccines to under 50s in Phase 1a and 1b

In-line with Australian Government Federal eligibility guidelines two West Australian GP Respiratory Clinics are offering vaccines to people:

- aged over 40 and over
- all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 16 to 49
- NDIS participants aged 16 years and over and their carers (of any age); and
- temporary visa holders aged under 50 years who are currently in Australia and have been approved for return travel to Australia through the travel exemption process.

Albany GP Respiratory Clinic (Pioneer Health) began offering the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to under 50s who met the eligibility criteria on Saturday (June 5) and Victoria Park GP Respiratory Clinic on May 28.

Albany appointments can be made by calling 08 9892 0480

Patients who meet the eligibility criteria can request an appointment at the Victoria Park clinic by emailing vicparkrespiratory@iinet.net.au or calling 08 7905 7205. Email is preferred as phone lines are very busy. They will need to include:

- Proof of eligibility
- Contact details including mobile number, name and date of birth
- Preferred Friday date and time either 9am to 12pm (morning session) or 12pm to 4pm (afternoon session)

## New TGA advertising and inducements for COVID-19 vaccines

Arrangements by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) permit health professionals, businesses and media outlets to develop their own materials about TGA-approved COVID-19 vaccines. They also permit the offer of a range of rewards to people who have been fully vaccinated under the Government's COVID-19 vaccination program.

The new arrangements, which will be in place until the end of 2022, will give health professionals and Australian businesses more flexibility to contribute to the national conversation about vaccination. Health professionals can enhance vaccine uptake by publicly supporting vaccination and counter misinformation. Logistical information about when and where to be vaccinated can continue to be communicated.

This is provided the content is consistent with Government messaging and does not contain:

- references to specific brands of vaccines, or compare different COVID-19 vaccines
- statements that COVID-19 vaccines cannot cause harm or have no side effects
- any statement that is false or misleading
- promotion of any vaccine that has not been approved by the TGA.

Read the full TGA statement here.

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## COVID-19 Vaccination Training Modules Updated

Updates have occurred to the COVID-19 vaccination training program on Friday 28th May. Module progress and completion have not been affected. You are expected to login and view the new information. A summary of the updates can be found in the announcement forum. All changes within the modules are identified by 'NEW' in red. You can log-in to the training modules here.

## COVID-19 HealthPathways Updates

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

#### COVID-19 Vaccination Information:

- Added Clinical Editor's note to include information about referral options for practices not providing COVID-19 vaccines including link to the Vaccine Eligibility Checker and to Roll Up for WA for more information on who can get vaccinated now and a link to VaccinateWA online booking system.
- Updated national guidance resources under health professional section:
  - The Thrombosis and Haemostasis Society of Australia and New Zealand (THANZ) COVID-19 Related Resources [Including Multidisciplinary VITT Guideline]
  - COVID-19 Vaccination: Consent Form for COVID-19 Vaccination [updated 27 May 2021]
  - Consent TGA COVID-19 vaccine: News and updates including TGA weekly safety report [27 May 2021]

#### COVID-19 Vaccination Procedure

- Updated information under:
  - o Clinical Editor's note based on ATAGI and THANZ joint statement on TTS (23 May 2021)
  - Medical conditions in Assessment of Risk section, including the addition of new section past medical history or family history of clots
  - WA Vaccine Safety Surveillance advice and reporting.
- Added link to Roll Up for WA for information on eligibility and who can be vaccinated now.

#### COVID-19 Assessment and Management:

 Updated Clinical Editor's note to include information for recent arrivals from Victoria about the change in entry conditions, testing and isolation requirements and exposure sites.

#### **Recently Reviewed Pathways**

- Anaphylaxis
- Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFIs)
- Integrated Team Care (ITC)
- Dose Administration Aids
- Medication Management Review
- Fraudulent Access to Medicines
- Contraceptive Injection

To access HealthPathways please email the HealthPathways team at healthpathways@wapha.org.au







## Important update for providers accessing the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR): Authentication file is ending; make the move to PRODA now

Services Australia has issued recent advice to providers who are currently using authentication file to access the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) that they will need to transition to Provider Digital Access (PRODA). Through a PRODA account, providers can access AIR using Health Professional Online Services. **All authentication file access to AIR will be switched off by 30 September 2021** and some provider types will lose access sooner

Read the full announcement here.

