

Practice Connect



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Practice Assist
Strengthening general practice in WA



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Latest news and updates

The 2018 RACGP Technology Survey is now available

The annual RACGP *Technology Survey* is designed to gain insights and opinions on the use of technology among general practitioners in Australia.

Each year GPs and general practice registrars currently practising in Australia are invited to have their say and contribute their experience.

Survey results assist the RACGP in understanding what systems are being used, where future investment is needed and the key technology challenges faced by general practice teams.

The 2018 survey report is now available. The next RACGP Technology Survey will be open later in 2019. If you have any questions about this survey or previous results, contact the RACGP Practice Technology and Management team at ehealth@racgp.org.au

To download and read the report, please go to <https://bit.ly/2WU2aUw>

National Framework for Continuous Quality Improvement in Primary Health Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The *National Framework for Continuous Quality Improvement in Primary Health Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, 2018-2023* is designed to provide practical support for all primary healthcare organisations in their efforts to ensure that the health care they provide is high quality, safe, effective, responsive and culturally respectful.

It is relevant to Aboriginal health services and private general practices, NACCHO Affiliates and Primary Health Networks, national and state/territory governments. It provides guidance for clinicians, board members and practice owners, health promotion, administrative and management staff.

To download the framework document, please go to <https://bit.ly/2MZaazb>

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WA Primary Health Alliance is supported by funding from the Australian Government under the PHN Program.

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Online diabetes upskilling for health professionals

Would you like to upskill in diabetes but can't attend the Diabetes WA face-to-face training in Perth?

Now you can learn online with the support of a Diabetes WA credentialed diabetes educator.

The National Association of Diabetes Centres (NADC) online diabetes care course is for health professionals in a general care setting. This interactive learning tool can be completed at your own pace with 24 hour access, and is suitable for anyone who finds it challenging to travel for training days.

Diabetes WA will provide 25 free registrations (worth \$594 each) to primary care health professionals working in rural or remote practice. Diabetes WA will also provide a credentialed diabetes educator (CDE) as a mentor to help support participants through the training process. Registered and enrolled nurses, GPs and other allied health professionals based at a GP clinic in regional or remote Western Australia are eligible for this offer.

For more information and to express your interest, please visit <https://bit.ly/2URpkJp>

Do you use a PKI certificate to access HPOS?

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is changing business processes to strengthen online security.

What's changing?

You may use Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) SHA-1 Individual Certificates to access HPOS. When this certificate expires, DHS won't renew it. If you use this certificate, they will send you a letter a month before it expires and remind you to create a PRODA account.

What you need to do

You'll need to use your PRODA account or create one to access HPOS. This is a more secure way to access digital services.

If you still need a PKI SHA-2 Individual Certificate for other services, you'll need to contact DHS.

For more information, please visit <https://bit.ly/2RT21gh>

Updated PBS education guides

The Department of Human Services has updated its PBS education guides as part of its annual review.

For more information, and to access the guides, please visit <https://bit.ly/2WZmt2P>

Accreditation tip – triage

RACGP Standards for general practices 5th ed GP1.1B

Triage is a vital process in general practice. The word triage comes from the French word *trier*, which means “to sort or separate”. This is what the triage process seeks to achieve: it sorts your patients into categories based on urgency of need, allowing you to deliver the right level of care within the appropriate period.

Triage is integral to the safety of patients, as well as staff, and a key focus from both an accreditation and medico-legal perspective. It is important to remember that all members of the practice team must understand the triage process used in the practice, as although triage will always occur upon the patient presenting at or calling reception, it could also happen anywhere in the practice, including managing a sudden deterioration, or having access to a clinical team member to determine the severity of a situation if a non-clinical team member is unsure of the patient’s needs.

All members of the practice team must know how the practice identifies patients with urgent medical needs, identifies emergencies and manages appointments accordingly, seeks medical assistance from a clinical team member, and deals with patients with urgent medical needs when the practice is fully booked. Ideally, triage training will be provided to all staff, focussing particularly on ensuring administrative staff have the necessary skills to effectively triage patients. This includes telephone triage: a caller should never be put on hold without being asked whether they are able to hold, and the practice team member who answers the call should be ready to record the details of the caller, and to transfer the call to a clinical team member if the call turns out to be urgent.

