

Practice Connect

Latest news and updates

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Transition to the Workforce Incentive Program

Practices currently claiming the Practice Nurse Incentive Program (PNIP) and medical practitioners claiming the General Practice Rural Incentives Program (GPRIP) will soon be transitioning to the Workforce Incentive Program (WIP). From 1 January 2020, the GPRIP will transition to the WIP – Doctor Stream and from 1 February 2020 the PNIP will transition to the WIP- Practice Stream. Practices and medical practitioners currently participating in the PNIP or GPRIP will automatically transition to the WIP.

An important change under the new WIP is the transition from the Australian Standard Geographical Classification – Remoteness Area (ASGC-RA) to the Modified Monash Model (MMM). Only practices in MMM3-7 will be eligible for rural loading under the WIP. Practices can check their MMM location using the search tool on [DoctorConnect](#).

The WIP guidelines are available on the [Department of Health website](#).

If you have any questions or concerns about your practice's eligibility or participation in the WIP, please contact Practice Assist (1800 22 77 478) or your Primary Health Liaison (PHL) or CPC Facilitator.

Further information about the WIP can be found on the Practice Assist website: Workforce Incentive Program Toolkit

Workforce Incentive Program: further reading

What is the WIP?

The Workforce Incentive Program (WIP) is an Australian Government incentive that will commence from 1 January 2020. The Practice Nurse Incentive Program (PNIP) and the General Practice Rural Incentive Program (GPRIP) will be incorporated into the WIP. The WIP is a component of the [Stronger Rural Health Strategy](#).

The WIP provides targeted financial incentives to encourage medical practitioners to deliver eligible primary health care services in regional, rural or remote areas that have difficulty attracting and retaining medical practitioners. It also provides financial incentives to support eligible general practices to engage nurses, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners and allied health professionals, including pharmacists (non-dispensing) and nurse practitioners.

What has changed?

The following changes will occur in the transfer from PNIP to the WIP:

- The Australian Standard Geographical Classification – Remoteness Area (ASGC-RA) will be replaced by the Modified Monash Model (MMM).
- Practices within Modified Monash 3-7 will be eligible for a rural loading. Different levels of rural loading will apply depending on rurality of the practice.
- Practices in all locations across Australia will be able to engage allied health professionals, not just in Urban Areas of Workforce Shortage.
- Nurse Practitioners have been added to the list of eligible health professionals.
- The accreditation assistance payment of \$5,000 per practice will no longer apply.

Who is affected?

- Practices currently claiming the PNIP or GPRIP will be affected. Those already participating in the PNIP or GPRIP will automatically be transferred to the WIP.
- Previously practices in ASGC-RA 2-5 were eligible for rural incentive loading. Under the WIP, this will change to MMM 3-7. Practices can check if they are affected by using the search tool on DoctorConnect.
- Practices that are not currently participating in the PNIP or GPRIP may wish to consider signing-on to the WIP. However, registration for the WIP is not yet available.

What are the payment streams?

The WIP rationalises major workforce distribution incentive payments into two streams and funds the continued growth of the general practice, nursing and eligible allied health workforce in primary care.

- WIP Doctor – Stream: Payments will be made directly to medical practitioners, similar to current arrangements for GPRIP (commencing 1 January 2020).
- WIP – Practice Stream: Payments will be made directly to general practices, similar to current arrangements for PNIP (commencing 1 February 2020). The WIP will expand eligibility for allied health to all areas of Australia and include pharmacists (non-dispensing role) and Nurse Practitioners to support increased team-based care arrangements.

WIP Guidelines and further information

- Department of Health's website www.health.gov.au/workforceincentiveprogram
- Department of Human Services website www.humanservices.gov.au
- MMM geographical classification www.doctorconnect.gov.au

PIP QI reminders

Have you signed your data sharing agreement?

WA Primary Health Alliance has issued, to practices, new Data Sharing Agreements (DSA) that reflect the use of data for the purpose of the Practice Incentives Program Quality Improvement (PIP QI) incentive. While most practices signed their new DSAs in the August – October quarter, there are a number of practices that have yet to sign and return their DSA.

