

# Practice Connect

## Latest news and updates

### In this edition:

- PIP QI Reminder
- Update: Distribution Priority Areas
- Updated testing criteria
- Voluntary Assisted Dying Act update
- Perth GPs launch support video
- Update: GP Urgent Care
- National Immunisation Catch-up Calculator now available
- National Immunisation Program changes 1 July: what you need to know
- Enhancing data quality of vaccination encounter records: tips and tricks
- Initial Assessment and Referral Project
- WA Sexual Health & Blood-borne Virus Program: New contact tracing video
- RACGP: Unlock your practice potential with the Practice Experience Program
- HealthPathways update
- NPS MedicineWise Update
- Allocation of surgical masks
- Update: Practice Assist Resource Library
- WAPHA: EAP wellness program
- Health Promotions
- Webinars and online training

### PIP QI Reminder

We are just over halfway through this Practice Incentives Program (PIP) Quality Improvement (QI) quarter.

We would like to remind practices to ensure that they have at least one successful data extraction before 15 July in order to be eligible for payment.

If you are unsure whether your practice has successfully extracted this quarter or if you are having issues with data extraction, please speak with your Primary Health Liaison Officer or Comprehensive Primary Care Facilitator.

Alternatively, please contact the Practice Assist Team on **1800 227 747** or by email [practiceassist@wapha.org.au](mailto:practiceassist@wapha.org.au).

## Annual update of the Distribution Priority Areas

The annual update of the Distribution Priority Areas will be available on DoctorConnect on 1 July 2020. The Distribution Priority Areas (DPA) for GPs and Districts of Workforce Shortage (DWS) for specialists are updated every year to ensure the latest available data is used to accurately target distribution. The DPA and DWS systems facilitate placing medical practitioners with location restrictions (International Medical Graduates and Australian Bonded Doctors) into communities of greatest need across Australia.

The updated 2020 versions will be published on [DoctorConnect.gov.au](https://www.doctorconnect.gov.au) on the Health Workforce Locator map on 1 July 2020.

## Updated testing criteria reminder

As outlined in the latest Department of Health WA COVID-19 Clinician Alert:

- People with acute loss of smell or loss of taste may be tested in certain circumstances
- Cases returning to a high-risk setting can be released from isolation based on clinical criteria. Clearance swabs are not required.

Read the full Department of Health WA COVID-19 Clinician Alert [here](#).

## Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019: Implementation Update

The voluntary assisted dying website has been updated to include new information releases for both the general community and health service providers (and related care service providers).

The aim is to provide a basic overview of the [Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019](#) (the Act) and the implementation being undertaken by the Department of Health.

Information has been provided in a variety of ways to support accessibility and cater to different levels of interest, and includes a range of fact sheets to provide a basic overview for the 'General Community' and 'Health and Other Service Providers', and also presentations with more detailed information for the 'General Community' and 'Health and Other Service Providers' available to be watched or listened to at any time.

For further information please contact the project team at the Department of Health via [email](#).

## Perth GPs launch video to support their colleagues

An ABC News story last week highlighted the immense pressure the COVID-19 pandemic has placed on GP practices and how a group of 24 Perth GPs collaborated in a show of support for GP clinic staff across the country.

Find the link to the video and read 'Coronavirus second wave fears leave 'forgotten' GPs fighting for voice after mental health toll' [here](#).

Visit [Practice Assist](#) to explore some of the resources and services available to support GPs and practice staff, professionally and personally.

## Participating Practices: GP Urgent Care Update

### Website information and logos

As a participating practice, we encourage you to upload a **GP Urgent Care logo** onto your website and/or social media profile to let patients know that you are accepting GP Urgent Care appointments.

For assistance please contact the GP Urgent Care Project Officer: Cheryl Bell via 0429 126 925 or [urgentcare@wapha.org.au](mailto:urgentcare@wapha.org.au).

### Awareness Campaign: GPUC Network Pilot Metro & Bunbury

The next planned awareness campaign 'burst 3' - Various media components will run across 6-week period **Sunday 2 August through to Saturday 12 September inclusive**.

Individual media platforms in the Metro and Bunbury areas will generally run for 4 - 5 weeks within this overall timeframe.

- TV media will run for 4 weeks from **Sunday 9 August to Saturday 5 September**, and
- Radio media components will run for 5 weeks from **Sunday 9 August to Saturday 12 September**.