## Australian Immunisation Handbook tip: Can a person with an egg allergy receive the 2021 influenza vaccine?

Egg allergy is not a contraindication to receiving the 2021 influenza vaccine, and people with egg allergy, including anaphylaxis, can be safely vaccinated with influenza vaccines. People with a history of anaphylaxis to egg can be vaccinated with a full vaccine dose in medical facilities with staff experienced in recognising and treating anaphylaxis. All staff performing vaccinations should be able to recognise and treat anaphylaxis.

#### Further information is available in the:

- Australian Immunisation Handbook
- NCIRS Influenza vaccines for Australians: Provider information fact sheet and Frequently Asked Questions
- ASCIA Guidelines Vaccination of the egg-allergic individual

Please also refer to the Influenza Immunisation HealthPathway.

## New research: Time to lift uptake of flu vaccination in children

Influenza vaccine uptake in children has grown in response to increased awareness and progressive expansion of funding, according to the authors of a Perspective published earlier this week in the Medical Journal of Australia.

All Australians aged 6 months or older are recommended to receive annual influenza vaccination, with free influenza vaccines for the highest risk groups provided by the National Immunisation Program (NIP). The NIP expanded in 2019 to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of all ages (closing the funding gap for those aged 5 to <15 years), and in 2020, influenza vaccine was added to the NIP for all children aged 6–59 months.

While there was a 44% uptake in flu vaccine in children aged 6–59 months in 2020, the authors suggest that Australia needs further strategies to improve and sustain high coverage, such as greater access to vaccination services and tools to assist healthcare providers to promote influenza vaccine.

Read the full article here.





## Influenza Vaccination Coverage

Influenza vaccination coverage rates continue to be lower in 2021 compared to the uptake in 2020. Amid the focus on COVID-19, people are reminded influenza can also cause serious respiratory illness and that immunisation provides the best protection for all ages. While people should get their seasonal flu vaccine as early as possible to optimise protection over the peak period for influenza infection in WA - typically from July to October - they should avoid getting it within 14 days of a COVID-19 vaccine dose

Influenza vaccination coverage update as at 4 June 2021:

- 579,268 influenza vaccinations were recorded in the AIR as administered in 2021. (20.1% coverage) the same as at same time in 2019. Still well below last year.
- Coverage for children aged >6 months to <5 years is 11.2%, coverage within this group was 42.3% at the same time last year.</li>
- Coverage for children aged 5 <12 years is 8.5%, compared with 34.8% at the same time last year.
- Coverage for adults aged 65 years or older is 53.4%, coverage within this group was 65.7% at the same time last year.
- Coverage for Aboriginal persons is 10.0% compared with 31.3% at the same time last year



Influenza vaccine doses and coverage - cumulative (AIR) - WA all ages, 2019-2021

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2020 %Coverage — 2019 %Coverage · · · · · · 2021 % Coverage

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## Acute Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease: Forgotten but not gone

Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) is completely preventable and has been eradicated in most parts of the world. In WA the numbers keep climbing, with active cases increasing by 676% from 2010 to 2020.

General Practitioners (GPs) and general practice teams need to intervene early and test and treat group A streptococcus infections when first contracted, or else this can progress to causing heart valve damage and lead to surgical intervention or death.



Strep A bacteria can cause infection in various parts of the body,

including the throat (strep throat) and skin (skin sores, pyoderma, impetigo). Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF) is an autoimmune response following a Strep A infection. After one or repeated cases of ARF, people can develop RHD which damages one or more of the four small heart valves. This valve damage can remain and often needs lengthy and painful antibiotic treatment.

Data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) shows that the burden of ARF and RHD continues to grow in Australia. RHD is rare in most high-income countries yet in Australia it is a disease of disadvantage, and persists in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, causing grief and heartache for many families and communities.

GPs and general practice teams also play a critical role in managing ARF and RHD along with helping to eliminate RHD. HealthPathwaysWA has recently updated the ARF pathway with up-to-date, locally relevant information about the diagnosis and management of ARF. These updates reflect the changes to the *2020 Australian guideline for prevention, diagnosis and management of acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease.* 

To help better prevent, diagnose and manage ARF and RHD, your practice could:

- Download the new RHD Guidelines and Diagnosis App
- Display posters and information available from RHD Australia at your practice. Available resources include posters for preventing ARF, as well as information for people living with ARF and RHD who might be concerned about COVID-19.
- Support your Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients to have an annual health check utilising the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Health Assessment available through the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) item 715.
- Ensure the GPs at your practice are aware of the updated ARF pathway on HealthPathwaysWA.
- Encourage practice staff to complete the free e-learning available from RHD Australia. This elearning is suitable for GPs, nurses, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners, and other health professionals.