If your practice had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WAPHA for the purpose of sharing data, you still need to sign the new DSA, as the DSAs replace the MOUs. Practices that have only recently started sharing data with WAPHA must also sign DSAs as part of their licencing arrangements for PEN CS.

If you have not signed your existing DSA, you have until 31 December 2019 to sign and return it to WAPHA. Practices that do not return a signed DSA by this date risk suspension of their PEN CS licence, as well as risking eligibility for PIP QI incentive payments.

If you are unsure whether you have received and / or signed a DSA, or you have questions about the document, please contact [Practice Assist](#) or your [Practice Support team member](#), as soon as possible to ensure any issues are resolved prior to 31 December.

Deploying Scheduler for practices with compatible software

Given the increased demand for support from PEN CS in the August – October quarter, there were some practices who were unable to have Scheduler deployed prior to the end of the data submission period. Where WAPHA was aware of this issue, the Department of Health allowed us to identify these practices in a specific way that still permitted practices to receive payment for the quarter, acknowledging technical issues beyond the control of the practice. This allowance, however, only applied to the one quarter, meaning practices that have not yet had Scheduler deployed need to act now to ensure it can be installed, and that a successful extraction can be submitted prior to the data submission period end date on 15 January 2020.

This process only applies to practices that are data sharing using PEN CS, via a compatible software (information on compatible software can be found on the [FAQs page](#)). If you have Scheduler installed, data will be automatically extracted from your clinical software between the 9th and the 12th of each month, aligning the extraction with the defined PIP schedule, and working in the background to ensure minimal disruption to your practice.

If you are unsure whether you have Scheduler deployed, we recommend you contact PEN CS immediately to confirm your practice's current status. If you are awaiting a deployment, we also recommend you contact PEN CS to ensure the installation can be completed prior to the next scheduled extraction on 9 - 12 January 2020.

Data submission period reminder

A quick reminder that the period in which a practice can submit an Eligible Data Set ends, for this quarter, on 15 January 2020. If your practice is participating in PIP QI and has not yet successfully submitted a data to set to WAPHA for this quarter, you must ensure this occurs prior to 15 January, otherwise you may be ineligible for a PIP QI payment for this quarter.

PIP QI reminders (cont...)

More information on data submission periods and PIP quarters can be found on [the FAQs page of the Practice Assist website](#).

Submitting data when your practice has an exemption

Practices that have been granted an exemption must commit to meeting the requirements of the exemption, as well as the ongoing requirements for eligibility for PIP QI. While these practices are required to develop, within the exemption period, a data sharing solution that complies with the PIP QI Guidelines and PIP Eligible Data Set Governance Framework. WAPHA is not yet positioned to receive these data sets as we have not yet received, from the Department of Health the technical specifications for the data sets.

For practices, this means that we cannot yet provide you with appropriate guidance around the extraction and submission of the PIP Eligible Data Set by means other than our preferred data extraction tool (PEN CS). Therefore, we ask that you do not send us patient or practice data until we are able to provide you with the guidelines and mechanisms to do so in a manner that meets your PIP QI eligibility requirements and, most importantly, ensures secure transmission of the data.

This reminder is not limited to practices sharing data for the purpose of PIP QI: we have, in the past, received a range of data from practices that has been submitted to us erroneously, or via methods that cannot be verified as secure. We ask that you do not send any patient or practice data to us other than via methods (such as PEN CS) that have been verified as fit for purpose and secure.

WAPHA will communicate with practices regarding the technical specifications as soon as these are made available to us.

Rural Health West: Professionals Survey

The Rural Health West Annual Nursing, Midwifery, Dental and Allied Health Professional Survey is now open.

This survey enables Rural Health West to enhance their recruitment and short-term placement service, shape their professional development offerings and ensure that they are providing relevant information regarding grant, sponsorship and networking opportunities.

The survey is hosted securely online and is open to nursing, midwifery, dental and allied health professionals working in rural and regional Western Australia.

Please [click here to take the Rural Health West Survey](#).

National Cervical Screening Guidelines updated

The recent changes to the 2016 [National Cervical Screening Program: Guidelines for the management of screen-detected abnormalities, screening in specific populations and investigation of abnormal vaginal bleeding](#) (the Guidelines) have been communicated by the Department of Health.