For practices preparing for accreditation, you must ensure you have evidence of how you prioritise patients according to urgency of need. You might display a triage flowchart at reception and in other areas of the practice, have triage guidelines available for reception staff, and provide triage training for staff (evidence could be provided via a training log or certificates of completion in the staff personnel files). During the survey visit, your staff might be asked to demonstrate how they manage the appointment system if an emergency must be accommodated, and discuss how they work with the clinical team to seek advice about, and manage, patients with urgent needs. Staff may also be observed answering the phone and checking that the caller is able to be put on hold (if necessary) while assessing the urgency of concurrent calls and face-to-face presentations.

For your patients, it is worthwhile displaying signage that explains (in simple terms) some Category 1, 2 and 3 symptoms, about which practice staff must be alerted immediately, and that patients should also alert reception staff if their condition deteriorates while waiting. You may also wish to advise patients that they will be assessed for the potential to infect other patients and practice staff, and may be asked to use personal protective equipment (such as a mask) or to move to another area if their symptoms indicate that there is the potential for cross-infection. Assisting patients to book consultations appropriate to their needs will help you maintain your appointment schedule, and it is good practice to notify patients when an emergency has been accommodated that may impact their appointment times.

Ensuring that your practice team members have all completed CPR training within the last three years also supports them in being able to confidently handle emergencies within the practice.

Useful links:

RACGP Standards for general practices 5th ed Criterion GP1.1B <https://bit.ly/2BvnlmU>

Practice Assist Front Desk Triage Poster <https://bit.ly/2DXMurS>

Medical devices patient implant card and device information leaflets

From 1 December 2018, new regulatory requirements commenced that offer greater patient access to information about implantable medical devices. Medical devices suppliers must now provide in simple language, a leaflet about medical device implants being supplied to health facilities. The leaflet can be provided either with the device or available on the sponsor (or manufacturers' website). This leaflet may be used when discussing with a patient, treatment involving the medical device implant.

The leaflet is a summary document and is similar to a consumer medicines information sheet. It should contain information about the type of patient or medical condition the medical device is used for, information about how to use the device properly, possible adverse events etc. The information contained in the leaflet is aimed at providing additional information to help patients be better informed about the type of device they are in discussion with their doctor about before a procedure or may have been implanted with.

In addition, medical device suppliers are also required to provide patient implant cards bearing the name of the medical device that has been implanted, including model, serial number and details about the manufacturer's website. This card should be made available to the patient after the device is implanted. The cards may be made available in a range of ways, including as a plastic or cardboard card or as part of discharge summary information.

Collectively these patient information materials will help the patient identify the medical implant that they have received, making it simpler to report any complications that may arise to the doctor or the TGA.

The new regulations are being implemented over a 3 year period and will be fully rolled out by December 2021. Patient information leaflets are required now for all new implantable medical devices and patient implant cards for new urogynaecological mesh products.

If you have any questions, please contact the Medical Devices Branch on MDBInputs@health.gov.au

Potentially preventable hospitalisations in Australia by small geographic areas

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report provides information on 22 conditions for which hospitalisation may have been prevented by timely and appropriate provision of primary or community-based health care, by Primary Health Network (PHN) and Statistical Area Level 3 (SA3). These include chronic, acute and vaccine-preventable conditions. Rates for two age groups (for people aged under 65, and 65 years and over) are included.

To access this data, please visit: <https://bit.ly/2MMYaka>

National cancer screening programs participation data

Cancer screening programs aim to reduce illness and death resulting from cancer through an organised approach to screening. This report presents the latest cancer screening participation rates and trends. Participation rates are presented for state and territory, the 31 Primary Health Network areas, and for more than 300 smaller local areas (SA2s and SA3s) across Australia.