This is the first article in a series of three articles on ARF and RHD. In the next edition, we will cover mandatory reporting to the WA RHD Register.





## Nicotine scheduling changes

The latest NPS MedicineWise podcast discusses upcoming scheduling changes to nicotine vaping products coming into effect from 1 October 2021.

NPS MedicineWise CEO Adj A/Prof Steve Morris talks with Adjunct Prof John Skerritt and Ms Jenny Francis from the Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) about why the regulation is being changed, which products are being affected, and what prescribers need to do to prepare for this change.

This podcast was developed with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health.



## My Health in My Hands – Youth Animation Resource

The Child and Youth Health Network in partnership with the project's youth advisory team, are proud to launch, *My Health in My Hands*, an animation which aims to support young people become more independent with their health care. The animation is in response to information requested by young people involved in the Community Consultations undertaken during the development of the *WA Youth Health Policy 2018-2023*. It was widely reported by young people that an animation would be more accessible than a policy document.

*My Health in My Hands* is aimed at young people residing in Western Australia aged 12 to 18 and summarises:

- how young people can expect to be treated by health professionals
- information on their health privacy and confidentiality
- how to access Medicare
- tips on choosing a GP
- how to give feedback in relation to the health service received.

This animation is hosted on the Healthy WA website here and is free to be viewed and shared, and or played within your GP waiting rooms.







All about me

### Purple Book review - GP input

The Child and Adolescent Health Service (CAHS) and Western Australian Country Health Service (WACHS) are currently reviewing the "All about me" Personal Health Record content. One aspect under review is the '6-8-week doctor check' section and triplicate form use, to determine inclusion/exclusion in future editions.

We have consulted with over 500 consumers, and they value the information GP's provide in the 6-8week doctor check tab. We intend to keep this page in the purple

book, however, are seeking your advice on the usefulness of the triplicate system for your record keeping purposes.

We would value your response to a short, approximately 5-10minute survey, in relation to your triplicate form use. Click here to complete. The survey will be open until Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021.

Please contact Kelly Bibby, Senior Project Officer – Nursing, Child and Adolescent Health Service with any questions; email Kelly.Bibby@health.wa.gov.au or phone 6372-4507.

# Evidence based online perinatal depression and anxiety treatment available to GPs

The Perinatal Depression e-Consortium (PDeC)\*, led by the Parent-Infant Research Institute (PIRI), is pleased to provide a range of tools and resources to support general practice to better help women with perinatal depression and anxiety. The MumSpace initiative offers MumMoodBooster and Mum2BMoodBooster: free, effective evidence-based online treatment programs for mild to moderately-severe antenatal and postnatal depression and anxiety.

They have also recently developed a clinician portal that allows GPs to directly refer patients to MumMoodBooster and track their progress. GPs have rapid, secure log-in access to comprehensive screening assessments and progressive summary reports.

For further information on this service please visit the MumSpace website.









Pilot participants wanted for new Lotterywest funded health and wellness program



Diabetes WA, through the generous support of Lotterywest, is set to pilot a new digital health and wellness program for people at risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

The program, called *Let's Prevent - Digital, supported by Lotterywest*, is an online, behavioural change program which aims to support participants work towards wellness and to improve their long-term health outcomes.

The program is currently being adapted by Diabetes WA for Australian audiences and a 6-week pilot program is scheduled to commence in late August 2021.

## Diabetes WA are looking for people to participate in the 6-week pilot program and we would love you to recommend the pilot program to your patients that may be at risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease or stroke.

To be eligible to participate, your patients will need to be aged 18 years of age or older, have an email address, and access to the internet via a computer, tablet or smartphone. They must not have had a previous diagnosis of diabetes or currently be pregnant.

Participants successfully completing the program will be rewarded with a \$50 Mastercard incentive (subject to terms and conditions).

You can find out more information and your patients can register their interest to participate in the pilot program at https://www.diabeteswa.com.au/lets-prevent-digital/. Alternatively, if you have further questions, please call the Diabetes WA Helpline on 1300 001 880 during business hours.



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## Royal Perth and Bentley Hospitals – Outpatient Clinic Letter Secure Messaging to GPs

Royal Perth Bentley Group is excited to be able to deliver one of the key improvements requested by GPs in the *East Metropolitan Health Service Communication for Safety 2020 GP Survey*!

Royal Perth Hospital (RPH) and Bentley Hospital commenced secure messaging to deliver most outpatient clinic letters to GPs in June 2021.

