



## IN THIS ISSUE...

HEALTH REFORM UPDATE 1

POLICY 2

RESOURCES 3

EDUCATION & TRAINING 4

RESEARCH

GET INVOLVED 5

POSITIONS VACANT 6

WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES 7

GENERAL PRACTICE NSW CONTACTS 8

## HEALTH REFORM UPDATE

### Medicare Locals

The closing date for applications from consortiums bidding to be part of this first tranche of Medicare Locals closes today 5th April. Applications for Medicare Locals commencing in 2012 close Tuesday, 19 July 2011. The implementation of Medicare Locals will be done in three stages. The first tranche of Medicare Locals (approximately 15) will begin operating in mid 2011. A second tranche of approximately 15 Medicare Locals will commence in January 2012, with the remainder starting in July 2012.

Further information on Medicare Locals and health reform can be found at [www.yourhealth.gov.au](http://www.yourhealth.gov.au).

### Key health reform legislation passed

The Federal Parliament has passed key health reform legislation to establish a permanent independent Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care from 1 July 2011, to support safe, high quality health care. Critical to the Government's health reforms, the Commission will monitor safety and quality in health care. The Commission will develop national standards for clinical safety and quality; develop a national system for health service accreditation; improve patient safety by reducing harm caused by preventable errors; more effective management of healthcare resources arising from unnecessary or ineffective treatment; give independent and informed advice to all healthcare providers and healthcare services consumers.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr11-nr-nr051.htm>

### New Minister and Director General Health for NSW

Jillian Skinner MP has been given the Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research portfolios within the new NSW government and Dr Mary Foley had been appointed Director General of the NSW Health Department, replacing Professor Debora Picone. Dr Foley had held leadership roles in government, corporate, academic and not-for-profit sectors. Most recently she was National Health Practice Leader for PricewaterhouseCoopers.

### Nine New E-Health Sites Announced

Nine new locations have been selected to lead the roll-out of e-health records. <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr11-nr-nr054.htm>



## POLICY

### Medicare Australia - new powers in relation to audits

The *Health Insurance Amendment (Compliance) Bill 2010*, to provide Medicare Australia with new powers in relation to audits, passed through the Senate on 21 March 2011 and will become law in the coming weeks. The powers will only apply to services that are rendered on or after the date that the new law takes effect.

In summary the new law will:

- Require health professionals to produce documents to substantiate claims made under the Medicare program when provided with a notice by Medicare Australia.
- Allow Medicare Australia to require the production of clinical records where it is necessary to substantiate the claim. The health professional may elect to provide the clinical record to a Medicare Australia medical adviser.
- Require that notices to produce documents only relate to services that were rendered in the two year period immediately before the notice is provided and after the legislation takes effect.
- Set timeframes for certain parts of the audit activity. For example Medicare Australia is required to give a health professional at least 21 days to respond to a notice to produce documents.
- Require that Medicare Australia contact health professionals in writing at the beginning of an audit as well as advising health professionals in writing of the outcome when the audit has been finalised.
- Prevent Medicare Australia from issuing a debt notice until 28 days after the health professional has been advised of the audit outcome.
- Give health professionals 28 days in which to request an internal review of the audit outcome and allows the health professional to provide further information to substantiate the claims in that time.
- Prevent Medicare Australia from using information that is provided by a health professional in response to a notice to produce referrals to the Director of the Professional Services Review.
- Introduce a penalty system to encourage voluntary compliance and deter recidivism.

Medicare Australia will provide more detailed information to health professionals about the requirements and obligations of the new law in the coming weeks. They will also provide a dedicated email address for health professionals to ask us about the new law. Contact details will be provided with the information pack to health professionals. [www.medicareaustralia.gov.au](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au)

### National Palliative Care Strategy

The new *National Palliative Care Strategy: Supporting Australians to Live Well at the End of Life* has been released by the Australian Government to guide palliative care policy development and service delivery across Australia. <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/palliativecare-strategy.htm>

### Mental health clinical practice guidelines

The *National Health and Medical Research Council* has approved guidelines addressing depression and related issues developed by beyondblue. One guideline deals with the effective treatment of depression amongst adolescents and young adults aged 13 to 24 years. The second will assist primary and maternity care health professionals provide care to those in the perinatal (around birth) period. [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)



## ACI model of care to improve care for people with osteoporosis

A new guideline developed by the Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) to help bring potentially life-saving preventative care to elderly people living with osteoporosis. The new model of care is designed to prevent repeat bone fractures which can cause pain, suffering and premature death for patients with osteoporosis.