### Education and Training Events with RACGP for GP Urgent Care Practices:

- **Respiratory Infections:** Monday 20 July 2020, 7.00–8.30 PM (AWST)
- **Mental Health Urgencies:** Monday 27 July 2020, 7.00–8.30 PM (AWST)
- **GP Urgent Care Workshop: 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020**  
We encourage practices to suggest topics for discussion, including the experience of running a GP Urgent Care practice, impact of COVID on GP Urgent Care, feedback on what worked well, and what could be done differently for the upcoming webinar in August. This will be facilitated by Dr Mike Civil. Please send your topic suggestions to: [urgentcare@wapha.org.au](mailto:urgentcare@wapha.org.au)

For further information please visit the WA Primary Health Alliance [GP Urgent Care](#) webpage.

## National Immunisation Catch-up Calculator now available

The National Immunisation Catch-up Calculator (NICC) is now available and is based on the Australian National Immunisation Program (NIP) recommendations for Australian immunisation schedules. This version of the National Immunisation Catch-up Calculator (NICC) has been developed and designed for Australian children **less than 10 years** of age based on the National Immunisation Program scheduled vaccines. Schedule variations for all states and territories have been incorporated.

Calculator recommendations are provided by antigens due. Users can access additional information to assist with the interpretation of the recommendations from the Handbook website's [Recommendations](#) and [Resources](#) pages.

The Calculator is designed based on the Australian immunisation schedule and therefore may not give accurate recommendations if used for individuals who have been vaccinated overseas. The Calculator **does not provide recommendations for individuals with Medical at-Risk conditions** where additional boosters may be recommended.

Users should always exercise their own independent skill or judgment or seek additional professional advice before relying on the information provided for clinical decision making. Later releases of the NICC are planned to expand the age groups for catch-up calculations. The Calculator can be accessed via the [Australian Immunisation Handbook website](#).

## National Immunisation Program changes from 1 July: what you need to know

From 1 July 2020 some important changes to the National Immunisation Program (NIP) and recommendations for pneumococcal, meningococcal and hepatitis A vaccination will take effect.

The National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) hosted a webinar providing an overview of the NIP Schedule changes that come into effect from 1 July 2020 and the key points that healthcare professionals need to know.

Access the NCIRS webinar [here](#).

For further information see [Clinical update: National Immunisation Program \(NIP\) schedule changes from 1 July 2020 – advice for vaccination providers](#).

## Enhancing data quality of vaccination encounter records: tips and tricks

A new resource titled “Enhancing data quality of vaccination encounters recorded in practice software and on AIR – tips and tricks” has been developed by the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) to help immunisation providers minimise and identify errors in vaccination recording to ensure the information held on patient’s records and on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) is accurate.

This resource provides tips and tricks related to practice software, recording encounters, entering history, transmitting encounters to AIR, common errors or “pends”, data cleaning and other information to enhance the quality of data recorded by immunisation providers.

[Click here](#) to access the resource.

### Viewing Immunisation History Statements in Medicare

The ‘Viewing Immunisation History Statements in Medicare’ resource has been compiled to assist your patients with viewing their immunisation history via their myGov account, [view the resource here](#).



## Initial Assessment and Referral for Mental Healthcare Project

WA Primary Health Alliance is seeking interested GPs to join a GP Advisory Group that will contribute to a co-design process to develop and pilot a new service for people with or at risk of mental illness, who can be appropriately managed in primary care.

This project will involve a collaboration with GPs, consumers, commissioned providers and other parties involved in the Initial mental health assessment and referral process, to co-design and pilot a viable service model and plan for its widescale implementation.

This project is anticipated to run until the mid-2022.

For further information on the key messages for this project and to review the criteria for GPs to be considered, please [click here to view the flyer](#).

A nomination form can be found on the [Primary Health Exchange](#) for GPs who are interested to join.

## WA Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Program: New contact tracing video

The Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Program has worked closely with the Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service to develop a video on contact tracing for health professionals working in regional and remote WA. It features a Registered Nurse and an Aboriginal Liaison Officer based in Kununurra and covers the essential components of contact tracing and potential scenarios that clinicians might face.

The video is accessible [here](#).

## RACGP: Unlock your practice potential with the Practice Experience Program

Applications are now open for the Practice Experience Program (PEP), the RACGP's flexible education and support program for non-vocationally registered (non-VR) doctors in regional, rural and remote Australia.

With a tailored online learning package and GP mentors from a training organisation, you can draw from and expand on your ongoing experience, building valuable knowledge and skills for the journey towards Fellowship, all while accessing full A1 Medicare rebates.

You'll also be a step ahead when eligibility for Fellowship exams changes at the end of next year, and only those on an approved program - such as the PEP - will be able to sit exams to become Fellows of the RACGP.

If you're interested to find out more about how the PEP can benefit you and your community, register for our upcoming webinar on Tuesday 7 July at [www.racgp.org.au/pep](http://www.racgp.org.au/pep).

Applications close Thursday 16 July 2020.