Key points:

- If you currently receive secure electronic discharge summaries from Royal Perth Hospital, we have your correct details. No action is needed.
- If your contact details or list of doctors working at your practice require checking or alteration, please telephone 9224 3673, fax: 9224 2348 or email on RPH.GPN.Coordinator@health.wa.gov.au
- If we do not have secure messaging details and we have your fax number, we will fax the letter instead, because this will still reach you sooner than snail mail.
- Where a letter appears to have been successfully transmitted by secure messaging or fax, a hard copy of that outpatient letter will NOT be mailed.
- Where we do not have your secure messaging code or fax number or the letter is not able to be transmitted, the letter will be sent by post.
- Letters from clinics that do not have this facility will continue to be mailed for now (unless manually faxed if urgent).
- If you receive an outpatient letter for a patient who does not attend your practice, please contact the RPH Medical Typing Unit by telephone on 64775299, fax on 6477 5271 or by email on rph.clinicletters@health.wa.gov.au (include patient name, DoB, medical record number, speciality and date of letter).
- Most RPH and Bentley outpatient letters as well as outpatient and inpatient pathology and imaging results are also now uploaded to the patient's My Health Record. Please check your patient's My Health Record for information needed before requesting from medical records, pathology or imaging.

## Important changes to Gastroenterology ASI at Bentley Hospital

Bentley Hospital gastroscopies and colonoscopies are now delivered as direct access endoscopy, not under the Ambulatory Surgery Initiative (ASI).

#### Patients already on the waiting list will not be affected by these changes.

For **new** referrals, Bentley Hospital will no longer accept gastroenterology endoscopy referrals for "out-of-catchment" patients and, as a result, it is anticipated EMHS-catchment patients will have earlier access to direct endoscopy.

The referral process for GPs will still be via the Central Referral Service (CRS). Pending an updated endoscopy referral form, the existing referral form (mentioning ASI) can still be used and CRS will forward referrals of the Royal Perth Bentley Group-catchment patients to RPBG.





## 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:

#### **COVID-19 Resources**

- COVID-19 Checklist Preparing Patients for vaccination at a different location (new)
- COVID19 Vaccination for Nonparticipating practices (new)
- COVID-19 Vaccination Planning Implementing a vaccination clinic checklist (new)
- MBS COVID-19 Vaccine Suitability Assessment Items (new)
- COVID-19 Vaccination Checklist (new)
- COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Checker (new)

#### **Digital Health**

 How to access AIR through My Health Record and find a patient's immunisation history (new)

Medicare

- MBS Items for Medical Practitioners in 3GA Programs and MDRAP (new)
- Advance Care Planning (ACP) and supporting MBS items (new)

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

## Medicare Benefits Schedule Changes

From 1 July 2021 there will be changes made to the MBS. While most of these changes apply to surgical items, the following may impact general practice.

#### **Heart Health Assessment**

Items 699 and 177 will be amended from 1 July 2021, with these services only applying to a patient who is 30 years old or older. This will align the items with the current evidence-based age cohorts for the Australian Absolute Cardiovascular Disease Risk calculator.

#### Indexation

Indexation is to be applied to most of the general medical services items, all diagnostic imaging services, except nuclear medicine imaging and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and two pathology items. The MBS indexation factor for 1 July 2021 is 0.9 per cent.

Further information on the indexation schedule for the MBS is available on the here.

#### MBS XML files

The July 2021 Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) files, including an updated XML file, are available here.

Updated Factsheets and MBS Quick guide will be available soon.





### Health Promotion Events

#### Men's Health Week is 14-20 June 2021

More males die at every stage through the life course, more males have accidents, more males take their own lives and more males suffer from lifestyle-related health conditions than females at the same age.

Meanwhile, men are less frequent visitors to general practitioners, and the perception is that they don't care about health or that health services are not well-prepared to interact with men effectively.

In Australia, Men's Health Week provides a platform for challenging and debating key issues in men's health and to raise the profile of men, their health outcomes and health needs around the country each June.

The Men's Health Week approach celebrates the strengths of men, the contributions they make and the important role they play in society.

This national Men's Health Weeks seeks to recognize and promote:

- Men's health is a critical issue and that there are health issues which only affect men
- Promoting awareness of men's approach to health
- Changing the way health care is provided to be more sensitive towards men's needs
- Creating school and community programs which target boys and young men
- Connecting health and social policies to better pursue men's health goals

For further information please visit the Men's Health Week website, and or access resources here.

