

P.S.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR PRACTICE STAFF | MARCH 2009 ISSUE 2

IDGP Highlights

Congratulations to the five local practices involved in the Australian Primary Care Collaboratives. The practices are Woonona Medical Practice, Albion Park Medical Service, Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service and Keiraville Medical Surgery. These practices have achieved the following improvements in six months:

- » A 46% reduction in unmet demand
- » A 19% reduction in the no. of days until the GP's third available appointment
- » A 66% increase in CHD patients with BP in the target range
- » A 35% increase in Diabetes patients with BP in the target range
- » A 10% increase in CHD patients taking aspirin
- » A 9% increase in patient satisfaction

SPECIAL CONGRATULATIONS to Keiraville and Albion Park, who have achieved one of the Collaboratives goals after only six months. 50% of their diabetes patients with an HbA1c of 7% or less...food for thought.

The Division's Lifestyle Modification Program 'Reset Your Life' a program for patients at risk of diabetes will commence this month. Referrals are needed! See page four.

Three Practices within the Illawarra received Area of Need Status in the past months .

Healthy Kids Sessions were run by the Practice Support Team on the 19th and 26th of November, with 36 Practice Nurses and 9 GPs attending. Attendees rated the session highly, stating that they felt more confident in performing the health assessment

The IDGP board consists of four non-GP members, these are Prof John Hogg, Helen Gaps, Kath McCormack and Mark Grimson.

GP members are Chair Person Dr John McAlpine, Deputy Chair Dr Person Russell Pearson, Dr Steve Lyon and Dr Rod McMahon and Dr Andrew Dalley.

WELCOME

We hope that you had a safe and happy festive season and all is in full swing for 2009.

In this second issue of P.S. we are showcasing the diverse range of services provided by the IDGP to meet the needs of the Illawarra community and support the work of our local general practices.

There are articles on the Division's Clinical Psychology Service, headspace, GPEP, Home Medicine Review, the IDGP Cervical Screening Project, the Life Style Modification Program and more.

The Practice Support Team is putting the finishing touches to our education program for practice staff and practice nurses. Topics have been developed based on your feedback in the Practice Support Survey, Nursing in General Practice survey and 2008 education event evaluation forms.

Your attention is drawn to important changes to IDGP membership. Due to a decision of members at the AGM, all practices have been sent membership forms inviting the nomination as practice members. In practice this means that discounted Division services can be provided to any practice without regard to membership of individual GPs in the practice.

An important event for February is the launch of the Division's new website. The new-look site provides portals for General Practices, allied health professionals, patients, registrars and students. This easy-to-navigate website will provide practices with updates on events, programs and incentives, information on Division services, convenient access to useful resources and templates and much more. This site can be trialed at www.idgp.org.au:8081.

Please look out for the following inserts in this issue:

- » QUM Matters
- » SESIAHS Movement and Play Skills Assessment Clinic
- » Calendar of Division Education Events for March and April

Also... a reminder that if you have changed your email or fax details please advise us and we will update our records so that you receive all communication.

Through PS, the Practice Support Team is attempting to create a relevant, whole practice publication. If you have any comments or suggestions for future editions please contact the Practice Support Team at 4220 7600 or practicesupport@idgp.org.au

Chris, Margaret, Kristie-Lee, Jessica Lee, Linda
Your Practice Support Team



Snippets

Changes to Allied Health Services Effective 1 January 2009

From the 1st of January 2009, the requirement to claim a rebate for chronic disease management care planning items before items 10950 - 10970 and 81100 – 81125 can be claimed has been removed. However, note that eligibility requirements for these items have not changed.

Although the claims for a GPMP, TCA, or contribution to a care plan for an RACF resident (item 731) may not need to be completed (billed & rebate claim processed) prior to the Allied Health items being claimed, GPs are encouraged to still bill and submit claims prior to the patient seeing the Allied Health provider.

What these changes mean from a patient perspective is that if they claim the rebate for the Allied Health service, prior to the GP claim being paid, it is unlikely to be rejected.

Medicare has updated their quick reference guides to reflect these changes – they can be found at:

<http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/business/education/files/2249-quick-reference-guide-for-general-practitioners.pdf>

Services Provided by the IDGP

FREE Cervical Screening Clinics for General Practice

The Illawarra region has been identified as an area with low rates of Cervical Screening and as a result the Division has received funding from the NSW Cancer Institute to run a cervical screening project within the Wollongong and Shellharbour LGAs.

The project aims to improve access to cervical screening for underscreened women in the area, and also specially assist women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to access cervical screening.

