

Practice Connect

Latest news and updates

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Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV): Stay up to date with the latest information

Following the significant outbreak in the province of Hubei, including Wuhan City and surrounds in China, there have been five confirmed 2019-nCoV cases in Australia. Four in NSW and one in Melbourne.

Chief Medical Officer Professor Brendan Murphy has advised four people are being tested in Perth, with results due shortly.

Health Professionals can stay up to date with all the latest information by logging on to the [HealthPathways WA website](#).

If you need log on details please email healthpathways@wapha.org.au or contact your Primary Health Liaison Officer, and or email practiceassist@wapha.org.au

Novel Coronavirus resources

The Department of Health has developed the 'Tell staff immediately if...' poster to display in general practice and in clinical areas.

Further information and resources regarding the Novel coronavirus can also be accessed via the HealthPathways website. Please contact your WAPHA Primary Health Liaison or email the HealthPathways team at healthpathways@wapha.org.au.

Mental Health Services for Bushfire Response

The Australian Government is offering mental health support for individuals or families impacted by the 2019-20 bushfires in disaster declared areas and affected responders, emergency management employees or volunteers. Anyone affected by the fires can access these Medicare Bushfire Recovery services until 31 December 2021. Although Western Australia "WA" has thankfully not been impacted at the level seen in the eastern states, these services may be applicable to WA patients with families in or visiting disaster declared areas or WA based responders, emergency management employees or volunteers working interstate.

Further information can be accessed via the Department of Human Services by viewing the [Mental Health Support for Australians Affected by the 2019-20 Bushfires](#) or patients can be directed to the [How to access our services](#).

New MBS items – Mental Health Services for Bushfire Response

New MBS items specific for Mental Health Services for the bushfire response have been released:

- From 17 January 2020, extra mental health services, including telehealth services, are available to people whose mental health is adversely affected by a bushfire that occurred in the 2019-20 financial year.
- The new services are provided by eligible psychologists, GPs and medical practitioners, social workers and occupational therapists.
- The services are available to anyone whose mental health has been affected by the bushfire crisis and are not restricted to people living in areas directly affected by bushfire.

For further information please visit the ['Mental Health Services for Bushfire Response'](#) MBS online updates.

Medicare Benefits Schedule: Revised 1 January updates

The revised 1 January 2020 Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) workbook XML files are now available for download by [clicking here to the MBS downloads page](#).

The changes include in this edition:

- MBS Mental Health and Well-Being Telehealth Support Services for Patients Affected by Bushfire
- Schedule fee change for MBS item 591 (urgent after hours)
- Amended geographic eligibility requirements for MBS item 10991, 64991 and 74991
A locator map to identify a medical practice's MMM classification is available at the [Doctor Connect website](#)

For further information please visit the [MBS website by clicking here](#)

Hedland Community of Excellence

WAPHA has partnered with the Australian Digital Health Agency to create a Digital Health Community of Excellence in Hedland, one of only two in Australia.

The project will look at ways to improve care coordination and access to digital health services – especially during transition of care, such as from the community to the hospital, when medication errors are most likely to occur. The focus will be on key digital health initiatives such as My Health Record, secure messaging and telehealth.

WAPHA are collaborating with partners across WA including the Australian College of Rural & Remote Medicine, the WA Country Health Service, the Aboriginal Health Council and Allied Health Professionals Australia to:

- Connect all healthcare providers in Hedland to the national My Health Record system and train them on how to use it and how it will benefit the community
- Run a digital literacy program for Hedland residents to empower them to take advantage of the benefits of digital health
- Showcase Hedland as a model for building digital health Communities of Excellence that can be replicated across Australia

For more information, please contact the My Health Record team via myhealthrecord@wapah.org.au

My Health Record: Pathology and Diagnostic Imaging Overview

There is a new pathology and diagnostic imaging report overview on the My Health Record. The report overviews will allow clinicians to see reports grouped by test or examination name, or by date.

The new overview functions for pathology and diagnostic imaging will join the existing Medicare overview, which includes MBS, PBS and Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) data, and the Medicines overview, which gathers all a person's medicines information from different clinical documents in one place.

