

# P.S.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR PRACTICE STAFF | NOVEMBER 2008 ISSUE 1

## IDGP Highlights

Headspace youth health practice opens which saw over 300 young people access the service between February and June 2008

Practice support requests rose by 127% in 2008 compared to 2007

OTiS had 1169 requests for IT Support

In 2008 the IDGP joined with Lifeline SouthCoast to form a jointly managed Clinical Psychology Service. The service currently employs nine part-time clinical psychologists, which received over 275 referrals from Illawarra GPs in 2007/8

ABHI Mental Health Services established at Kiama Hospital

IDGP to extend membership to practices

IDGP announces new strategic direction that focus on members and member services as a means to address workforce issues

Number of staff in the division increased by 74%

An average of 280 patients received Home Medicine Reviews (HMR) each quarter Illawarra topping the number of HMRs nationally

Number of practice nurses rose to 104

Number of RMMRs has risen from 3 to 171

91% increase in immunisation support services

Average total cholesterol for diabetics on TAADIS has reduced to 4.3mmol/L

## WELCOME

PS is brought to you quarterly by the newly formed IDGP Practice Support team.

This update will come to you each quarter filled with relevant information for all GP's, Practice Managers, Practice Nurses and Practice Staff.

We have experienced a very busy couple of months settling into our new role and learning the "ropes".

Thank you to those of you who responded to the Needs Survey. We will be using the information to help us improve the Division's services and would still be pleased to accept any surveys that have not yet been returned.

The IDGP is transitioning to new contact numbers over the next 12 months for general enquiries and for the IT Department. Refer to the advertisement within.

The number for the Practice Support Team is 4220 7600 or you can email us at [practicesupport@idgp.org.au](mailto:practicesupport@idgp.org.au)

In addition to the quarterly PS newsletter we will also send regular short bulletins via email and fax, so please look out for this in the coming weeks.

If you have recently acquired an email account or changed your email/fax details please advise practice support so we can add you to our e-list to ensure you receive these interim updates.

We hope you will find the information useful and interesting and any feedback from you would be most welcome and greatly appreciated.

Chris, Margaret and Kristie-Lee  
Your Practice Support Team



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## Rehabilitation

### Changes to the Rehabilitation Appliances Program

Changes to the Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP) National Schedule of Equipment Members of the veteran community and health providers will benefit from the revised RAP National Schedule of Equipment which lists over 250 items available to entitled members of the veteran community.

Changes to the Schedule include the addition of new items such as waterproof limb protectors.

Financial and quantity limits have been increased on several items such as pressure care cushions and walking sticks.

The requirement for health providers to seek prior approval for supply from DVA has been removed from a total of 70 items.

Local Medical Officers and other General Practitioners may now assess for all RAP

items where a specialist health provider is unavailable. LMOs/GPs have also been granted assessment authority for items such as beds, chairs and seats.

The revised Schedule is available for viewing at: [www.dva.gov.au/health/rap/rap.htm](http://www.dva.gov.au/health/rap/rap.htm).

For further information call 1300 550 457 or 1800 550 457 (Regional areas) and select option '1'.



## Accreditation

### Myth

**Our practice does not need an onsite sterilisation log book because our practice uses offsite sterilisation methods...**

### Reality

Your practice must still maintain a steriliser logbook with details of:

- ▷ packs and loads,
- ▷ load numbers,
- ▷ details of content of the cycle performed off site,
- ▷ the conditions of the packs received by the practice and,
- ▷ the identity of the staff preparing the loads for sterilisation and releasing loads for use.

### A Surveyor Speaks – Criterion 1.1.2

It is important that patients of your practice are informed of how to obtain advice or information related to their clinical care by telephone or by electronic means where the GP determines that this is clinically safe and that a consultation is unnecessary.

You can notify patients of this by a sign in the waiting room, your on hold message and your practice information sheet.

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# Snippets

## **NEW** IDGP Telephone number

The IDGP and the IT team have new contact numbers.

IDGP phone: 4220 7600

IT phone: 4220 7699

A diversion from the old number will be in place for 12 months for the IDGP phone, but only six months for the IT phone.