[http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/gmct/musculoskeletal/pdf/aci\\_osteoporotic\\_refracture\\_prevention-moc.PDF](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/gmct/musculoskeletal/pdf/aci_osteoporotic_refracture_prevention-moc.PDF)

## RESOURCES

### Experts warn - reduced vaccination may lead to increased health risks

As the 'flu season' begins, new findings released today by the Influenza Specialist Group have revealed that every third person that you come into contact with on transport, at work or while buying a coffee this season could be the one that passes the influenza virus on to you or someone you know. The survey of 1,120 people revealed that while 82 percent of respondents recognise that even healthy people would benefit from vaccination, nearly three quarters (72%) are unsure whether they will get the vaccination, almost half (42%) have never had the vaccination and around 5,400,000ii adult Australians (35%) will definitely not be seeking vaccination this year. Although people recognise the benefits of vaccination there was some reluctance identified through the survey. While people understand that being vaccinated in the past does not necessarily protect them from future influenza outbreaks (95%) they still do not believe it is important to be vaccinated every year (28%).

The Influenza Specialist Group has launched a new digital video to show Australians how influenza is transmitted across the world. The video forms part of a new range of online educational resources also launched today, including; consumer information brochures and posters available in GP surgeries, and a YouTube channel featuring video information on the virus and advice on prevention and treatment.

Media release: [http://www.influenzaspecialistgroup.org.au/images/stories/media/2011\\_web\\_media\\_release.pdf](http://www.influenzaspecialistgroup.org.au/images/stories/media/2011_web_media_release.pdf)

### Alcohol and Pregnancy and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Resources for Health Professionals

- (1) 32-page Booklet for health professionals;
- (2) Double-sided laminated fact sheet summarising the information from the booklet; and
- (3) A wallet card for health professionals to give to women.

Are now available as hard copies and may be ordered and mailed to you (free of charge) or downloaded from <http://www.ichr.uwa.edu.au/alcoholandpregnancy>.



## EDUCATION & TRAINING

### Training available for the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition RACGP Standards for General Practices

The transition to using the RACGP *Standards for general practices* (4th edition) for accreditation purposes will happen gradually over the coming year with full details available on the RACGP website, see: <http://www.racgp.org.au/standards>. A [summary of key differences between the 3rd and 4th edition standards](#) is now available.

The RACGP is offering free education sessions about the new features of the 4th edition Standards. The education sessions will be held via teleconference on several dates in April, May and June see: <http://www.racgp.org.au/standards>

A free PDF version of the [RACGP Standards for general practices \(4th edition\)](#) is now available.

The RACGP [Computer security guidelines \(3rd edition\)](#) is a free companion document.

The RACGP [Patient feedback guide](#) is a free companion document. This guide is an essential resource for meeting Criterion 2.1.2 Patient feedback, in the 4th edition *Standards*.

### Rural Health Continuing Education Stream 2 (RHCE2) - Round Two

The 2011 RHCE2 program which is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing supports qualified health professionals working in rural and remote Australia to undertake continuing professional development and inter-professional learning activities. – see. RHCE2 is being administered for the Department by the National Rural Health Alliance for three years (April 2010-June 2013). Total funds available for RHCE2 project grants are approximately \$630,000 per annum, with the final round in 2012-13. Information on the allocation of grants in Round One (2010) is available [here](#). The 2011 application round will open in June and close in early August 2011. Watch the [RHCE2 website](#) for the exact dates. For details see the [Guidelines page](#) of the RHCE2 website. Please read the guidelines carefully before applying online for a grant. Only one application per organisation or group will be accepted.

Website <http://rhce.ruralhealth.org.au/> Contact - RHCE2 Program Manager, Wendy Downs, on (02) 6162 3241 or 1800 987 440

## RESEARCH

### Health and the environment: a compilation of evidence

There is increasing awareness that our health and the environment in which we live are closely linked. This report compiles evidence on the relationship between health and a selected list of environmental factors including 'natural' features (such as temperature and ultraviolet radiation) and aspects of our surroundings which have been created by humans (such as housing and transport).

