

Practice Connect

Latest news and updates

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Coronavirus update

Last week, WA Primary Health Alliance undertook a state-wide delivery of surgical masks, as provided by the Australian Government Department of Health as part of a national distribution to general practices and health workers.

To the best of our knowledge, we have contacted all WA general practices to confirm their delivery status, with the majority of deliveries now completed. If you were not contacted, please let us know via Practice Assist, whose details are included below.

The national shortage of masks meant we had to prioritise the initial distribution to practices in areas whose demographic makeup indicated a higher risk category. This included but was not limited to having a relatively high number of foreign nationals including students and tourists, having a relatively large Aboriginal population, proximity to a port or airport, or having a relatively high number of patients with existing respiratory conditions.

We await further advice from the Australian Government Department of Health as to the release of further surgical mask stocks.

Queries about mask distribution

For answers to some common questions, please read our [FAQ](#).

For any other queries about mask distribution, please contact **Practice Assist on 1800 227 747 (Monday – Friday, 8.00am to 5.00pm) or practiceassist@wapha.org.au**

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Coronavirus update (cont.)

Up to date clinical information

WA Health advises this is a rapidly changing situation and updates will be provided as any new information becomes available. We strongly encourage you to check back regularly with either of the websites below to ensure the information you have is up to date.

Department of Health WA – regularly updated information from both Commonwealth and State health departments for health professionals on how to deal with patients whose symptoms and epidemiological history are suggestive of coronavirus and the use of personal protective equipment.

HealthPathways WA – regularly updated clinical information. If required, email healthpathways@wapha.org.au for log on details.

Up to date consumer information

healthdirect – information on the new 2019-nCoV coronavirus, including symptoms, spread, rate of infection, diagnosis and treatment.

healthdirect Symptom Checker – guide to the appropriate healthcare action, also available on the HealthDirect app.

Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080 for people with questions regarding prevention and the spread of coronavirus.

healthdirect helpline on 1800 022 222 to speak to a registered nurse who can provide advice, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

PIP QI: Important information about 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.

WWW.PRACTICEASSIST.COM.AU

GP Urgent Care Update

From 10 September to 31 December 2019 the Healthdirect 1800 helpline has transferred over 300 calls to GP Urgent Care practices. Urgent Care walk-ins and phone calls directed to the practice from Healthdirect are required to have a clinical handover and evaluation eForm completed. The eForm can be submitted by either the GP or the practice nurse. Patients who need to have an eForm completed are:

- New patients booking through GP Urgent Care online
- Existing patients booking through GP Urgent Care online
- New patients presenting as an urgent walk-in
- New patients ringing the practice requesting an urgent appointment (including calls transferred from Healthdirect)

Your next step is to complete eForms for patients who attended the practice under GP Urgent Care since the launch. If you have not kept the details of the patients who have been booked under GP Urgent Care, you can:

- Run a report in your software, if you set up an appointment type such as Urgent Care
- Log into your Health Engine portal, click 'Online Bookings' and then change 'All Specialties' to 'Urgent Care' in the dropdown and review each month from September
- Review your HotDoc online bookings in the management portal

Upcoming Training

WA Primary Health Alliance have commissioned training for GP's, Practice Nurses, Practice Managers and Receptionists for practices participating in the GP Urgent Care Network pilot. Shortly participating practices will be receiving an email with an invitation to register for upcoming training.

It is a requirement that the practice has completed installation of MEDrefer software to be eligible to attend these courses.

Important Notice

As per the agreement for providing clinical handover and sending evaluation data, practices must have completed the MEDrefer installation and ensure eForm submissions are up-to-date by Friday 20 March 2020 to remain on the pilot.

Workforce Incentive Program: update

Key message

On 1 February 2020, the Practice Nurse Incentive Program (PNIP) transitioned to the Workforce Incentive Program (WIP) - Practice Stream.

The General Practice Rural Incentives Program (GPRIP) transitioned to the WIP - Doctor Stream on 1 January 2020.

Background information

The WIP provides targeted financial incentives to encourage doctors to deliver services in rural and remote areas. The WIP also provides financial incentives to support general practices to engage the services of nurses, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Health Practitioners, and eligible allied health professionals.

More information on the eligibility for the WIP, the rural loadings that apply under the WIP and payment levels is available at www.health.gov.au/workforceincentiveprogram

TADPOLE: Alcohol and drug issues in general practice

The Treating Alcohol and other Drugs in Primary Care 'TADPOLE' team of WA drug and alcohol specialists have developed educational resources to enhance the skills of GPs looking after patients with common alcohol and other drug problems e.g. alcohol dependence, benzodiazepines and methamphetamine use.