The four overviews will be grouped at the top of the clinical document list when healthcare providers open a patient's My Health Record, followed by the documents themselves. The overview is aimed at allowing users to quickly navigate to the reports grouped by name or date through hyperlinks.

For more information on the My Health Record or further training resources please visit: <https://www.myhealthrecord.gov.au/for-healthcare-professionals>

Changes to Aged Care Assessment applications

From January 2020 people wanting to apply for an Aged Care assessment can now do so on the My Aged Care website: myagedcare.gov.au.

This change comes as part of the ongoing changes to aged care assessments, services and delivery. For information on how people can apply for government-funded aged care services for themselves, family or friends go to [Apply for an assessment](#).

Health professionals must continue to use the existing ways of making a referral including:

- Online using the make a referral form
- Phone: 1800 200 422, or
- Fax: 1800 728 174 using the Health Professional and GP Fax Referral Form.
- GPs with Medical Director, Best Practice or Genie Practice management systems are encouraged to use the new pre-populating e-referral form.

Health Professionals can also check if a patient is receiving aged care services before completing a new referral by calling 1800 200 422.

For a report that summarises this, and other changes made to the My Aged Care system on 20 January 2020, [please click here](#).

Health Assessment for people aged 75 years and older

One of the Health Assessments available under the Medicare Benefits Scheme (MBS) is the Health Assessment for people aged 75 years and older. This health assessment provides a structured way of identifying health issues and conditions that are potentially preventable or amenable to interventions in order to improve health and/or quality of life.

The purpose is to help identify any risk factors exhibited by an elderly patient that may require further health management. The health assessment is used to identify a broad range of factors that influence a person's physical, psychological and social functioning.

The [Department of Health Fact Sheet](#) describes the required components and restrictions on the Health Assessment.

MBS items for Health Assessment for people aged 75 years and older.

Item Number	Description of health assessment	Fee*
701	Brief (<30 minutes)	\$60.30
703	Standard (30 to 45 minutes)	\$140.10
705	Long (45 to 60 minutes)	\$193.35
707	Prolonged (>60 minutes)	\$273.10

*Medicare rebates are paid as a percentage of the Medicare Schedule Fee. Please use the [MBS online search](#) to confirm the available rebate

For further information go to: [MBS online Health Assessments](#) or Department of Health - [Health Assessments for people aged 75 years or older](#)

Further resources can also be reviewed on the Practice Assist Fact Sheet [MBS Health Assessment for people aged 75 years and older](#).

WWW.PRACTICEASSIST.COM.AU

HealthPathways WA: recently localised pathways

The HealthPathways team have now localised 550 pathways. The most recently localised pathway is:

- Heart Murmurs in Adults
- Osteoarthritis
- Scrotal Lumps in Adults

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

HealthPathways Working Groups

HealthPathways are currently recruiting GPs for the following working group scheduled for 2020.

- Skin Lesions – March 2020

HealthPathways working groups provide an opportunity for GPs and specialists to collaborate on patient care management and referral pathways, discuss issues and contribute to potential service design.

Commitment to a HealthPathways Working Group consists of:

- Attendance at a two-hour meeting (generally held in the evening) in person or via videoconference if rural GP.
- One hour to review and provide feedback on the draft pathway subsequent to the meeting.

In recognition of a GPs contribution and time taken away from usual practice, remuneration will be offered at \$120 + GST per hour (\$360 + GST in total) for which an invoice template will be provided on receipt of the pathway review feedback. Attendees will also be eligible for 6 CPD points through RACGP.

Please visit the [Health Pathways Project site](#) to submit an expression of interest, and an invitation to participate in the working group will be sent to selected GPs.

Vaccine Updates email system changing

The Communicable Disease Control Directorate (CDCD) are changing the email system by which they send out Vaccine Updates.

Please subscribe to the new mailing list here to keep up to date on the latest [WA immunisation, surveillance and disease control information by clicking here](#).

CDCD will continue to distribute to both old and new mailing lists until majority of subscribers have moved over so you may receive 2 emails for a short period.

2020 Immunisation Update Study Day: Northam

WA Country Health Service - Wheatbelt Population Health in partnership with WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) Wheatbelt, invites you to the 2020 Immunisation Update Study Day, to be held on Wednesday 25 March in Northam.