The results of this compilation highlight that: our surroundings can influence our physical health and mental wellbeing through a variety of channels; health and wellbeing may be affected in both positive and negative ways; humans, through their intervention in the environment, can play a vital role in exacerbating or reducing health risks. As the pathways involved can be indirect and complex, this report also examines some of the difficulties involved in assessing the broader relationship between health and the environment.

AiHW: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=10737418534&libID=10737418533>



## New results from longitudinal women's health study

The latest major report from the ongoing Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health has been released. <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr11-mb-mb034.htm>

The report reveals that ischaemic heart disease is the leading cause of death and disability for women aged 65 and older. Among women aged 65-74, type 2 diabetes and breast cancer are the next two highest causes, while dementia and stroke are the next two highest causes of death and disability among women over age 75.

While some descriptive information about trends in health from all age cohorts is included in the current report, the focus of analyses is on data collected from the oldest cohort, who were born between 1921 and 1926, and are now aged 85 to 90 years. The survey is now in its 17th year and Minister Roxon announced in December 2010 additional Government support of \$5.3 million will be made available to create a younger cohort in the study and to enable examination of the changes and challenges to women's health over time across a broader range of age groups.

## Australia's health system needs re-balancing: a report on the shortage of primary care services in rural and remote Australia

This paper has been prepared by the *National Rural Health Alliance* to complement the AIHW report, *Australian health expenditure by remoteness*. It summarises the AIHW's reports findings, re-interprets some of the conclusions and makes estimates of the geographical distribution of the 44% of recurrent costs not included in the AIHW report <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au>

## New ABS report – GP Services: Use and Patient Experience

About 6% of patients avoid or delay seeing a GP because of the cost, according to a new report. Cost was also cited by one in ten patients as a reason for delaying or not getting their prescription medicine. In addition, almost 5% of people – about a million Australians - said there had been times when they had been unable to access a GP when they needed to. Almost a quarter of people living in regional, rural or remote areas felt they had to wait longer than was acceptable for an appointment with a GP, compared with 16% of those living in major cities. People living in regional and remote areas were also almost five times as likely as those living in cities to travel more than one hour to see a GP.

ABS Report:

[http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/LookupAttach/4102.0Publication23.03.113/\\$File/41020\\_Healthservices\\_Mar2011.pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/LookupAttach/4102.0Publication23.03.113/$File/41020_Healthservices_Mar2011.pdf)

## GET INVOLVED

### Chronic pain prescribing survey

Researchers at UNSW are seeking GPs who currently see patients with chronic pain to complete a brief survey into aberrant/divergent behaviours relating to prescription opioid use. GP thoughts and opinions will be used to inform the development of a brief scale for use with pain patients in Australia. The survey takes approximately 30 minutes, is completed online, and is confidential. It can also be completed over the phone or by paper copy if preferred. For more information please see <https://www.surveys.unsw.edu.au/survey/155253/19e2/> or contact Emma Black ([e.black@unsw.edu.au](mailto:e.black@unsw.edu.au), 02 9385 0242). GPs can feel free to adapt the questions to suit their perspective.



## Call for Abstracts - Youth Health Conference 2011

Abstracts are invited for oral and poster presentations and workshops for the 8th Australian & New Zealand Adolescent Health Conference and 3rd IAAH Asia Pacific Congress.

The themes of the Youth Health 2011 Conference are:

- Emerging youth health issues (obesity, mental health, flu pandemics, sexual and reproductive health, chronic and disabling conditions, preventing violence and injury, the developing adolescent brain)
- The changing world in which young people live (challenges and opportunities for young people's health in relation to new technologies, media, societal change, climate change etc)
- Effective and innovative strategies (creatively engaging and working with young people, particularly the most disadvantaged, involving young people in taking care of their health, engaging families and schools through holistic and partnership approaches)
- Raising the profile of youth health in the region (investment in young people, promoting rights to a safe and healthy life now and into the future, whole of community responsibility, focus on indigenous young people.

Visit the Call For Abstracts page [www.youthhealth2011.com.au](http://www.youthhealth2011.com.au) closing date: Monday, 20 June 2011

## POSITIONS VACANT

### Practice Support Officer – South Eastern Sydney Division of General Practice Ltd

35 hours/week - \$46 – 56k p/a (plus super & salary packaging) depending on skills and experience.