The Division would like to offer General Practices the services of an IDGP-employed female nurse, who is appropriately trained to do Pap smears, to undertake Well Women's screening clinics within the Practice for the provision of Pap smears and breast checks.

This service is provided free of charge to Practices and they would also be eligible for the MBS nursing rebate (\$22.20 for each Pap smear performed) and any associated Practice Incentives Program payments.

Support will also be provided from the IDGP to identify and recall patients who are overdue for their Pap smear to the clinics.

Benefits to practices include - reaching an at-risk population of patients, offering the convenience of Pap smear services without the work of employing a nurse and generating an income for the Practice from the nurse's services.

Practices interested in utilising the services of an IDGP-employed Nurse to run Cervical Screening clinics should contact Beth Bignell, IDGP Project Officer, p: 4220 7600 or email: bbignell@idgp.org.au

Home Medicine Review

Why a Home Medicine Review is an important service for your patients

Mr Bruiser – how a HMR can uncover a potentially dangerous situation

Recently a 62 year old man was discovered to be taking too many blood thinning agents during a Home Medicines Review. Mr CB was taking Plavix and Cartia as well as half a Solprin daily.

His GP had initially prescribed Solprin, then changed this to Cartia, then eventually

changed this to Plavix. Mr CB thought that he was meant to be taking all three medicines, he was not aware that he should have ceased one as he was changed to another one.

His conditions included Barrett's oesophagitis and gastro-oesophageal reflux.

Mr CB also takes Nexium for his conditions and was needing to take additional Mylanta nearly every day. Taking all three blood thinning agents increases risk of bleeding and is not recommended. The patient's GP was contacted on the day of the interview and only Plavix was retained as regular therapy.

If you have any Home Medicine Review related questions please contact Karina Bronska at 4220 7600 or through email at kbronska@idgp.org.au

IDGP Practice Support Service

The IDGP Practice Support Service aims to provide local practices with an integrated model of support which includes all members of the general practice team - general practitioners, nurses, practice managers and administration staff.

This practice team approach ensures General Practitioners and all members of the general practice team have access to information and resources to assist in their roles.

The IDGP Practice Support Service team comprises Christopher Pitt, Margaret Liackman and Kriste-Lee Dubowec. The team assists practices within the areas of:

- » Accreditation
- » Work Force Support
- » Human Resources
- » Information Management Support
- » Enhanced Primary Care

The Practice Support Service can be contacted by p: 4220 7600 f: 4226 9485 or e: practicesupport@idgp.org.au

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Snippets

Positions Vacant

Do you know of anyone looking for a new position in General Practice in the Illawarra, either as a General Practitioner, Practice Manager or Practice Staff?

Contact the IDGP Practice Support Team for further Information. The Division maintains a list of Practice Staff and General Practitioners looking for work which we are able to forward to General Practices as demanded.

The practice support team can be contacted at e: practicesupport@idgp.org.au

Sharing Healthcare Guidelines

The RACGP has developed Chronic Disease Self Management resources for practice nurses.

The Sharing Healthcare Guidelines have been developed to assist nurses and allied health professionals facilitate self-management in clients with a chronic condition by providing a framework for effective interactions and management strategies.

A desktop guide has also been developed to sit alongside the guidelines. There are also guidelines for GPs. The resources can be found at www.racgp.org.au/guidelines/sharinghealthcare

Secure Email Accounts

The Pacific Email account that many General Practices use is a standard email account. The Division can set up a secure idgpconnect email account which will be secure to other idgpconnect accounts and the area health email. Visit <http://www.idgp.org.au/idgpconnect/> to get a run down on this service.

Services Provided by the IDGP

headspace

The headspace Illawarra Youth Health Centre provides free health care, support and information services specifically for young people aged 12 to 25. Male and female GPs (doctors from local practices who work at headspace on a sessional basis) provide:

- » General medical care
- » Wellbeing checks
- » Sexual health services, contraception advice, pregnancy counselling and management
- » Nutrition and physical activity advice
- » Mental health and substance use screening

Alcohol and Other Drugs Worker (registered psychologist):

- » Alcohol and other drugs information and education
- » Counselling to assist with substance use problems and relapse prevention
- » Coordination of detox and rehabilitation services

Registered and Clinical Psychologists:

- » Assessment and therapy under the Better Access to Mental Health Care Initiative (a GP Mental Health Care Plan and referral is required)

Youth workers:

- » Care coordination, assisting young people to navigate the health system, and helping service providers within headspace and external organisations to work together for the benefit of the young person
- » Psychosocial assessment
- » Access to housing support, employment, education and training programs, legal and other social/welfare assistance.