A summary of these changes are as follows:

Chapter 18: Signs and symptoms of cervical cancer – identification and investigation of abnormal bleeding

The title for [Chapter 18](#) has been changed to reflect the addition of a new subpage, [Investigations of other symptoms - vaginal discharge and deep dyspareunia](#) which provides detailed guidance for healthcare professionals on the identification of the signs and symptoms of cervical cancer.

Three new recommendations in relation to deep dyspareunia and unexplained persistent unusual vaginal discharge have also been added to the Guidelines. The new recommendations are:

- **REC18.8 Women with abnormal vaginal discharge and/or deep dyspareunia**
Almost all women with vaginal discharge and/or deep dyspareunia have benign gynaecological disease. They should be investigated appropriately and if due for cervical screening a routine CST would be the most appropriate test.
- **REC18.9 Women with unexplained persistent unusual vaginal discharge**
Women of any age with unexplained persistent unusual vaginal discharge, especially if offensive or blood stained) should be investigated with a co-test (HPV and LBC) and referred for gynaecological assessment.
- **REC18.10 Women with unexplained persistent deep dyspareunia**
Women with unexplained persistent deep dyspareunia in the absence of bleeding or discharge should have a CST if due and referral for gynaecological assessment should be considered.

Chapter 14: Screening in pregnancy

The recommendations for screening in pregnancy in [Chapter 14](#) have been modified to reflect expert opinion on the risks and benefits of self-collection of specimens for HPV testing during pregnancy. The previous recommendation stated that self-collection for HPV testing during pregnancy is not recommended. The new recommendation is:

- **REC14.13 Self-collection in pregnancy**
Self-collection for HPV testing may be considered during pregnancy in never-screened or under-screened women, following counselling by a health care professional regarding the risk of bleeding.

Department of Health: Email system changes to vaccine updates

Please be advised that the “Vaccine Updates” via the Department of Health will soon be shifting over to a new email system. To continue to receive essential information relating to immunisation and disease control in Western Australia, it is important you sign up to the new email system. The old email list will soon be removed and only those signed up to the new list will continue to receive information.

The Communicable Disease Control Directorate (CDCD) recommends all health care providers involved in immunisation and disease control sign up to ensure they are kept up to date with all matter’s vaccine related. This could include important information such as current disease outbreaks and changes to the immunisation schedule.

Further action required

- Please sign up to the new Vaccine Updates via the sign up page

Or please visit the [Immunisation provider information and resources page](#) on the Department of Health website to sign up.

- Please forward this information on to your colleagues who may benefit from subscribing to the email list.

MBS Mental Health Services: more information for practitioners

To Support the Better Health Initiative, the Department of Human Services has a NEW eLearning module [Access to mental health services for eligible medical practitioners](#) supporting patients with mental health services under the Medicare Benefits Scheduled (MBS).

The purpose of the Better Access initiative is to improve treatment and management of mental illness within the community by providing access to mental health professionals and team-based mental health care. Under this initiative, Medicare benefits are payable to patients for selected mental health services provided by:

- General practitioners (GPs)
- Non vocationally recognised medical practitioners (non-VR MPs)
- Psychiatrists
- Clinical psychologists
- Registered psychologists, and
- Appropriately trained social workers and occupational therapists.

The new module is part of the [Primary care items eLearning program](#), which contains other modules on; attendance basics, MBS Primary care items, Telehealth and Access to mental health services for allied health professions.

The eLearning module is supported by a quick reference education guide [Better Access to mental health care for eligible practitioners and allied health professionals](#).

My Health Record statistics

The Australian Digital Health Agency publishes a range of statistics about how My Health Record is being used by healthcare provider organisations and patients. The statistics include information about registrations, document uploads and prescription/dispense documents.

Please click [here](#) to review a copy of the [My Health Record statistics](#).

BloodSafe eLearning: iron deficiency anaemia resources

BloodSafe eLearning Australia would like to introduce their program and hopefully increase exposure to their resources within the primary health care area.