Participation data is provided by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/2UXrY0n>

Royal Perth Hospital Update

RPH orthopaedics – foot and ankle referral changes

RPH have developed referral requirements for the following foot and ankle conditions.

- Claw Toe / Hammer Toe
- Flat feet (Pes Planus)
- Hallux Rigidus / 1st MTP Joint Arthritis
- Hallux Valgus / Bunions
- Metatarsalgia / Morton's Neuroma
- Charcot Neuroarthropathy (Neuropathic Arthropathy / Charcot Foot)
- Plantar Fasciitis
- Ankle / Hindfoot Arthritis

All referrals must include investigation reports and documentation of conservative management trialled to date.

The criteria for each condition can be found on the RPH website at <https://bit.ly/2WSVNkm>

Orthopaedic outpatient clinic appointment waiting times are long. Ensuring an appropriate trial of conservative management before referral will allow patients to receive evidence- based interventions close to home as soon as possible. This allows the best use of orthopaedic services and avoids unnecessary waiting for outpatient appointments.

RPH will shortly be undertaking an audit of existing referrals. If you receive a letter notifying you that a previously-sent referral does not meet the new criteria, the letter will outline how to proceed.

Immunisation update

Fact sheets for vaccine-preventable diseases

Vaccination is a successful and cost-effective population health intervention. The Australian Government provides funded vaccines against 17 diseases to eligible people through the National Immunisation Program. This series of fact sheets, published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, provides information about these diseases and their impact in Australia, including the number of cases reported, hospitalisations, and deaths.

You can access this wide range of fact sheets by visiting <https://bit.ly/2FIm0xC>

GSK advice regarding leaky syringes

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) has advised they are sending a letter to healthcare professionals regarding a problem with some “leaky syringes” that has been observed in Australia and a number of countries with some GSK vaccines. On occasion, a very small volume of vaccine has leaked from some syringes, at an observed rate of 37 reported leakages per million syringes distributed.

The leakage does not pose a concern for sterility assurance, but the potential risk associated with leakage of vaccine from the syringe is that it could, in theory, result in under-dosing. A review of GSK’s pharmacovigilance data shows no evidence that the observed leakage has resulted in vaccination failure (lack of efficacy) or any other patient safety concern.

GSK has reported information about known events in Australia to the TGA and the TGA has instructed GSK advise healthcare professionals across Australia.

The syringes are in the process of being substituted with improved syringes, and the majority of potentially impacted products will be depleted by the end of 2019. As the re-supply of vaccines with improved syringes commences, the observed rate is expected to progressively decrease.

For further information, please contact the GSK Medical Information team on 1800 033 109.

Updated NCIRS fact sheets: Meningococcal vaccines for Australians and FAQs

NCIRS has updated the Meningococcal vaccines for Australians factsheet and Meningococcal vaccines – frequently asked questions.

These fact sheets have been updated with the following information:

- details of various jurisdictional meningococcal vaccination programs
- meningococcal vaccines available through the National Immunisation Program (NIP), particularly upcoming changes for MenACWY vaccine
- advice on concomitant/sequential administration of routine vaccines with MenACWY vaccines
- use of Bexsero, particularly the 2+1 schedule recently registered in infants.

These and other NCIRS fact sheets are available on the NCIRS factsheets webpage, which can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2TF5oJz>

My Health Record update

Young people and My Health Record – National Healthcare Provider Webinar

This interactive webinar will provide an overview summary to Practice Managers and support staff in regards to what the recent legislation changes for the My Health Record means to them.

- Date and time: 3.00pm – 4.00pm (AWST) on Thursday, 21 February 2019
- Where: Online (Join via your computer – register beforehand)

Registration link: <https://bit.ly/2OJttf9>

Please note, this webinar will be recorded and will be made publicly available after the event. This event was originally planned to be held in November, but has been rescheduled to 21 February 2019.