The fax number (4226 9485) remains the same.

## Illawarra Leg Ulcer Clinic

Established in May 2002 the ILUC was set up to assist in the correct diagnosis of leg ulcers.

The ILUC can treat venous traumatic leg ulceration and has continued to be successful in effectively diagnosing and treating ulcers.

The clinic operates out of the Port Kembla Hospital Rehabilitation Outpatient Unit, fortnightly on a Friday.

The clinic is staffed by Community Health Nurses and a GP. To refer patients to the clinic, please phone the clinic on 4223 8201.

## Life Saving Immunisation

GP NSW and the ACT Division of General Practice in partnership with Genesis Ed, have created six free online modules on immunisation.

To participate in these interactive modules log onto [www.thinkgp.com.au](http://www.thinkgp.com.au) and look for "immunisation saves lives" education title.

There are continuing education points for GPs and nurses attached to the modules.



# Chronic Disease Management

## Diabetes Management in General Practice 2008/2009

The 2008/9 edition of Diabetes Management in General Practice is available.

For more than 20 years, Diabetes Australia in conjunction with the RACGP has provided these guidelines for the management of type 2 diabetes in the general practice setting.

The guidelines are updated every year and distributed by sponsors Alphapharm and Eli Lilly.

If you have missed your copy please contact your medical representative or contact Practice Support.

Further information can be found at — [www.racgp.org.au](http://www.racgp.org.au)

## Dental Items

(Medicare items 85011-87777)

The Government has not yet agreed to close this scheme but it is their intention to do so. Currently Medicare cannot confirm whether patients already enrolled in the scheme will have a transition period in which to complete their dental work.

While the scheme remains open, some caution should be exercised if GPs are going to enroll any new patients.

We are in constant liaison with Medicare and will inform General Practices as soon as any changes happen.

There is further information available at the following websites <http://www.racgp.org.au/news/25788> and [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/GP-factsheet\\_dental](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/GP-factsheet_dental)

## Medicare Australia: CDM information sent to practices

Medicare Australia recently sent information packs to general practices and allied health providers to increase awareness and correct use of the MBS CDM items.

The information included —

- » Quick reference guides for GPs and allied health professionals (additional copies are available to download from: [www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/epc](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/epc)).
- » An information sheet (GP practice managers only) DOHA Information sheet and brochure for patients (GP practice staff only).
- » A covering letter detailing the purpose of the information packs and instructions on accessing further CDM reference material.

This information aims to reinforce key requirements and will assist health care professionals to prepare comprehensive care plans.

## Chronic Disease Q and A

- Q** When required can a single patient be on a Mental Health Plan and GP Management Plan?
- A** Where a patient has a mental disorder as well as significant co-morbidities and complex needs requiring team based care, the GP is able to use both the CDM items (for team based care) and the GP Mental Health Care items.

As a principal, the creation of multiple plans should be avoided unless the patient requires an additional plan for the management of a separate condition.

# Snippets

## Helping Children with AUTISM

Six item numbers are available on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) as part of the Australian Government's \$190 million Helping Children with Autism package.

These items allow allied health professionals to provide services for children aged under 13 years (for diagnosis) and under 15 years (for treatment) with autism or any other pervasive developmental disorder (PDD). The MBS items have been developed in close consultation with allied health professional organisations.

Visit: [www.health.gov.au/autism](http://www.health.gov.au/autism) for more details.

## IDGP Website

The new IDGP website, is scheduled to go live in the coming months. Our new website will provide important updates, resources and templates to assist all practice staff.

## Practice Nurses Code of Conduct

The release of the new Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for nurses are available on the Australian Nurses and Midwifery Council website at [www.anmc.org.au](http://www.anmc.org.au)

## PS... Evaluation

The practice support team is seeking to create a relevant publication that will provide information to assist all practice staff.

If you have any recommendations for future publications or wish to provide any comments about the first edition of PS, please contact the Practice Support Team.