BloodSafe provides free online learning and resources on patient blood management and clinical transfusion practice to Australian health care professionals. BloodSafe receives joint national funding provided by the National Blood Authority, on behalf of all Australian Governments, to enable free access by all users.

Of particular focus for primary health care is that there were 57,518 potentially preventable hospitalisations for Iron Deficiency Anaemia (IDA) in Australia in 2017-18.

BloodSafe eLearning Australia provides free resources to help you understand the cause/s, diagnosis and management of IDA:

- Case-based courses in paediatrics, preoperative, heavy menstrual bleeding, maternity, and chronic-complex cases
- IV iron administration in primary care video
- IV iron tools
- IDA app to assist with diagnosis, investigation and management. Download for free from App Store or Google Play

Visit www.bloodsafelearning.org.au for more information, or to review the case study that they created on the [Preoperative Iron Deficiency Anaemia course](#).

There are also the following local Pathways available on HealthPathways WA relating to Iron Deficiency Anaemia and Preoperative Anaemia:

- [Iron Deficiency Anaemia](#)
- [Preoperative Anaemia](#) and
- [Parenteral Iron](#) which includes links to lists of local [IV Iron Clinics](#) this pathway lists mostly GP surgeries that offer this service, removing the need for hospital admission in most cases.

To access HealthPathways please contact your WAPHA Primary Health Liaison or email the HealthPathways team at healthpathways@wapha.org.au

NPS MedicineWise: Practice IV cannulation skills and improve management of patients with iron deficiency or cellulitis

WAPHA has partnered with NPS MedicineWise to offer a free workshop for practice nurses and General Practitioners to learn more about diagnosis and management of patients with iron deficiency and cellulitis in a primary care setting.

Management of both these conditions may require IV administration of iron or antibiotics. The full-day workshop discusses when this option should be considered, and which patients may be safely treated in primary care without being admitted to hospital.

Interactive sessions will be tailored to meet the needs of participants, with a practical, hands-on approach that enables participants to apply learnings, including how to safely undertake cannula insertion to reduce adverse events.

Discussion will include consideration of how to effectively set up systems in your practice to safely and sustainably offer IV services.

Priority will be given to nurses and GPs attending from the same practice (no previous cannulation experience is necessary). The workshop is endorsed by the Australian College of Nurses for 6 CPD hours.

Two dates are available:

- Saturday 28 March 2020, 10am to 4 pm
UWA Crawley WA 6009
- Saturday 4 April 2020, 10am to 4 pm
Hotel Clipper Rockingham WA 6168

To register visit the NPS MedicineWise website: <https://www.nps.org.au/iron-deficiency-cellulitis>

The Advance Project: Information sessions

Advance care planning is an important step in ensuring a person's preferences and values are known at the end of their life. General practice has an opportunity to start these discussions with patients because trust has already been established.

WA Primary Health Alliance is working with Hammond Care to support Western Australian general practices to implement a team-based approach to initiating advance care planning and palliative care into everyday clinical practice. The Advance Project is a practical, evidence-based toolkit and training package, specifically designed to support general practices to deliver team-based care.

The Advance Care Project would like to invite you to hold an information session for all practice staff. The event will be held at your location and convenience, where possible. The session will take 1 hour depending on questions you may have. If this is something you would be interested in, please speak to your WA Primary Health Alliance Liaison or Coordinator, or alternatively please contact The Advance Project Lead directly: Roseanne.Adamson@wapha.org.au

Please click here to view [The Advance Project flyer](#) on these information sessions.

WWW.PRACTICEASSIST.COM.AU

Hospital Liaison General Practitioner (HLGP): Expressions of Interest

WA Primary Health is currently seeking a forward thinking, innovative General Practitioner for the Hospital Liaison GP position located at Sir Charles Gairdiner Hospital (SCGH). The ideal candidate will be currently practicing within the SCGH catchment area and have a keen interest in facilitating cross sector integration and coordination of care between the hospital, community and general practice.