The opportunity exists for you to join an organisation focussed on supporting general practice, driving positive change in primary health care and improving health outcomes. Roles and responsibilities include: delivering our range of services and support initiatives (including championing a focus area), territory management, planning and reporting and co-ordination of education events. The successful applicant will be proactive and dynamic – ideally with a background in health/pharmaceutical sales and an understanding of the primary health care system. You will have excellent rapport building and time management skills and work well both independently and as an integral team member. Competency in MS Office and internet applications is essential. You will also need a current driver's licence and a comprehensively insured vehicle.

A full position description and more information is available from Amanda Jones on 02 9663 5958 or email [admin@sesdgp.com.au](mailto:admin@sesdgp.com.au). Applicants must address the selection criteria in their application.

Applications close at 5.00pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2011. Depending on availability of applicants, job sharing would be considered.



## WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES 2011

<b>May</b>	
<b>5 – 6</b>	<p><b>Aboriginal Health Research Conference-‘Research for a better Future’</b> 5 - 6 May 2011</p> <p>This conference will showcase Aboriginal Health Research and promote community, research and policy engagement and exchange in Aboriginal health, to allow communities to describe their health and research priorities and to provide opportunities for sharing information and establishing collaborations among Aboriginal community members, researchers and policy makers. The conference will be held on 5 - 6 May 2011 in Sydney. Further information contact Julie McGraw <a href="mailto:jmcgraw@gemspl.com.au">jmcgraw@gemspl.com.au</a>.</p>
<b>July</b>	
<b>3 – 10</b>	<p><b>NAIDOC Week 2011 - Change: the Next Step is Ours</b> 3 – 10 July</p> <p>For entry forms and information on NAIDOC Week, visit <a href="http://www.naidoc.org.au/">http://www.naidoc.org.au/</a>.</p>
<b>August</b>	
<b>24 - 26</b>	<p><b>12th International Mental Health Conference</b> 24- 26 August 2011 Gold Coast QLD</p> <p><i>Personality Disorders: Out of the Darkness</i> - This conference presents a unique opportunity to bring together Australia’s and New Zealand’s leading Academics, Practitioners and other Mental Health Professionals. The focus will be on new clinical developments, treatments, programs and studies in meeting the challenges faced by people with Personality Disorders. Website: <a href="http://www.anzmmh.asn.au/conference2011/">http://www.anzmmh.asn.au/conference2011/</a></p>
<b>20</b>	<p>Family Planning NSW Conference 2011 Informative, relevant clinical and research updates in reproductive and sexual health which includes panel discussions, speakers and workshops! Application has been made for Category 2 points in the RACGP and QI&amp;CPD Program. Date: Saturday 20 August 2011 Venue: <b>Aerial UTS Function Centre</b> 235 Jones Street ULTIMO NSW 2007 Level 7, Building 10 Cost \$195 (Early Bird Special \$175 (prior to 17 June 2011) <b>For information on speakers and registration visit:</b> <a href="http://www.fpnsw.org.au/choosetobechallenged2011">www.fpnsw.org.au/choosetobechallenged2011</a></p>
<b>September</b>	
<b>19 - 22</b>	<p><b>2011 National Men’s Health Gathering</b> 19 to 22 September 2011 Perth, Western Australia</p> <p>The 2011 National Men’s Health Gathering provides a chance for delegates to participate in strengthening the advancement of male health in the Australasian region and beyond through effective strategic planning and knowledge management. The Gathering will incorporate the 6th National Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Islander Male Health Convention, the 5th National Men and Family Relationships Forum and the 9th National Men’s Health Conference. <a href="http://www.workingwithmen.org.au">www.workingwithmen.org.au</a></p>
<b>Nov</b>	
<b>25</b>	<p><b>NSW RDN /RDA (NSW) Rural GPs Conference</b> 25 – 27 November 2011 CPD Weekend Location: TBC</p> <p>For further information, contact Arna Wotherspoon - Phone: 02 8337 8100, Fax: 02 8337 8110, Email: <a href="mailto:conferences@nswrdn.com.au">conferences@nswrdn.com.au</a>.</p>



