

GP Urgent Care Pilot taking off soon

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A new way of getting urgent healthcare needs met in the community setting was unveiled today, with an 18-month GP Urgent Care Pilot to begin on 10 September.

The model, developed and delivered by WA Primary Health Alliance in partnership with WA Health, was announced by WA Premier, Mark McGowan and Health Minister, Roger Cook.

WA Primary Health Alliance has been integral to the design of the GP Urgent Care Pilot which uses existing capacity and capability in general practices, with 133 practices enrolled to date.

Patients will be able to easily book an appointment with the closest practice at a time convenient to them using a dedicated booking site and telephone number, rather than turn up at a hospital emergency department with no idea when they will be seen.

WA Primary Health Alliance Board Chair, Dr Richard Choong, said GP Urgent Care will give greater choice to patients by allowing them to receive urgent care in the general practice setting, thus reducing 'GP type' presentations at emergency departments.

"The selected model is a good outcome for the public, giving them more access to urgent care closer to home," Dr Choong said.

"It is also good for GPs as it creates a 'level playing field' for practices to participate, moving away from reliance on a stand-alone urgent care centre model.

"We are delighted to have worked so closely with WA Health, the Royal College of General Practitioners WA Faculty and the Australian Medical Association (WA), as well as with the many GPs who have given their valuable time and input to inform the development of the Pilot and gear up to deliver it."

Participating practices will be well equipped to deal with a range of injuries and illnesses, ranging from cuts needing stitches to muscle sprains, minor fractures, fever, stomach pain and infections. They will also have access to radiology and pathology, so patients can have all the relevant diagnostic tests organised easily and quickly.

Participating GP, Dr Mike Civil, said he was looking forward to taking part in the Pilot, which was a smart way to match patients needing urgent care with the many unfilled GP appointments on any given day.

"It offers a convenient solution for patients, as well as being a great way for GPs to contribute their knowledge and skills to help the health system function more effectively and efficiently," Dr Civil said.

The GP Urgent Care Network Pilot has been developed from the WA Government's Urgent Care Clinic election commitment and builds on the recommendations in the Sustainable Health Review regarding better connections and relationships between hospitals and general practice and keeping people well in the community.

MEDIA RELEASE



The public is reminded that in a medical emergency, they should always call 000 or go to their nearest emergency department.

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About WA Primary Health Alliance: WA Primary Health Alliance oversees the strategic commissioning functions of the Perth North, Perth South and Country WA Primary Health Networks (PHNs). The WA PHNs are three of 31 PHNs established by the Australian Government nationally to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for the community. We work across the WA healthcare system with doctors, allied health professionals, hospitals and service providers to improve the coordination of care for people who are at risk of poor health outcomes. For more information, visit www.wapha.org.au