Further information about the HLGP position is available by visiting: www.wapha.org.au/about-us/careers/

DRS4DRS: National Website Supports Medical Professionals Health and Wellbeing

A new national website has been launched offering a central coordination point to link doctors and medical students to a range of supports for their own health and wellbeing. The www.drs4drs.com.au website is supported by a network of doctors' health advisory and referral services operating across Australia; each offering independent, safe, supportive and confidential programs. The creation of DR4DRS has been led by the Doctors' Health Services Board (DrHS), incorporating input from all State and Territory doctors' health services. AMA President and DrHS Board member, Dr Tony Bartone, described the site as an important and practical step in ensuring the medical profession can easily find help for their own health when needed.

For more information on this service please visit: www.drs4drs.com.au

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: My Health Record resources

My Health Record storybooks have been created in collaboration with the Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW. The storybooks give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people an overview of My Health Record including how to log in, who can see their records and other important information. Practices can access a copy of these resources through the [My Health Record stakeholder materials website](#) or can contact us by email at myhealthrecord@wapha.org.au

- For adults
- For parent/carer/guardian
- For young people

[HealthPathways WA](#) provides information on; practice essentials, training and support for healthcare providers and advising patients about their [My Health Record](#).

WA Rural Health Conference: Beyond 2020 – health innovations

Rural Health West and WA Country Health Service will host the Annual Rural Health Weekend on 21 and 22 March 2020 at the Pan Pacific Perth. The conference theme of **Beyond 2020 | health innovations** will focus on the future of health and how technology will affect the treatment of patients.

Keynote speakers

Shara Evans

Technology Futurist Shara Evans is globally acknowledged and widely regarded as one of the world's top futurists. Shara provides the latest insights and thought-provoking ideas on a broad spectrum of issues. To read more about Shara, please click [here](#).

Dr Keith Suter

Dr Keith Suter is the Managing Director of the Global Directions think tank. He is an economic and social commentator, strategic planner, author and broadcaster. Channel 7's *Sunrise* Foreign Affairs Editor and a foreign policy analyst for Sky TV Australia. Read more about Keith [here](#).

Travel Support

Travel support is available for currently-practising medical practitioners, nurses and midwives and their partners who work and live in rural and remote WA. Register and book your flights now to maximise your regional travel allowance. For full details, please visit the travel page of the conference [website](#).

For further conference information and to register, please visit the conference [website](#).

Merry Christmas from the Practice Assist team

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

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

Coming up soon...	
Monday 23 December	Christmas closure
Tuesday 24 December	Christmas closure
Wednesday 25 December	Christmas Day
Thursday 26 December	Boxing Day
Friday 27 December	Christmas closure
Monday 30 December	Normal opening hours
Tuesday 31 December	Normal opening hours
Wednesday 1 January	Christmas closure
Thursday 2 January	Normal opening hours resume



Education and training

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

Team Based Care and Data Driven Improvement

Practice Improvements & Team Based Care (presentation copy)
Presented by Katrina Otto, TRAIN IT Medical

Screening and Identifying Chronic Disease in Primary Health

Presented by The Benchmark Group
Online learning

Diabetes in Practice for Nurses

Presented by Diabetes Qualified
Online learning

BreastScreen WA

Free mammograms for Denham women
Monday 6 January to Wednesday 8 January

Trauma Informed Care and Practice

Free Mental Health Training in the Goldfields
The Mental Health Commission
Tuesday 4 February (Kalgoorlie)
Thursday 26 March (Esperance)

Recognising and Responding to Amphetamine

Intoxication/Toxicity & Opioid Overuse
Free Mental Health Training in the Goldfields
The Mental Health Commission
Wednesday 5 February (Kalgoorlie)
Friday 27 March (Esperance)

Diabetes and travel

Presented by Christine Carne, RN, CDE
Diabetes WA
Monday 10 February

Cervical Screening for Nurses

Presented by Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ)
Monday 17 to Thursday 20 February

WA Rural Health Conference 2020: Beyond 2020 Health Innovations

Rural Health West
Saturday 21 & Sunday 22 March

Certificate in Sexual and Reproductive Health (Nursing)

Presented by Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ)
Wednesday 6 to Thursday 14 May

RACGP Practice Owners National Conference

Presented by RACGP
Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 May

Contraceptive Implant Theory for Nurses

Presented by Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ)
Friday 8 May

APNA National Conference

Webinar presented by Pen CS
Thursday 21 to Saturday 23 May

