

**Illawarra  
Division of  
General  
Practice**

**PO Box 1198  
Wollongong**



## IN THIS ISSUE

1. Why eHealth?
2. Family Doctor Awards 2010
3. 'Closing the Gap'
4. Beaton Park Leisure Centre & IDGP services

## Newsletter of the IDGP Community Consultative Committee

### Why eHealth?

Have you ever gone to your GP, only to find that he/she was on holiday, or away, or had moved on, and that a locum is 'covering' for them? Have you or a family member ever been injured or become ill while inter-state and had to go to a strange Accident and Emergency Department for treatment?

Have you ever gone to a hospital in your own town for a specialist procedure and had to answer the same questions about your health history several times, especially when you are not at your best and brightest? Has your GP ever referred you to a specialist for treatment? What information does the specialist get, from whom, and is it correct or out-of-date? Of course, you may be unaware of any errors if you don't get to see the information.

Do you remember what immunisation you have had and when? There is a record system for the immunisation status of children in Australia, but you are on your own for adult immunisation records<sup>1</sup>. On a national basis the patient/consumer's health record is fragmented and the availability of correct information at the site of health care delivery is often up to the consumer.'

Amy E Zelmer

eHealth. What's in it for me, the health consumer? p.18, HealthVoices, Journal of the Consumer-Health Forum of Australia, Nov 2010

<sup>1</sup> The Australian Childhood Immunisation Record is managed through Medicare

### EDITORIAL

The Family Doctor Awards aroused palpable excitement at the AGM of the IDGP in October last year. It has proved to be a valuable opportunity for people to show their appreciation for their GP.

The patient journey today is hampered by a reliance on paper records, memory and repetition both verbal in history taking, and in investigative procedures. Consumers can anticipate improved information exchange about their health when they can use personally controlled electronic health records (PCEHR).

Some GPs in the Illawarra already have in place card systems which summarise patient data providing vital information in emergency and out-of town situations. This system has repeatedly proved to be of huge benefit, particularly among patients who are elderly, disabled or suffering from chronic conditions or mental health disorders. Amy Zelmer's article asks questions that make us think about the current situation of the paper shuffle.

Closing the Gap is about important measures by government to lessen the disadvantage suffered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descendants and increase their life-span to that of other Australians. The statistics give strong support about the need for drastic changes to improve the health of the original inhabitants of our lucky country.

Noreen Parrish has provided information about the facilities available to consumers covering a range of health rehabilitation and training needs.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a happy and prosperous 2011.

**Patricia Noferi**  
Chairperson  
January 2011

## Illawarra Family Doctor Awards 2010



**2010 GP of the Year**  
**Dr Jenny Smiley**  
**of Gwynneville**

Illawarra GPs and practices have again been recognized for their excellent qualities and skills at the AGM of the Illawarra Division of General Practice, by the presentation of the Family Doctor and the Practice Awards for 2010.

The selection is based on nominations made by patients and judged by a sub-committee of the Division's Consumer Consultative Committee.

**Dr Jenny Smiley** had an outstanding number of excellent nominations and was the unequivocal choice for the **Illawarra GP of the Year**.

Her Gwynneville practice was also nominated for an exceptional mention

**Bulli Medical Practice** was awarded the Illawarra **Practice of the Year**.

The following GPs stand out for exceptional mention:

- Dr Leon Wright, Dapto Medical & Family Practice
- Dr Seng Ooi, Dapto Medical & Family Practice
- Dr Grayson MacKay, Illawarra Family Medical Centre, Crown St Wollongong

We congratulate all the GPs and Practices who received distinguished recognition by the lay-network, their patients.

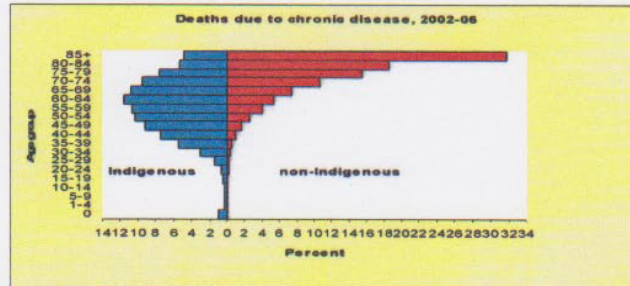
**Dr Seng Ooi**



**2010 Practice of the Year**  
**Bulli Medical Practice**

## “Closing the Gap”

Engaging General Practice network to improve Indigenous access to mainstream primary care.