## GENERAL PRACTICE NSW CONTACTS

### Management

Chief Executive Officer	Jan Newland	<a href="mailto:jannewland@gpnsw.com.au">jannewland@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Executive Assistant	Sarah van de Scheur	<a href="mailto:sarahvandescheur@gpnsw.com.au">sarahvandescheur@gpnsw.com.au</a>
General Manager	Caroline Curtin	<a href="mailto:carolinecurtin@gpnsw.com.au">carolinecurtin@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Finance Manager	Melanie Liu	<a href="mailto:melanieliu@gpnsw.com.au">melanieliu@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Corporate Services Manager	Jody Dopper	<a href="mailto:jodydopper@gpnsw.com.au">jodydopper@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Policy Development & Communication Manager	Carla Saunders	<a href="mailto:carlasaunders@gpnsw.com.au">carlasaunders@gpnsw.com.au</a>

### Program and Support Staff

(In program alphabetical order)

APCC Regional Manager	Pat Simmonds	<a href="mailto:patsimmonds@gpnsw.com.au">patsimmonds@gpnsw.com.au</a>
eHealth Support Officer	Frank Zivkovic	<a href="mailto:frankzivkovic@gpnsw.com.au">frankzivkovic@gpnsw.com.au</a>
eHealth Support Officer	Jacqueline Owens	<a href="mailto:jacquelineowens@gpnsw.com.au">jacquelineowens@gpnsw.com.au</a>
eHealth Support Officer	Paul Bruce	<a href="mailto:paulbruce@gpnsw.com.au">paulbruce@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Finance Officer	Lanita Du Toit	<a href="mailto:accounts@gpnsw.com.au">accounts@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Immunisation Coordinator	Andrew Cramp	<a href="mailto:andrewcramp@gpnsw.com.au">andrewcramp@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Nursing in General Practice – Program Assistant	Olivia Moore	<a href="mailto:oliviamoore@gpnsw.com.au">oliviamoore@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Quality Control & Events Officer	Noela Walker	<a href="mailto:noelawalker@gpnsw.com.au">noelawalker@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Receptionist	Lyn Slade	<a href="mailto:reception@gpnsw.com.au">reception@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Systems Support Officer	Cassandra Smiles	<a href="mailto:cassandrasmiles@gpnsw.com.au">cassandrasmiles@gpnsw.com.au</a>

### Chronic Disease Team

Program Manager – Diabetes LMP	Tanja McLeish	<a href="mailto:tanjamcleish@gpnsw.com.au">tanjamcleish@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Aboriginal Health Coordinator	Jerry Bacich	<a href="mailto:jerrybacich@gpnsw.com.au">jerrybacich@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Aboriginal Health Coordinator	Wendy Campbell	<a href="mailto:wendycampbell@gpnsw.com.au">wendycampbell@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Aboriginal Health Coordinator	Alex Swain	<a href="mailto:alexswain@gpnsw.com.au">alexswain@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Aged Care Access Initiative	Sarah Bradfield	<a href="mailto:sarahbradfield@gpnsw.com.au">sarahbradfield@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Program Assistant - Chronic Disease	Ciara Wellard	<a href="mailto:ciarawellard@gpnsw.com.au">ciarawellard@gpnsw.com.au</a>

### Mental Health and Co Morbidity Team

Team Leader – Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol	Jane Westley	<a href="mailto:janewestley@gpnsw.com.au">janewestley@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Coordinator – Mental Health, Divisions Support	Meg Bennett	<a href="mailto:megbennett@gpnsw.com.au">megbennett@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Shared Care Clinical Coordinator, Clinical Nurse Consultant	Natalie Healey	<a href="mailto:nataliehealey@gpnsw.com.au">nataliehealey@gpnsw.com.au</a>
Program Assistant - Mental Health & Immunisation	Dora Tomaras	<a href="mailto:doratomaras@gpnsw.com.au">doratomaras@gpnsw.com.au</a>

### Contractor

Nursing in General Practice & STI Program Coordinator	Liz Meadley	<a href="mailto:lizm50@bigpond.com">lizm50@bigpond.com</a>
---	-------------	--

If you wish to discontinue receiving this newsletter, please email [reception@gpnsw.com.au](mailto:reception@gpnsw.com.au)  
Phone: 02 9239 2900.

### Disclaimer:

10 Minute Update is produced fortnightly by General Practice NSW Limited. The views contained within this publication are not necessarily those of General Practice NSW. Information in this newsletter may be published in other media with due acknowledgment of the originating source.  
© General Practice NSW Ltd 2011. All rights reserved.