Keynote Speakers

- Dr Marisa Gilles, Director of Public Health Medicine
- Professor Peter Richmond, Immunologist and Pediatrician at Perth Children's Hospital
- Dr Chris Blyth, Assoc. Prof of Pediatrics UWA and research fellow Telethon Kids Institute
- Dr Sue Jackson, HealthPathways WA

Program Includes:

- Global measles outbreak and its impact on WA
- Changes to National Immunisation Program
- Meningococcal Disease and RSV
- Vaccine hesitancy workshop – How to address vaccine hesitancy? Communications toolbox.
- HealthPathways WA – online information portal which assists clinicians with managing and referring patients to appropriate services.

Representatives from WAPHA – My Health Record, HealthPathways WA, AIR, GSK, CSL & Sanofi-Pasteur, Amanda Young Foundation, and Cancer Council WA will also be attending.

For further information regarding registrations and to view the event flyer, [please click here](#).

NPS MedicineWise update: why not try a Virtual Visit

GPs who find it difficult to schedule an in-practice NPS MedicineWise educational visit can still benefit from the educational visiting program through the NPS MedicineWise Virtual Visiting service.

An NPS MedicineWise Virtual Visit is an accredited clinical education discussion with a GP, covering the latest prescribing evidence and delivered by video conference.

Doctors can nominate their preferred videoconferencing technology and can book a session at time convenient to them.

A one-to-one Virtual Visit with a GP is free, RACGP & ACRRM accredited and takes just 30mins.

Bookings can be made through the NPS MedicineWise website,

<https://www.nps.org.au/cpd/professions/general-practitioners>.

Cancer Council Western Australia: Find Cancer Early Information for General Practitioners and Primary Health Nurses

In Australia, over 75% of cancers first present in general practice as a result of symptoms.

General Practitioners 'GPs' play a key role in the early detection of cancer; however they can often experience challenges in early diagnosis of cancers;

- GPs will only see five to 10 new cases of cancers (excluding skin cancers) among several thousand consultations per year.
- Most symptoms of cancer have more common benign causes.
- Cancers in general practice often present initially with more subtle non-specific symptoms.

To assist GPs, Cancer Council Western Australia presents the *Find Cancer Early GP Education Project* with a new resource guide for GPs on colorectal, lung, prostate and breast cancer. The 'Find Cancer Early: A Guide for General Practitioners' resource provides evidence-based approaches to assess cancer symptoms to aid decision-making around further investigation or referral. The guide comes with a short video explaining how to use the guide in clinical practice and a WA Cancer Referral Directory. These resources are also accompanied with a *Find Cancer Early Webinar Series*. The series of four webinars host specialists presenting on; symptoms that best predict the four common cancers; implications for general practice when diagnosing patients with suspected cancer, and recommended referral pathways.

To access the resources and view the webinar recordings, visit www.cancerwa.asn.au/gp/fce

Veteran Health Check Programs

What is the Veteran Health Check?

The Veteran Health Check is an opportunity for veterans to gain access to a comprehensive physical and mental health assessment and establish a relationship with their General Practitioner (GP).

It is an opportunity for GPs to build an understanding of a veteran patient's health and wellbeing and identify and address any health conditions common in the years following transition out of the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

The aim is to encourage early intervention to promote better health outcomes for veterans during their transition to civilian life. DVA recommends that a 45-minute appointment is booked to conduct a Veteran Health Check.

The Department of Veterans Affairs offers a range of resources to assist with the Veteran health check:

- [Veteran Health Check Poster](#)
- [Veteran Health Checks – Frequently Asked Questions for GPs](#)
- [Veteran Health Checks – Frequently Asked Questions for Veterans](#)

How can I find more information about Veteran Health Checks?

Find out more about Veteran Health Checks by visiting ease.dva.gov.au/professionals

For further information please email: generalenquiries@dva.gov.au

Youth Mental Health Masterclass

Calling all youth mental health clinicians and professionals

Presented by Youth Focus, this full day interactive Youth Mental Health Masterclass is a rare opportunity to hear from preeminent clinicians and researchers about the latest evidence, research and best practice for working with young people with mental health concerns. Topics include: clinical complexity, early psychosis, alcohol and substance abuse, self-harm and suicide prevention.