Our Mental Health Nurse provides:

- » Coordinated clinical care and treatment for young people with a severe mental disorder who have been hospitalised or are at risk of hospitalisation (a GP Mental Health Care Plan and referral is required)
- » Regular reviews of the patient's mental state
- » Medication monitoring
- » Information on physical health care
- » Close liaison and support for families and carers.

All headspace staff are specially trained, care about and are sensitive to the specific needs of young people. Young people can phone for an appointment or drop in. Referrals are also accepted by phone from parents/carers, GPs and other service providers. Phone 42251184.

Clinical Psychology Service

The Clinical Psychology Service (CPS) has been running successfully for over five years, providing psychological assessment and treatment to over 1300 patients referred by Illawarra GPs.

In 2008 the IDGP and Lifeline South Coast combined to launch a joint Clinical Psychology Service to address resourcing issues required to meet the service demands of both organisations.

The CPS provides evidence-based assessment and short-term treatment (six sessions) for patients with mild to moderate mental disorders that are likely to respond to brief therapy.

The most common diagnoses include mood and anxiety disorders. Given the brevity of therapy, the CPS is not a crisis service and referrals for complex cases (psychotic and personality disorders) are not appropriate. If you wish to make a referral to our service but are unsure of suitability, please call to discuss.

The CPS, as well as offering individual treatment, now provides group therapy programs for Depression and Anxiety. In referring to the CPS it is worth discussing with your client the opportunities to access this new mode of therapy.

This will also assist clients to access treatment sooner.

Each group therapy program runs for a duration of four weeks and patients with depression and anxiety will likely access this treatment program prior to individual treatment when appropriate.

The CPS will be expanding later in 2009, offering perinatal depression services.

The CPS includes a team of 10 part-time Clinical Psychologists who also work within headspace Illawarra.

Both the CPS and headspace Illawarra psychological services continue to bulk bill.

If you would like more information on any of the services mentioned in this article please contact the Clinical Psychology Service on 4220 7600.

Snippets

ABHI makes waves

The Division's new clinical service stream has made positive outcomes just 6 months in from its inception.

ABHI (Australian Better Health Initiative) was introduced to Kiama in June 2008 and already had serviced in excess of 500 occasions of mental health services to patients by December.

2009 will see another year for clinical service growth in Kiama through the negotiation of service pathways with the Area Health Service for diabetes and respiratory disease, to ease workforce pressures in general practice.

It is planned that in 2010 these models will be replicated more broadly across the Illawarra as an emerging element of the Division's clinical service stream.

Lauren Hickson can be contacted at hickson@idgp.org.au for further details.

Are you keeping on top of workplace laws?

In today's changing workplace environment, understanding industrial relations laws and how they apply to you can be quite a challenge.

Toni Minovski, a Workplace Adviser with the NSW Office of Industrial Relations (OIR), says it is important that general practices and medical centres in Illawarra are aware of their responsibilities as employers as frequent checks are made.

The OIR has a range of practical services to assist employers to understand their rights and responsibilities, including:

- » workshops and short courses
- » an information advisory hotline – 131 628
- » online calculators to check pay rates and entitlements
- » electronic award updates
- » 'My IR Rules' - an online service to check if a business is covered by the state or federal industrial relations system
- » workplace advice publications in a range of different languages.

For a full list of workshops and to register contact the Office of Industrial Relations on 02 9020 4612 or visit www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au

Services Provided by the IDGP

Lifestyle Modification Program Update

The first LMP program, 'Reset your Life' has commenced at IDGP. Referrals are still needed as we are looking to hold more sessions!

This is a series of seven healthy lifestyle workshops, provided free to groups of eligible patients over a six month period.

Eligible patients are those who:

- » are aged 40-49
- » are at 'high risk' of T2 diabetes as identified by the AUSDRISK assessment (a 10 question survey)

Steps to refer:

- » complete the AUSDRISK assessment
- » if the score is 15 or >, the patient is eligible
- » confirm the patient does not have diabetes
- » complete the referral form and fax to the Division
- » claim item 713, 710 or 717

Ways you can manage this in your practice:

- » Provide copies of the AUSDRISK in the waiting room, patients can complete the assessment themselves and then discuss it with the GP
- » conduct a mail out on all patients aged 40-49 and send them the AUSDRISK assessment to do at home. If they score high risk, they can make an appointment to see the PN or GP for referral to the LMP. Item 713 can be claimed when the patient sees the GP.
- » Ask patients to complete the AUSDRISK during a 45-49 year old health check. Note their score to see their eligibility to attend an LMP.
- » Run a 713/717 clinic once a month to screen all patients aged 40-49 (the Aboriginal health check item 710 can also be used to refer patients)

Tools available to assist:

- » referral form in MD and Profile
- » mail out letter in MD and Profile
- » AUSDRISK brochures (for patients to fill out at home, to send in a mail out or for the waiting room)
- » LMP brochure – explains LMP is

- » 'Reset your Life' flyer – lists workshop topics plus details on our local sessions

Workshops will commence at differing times based on referrals. For further information please contact the practice support team or Lauren at hickson@idgp.org.au 4220 7600.

