

GP Connect

Keeping GPs informed in the changing primary health landscape



28 November 2019

Department of Health - PIP QI Incentive Payment Update

The Department of Health has provided the below information for general practices, Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS) and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) registered with the Practice Incentives Program (PIP) Quality Improvement (QI) Incentive program.

Entities that meet the following specifications will receive their payment for the first quarter (August to October 2019) in November 2019:

- Registered with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to participate in PIP QI by 15 October 2019 and submitted data to their local Primary Health Network (PHN) prior to their PHN's data submission cut-off date; or
- Registered with DHS to participate in PIP QI by 15 October 2019 and submitted nKPI data to the Department of Health as required under the Indigenous Australians' Health Program (IAHP); or
- Registered with DHS to participate and had an exemption granted between 1 August and 15 October 2019.

During the first 12 months of transition, entities that meet the below specifications will receive their payment in December 2019:

- Registered with DHS to participate in PIP QI between 16 October and 31 October 2019 and submitted data to their local PHN by 31 October 2019; or
- Registered with DHS to participate in PIP QI between 16 October and 31 October 2019 and submitted nKPI data to the Department of Health as required under the Indigenous Australians' Health Program (IAHP); or
- Registered with DHS between 1 August and 31 October and applied and had an exemption granted between 16 October and 31 October 2019; or



- Have not been able to be included in the first tranche assessments (November 2019) due to further work being required to assess their eligibility (i.e. correction of records, review of decisions and other extenuating circumstances).

For a small number of AMS and ACCHS payments, PIP QI eligibility assessments may be delayed where multiple subsidiary organisations are reporting to a singular 'umbrella' organisation for the purposes of nKPI reporting.

General practices may have had their payment delayed or withheld due to:

- Non-compliance with eHealth Incentive requirements (this can affect all PIP payments for a short time)
- The practice's accreditation having expired
- The annual confirmation statement has not been confirmed.

If a practice has not received a payment and feels that there are extenuating circumstances as to why they should have been considered, they may request a Review of Decision through the DNS.

For more information, contact Practice Assist on 1800 227 747 or email practiceassist@wapha.org.au

GP Hospital Liason Updates

SCGH Outpatient Referrals

Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital is conducting an extensive review of outpatient services and processes to improve patient access to care, and this requires it to streamline its processes.

Referrals for a specialist outpatient appointment should be sent to the Central Referral Service (CRS) so that patients can receive care in the most suitable location. This includes directing referrals to sites that offer state-wide services. Non-immediate referrals sent directly to the hospital cannot be actioned, and will be returned to the referrer.

Immediate referrals, i.e. where the patient needs to be seen by the specialist within seven days, must be discussed with, and accepted by, the relevant specialty. To discuss a patient who may require immediate review, phone the hospital switchboard on 6457 3333 and ask to speak with the relevant on-call consultant/registrars. If accepted, mark the referral as 'immediate' and fax to the hospital as directed by the consultant/registrars to the specific fax number provided.

For more information on how to refer for outpatient appointments, see the [Central Referral Service guide for referrals](#).

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Clinical Updates

Tc-99m shortage over

WA Health has advised the supply of Technetium (Tc-99m), the main isotope used in nuclear medicine scans, has much improved and both public and private providers are gradually transitioning to normal scanning capacity.

This means that clinicians can now resume issuing patient referrals for Tc-99m scans through their nuclear medicine provider for both urgent and non-urgent scans.

Advice for hospital referrals that include radiology reports

Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital has requested the name of the imaging provider be included with radiology investigations as part of a referral. This assists hospital clinicians in being able to access a copy of the imaging when triaging referrals and ensures patients are seen in a clinically appropriate time frame.

SCGH advises this practice would be beneficial to all hospitals.

Free pertussis-containing vaccine now recommended earlier in pregnancy

Evidence around the timing of pertussis vaccination in pregnancy has recently been reviewed and the pertussis-containing vaccine is now recommended as a single dose between 20 and 32 weeks in each pregnancy, including pregnancies that are closely spaced to provide maximal protection to each infant. This advice is reflected in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#).

Maternal antibodies against pertussis provide protection to babies until they have received at least two doses of pertussis containing vaccines (at six weeks and four months of age). Babies less than six months of age are at greatest risk of severe disease and death from pertussis.

The most important factor associated with uptake of vaccination during pregnancy is a healthcare provider recommendation. Please take all opportunities to speak to your pregnant patients and their partners about the importance of getting vaccinated against pertussis during pregnancy.

The pertussis-containing vaccine is provided free to pregnant women through the National Immunisation Program to protect both pregnant women and their babies from pertussis and its complications.

More information for healthcare providers, including a clinical advice fact sheet and promotional materials is available at health.gov.au/immunisation or see the "Pertussis Vaccine for Pregnant and Post-Partum Women" HealthPathway.

New GP training to upskill in harm minimisation and AOD use

The RACGP has launched a new education program to help GPs develop skills in addressing alcohol and other drug use in their communities. The [Alcohol and Other Drugs \(AOD\) GP Education Program](#) will be tailored to meet the needs of GPs in different communities and settings and encourages participation from rural and remote GPs.

To take part in the AOD GP Education Program, GPs will need to complete an online application form. Applications for the program will open 2 December 2019. For more information, email AOD@racgp.org.au

National Cancer Screening Register now supporting bowel cancer screening

As of 18 November, the [National Cancer Screening Register](#) will also be supporting the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP), creating a single national record for participants of the NBCSP and the National Cervical Screening Program.

The Register will support the NBCSP by:

- Collecting and storing NBCSP bowel cancer screening data
- Inviting and reminding eligible people to participate (through integration with the Medicare database)
- Distributing free iFOBT kits to eligible participants
- Providing the State and Territory Participant Follow-Up Function (PFUF) access to the National Register to facilitate their support and follow up of positive iFOBT results
- Providing information on participants to healthcare providers
- Reporting on key program and operational outcomes for policy makers and key stakeholders to ensure appropriate safety, monitoring and evaluation of the Program.

Additional functionality will be implemented in stages from March 2020, including an online portal for healthcare providers to access and submit data, and integration with practice management software and whole-of-government services (such as MyGov and My Health Record).

Visit ncsr.gov.au for more information.



Referring patients to My Aged Care now available online

The Department of Health together with HealthLink has developed a new electronic referral process allowing GPs to refer their patients to My Aged Care directly from their practice management systems.

The new e-Referral form can be accessed from within Best Practice, Medical Director and Genie practice management systems. For support or to enable access, contact HealthLink on 1800 125 036 or email helpdesk@healthlink.net

A new [After you've registered with My Aged Care](#) brochure is also available to support patients with next steps once they have been referred. The Department welcomes feedback on the new e-Referral form and the brochure, via myagedcare.hpreferrals@health.gov.au

Online GP learning for Hepatitis C point-of-care

The Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) have launched a free set of online learning modules for GPs and other community practitioners. ASHM's Hepatitis C point-of-care (PoC) modules are designed to introduce practitioners to PoC testing and cover options for sample collection, the pathway to diagnosis and sharing results.

Point-of-care tests provide an opportunity for testing people who may not otherwise seek testing from medical settings and will greatly enhance linkage to care in community settings. Visit ashm.org.au for more information.