Webinar - What you need to know about connecting your practice to My Health Record

- Date and time: 2.00pm – 2.45pm (AWST) on Monday, 18 February 2019
- Where: Online (join via your computer - register beforehand)

Registration link: <https://bit.ly/2DqoGgc>

Post Opt-out

The conclusion of the Opt-out period marks the creation of records for every Australian unless they've chosen to Opt-out during this period or cancelled their My Health Record after 31 January. Records will be created within 30 days from the end of the Opt-out period.

This means there is no longer a requirement to register patients for My Health Record. Please note assisted registrations are still possible where a patient who has opted-out or cancelled their My Health Record subsequently decides they would like one.

Understand when you can view and upload information

Under the My Health Records Act 2012, healthcare provider organisations are authorised to upload information to the My Health Record System, and view information in the system.

Generally, this means that healthcare providers do not need to obtain consent prior to uploading information to a My Health Record when providing services to a healthcare consumer. However, consumers can request that a particular document is not uploaded to their record, and healthcare providers must comply with such requests. Other situations where documents should not be uploaded are discussed here: <https://bit.ly/2lmzTSQ>. In addition, consumers can restrict access to or remove information contained in their record, and further information on these controls is available here: <https://bit.ly/2LIS0Xb>

Assistance with My Health Record

Please contact your WA Primary Health Alliance practice support contact or a member of the My Health record team at WAPHA via myhealthrecord@wapha.org.au

NPS MedicineWise update

Clinical education – Anxiety topic

NPS MedicineWise are will be launching a new topic, Anxiety from March 2019. This topic is available to be delivered in a practice visit or by video conference. All sessions are free, funded by the Federal Government.

The Anxiety topic focuses on assessment of anxiety disorders and evidence-based approaches to management. Both psychological and pharmacological treatment options will be discussed.

Learning Outcomes

Differentiate between anxiety symptoms and anxiety disorder, by assessing severity, persistence, contributing factors and impact on the patient

Discuss the impact of anxiety and provide psychoeducation to patients with anxiety

Use evidence-based psychological therapies as first line for patients with mild to moderate anxiety

Recognise SSRI antidepressant monotherapy as first line for patients with anxiety requiring pharmacological therapy

Identify and address mental health polypharmacy in line with prescribing guidelines when starting and reviewing pharmacological therapy for anxiety

This activity has been accredited for 2 (Category 2) points in the RACGP QI & CPD Program and 1 Core point in the ACRRM PD Program.

Educational visits are available as:

One-on-one: a 30-minute in-practice discussion for GPs, tailored to individual learning needs. We also offer virtual visits via video conferencing software so that GPs who find it difficult to schedule an in-practice visit can still benefit from our visiting program.

Small-group: a 1-hour in-practice discussion for up to 10 health professionals (GPs, pharmacists and nurses).

Please download the flyer by visiting <https://bit.ly/2RSSvda> for more information.

TGA Advertising Reforms

There have been several important developments in the regulation of therapeutic goods advertising over the last six months.

In particular, the new Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code (No. 2) 2018 (found here <https://bit.ly/2GE1tZJ>) came into effect on 1 January 2019.

The Therapeutic Goods Advertising Consultative Committee has also been established and a new advertising hub (<https://www.tga.gov.au/advertising-hub>) launched on the TGA website.

To find out more, visit the TGA website: <https://bit.ly/2E7QAhd>

Education and training

Visit our Webinars & Workshops page at www.practiceassist.com.au for more events in your area.

Paediatric Emergencies and Clinical Healthcare Scenarios (PEaCHS) – 15 February

This Rural Health West CPD workshop is a one day workshop in paediatric emergency scenarios and skills. It will give delegates real-life examples and the opportunity to manage sick or injured children in a safe environment.

The workshop content will include:

- Hands-on simulation: practise common scenarios and structured care
- Short presentations by experienced paediatric emergency physicians
- Comprehensive handbook of lecture materials and practical skills
- "Resuscitation reminders" card for your ID badge clip

This workshop is accredited with RACGP and ACRRM for continuing professional development points and is approved for the Rural Procedural Grants Program. Please contact your relevant college before attending training if you wish to apply for the grant.