GPEP – Diabetes Exercise Program at Beaton Park

Enrolments are now open for the GPEP semester 1, commencing on March 23. The 12 week program is open to adults with diabetes who lead a sedentary lifestyle. There is a limit of 25 places.

The program aims to help people manage their diabetes and reduce their risk of complications.

A personalised program is developed for each participant and supervision is provided by an Exercise Physiologist.

Beaton Park attendance fees are substantially reduced for GPEP participants.

A GP referral is required. Patient pamphlets, GP referral forms and patient consent forms are available from the Practice Support Team or can be downloaded from the Division website <http://www.idgp.org.au:8081>.

For further information phone Practice Support on 4220 7600 or Beaton Park on 4229 6004.

Move For Health - the six week program has finished. Patients at high risk of diabetes aged 40-49 can be to the Lifestyle Modification Program (LMP). See the above article for further information.

Compression Stocking information

To help CALD patients prevent venous leg ulcers returning, the Illawarra Leg Ulcer Clinic together with NSW Health have developed compression stocking brochures in eight different languages other than English.

They are available to download from the NSW Health website.

For further information please contact Lauren at hickson@idgp.org.a

Snippets

Domestic Violence training session

Lifeline Australia has organised a Domestic Violence Response Training session for Practice Nurses and Aboriginal Health Workers in Nowra.

The session will be run on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th of March between 9.00 am and 5.00pm at the Shoalhaven Division of General Practice.

For further information about this session please contact Kathryn White at mobile 0411 821 031.

ARCHI - The Australian Research Centre for Healthcare Innovations

GPs and practice staff can now log into the ARCHI Website - Free of Charge!

The ARCHI website provides valuable information about NSW Health programs through clinical services redesign and clinical tools and pathways including an e-library.

Membership entitles you to full access to the website, participation in the discussion forums and access to the enquiry and event management services.

Login: gpdivnsw
Password: gp777div

Services Provided by the IDGP

Practice Nurse Incentive

Reminder re Practice Nurse/Allied Health Worker Incentive

The IDGP Practice Support Service would like to remind local practices who either employ or contract the services of a nurse, of the availability of the Medicare Practice Incentives Program (PIP) Practice Nurse/Allied Health Worker Incentive.

In 2006 the Australian Government extended availability of the Practice Nurse/Allied Health Worker Incentive to all general practices across the Illawarra region.

Recent Medicare statistics show only 33 general practices out of 55 eligible practices in the Illawarra are registered to claim this payment.

If your practice would like further information or assistance in accessing the Practice Nurse/Allied Health Worker Incentive, please contact the Practice Support Service on ph: 4220 7600 or email practicesupport@idgp.org.au

A Medicare information sheet is also available online at: www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/pip/

Healthy Kids Check

Promotion of the Healthy Kids check to parents

Between the 23rd Jan and 6th Feb all parents and caregivers of children aged between two and five will receive a letter to raise awareness of the availability of the Healthy Kids Check.

The letter also includes a reminder about the four year old immunisation.

Please be aware that this letter may generate some increased interest from parents/caregivers wishing to get their children immunised and have the Healthy Kids Check conducted.

If you would like any more information please contact practice support at the Division or visit immunise.health.gov.au.

The link for more information about the Healthy Kids Check is as follows: http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/Healthy_Kids_Check

Immunisation

Changes to Due and Overdue rules for the four year old immunisation.

The National Due and Overdue rules used by ACIR changed on January 1st 2009. The change applies to the four year old vaccination schedule for children born from 1st January 2005.

The change was necessary to support the changes to the Government's Maternity Immunisation Allowance paid to families.

The previous rule stated that a child was due at four years and overdue at five years. The new rule states that a child is due at four years and overdue at four years and one month.

The change brings the four year old schedule in line with the other age schedules. For more information please visit www.medicareaustralia.gov.au

HPV Catch up extended until December 2009

The Department of Health and Ageing has extended the access to the free cervical cancer vaccine until December 2009 provided the first shot has been received by June 30th 2009. If young women do not access the vaccine for free it will be available from 2010 at a cost of \$450 for the three shots.

Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service Now available

The Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service is a free telephone and web based service staffed by qualified health coaches. It's aimed at assisting NSW adults at risk of developing chronic disease to make lifestyle changes re physical activity, healthy eating and reaching a healthy weight.

People can call the Service Monday to Friday from 8am to 8pm on 1300 806 258 or visit the website at www.gethealthynsw.com.au

People can refer themselves or be referred by their GP or Practice Nurse. Practice teams who refer patients will receive ongoing communication about patient progress.

Visit the website for more information or to download a brochure about the service.

Education Events

The Division have organised dates for General Practitioner, Practice Nurse and Practice Staff Education for the coming months. Please place these dates into your calendar.

General Practitioner Education

- 17 March Asthma Training
- 29 April Topic to be determined
- 17 June Topic to be determined
- 29 July Topic to be determined
- 1 August Update Seminar

Practice Nurse Events

- 25 March Life Style Modification 'bootcamp'
- 3 April MD training for new nurses
- 22 April Asthma/COPD Training

headspace

- 7th of March, 9am to 4:30 pm
Early Identification of Psychosis in Young People
- 18th of April, 9 am to 4:30 pm
Problem Solving Skills Training
- 9th of May, 9 am to 4:30 pm
Managing challenging Behaviors: Aggression, Suicide and Self Harm

If you would like any further information about any of these sessions please contact Sherrill Spears on 4225 1184 or via email sspears@sfys.org.au

CPR training

The Division will be running two CPR training sessions this year. Further information will be provided as dates are confirmed.

Practice Staff Events

- 11th March
Security Update and Practice Management focus group

Invitations will be sent to all events. Registration is required for catering purposes and to assist with workshop planning.

If you have any future training requests please contact the Divisions Education and Publication – Administration Officer Jessica Lee at 4220 7600 or through email at jlee@idgp.org.au

Education

PSO's Declare War on Lifestyle Risk Factors

The first Practice Nurse Workshop of 2009 will be held on the 25th of March at the Division. This interactive "boot camp" will focus on practical tips for incorporating Lifestyle Risk factor Management into patient consultation.

The session will run from 18:30 hrs to 21:30 hrs, in the Division mess hall, with rations included! Please RSVP your attendance to the Division by the 23rd February, via email to practicesupport@idgp.org.au or 4226 9485. This event will be sponsored by Pfizer.

The Office of Industrial Relations Workshops

The office of Industrial Relations has organised to run an number of workshops out of the Wollongong area in the first half of 2009. These workshops include

Industrial Relations in NSW – (Free)

- 19th March, 9am-12pm
Kiama, Training Masters, 1/44 Manning St, Kiama

Workplace Arrangements (\$99)

- 29th April, 9am-1pm
Wollongong Golf Club, Cnr Corrimal and Bank Sts, Wollongong
- 28th May, 9am-1pm
Kiama, Training Masters, 1/44 Manning St, Kiama

For a full list of workshops and to register contact the Office of Industrial Relations on 02 9020 4612 or visit www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au

Antenatal Shared Care

Developed for General Practitioners who attended an initial accreditation seminar and wish to maintain their accreditation. The dates for these sessions are:

- 14th of March, 12:30pm to 4:30pm
- 29th of July, 4:00pm to 8:00pm

For further information please contact Leanne Cummins at 4253 4271 or email leanne.cummins@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au

CPR Training in the Wollongong Area

The New South Wales Surf Life Saving run monthly CPR full courses and updates at the Wollongong Master Builders Club. CPR full courses costs \$60 and CPR updates cost \$30.

Upcoming CPR dates include:

- Wed 18 Mar 2009
9:30am-12.00pm
- Sat 18 April 2009
9:30am-12.00pm
- Wed 20 May 2009
9:30am-12.00pm
- Sat 20 June 2009
9:30am-12.00pm

For Further information please contact Nadine Morton from NSW Surf Life Saving at 02 9984 7188 or enrol online at <http://www.surflifesaving.com.au/>

Practice Security update and Practice Management Focus Group

On the 11th of March between 2:00pm and 4:00pm the IDGP will host a workshop for practice managers and practice staff (max 2 staff per practice)

A session on Practice security will be presented by Senior Constable Mary Paterson.

If any practices have specific issues around this that they would like addressed please contact the Practice Support Team.

The second hour will be run as a Focus Group for Practice Managers or designated Senior Office Staff. We will be inviting feedback from the Practice Managers on practice management issues.

This work shop will be held in the IDGP conference room