# Diabetes

## Diabetes Australia — Wollongong Resource Centre opens

**Diabetes Australia-NSW has opened a resource centre to support people with diabetes and their families in the Illawarra region and beyond.**

The centre is situated at 3 Station St (off Crown St) Wollongong and is open Monday to Friday 10am-2pm.

The Diabetes Australia outlet stocks products such as cookbooks, travel packs, sharps containers and blood glucose meters.

NDSS supplies including blood glucose strips, pen needles and syringes are also available.

Blood glucose meter demonstrations and accuracy checks can be provided upon request.

For people newly diagnosed or those

commencing insulin, NDSS registration can be processed immediately on site upon presentation of completed NDSS registration form or if form is faxed through any forms received after 2pm will be processed the next business day.

Insulin pump supplies are also available.

Diabetes Australia NSW health professionals based in the Illawarra are working with local services to support people with diabetes, however all clinical services continue to be provided by the Illawarra Diabetes Service.

For more information contact Diabetes Australia-NSW Illawarra region  
Phone (02) 4226 4379  
Fax (02) 4226 3205

# Immunisation

## Immunisation SIP Payment to cease from 1st October 2008

The Immunisation SIP payments of \$18.50 for completing an age-appropriate immunisation ended on the 1st of October 2008.

The \$6 ACIR Information payment remains as does the Outcomes payment of \$3.50.

The Outcomes payment is paid to GPII registered practices with immunisation coverage rates over 90%.

Immunisations up to and including the 30th September will attract the SIP (\$18.50) if the notification is received by ACIR by middle of December 2008.

## ACIR Secure Site

Is your practice interested in using the ACIR Secure site? Would you like to view a child's vaccination details, record immunisation encounters and access a range of reports?

If you would like to know more or receive assistance with accessing the secure site please contact Practice Support at the Division.



# Snippets

## Wollongong OIR Workshops

### Workplace policies

Thurs 27 November 9am–1pm  
\$88.00

For more information and registration please visit: [www.industrialrealitions.nsw.gov.au](http://www.industrialrealitions.nsw.gov.au) and select Workshops or phone 02-9020 4612.

## Pandemic Preparedness Kit

The RACGP has recently announced that every general practice in Australia is getting a “kit” with CPD attached to guide them through pandemic preparedness.

Please see following website for further information;  
[www.racgp.org.au/pandemicresources](http://www.racgp.org.au/pandemicresources)

## NSW Heart Foundation Hypertension Guidelines

The Heart foundation “Guide to Management of Hypertension 2008” is now available.

The updated guide provides information on the diagnosis, management and follow-up of people with raised blood pressure.

The publication can be accessed at: [www.heartfoundation.org.au/Professional\\_Information/Clinical\\_Practice/Hypertension.htm](http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/Professional_Information/Clinical_Practice/Hypertension.htm)

### DISCLAIMER

Opinions and/or advertising appearing in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Illawarra Division of General Practice.

Furthermore the authors or officers of the IDGP are/or will not be held responsible for the results of any actions taken on the basis of information in this publication nor for any error in or omission from this publication.

## Education



### Immunisation Update

The Public Health Unit will be running two more Immunisation Update Sessions.

An evening session will be held at IDGP on the 3rd of December, while a day session will be held at the University on the 4th of December.

For Further information/RSVP please contact Caroline Williams, SESIAH Immunisation Coordinator, ph 4221 6700.

### Education 2009

The Division is planning practice nurse and practice staff education programs for 2009. The program will be based on the needs identified in our recent Needs Survey and also on suggestions provided by practice staff. The broad areas of need that were identified in the survey included the following —

- » Chronic Disease Management including care planning, patient self management and prevention
- » Diabetes, Woman’s health and Asthma
- » Woundcare
- » Immunisation, Cold Chain and ACIR
- » Medical Director training including recalls
- » IT troubleshooting
- » Medicare items with updates on new items
- » Human Resources Management
- » Security Training – Crime and Violence Prevention
- » CPR
- » Customer Service Training

If you would like to contribute training needs or suggestions please email the IDGP practice support team: [practicesupport@idgp.org.au](mailto:practicesupport@idgp.org.au)