Date: Friday, 15 February 2019
Time: 8.00am – 5.00pm
Venue: Narrogin Hospital, Williams Rd, Narrogin
Cost: \$550.00
Register: To register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2PHXcFu>

Conversations with vaccine-hesitant parents – 18 February (webinar)

What do you say to parents who aren't sure vaccines are safe for their children?

Sharing Knowledge about Immunisation (SKAI) can help. The SKAI website for parents contains information about every vaccine included on the NIP schedule for children, and the diseases they protect children from. It answers the questions parents ask, in an easily interpreted and accessible format.

Register now to hear about how SKAI was created from years of research with providers and parents and see a live demonstration of how you can use the SKAI websites during your conversations with parents and carers.

Be one of the first to have access to the new SKAI parent website. All registrants will be sent links to the live website for parents on the day of the seminar/webinar and will also be updated on future developments when the provider website and eLearning module tools become available.

Date: Monday, 18 February 2019
Time: 10.00am – 11.00am (AWST)
Venue: Online
Cost: Free
Register: To register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2BkUhOE>

HIV PrEP Update for GPs and Nurses – 19 February

This training will provide GPs, Nurses, and Health Professionals working in primary care an update on strategies available for the prevention of HIV transmission, focusing on prevention particularly pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).

This evening educational session will be presented by Dr Ric Chaney, GP and HIV s100 prescriber, as well as Dr Christine Dykstra, Sexual Health Physician – Royal Perth Hospital. This program will also include an STI update and WA AIDS Council session covering a health consumers perspective around PrEP.

Date: Tuesday, 19 February 2019
Time: 6.30pm – 9.30pm (registrations from 6.00pm)
Venue: Fraser Suites, 10 Adelaide Terrace, Perth
Cost: Free (dinner and refreshments provided)
Register: For further information and to register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2GEb16Y>

Breathing Fresh Air into COPD – 23 February

A skills building and quality improvement workshop to increase capacity of general practice to care for people living with COPD, this workshop involves a whole of practice approach and is targeted at general practitioners, general practice principals, practice nurses and practice managers.

Workshop Overview:

This workshop provides a whole of practice approach to improving COPD diagnosis, treatment and care coordination for healthcare providers in general practice.

There are three streams facilitated in the morning:

1. General Practitioner Stream
2. Practice Nurse Stream
3. Practice Manager Stream

The afternoon session is focused on inhaler technique and effective quality improvement methods to plan and test team-based innovations to improve COPD care.

We recommend practices to encourage attendance from a team comprised of General Practitioners, Practice Nurse and Practice Manager to lay the foundation for a team-based approach to improving COPD management.

Date: Saturday, 23 February 2019
Time: 8.30am – 4.15pm
Venue: WA Primary Health Alliance, Tanunda Drive, Rivervale
Cost: Free
Register: To register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2GBykhW>

Temperament Based Therapy with Supports (TBT-S) workshop and training – 7 March

Temperament-Based Therapy with Supports (previously known as NEW FED TR) is a new treatment approach focused on integrating cutting edge information about the brain-basis of eating disorders into treatment. TBT-S focuses on arming clinicians with experiential activities and highly-focused skills to teach clients and carers/supports reasons that eating disorders occur, and concrete and applicable skills that can be used to combat disordered eating behavior. Clinicians and carers learn how to address eating behavior in EDs from a brain basis based on the latest information from a neuroscientific perspective. Studies evaluating TBT-S suggest that the effect of approaching treatment from a scientific perspective, as is taught in TBT-S, leads to high client and carer satisfaction, enhancing both clients' and supports/carers' motivation to engage in treatment and a higher degree of self-efficacy.

Come & learn from the founders of TBT-S about this new evidence informed multi-family treatment for patients 16 and over with Anorexia Nervosa (AN). The temperament-focused treatment combines psychoeducation of AN neurobiology and involvement of supports (families/carers) to develop skills to manage traits contributing to disease chronicity.