### Recognise excellence in general practice with the RACGP Awards

Do you know an extraordinary GP, GP in training, GP supervisor, or general practice going above and beyond? The RACGP is proud to recognise the value of GPs in our community and celebrate these achievements through our annual awards.

GPs receive all kinds of acknowledgements from their patients, but it is important to formally celebrate this work and dedication to holistic patient care. Nominations are now open for the 2020 RACGP Awards with a number of categories established to celebrate excellence in general practice. To find out more or to nominate, please visit [www.racgpawards.org.au](http://www.racgpawards.org.au).

### RACGP Elections

Forward thinking leaders with a drive to move general practice ahead are encouraged to nominate for the RACGP elections.

Nominations for the President and Censor in Chief on the RACGP Board, as well as positions on Faculty Councils are now open and close 12 noon Thursday 30 July 2020. For more information or to nominate, please visit [www.racgp.org.au/the-racgp/racgp-elections](http://www.racgp.org.au/the-racgp/racgp-elections).



## COVID-19 MBS Items pathway is now available on HealthPathways

The following pathways have now been published on the HealthPathways website:

- **COVID-19 MBS Items pathway** includes information on the new telehealth MBS items in primary care and provide quick links to specific items e.g., for GP Attendances, Bulk Billing Incentives, Chronic Disease Management and Support, Mental Health and Eating Disorders.

### COVID-19 HealthPathways Updates

The following content updates have now been published on the following pathways:

- The following content updates have occurred on the **COVID-19 Assessment and Management** and **COVID-19 Child Assessment and Management** pathways:
  - Updated investigation for SARS-CoV-2 as per latest testing criteria effective as of 21<sup>st</sup> June.
  - Updated information on notification requirements.
  - Updated case definition of “suspected case” to include sudden unexplained onset of loss of taste or loss of smell to clinical criteria as per CDNA updated guidelines.
  - RACGP template for medical clearance certificate requests.
- **COVID-19 Information**  
Updated pathway to include links to other useful resources including:
  - The WA online testing criteria tool which contains information on testing and self-isolation,
  - The NPS MedicineWise, which includes information of medication to use during COVID-19, and the
  - National Clinical Evidence Taskforce flow charts.

Please email [healthpathways@wapha.org.au](mailto:healthpathways@wapha.org.au) for login details if you do not already have access to HealthPathways.

## NPS MedicineWise update

NPS MedicineWise have lifted their visiting restrictions on group visits at GP practices.

Free, RACGP & ACRRM accredited education sessions are available on the topics below:

- **Paediatric Asthma – breathing new life into diagnosis and management**
- **Opioids and the bigger picture when treating chronic pain**

These topics continue to also be offered as convenient virtual visits delivered via Zoom.

For more information visit the [NPS MedicineWise](#) website.

## NPS MedicineWise: Medicinal cannabis information portal – ‘go live’

NPS MedicineWise, would like to notify the upcoming launch of an information portal on their website about medicinal cannabis. The portal assists health professionals and consumers navigate evidence-based information about medicinal cannabis.

The new information helps explain the regulatory framework and process required to access medicinal cannabis for both consumers and health professionals and provides summaries on the latest evidence for medicinal cannabis.

The content found in the portal supplements [clinical guidance provided by the Therapeutic Goods Administration \(TGA\)](#) for health professionals and provides additional information for consumer and pharmacist audiences.

**For pharmacists** – the portal includes two important resources for pharmacists: *7 questions pharmacists are asking about medicinal cannabis* and *Medicinal cannabis: dispensing process for pharmacists*.

**For prescribers** – the portal includes important resources for prescribers including full evidence summaries with links to the TGA’s clinical guidance and a flowchart for prescribers that outlines the steps to accessing medicinal cannabis.

**For consumers** - The consumer-friendly content includes answers to frequently asked questions in a downloadable article *Medicinal cannabis: What would you like to know?* an infographic resource: *Is medicinal cannabis suitable for me?* and an explainer article: *Medicinal cannabis, explained*.

For further information, please visit <https://www.nps.org.au/medicinal-cannabis>

## Allocation of surgical masks from the National Medical Stockpile

WA Primary Health Alliance continues to operate a significant logistical strategy to distribute masks during the COVID-19 pandemic to general practices, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, pharmacies and allied health practices that meet the criteria of the [Department of Health Tranche 4 guidelines](#).

For mask requests, visit the [Practice Assist website](#).

Please note, re-orders will not be accepted within five business days (Mon-Fri) of the previous request, except in exceptional circumstances.

Please send all general queries in relation to the National Medical Stockpile to [Stockpile.Ops@health.gov.au](mailto:Stockpile.Ops@health.gov.au).