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Coming up soon	
World Blood Donor Day	June 14
Red Apple Day	June 16
World Sickle Cell Day	June 19
National Palliative Care Week	June 19
Infant Mental Health Awareness Week	June 23-27
World Scleroderma Day	June 29



### WA Ear & Telehealth Forum



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#### WA Ear and Hearing Telehealth Forum 2021

Working together to explore the role of telehealth along the ear health pathway



#### Date: Friday 11 June 2021 | Venue: Esplanade Hotel Fremantle by Rydges

Facilitated by Rural Health West

Health professionals and providers are invited to join us for this one-day event to:

- Explore the role of telehealth across the patient's ear health journey and lifespan.
- Identify state-wide telehealth capabilities, where telehealth systems are working well and where improvements can be adopted.
- Share knowledge and skills to improve health care delivery in Aboriginal communities through innovative telehealth solutions.
- Participate in hands-on interactive upskilling and education.
- Learn practical applications including use of technology and culturally inclusive practices for Aboriginal people and families.
- Engage and network with other health professionals and providers working to reduce the burden of ear disease.

View the flyer here, or to view the program or for more information, please visit the website.

## Reminder – Upcoming Immunisation Conferences

#### Immunisation Coalition Adult Immunisation Forum

The 5th Adult Immunisation Forum will take place on Monday 28 June 2021, over 4 virtual sessions. The meeting will be of particular interest to health professionals, immunisation specialists, policy makers and anyone else working on the front line of public health.

Date: Monday 28 June - Time: 8am

Learn more and register here.

#### 17th National Immunisation Conference 2021

The 17th National Immunisation Conference will be hosted as a virtual conference. In 2021 the conference theme has been updated to 'Immunisation in the COVID pandemic era'. Registration continues to be available.

Date: Tuesday 29 June to Thursday 1 July 2021 - Time: Various





### Education and training

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

#### Webinars & Workshops

Hepatitis B in Primary Care Presented by RACGP / ASHM Thursday 10 June

International Conference on Nursing Ethics and Medical Ethics Presented by Research Foundation Thursday 10 June

Rural Clinicians, Rural Practice and Voluntary Assisted Dying Symposium Presented by RHW & WACHS Friday 11 June

WA Ear and Hearing Telehealth Forum 2021 Presented by Rural Health West & Partners Friday 11 June

Obstetric Emergencies Presented by Rural Health West Friday 11 June

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

Online Health - Professional Diabetes Upskilling Presented by Diabetes WA Monday 14 June

#### Recovery and Recovery Plans Presented by WAAMH Thursday 17 June

Driving and Dementia: the GP's dilemma Presented by Dementia Training Australia Thursday 17 June

Regional Cancer Education Series - Kimberley program: Part 1 Presented by Cancer Council Saturday 19 June Rural Obstetrics and Gynecology Forum 2021 Presented by Rural Health West

Friday 18 to Sunday 20 June

Is it depression or adjustment disorder? Presented by Mental Health Professionals

Network Thursday 24 June

Women's Health and Family Services -Community Information Sessions Presented by Women's Health & Family Services Joondalup – Wednesday 23 June Northbridge – Friday 25 June

#### WA Foot Collaborative Annual Meeting

Presented by Diabetes WA Saturday 26 June

Curing Hepatitis C in Primary Care Presented by ASHM

Presented by ASHM Saturday 26 June

Motivational Interviewing in Primary Care: Improving lifestyle factors in the population one consultation at a time Presented by RACGP & Ochre Thursday 1 July

General Practice Conference & Exhibition (GPCE) Perth 2021 Presented by Reed Exhibitions Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 July

PATHFINDER: Early career GP conference 2021 Presented by RACGP Saturday 7 August

Paediatric eczema, allergy and asthma update for Primary Care Nurses WA Presented by Perth Children's Hospital Saturday 21 August

Cervical Screening for nurses Presented by Sexual Head Quarters (SHQ) 24 & 25 August

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## Education and training

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

Joint Australasian Sexual Health and HIV&AIDS Conferences: VIRTUAL Presented by ASHM Monday 6 to Thursday 9 September

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 Electronic Prescribing online training Presented by ADHA

RACGP webinar - Phone and Video consultations Presented by RACGP

Safety Through Reporting Presented by Department of Health & TGA

Keeping your practice COVID-safe Presented by RACGP

High-quality health records to support patient care Presented by RACGP

Medico-legal concerns and My Health Record Presented by RACGP