

Doctor's Notes




Clinical Communiqué

Issue 31 - August 2018



Vaccines for invasive meningococcal disease

August and September are peak months for invasive meningococcal disease, GPs should be alert for symptoms in all ages. NSW is offering meningococcal ACWY vaccine (Men ACWY0 to year 10 and 11 students through schools in 2018 and to year 10 students in 2019. GPs can offer free MEN ACWY to any 15-19 year olds who have not been vaccinated at school until 31 December 2018.

[Find out more >>](#)

Lead-contaminated opium alert

NSW Health recommends blood lead level screening for any patient suspected of ingesting or inhaling illicit opium products at any point since early 2016. There have been cases of severe lead poisoning in NSW and Victoria believed to result from the use of illicit opium products contaminated with lead. Lead poisoning can be difficult to diagnose and should be considered in patients who have abdominal pain, constipation and anaemia of unexplained origin.



[Find out more >>](#)

Changes to telehealth billing rules



Australian Government

The Commonwealth has updated the website on telehealth billing rules. It provides clarity on eligibility, locations and MBS item numbers and payments. The website also provides information on claiming for different types of health care professionals.

[Find out more >>](#)

Study into problematic use of opioids by people with cancer and pain

GPs with experience in prescribing opioids to people with cancer and pain are invited to take part in a qualitative study run by the University of Technology Sydney. The study aims to inform a balanced response from policy and practice to optimising benefits and minimising risks from opioids for people with cancer pain. The study involves participation in a one-off, 30-minute interview which will be reimbursed in accordance to MBS item 36.



[Find out more >>](#)

New report into General Practice in Western NSW



A new report on General Practice in the region has been released. Western NSW PHN engaged Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association to produce *General Practice in Western New South Wales, August 2018*. The report has detailed analysis on the state of General Practice in the Western NSW PHN area.

[Read the report >>](#)

Survey: Utilisation of Cardiovascular Risk Calculators

An RACGP study conducted in 2016 found that many GPs want to better utilise eHealth technology for patient education and clinical decision-making. Western Sydney University (WSU) is conducting research to identify how eHealth technology can be utilised to improve the efficiency and accuracy of cardiovascular risk assessment and management in general practice.

WESTERN SYDNEY
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[Click here to complete the 5-minute survey >>](#)

Survey: Gout Self-Management App in Primary Care



University of NSW (UNSW) researchers are evaluating the efficacy of a mobile app to aid in the management and control of gout in primary care. This cluster randomised trial compares the efficiency of two apps in achieving target serum urate concentrations. The NHMRC-funded project is led by Prof Ric Day, St Vincent's Clinical School. GPs who have seen patients with gout in the last year are invited to participate. RACGP- and ACRRM-accredited professional development points are available, and each participating GP practice will receive a \$300 gift voucher.

[Find out more >>](#)

Accessing Medical Imaging over the Internet

Western NSW LHD has announced the introduction of a new PACS viewing platform - MerlinVue. This platform uses the latest technologies to ensure compatibility across all modern internet browsers and has enhanced, high-quality image viewing functionality. For more information email WNSWLHD-PACS-Helpdesk@health.nsw.gov.au.



Health
Western NSW
Local Health District

Making hearing care more accessible



A commitment to improve your patients' quality of life.

Better hearing. Guaranteed.

[Find out more](#)

Connect Hearing!

Connect Hearing has developed a customer service program to make quality clinical hearing care accessible to more Australians. The **Better Hearing Guarantee** is a commitment to provide a high standard of hearing solutions and service at an affordable price point. You can refer patients to your local Connect Hearing clinic for hearing services in Bathurst, Cobar, Cowra, Forbes, Mudgee, Oberon, Orange and Parkes as well as tinnitus assistance, pre-employment and audiometry testing and custom ear plugs. Contact them on 1300 721 589 or info@connecthearing.com.au to request a free referral template for your practice software.

Training and Events

WNSW PHN organises regular CPD events for doctors and health professionals. These are listed on our [website](#). Upcoming events organised or supported by WNSW PHN include:

- **Understanding the Long Limbs of Trauma** (External CPD Event) - 5 September, Dubbo
- **PSA Interactive Workshop - Deprescribing for an aging population** - 12 September, Dubbo
- **Cervical Screening Upskilling and Implanon NXT® Insertion and Removal** (External CPD Event) - 12 September, Broken Hill
- **HIV Prep Update for GPs and Practice Nurses** (External CPD Webinar)- 12 September
- **Q Fever Overview and Common Issues faced by Medical Practitioners** - 13 September, Orange
- **Chronic Pain Management Education Session** - 17 September, Bathurst
- **GP Synergy Registrar Networking Dinner** (External CPD Event) - September 18, Orange
- **Health Education and Training (HETI) - Rural Teaching on the Run workshop** (External CPD

Event)- 21 September, Dubbo

- **Chronic Care Respiratory Health Forum** (External CPD Event) - 11 October, Dubbo
- **Mudgee Medico Masterclass: Orthopaedics** - October 19, Mudgee
- **GP Synergy Dinner - It Ain's Easy! Assessment and Feedback** - 22 October, Broken Hill
- **GP Education Day** - 3 November, Orange
- **Adult Spina Bifida: A model of multidisciplinary disability management** (CPD Event)- 13 November, Dubbo
- **Caring for Colleagues, Caring for Ourselves** (CPD Event) - 24 November, Dubbo



Contact Western NSW PHN

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While the Australian Government helped fund this document, it has not reviewed the content and is not responsible for any injury, loss or damage however arising from the use of or reliance on the information provide herein.

We acknowledge that we work on the traditional lands of many Aboriginal clans, tribes and nations. We commit to working in collaboration with our region's Aboriginal communities and peoples to improve their health, emotional and social wellbeing in the spirit of partnership.



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