## An update on the Practice Assist Resource Library

Practice Assist has published a suite of resources in our website [Resource Library](#) to assist in Quality Improvement for Childhood immunisation including a Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) template, tip sheets and supportive resources that can be accessed via the links below:

### Immunisation & AIR Resources

- Template - Childhood Immunisation Quality Improvement Activity (QIA) Plan Do Study Act (PDSA)
- Fact Sheet – AIR: How to request AIR overdue or due 10A report
- Fact Sheet – AIR: How to analyse AIR overdue or due 10A report
- Fact Sheet – AIR: Recording and updating an encounter
- Fact Sheet – AIR: How to identify and amend dose errors in AIR
- Resource – Enhancing data quality of vaccination encounter records – tips and tricks
- Resources – Viewing Immunisation History Statements in myGov

### Cold Chain Resources

- Template - Cold Chain and Vaccine Potency Policy Template
- Poster – Vaccine Cold Chain Strive for 5 Temperature Monitor (Fridge Chart)
- Fact Sheet – Data Loggers Information Sheet



HealthPathways WA was also updated in line with the July 1 schedule changes:

- Immunisation – Childhood
- Immunisation – Adolescent
- Immunisation - Adult

Please email [Health.Pathways@wapha.org.au](mailto:Health.Pathways@wapha.org.au) and request your username and password if required.

The Practice Assist Team values your feedback, and should you have a **'new idea'** for a resource needing to be developed for your practice, and or **'feedback'**, please email this through to [practiceassist@wapha.org.au](mailto:practiceassist@wapha.org.au).

## WAPHA: Free general practice wellness program

WA Primary Health Alliance is offering FREE counselling support for all GPs and their practice staff across WA through the long established and experienced employee assistance program provider, AccessEAP.

To support WA general practice teams, navigate the COVID-19 response, and to help you deal with the pressures that arise professionally and personally, WA-based general practices can now access WA Primary Health Alliance's General Practice Wellness Program.

General practice staff, as Members of WA Primary Health Alliance are offered three confidential counselling sessions free of charge.

More information is provided in the [attached brochure](#).

You can use your sessions for a range of matters such as:

- Preparing for major life changes
- Changes in your role at work
- Changes within your family (marriage, new baby, divorce/separation)
- Goal setting for your professional or personal life
- Developing new strategies for handling stress at work or at home
- Or simply to have someone to speak to about any of life's inevitable challenges



When you call to access the service, you **must** identify as a Member of WA Primary Health Alliance.

To book a phone or video counselling appointment, you can call AccessEAP anytime on 1800 818 728.

GPs and practice staff can also contact Practice Assist on 1800 227 747 with any questions about the program.

## Health Promotion Events

### World Hepatitis Day is July 28

#### 2020 Theme: Find the Missing Millions

Worldwide, 290 million people are living with viral hepatitis unaware. Without finding the undiagnosed and linking them to care, millions will continue to suffer, and lives will be lost. On World Hepatitis Day, 28 July, we call on people from across the world to take action and raise awareness to find the “missing millions”.

#### Get Involved

Use the official World Hepatitis Day campaign materials to raise awareness online and in your practice.

Materials are available to [download](#) in a range of languages, or you can use the customisable poster and social media graphic tools to create your own materials in your language.

For further information please visit the [World Hepatitis Day](#) website.



Coming up soon...	
Dry July	July 1-31
National Pain Week	July 22-28
Donate Life Week	June 26-August 2
World Hepatitis Day	July 28
Gastroschisis Awareness Day	July 30

## Webinars and online training

Visit our Webinars & Workshops page at [www.practiceassist.com.au](http://www.practiceassist.com.au) for the events calendar.

### Webinars

**Healthdirect Video Call Familiarisation Webinars**

Presented by Healthdirect

[View a recorded session here](#)

**STIs in WA Primary Care**

Presented by SHQ

Various dates through to 18 July

**GP's Role in Palliative Care: Management and Support Options**

Presented by Cancer Council WA

Thursday 9 July

**Infection Control**

Presented by AAPM

Thursday 9 July

**GP Urgent Care (practices only): Respiratory infections**

Presented by RACGP

Monday 20 July

**5<sup>th</sup> edition accreditation**

Presented by AAPM

Thursday 23 July

**GP Urgent Care (practices only): Mental health urgencies**

Presented by RACGP

Monday 27 July

**Cervical Screening for Nurses**

Presented by SHQ

Monday 7 to Thursday 10 September

**Improving Patient Outcomes and Experience**

Presented by the Public Sector Network

Thursday 10 September

### Online Training

**COVID-19 Infection Control Training**

Presented by Department of Health

**Chronic Disease Management and Healthy Ageing Program**

Presented by APNA

**STIs in WA Primary Care**

Presented by SHQ

Various dates through to 18 July