Presenters include:

Professor Pat McGorry

International authority and pioneer in youth mental health and a post Australian of the Year. Professor of Youth Mental Health, University of Melbourne, Executive Director Orygen and founder of headspace.

Assoc Professor Matt Coleman

WA-based specialist in substance use disorders and co-occurring mental health problems. Clinical Academic and Associate Professor in Rural and Remote Mental Health Practice, Rural Clinical School of WA.

Helen Nicoli

Cognitive and behavioral therapist registered mental health nurse and clinical educator at Orygen with a focus on suicide prevention in primary care.

For further information and to [book a ticket please click here](#).

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.

Health promotion events

February is Heart Research Month

Heart Research Month raises awareness about the devastating impact heart disease has on families, friends and communities, and the importance of supporting life-saving heart research to find new ways of preventing, diagnosing and treating heart disease.

Heart Research Australia supports a centre of excellence that attracts world class and emerging researchers to conduct ground-breaking research into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease.

Statistics

- Heart Disease is the single leading cause of death in Australia
- 23 people die each day of a heart attack
- Heart disease kills one Australian every 30 minutes

National Wear Red Day 14 February 2020

Heart Research Australia is promoting Heart Research month with National Wear Red Day on 14 February 2020 to raise awareness and money for heart disease research.

People are invited to wear **RED** for someone close to them that is affected by heart disease, or in memory of someone you loved who sadly passed away due to heart disease.

For information on how to be involved, and resources please visit [Heart Research Australia – National Wear Red Day](#).

Coming up soon...	
Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month	February
World Cancer Day	February 4
Smart Eating Week	February 10-16
International Asperger's Day	February 18
Teal Ribbon Day for Ovarian Cancer	February 26
World Leprosy Day	February 26

Education and training

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

Communication After Trauma
Presented by Katrina Otto, Practice Coach
Australia
Free Online Training

Better Health Program: Healthy Active Happy Kids
Presented by the Better Health Company
WA School Term 1

Heart Foundation Health Professional Ambassador Program - Workshop
Presented by the Heart Foundation
Applications close Friday 7 February

Rural Health Webinar: Supporting gender questioning in rural adolescents: The consult room and beyond
Presented by RACGP
Thursday 6 February

Webinar: Heart Health Checks: the critical role of the practice nurse
Presented by the Heart Foundation
Thursday 6 February

Rural Health West Paediatric Emergencies and Clinical Healthcare Scenarios (PEaCHS) Geraldton
Presented by Rural Health West
Friday 7 February

Working to support the mental health of children with an intellectual disability
Presented by Emerging Minds
Thursday 13 February

Cervical Screening for Nurses
Presented by Sexual Health Quarters
Monday 17 to Thursday 20 February

Youth Mental Health Masterclass
Presented by Youth Focus
Wednesday 19 February

Rural Health West Advanced Life Support (ALS)
Presented by Rural Health West
Friday 21 February

Rural Health West Emergency Airway Skills Management (EAM) Carnarvon
Presented by Rural Health West
Friday 28 February

'Right to Belong' LGBTI inclusive aged care | Workshops 2020
Presented by GLBTI Rights in Ageing Inc
Wednesday 11 March

Rural Health West Neonatal Emergency Care (NEC) Northam
Presented by Rural Health West
Thursday 12 & Friday 13 March

Rural Health West Emergency Assessment Clinical Training (REACT)
Presented by Rural Health West
Thursday 19 & Friday 20 March

Rural Health West Toxicological Emergencies (TOX)
Presented by Rural Health West
Friday 20 March

WA Rural Health Conference 2020: Beyond 2020 Health Innovations
Presented by Rural Health West
Saturday 21 & Sunday 22 March

RACGP Practice Owners National Conference
Presented by RACGP
Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 May

APNA National Conference Webinar presented by APNA
Thursday 21 to Saturday 23 May

The Cutting Edge: Practice Nurse Skills Training Workshop
Presented by Clinical Training & Evaluation Centre (CTEC)
Saturday 6 June