## Human Resources

### What support the Division can offer your practice?

The practice support team has the capacity to support local general practices with their Human Responsibilities. Division Support encompasses —

- » Maintaining a list of Administration Staff looking for work
- » Maintaining a list of Practice Nurses looking for work
- » Maintaining Job descriptions for Practice Staff, Practice Nurses and General Practitioners
- » Providing Orientation and Induction guidelines to assist the integration and training new employees
- » Maintaining a current list of GP locums
- » Answering Practices Human Resources queries

### Medical Receptionists and Practice Nurses Staff Pool

The information provided from these staff pools have been developed for members of the Division. This list is not associated with any recommendations from the IDGP.

### Positions Vacant

Do you know of anyone looking for a new position in general practice — Practice Nurses, GPs and Practice Managers based in the Illawarra? Contact the IDGP practice support team for further Information.

## Nursing

### GP Nursing Project

The IDGP is currently undertaking an exciting Nursing in General Practice Project which will explore the way practices utilise the services of nurses, and develop some innovative models to improve a practice team approach to chronic disease and lifestyle risk factor management.

Another focus will be on nurse recruitment, with assistance given to those practices interested in employing a nurse.

The project will run until June 09 and sees the return of Anne Harding in the position of Project Officer.

The first phase of the project is underway in the form of a questionnaire sent to all practice nurses, if you are a practice nurse yet to receive a survey please contact the Division.

While you may sigh at the thought of another survey, the data which is collected in this survey will help us to develop user friendly models and resources which will assist the entire practice team!

For more information please email Anne at [aharding@idgp.org.au](mailto:aharding@idgp.org.au)

### HPV Register — Encounters

The HPV Register requires the GP provider number in order to make payment hence even if the nurse administers the vaccine the provider number of the patient's usual GP must be provided with the dosage information sent to the register in order for payment to be made.

HOWEVER, those practices using Medicare Online and other forms of electronic Medicare Item claiming should be aware that if you are claiming 10993 (Immunisation provided by a practice nurse) then your practice records need to reflect this and the provider **should not** be changed to the GP in their electronic records as this would create a false account of who provided the vaccination.

## Multidisciplinary Care Pilot

### For all PHReNet members

One of our UNSW Centre for Primary Health Care colleagues is conducting a study "Outcome of Multidisciplinary Care in General Practice Pilot".

The study aims to enhance working relationships with other health professionals in the process of sharing the care of patients with chronic disease.

Participation in this research study is open to GPs and Allied health professionals.

You will be required to undertake just one survey, which will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

The survey investigates the working relationship between GPs and Allied Health professionals in caring for patients with chronic diseases including type 2 diabetes and ischaemic heart disease/hypertension.

All participants will receive a copy of any journal articles that result from this study.

The study is funded by the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council. If you or your colleagues would like to participate in this research I am happy to post you a participation sheet, consent form and the Pilot questionnaire form.

Please email me: [suzan.mehmet@sswahs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:suzan.mehmet@sswahs.nsw.gov.au) or Ph: 96168520.

If you would like further information about the study please do not hesitate to contact the UNSW project coordinator Bibiana Chan Ph 93858381 e: [bibi.chan@unsw.edu.au](mailto:bibi.chan@unsw.edu.au)

## Aged Care Initiative

### The Aged Care Access Initiative commenced in July 2008 replacing the Aged Care GP Panels Initiative.

This Department of Health and Ageing funding is to support the primary health care needs for people living in residential aged care facilities (RACFs).

There are two components—

The first component is payments linked through PIP for GPs who provide a predetermined number of Medicare services to residents living in Commonwealth funded RACFs in 2008-2009.

The second component is the provision of allied health services identified through a local needs assessment for services that are not funded by Medicare or other government sources.

Clinical allied health services can be

provided on an individual or a group basis. Planning for this service provision is in the early stages and will be led by Anita Needham, IDGP Allied Health Advisor.

For further information about residential aged care please contact Glenda O'Halloran, IDGP Aged Care Program Officer.