TADPOLE would like to offer you the opportunity of having a small group education session in your practice. This is free and qualifies for RACGP CPD points. The facilitator (an addiction specialist or a GP with a special interest in addiction) will give a short presentation about alcohol or other drug topics of interest followed by 30 minutes to talk through case studies or any concerns you have about your patients.

TADPOLE will supply lunch/ snacks and accreditation for 2 RACGP CPD points in the 2020-2022 triennium.

For more information [please click here to view the TADPOLE flyer](#).

Letter templates for cervical screening and follow-up

A suite of adaptable letter templates is now available to assist healthcare providers with the delivery of recall and reminder systems for cervical screening and follow-up.

Please click [here](#) to access this resource.

Department of Health: School Based Vaccinations – New Videos for students

The Australian Government recently produced a series of videos, developed to inform students about the vaccinations they receive through school-based vaccination programs. The videos are available for schools as an educational resource to be shown to students either on the day of, or prior to, vaccination. It is hoped the videos will allay any concerns of the students and outline the process for receiving each vaccine.

The videos are available on the [Department of Health's website](#) as well as on Youtube (links below). Please feel free to use or share these videos as part of your immunisation programs.

Videos on Department of Health website

- Getting your meningococcal ACWY vaccination at school — what to expect
- Getting your human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination at school — what to expect
- Getting your diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (dTpa) vaccination at school — what to expect
- Getting your HPV & dTpa vaccinations at school — what to expect

Videos on YouTube

- Getting your meningococcal ACWY vaccination at school — what to expect
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Video collection

- Vaccination videos for high school students

New Digital Health Capability Framework for Nurses and Midwives

Australian Digital Health Agency and the Health Information Society of Australia are developing a Digital Health Capability Framework to support nurses and midwives in the digital workplace.

Nurses and midwives across Australia will be consulted on:

- the specific digital health skills they need,
- what is practical and relevant for them as nurses and midwives,
- how a draft digital health capability framework could be used in hospitals and health services as a professional development guide for nursing and midwifery in the digital world.

Consultation will include an [online survey](#), webinars, face-to-face consultations and the ability to provide written submissions.

WA Cervical Screening Provider Scholarships April 2019-2020

The WA Cervical Cancer Prevention Program (WACCPP) is pleased to announce that scholarships are available for eligible nurses and midwives working in the private and publicly funded sectors who are committed to delivering cervical screening in their workplace.

The WACCPP will consider applicants' requests for funding to cover costs associated with completion of clinical placements. This may include travel and accommodation, or the engagement of SHQ services necessary for the completion of clinical placements. The scholarship funding will be agreed with scholarship recipients on an individual basis, at the discretion of the WACCPP.

Applications

Applications for 2019-2020 are open now and will close June 2020.

For further information on this [scholarship program and the application form please click here](#).

Update regarding delegations to access the AIR

Health professionals with a Medicare provider number can now delegate their AIR access to another person, for example, a practice manager or practice nurse, to act on their behalf. This delegation is set up using the delegation's function in Health Professionals Online Service (HPOS) and mirrors the process for Medicare access.

To become a delegate, an individual must have their own PRODA account and an RA number. Once set up, they can perform the same actions as the health professional:

- view and update individual immunisation records
- print immunisation history statements
- request, view or modify AIR site reports (including the 10A Due/Overdue report – by Immunisation Practice) – contact your WAPHA Primary Health Liaison for support with this. WAPHA can provide tip sheets including screenshots of how to set up your practices overdue report. This can be downloaded monthly to keep your overdues maintained and to crosscheck your reminders.
- view claims submitted to the AIR
- view payment statements and reconciliation reports

You can find more information about AIR HPOS delegations by visiting the [Services Australia website](#).

Changes to how new vaccination providers access the AIR site

As of 18 January 2020, the AIR has changed how new vaccination providers access the AIR site.

Authentication Files will no longer be issued, and providers need to use Provider Digital Access (PRODA) (which uses a username and password) to login.

During the registration process, new vaccination providers receive two welcome letters.

1. One letter contains the new AIR vaccination provider number
2. The second letter contains a unique AIR linking code which is required as part of the

PRODA registration process. This will link the account to Health Professionals Online Services (HPOS) which allows access to the AIR secure site.

These letters are sent separately for security purposes and it's important that providers keep these letters to enable reference to the provide number and linking code.

These changes only apply to new AIR vaccination providers. Existing vaccination providers using Authentication File to log on to the AIR site are encouraged to transition to PRODA now before the Authentication File method of access is ceased on 30 June 2020.

For instructions on how to register for a PRODA account and link it to the AIR, visit the [Services Australia](#) website.

Cancer Council WA: Optimal Care Pathways

Now well-established in Australia, the Optimal Care Pathway resources are a national standard of cancer care, designed to reduce inequalities, help all health professionals and people affected by cancer to navigate the healthcare system, and provide a framework to measure performance.