Date: Thursday, 7 March 2019
Time: From 8.30am
Venue: Boulevard Centre, 99 The Boulevard, Floreat
Cost: Please see information <https://bit.ly/2EyddwS>
Register: To register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2DtarYq>

Supporting Positive Pregnancy and Parenting Outcomes – 9 March

St John of God Hospital is hosting a free half-day education session for GPs to highlight the impact of alcohol and other drugs on the perinatal period. The event will provide GPs the opportunity to learn from experts, including perinatal psychiatrists, researchers, and specialist service providers to improve pregnancy and early parenting outcomes.

This session has been allocated six RACGP QI&CPD points.

Date: Saturday, 9 March 2019
Time: 8.30am - 1.00pm (registrations from 8.00am)
Venue: UWA Club, Banquet Hall South, Hackett Drive, Crawley
Cost: Free
Register: For more information and to register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2N1Jv4F>

Paediatrics GP Education Event – 16 March

A collaborative event between Perth Metro Hospital's Paediatric Departments and HealthPathways WA.

Education sessions include

- ENT
- Diabetes in children
- Panel discussion: transition and shared care for chronic conditions
- Childhood obesity
- Paediatric orthopaedics

Date: Saturday 16 March 2019
Time: 8.30am to 3.30pm (registrations from 8.00am)
Venue: Perth Children's Hospital, 15 Hospital Ave, Nedlands
Cost: Free (morning tea and lunch provided)
Register: For more information and to register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2SoGj94>
RSVP: By Friday 8 March

This session is awaiting allocation of 40 Category 1 RACGP QI&CPD points, and 30 ACRRM PRDP points.

Medcast Hot Topics GP Update Course 2019 – 16 March

Hot Topics covers the most pertinent medical literature from the last 12 months, perfectly distilled for today's busy GPs and Nurses; from Cardiovascular Medicine to Neurology, Paediatrics to Mental Health and everything in between.

The 2019 program will include topics in Women's Health, Respiratory, Paediatrics, Musculoskeletal, Mental Health, Diabetes & Endocrine, Cardiovascular, ENT, Cancer, and Dementia. The final list of topics will be released in 2019.

Following the session, an optional two-hour CPR workshop will be offered. This workshop is accredited for five Category 2 RACGP QI&CPD points, and ten BLS, four PRPD, and two Core PDP points from ACRRM.

Date: Saturday, 16 March 2019
Time: 9.00am – 4.30pm (registrations from 8.30am, optional workshop from 5.00pm – 7.00pm)
Venue: Perth Convention Centre, 21 Mounts Bay Rd, Perth
Cost: Varies - please see registration page (early bird available)
Register: To register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2Emh6Ed>

Critical Airway and Respiratory Management (CARM) – 20 March

This Rural Health West CPD workshop covers topics related to life-threatening emergencies affecting airway and breathing. Course faculty consists of emergency physicians with extensive clinical experience in managing patients with critical illnesses. Participants are expected to introduce their own clinical experiences to make their learning more relevant.

This workshop is accredited with RACGP and ACRRM for continuing professional development points and is approved for the Rural Procedural Grants Program. Please contact your relevant college before attending training if you wish to apply for the grant.

Date: Wednesday, 20 March 2019
Time: 8.00am – 5.00pm
Venue: The Westin Hotel, Hay St, Perth
Cost: \$300.00
Register: To register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2SSv5p4>

Rural Emergency Assessment Clinical Training (REACT) – 21 & 22 March

This Rural Health West CPD REACT workshop is designed to assist Western Australian Visiting Medical Practitioners to maintain their emergency knowledge and skills, and gain formal assessment toward their emergency credentialing, as required by the WA Country Health Service. Covering cardiac arrest, major trauma in both adults and children, and associated lifesaving procedural skills, REACT is a highly interactive workshop, with participants predominantly involved in practical skill stations and simulated scenarios.

This workshop is accredited with RACGP and ACRRM for continuing professional development points and is approved for the Rural Procedural Grants Program. Please contact your relevant college before attending training if you wish to apply for the grant.