Source: DoHA estimates based on data from the AIHW National Mortality Database.

Poor access of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to primary care services is evidenced by the significant under-utilisation of the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). The result is low levels of prevention and primary care treatment services, under-use of MBS-funded specialists and under-servicing in the hospital system compared to equally ill non-Aboriginal patients. *Australian Medical Association report card series 2007: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2007.*

For Indigenous Australians, Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) per capita expenditure is estimated to be 45% of the non-Indigenous average, and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) per capita expenditure is estimated at 51% of the non-Indigenous average. *AIHW 2008. Expenditures on health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 2004-05. Health and welfare expenditure series no. 32. Cat. no. HWE 40. Canberra: AIHW.*

The low usage of primary health care by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, relative to need, has resulted in over-utilisation of hospital services. In 2004-05 Indigenous Australians were more than twice as likely to visit casualty/outpatients as non-Indigenous Australians. *Australian Government, 2008, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework 2008 Report*

In terms of tertiary services Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples face serious disparities in care, where they are more likely to be hospitalised than non-Indigenous Australians, and less likely to be treated by medical or surgical procedure while in hospital. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework 2008 report. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare,*

## Rehabilitation & fitness

Enhanced Primary Care, Rehabilitation and general doctor's referrals have become a major part of the role of participants at Fitness Centers. Modalities utilized in the fitness centers vary from hydrotherapy, Pilates and Pilates based classes to work hardening land based programs and manual handling training.

Beaton Park Leisure Centre, is located in the centre of Wollongong with ample parking, a 25 meter heated pool, synthetic track, gym and cardio equipment and a large variety of classes. The centre has internal accredited Personal Trainers and Exercise Physiologists, who are accredited by Workcover and Medicare. The Exercise Physiologist can assess, treat and write programs for rehabilitation clients, doctors' referrals – who can claim from their rehabilitation providers, Medicare and/or their private health fund (conditions apply). BPLC can also cater to external Exercise Physiologists or physiotherapists accredited with Work cover and Medicare to perform rehabilitation services. For southern residents, Lakeside Leisure Centre provider full gym and cardio equipment as well as a variety of classes.

The areas catered for are;

Rehabilitation – internal and external

The key areas addressed are muscular strengthening and mobility, correction of muscular imbalances, work hardening programs, postural control and awareness, functional aerobic and strength training.

Enhanced Primary Care

These patients are usually people with metabolic diseases i.e. diabetes etc. that are referred by their GP to an exercise physiologist and are entitled to 5 visits per calendar year. The cost of the visits as per Medicare schedule is \$58.85 and the refund by Medicare is \$50.80 so the cost to the person is \$8.05.

Personal Training

This service caters for every individual's needs in a safe and professional manner. BPLC provides qualified trainers for training in health and fitness to clients in order to provide tuition in muscle flexibility, warm ups, cardiovascular conditioning, weight training and body fat management.

For more information or bookings for these services at Beaton Park or Lakeside Leisure Centre please contact Noreen Parrish at Beaton Park Leisure Centre 02 4227 7759, Lakeside Leisure Centre on 02 4261 3693, or by email at [leisurecentres@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:leisurecentres@wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

## IDGP Postnatal Group

**Are you concerned about how you're coping since the birth of your baby?** The IDGP Postnatal Group therapy helps women through Post-natal Depression and Anxiety. The group involves 8 weekly sessions, 4-6pm at the Green Bean Play Cafe. Sessions are bulk-billed under Medicare, so no cost to you, coffee and light refreshments provided; childcare provided by accredited childcare workers from Illawarra Childrens Services. Toddlers and newborns are welcome as part of our therapy group.

**Please phone (02) 4220 7600 for more details on these services run by the IDGP Clinical Psychology Service.**

## Community Consultative Committee

The Community Consultative Committee (CCC) is a group of community members who meet regularly with the IDGP and local GP representatives. The link opens the lines of communication between the community and GPs and allows items of concern and/or interest to be discussed. This is designed to foster understanding and goodwill between the consumers (users of medical services) and the medical fraternity (the providers of medical services).

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House Call