Developed in consultation with patients and carers, the Optimal Care Pathways are endorsed by Cancer Australia, the National Cancer Expert Reference Group (NCERG), the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Committee to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), and all states and territories.

Cancer Council WA is pleased to share three [Optimal Care Pathways](#) to join the existing suite of national resources, now 19 different cancer types in total.

Developed to set the benchmark for consistent, high-quality cancer care for all Australian patients, the new editions include:

1. **Cervical cancer**
2. **Sarcoma (bone and soft tissue)**
3. **Cancer of unknown primary** (collaboration with Cancer Institute NSW)

HealthPathways publishes 550 pathways!

HealthPathways WA has recently published the 550th pathway! HealthPathways WA covers the largest geographic area in Australia so this is a significant accomplishment. Since the launch in 2015, HealthPathways WA has evolved significantly, localising, reviewing and mapping services for general practitioners across the region.

Thank you to everyone who helped us to achieve such a milestone.

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

Newly 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

HealthPathways Working Groups

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

- Skin Lesions – 17 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.

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

NPS MedicineWise update: Paediatric asthma

Could you be missing important differences between diagnosing and managing asthma in preschool and school-age children, and how treatment of children's asthma differs from that of adults?

NPS MedicineWise are offering an accredited GP Educational Visit topic on Paediatric Asthma.

This educational visit provides clarity on the latest guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of paediatric asthma, including the differences between diagnosing and managing asthma in preschool and school-age children, and how treatment of children's asthma differs from that of adults.

Discussion will also cover when regular preventer treatment is required and how to optimise different preventer options for the two age groups.

Educational visits are free and available as:

- One-on-one discussion: a 30-minute in-practice discussion for GPs, tailored to individual learning needs.
- Virtual visit: via video call for GPs who find it difficult to schedule an in-practice visit.
- Small-group: a 1-hour in-practice meeting for up to 10 health professionals (GPs, pharmacists and nurses).

Please visit the NPS MedicineWise website to book a visit [Paediatric asthma: breathing new life into diagnosis and management](#)

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

World Hearing Day is March 3

World Hearing Day is held on 3 March each year to raise awareness on how to prevent deafness and hearing loss and promote ear and hearing care across the world. It coincides with Hearing Awareness Week in Australia.

- Hearing loss costs Australia \$15 billion a year in health system costs and lost productivity
- Hearing loss affects 70% of people over the age of 70 and it has a huge impact on the quality of life
- It is more common than heart disease, cancer and diabetes
- 500,000 hearing aids are bought every year in Australia
- 10,000 people whose first language is Auslan cannot be left behind and deserve better access to education, jobs & community life

Go to the [RESOURCES](#) page to download brochures, a webpage graphic and an organisers' toolkit to participate in the promotion of World Hearing Day 2020 within your practice.

Coming up soon...	
International Asperger's Day	February 18
Teal Ribbon Day for Ovarian Cancer	February 26
World Leprosy Day	February 26
Rare Diseases Day	February 29
National Epilepsy Awareness Month	Month of March
Hearing Awareness Week	March 1-7
March into Yellow	March 6
World Glaucoma Week	March 8-14
World Kidney Day	March 12

Education and training

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

Synthetic Cannabis – Information for Healthcare Professionals, guest presenter **Dr Stephen Bright**

Presented by Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet
Thursday 13 February

Working to support the mental health of children with an intellectual disability

Presented by Emerging Minds
Thursday 13 February

Rural Health West Advanced Life Support (ALS)

Presented by Rural Health West
Friday 21 February

RACGP Practice essentials webinar series: My Health Record – an update

Presented by RACGP
Wednesday 26 & Thursday 27 February

Rural Health West Emergency Airway Skills Management (EAM) Carnarvon

Presented by Rural Health West
Friday 28 February

Spirometry Training Course – Rockingham WA

Presented by WAPHA and the National Asthma Council
Saturday 29 February

GP Education Project: Breast Cancer Update

Presented by Cancer Council WA
Wednesday 4 March

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

The Child with an Itchy Rash – Diagnosis & Mgmt plus Acne – What's New

Presented by PCH in partnership with WAPHA and HealthPathways WA
Wednesday 18 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

Spirometry Training Course - Esperance

Presented by WAPHA and the National Asthma Council
Saturday 9 May

Childhood Allergies – How to Diagnose & Prevent?

Presented by PCH in partnership with WAPHA and HealthPathways WA
Wednesday 13 May

RACGP Practice Owners National Conference

Presented by RACGP
Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 May

The Cutting Edge: Practice Nurse Skills Training Workshop

Presented by Clinical Training & Evaluation Centre (CTEC)
Saturday 6 June

Common Paediatric Surgical Problems

Presented by PCH in partnership with WAPHA and HealthPathways WA
Wednesday 5 August