Date: Thursday, 21 March and Friday, 22 March 2019
Time: 8.00am – 5.00pm
Venue: The Westin Hotel, Hay St, Perth
Cost: \$2,200.00
Register: To register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2S5MQ4n>

Toxicology - 22 March

This Rural Health West CPD workshop, presented by leading specialists in their field, has been designed to offer practicing rural medical practitioners an update in toxicological emergencies.

This one day workshop stream covers general and specific topics related to poisoning and local toxicology, using an interactive tutorial format concentrating on small group discussions of case scenarios.

The workshop content includes:

- Understand the pathophysiology and clinical effects of common envenomation (snake, spider and marine).
- Improve ability to decide on patient disposition and appropriately stabilise patients for transport.
- Improve understanding of the appropriate use of first aid and investigations Identify and list common poisonings.
- Apply a systematic diagnostic approach in toxicological presentations to increase patient safety.

Date: Friday, 22 March 2019
Time: 8.00am – 5.00pm
Venue: The Westin Hotel, Hay St, Perth
Cost: \$550.00
Register: To register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2QxHiTq>

Rural Health West Annual Conference – 23 & 24 March

The 2019 Annual conference theme *Healthy Country Healthy Lives*, will focus not only on the importance of our physical health, but also on the health of our environment and the community.

There are increasing health complications and risks that environmental factors have on the planet, including natural features and aspects created by humans. Medical professionals have an important role to play in guiding the direction of Australia's health and wellbeing and promoting good health through care of the environment.

Sustainable healthcare will also be explored and discussed with a focus on rural health systems, practises and workforce.

Through a range of presentations, workshops and clinical updates the conference will raise awareness about the environmental challenges to healthcare and how we can all work together to create a *Healthy Country and Healthy Lives*.

By recognising the relationship between health and the environment we can make a difference to the health of our rural communities now and into the future.

Date: Saturday, 23 March and Sunday, 24 March 2019
Time: TBC
Venue: The Westin Hotel, Hay St, Perth
Cost: Varies – please see registration page (early bird available)
Register: To register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2S5RG1C>

2019 Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Symposium – 29 March

In recognition of the importance of the first 1000 days of life, Women and Newborn Health Service is happy to present this one day symposium on supporting the early parenting environment. Exploring evidence based strategies that scaffold mothers and families during the perinatal period gives us the best opportunity to work with families to promote a good start to life.

Video-conferencing is available for rural participants.

Date: Friday, 29 March 2019
Time: 8.30am – 4.30pm
Venue: Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research Auditorium, QEII Medical Centre
Cost: \$70.00 - \$90.00 (early bird closes 27 February)
Register: To register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2Glp7f3>

Health promotion events

Wear red for those close to your heart – 14 February

This February, you are invited to help keep families together for longer. On Valentine's Day, the day of hearts, wear **red** for someone close to your heart. Whether it's a family member, wife, husband, or that special friend who means the world to you, or in memory of someone you loved who sadly passed away due to heart disease.

Join the Heart Research Foundation's National Wear Red Day on Thursday, February 14, to honour those close to your heart. Raise money for life-saving research, raise awareness for heart disease, and help keep families together for longer.

For more information, please visit <https://www.heartresearch.com.au/wrd/>

Epilepsy Awareness Month – March

Throughout March, Epilepsy Australia is urging people around the country to end the stigma and discrimination of epilepsy and **'GO PURPLE'**, the international colour for epilepsy.

Epilepsy is a common brain disorder which takes the form of recurring seizures. It can develop at any age, regardless of gender or ethnicity. An estimated 65 million worldwide currently live with epilepsy - in Australia alone approximately 250,000 people live with epilepsy and one in 25 people will have epilepsy at some point in their life.

Purple Day is March 26, and aims to encourage people to talk about epilepsy and to remind those who live with seizures, that they are not alone.

For more information, please visit <http://www.epilepsyaustralia.net/>