

GP Connect *In Brief*

Keeping GPs informed in the changing primary health landscape



3 October 2019

Alternative diagnostic imaging available during radioactive isotope shortage

To offset the impact of the current Technetium (Tc-99m) shortage (the main isotope used in nuclear medicine scans), the Department of Health has added temporary nuclear medicine diagnostic imaging items to the Medicare Benefits Schedule.

Until Tc-99m supply returns to normal, GPs are advised to discuss the availability of alternative diagnostic imaging with their patients at the time of referral and continue to refer patients for standard tests which will be determined by the radiology provider.

The Tc-99m shortage is a result of a recent mechanical failure at Australia's Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation. It is still unknown how long the shortage will last.

For advice on capacity and alternative diagnostic options contact your radiology provider.

Clinicians and specialists can also seek information from WA Health at:

https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/S_T/Technetium%20Tc99m%20scans

<https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Media-releases/2019/Medical-diagnostic-scans-to-be-prioritised-due-to-technetium-shortages>

Consumers can also be directed to WA Health for further information at:

https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/S_T/Technetium-scans

<https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/News/Technetium-shortage>



GP Hospital Liaison Updates

Fiona Stanley Hospital

New rapid access giant cell arteritis clinic

Fiona Stanley Hospital and Royal Perth Hospitals are combining to provide patients living in both catchments with early access, investigation and management of suspected giant cell arteritis.

Inclusion criteria includes:

- Aged over 50 years
- Presence of suggestive features e.g. new headache, jaw claudication, scalp sensitivity, tenderness over the temporal arteries, fever, visual disturbance, PMR, raised ESR/CRP
- No other more likely diagnosis
- Within the SMHS or EMHS catchment (and related country areas).

To refer:

1. Call the on-call rheumatology registrar (in hours) or consultant after hours via the RPH switchboard on 9224 2244 to discuss the referral, whether to start steroids and for an appointment time to be allocated.

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Clinical Updates

Mental Health Week 2019

Mental Health Week (October 6 to 12) is a good opportunity for GPs to undertake self-directed learning to support their key role in identifying and treating depression. WA Primary Health Alliance has developed a suite of resources to assist GPs in identifying and treating depression in primary care. This includes a 45-minute video lecture presented by Dr Daniel Rock and Dr Geoff Riley that qualifies as self-directed learning in a GP's professional development plan. Visit the [Primary Health Exchange website](#) to access the video and other Alliance Against Depression Resources.

GPs can also direct patients to mhw.waamh.org.au/ for Mental Health Week resources and events.

New factsheet on selective reporting of antimicrobials

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care has developed a [new factsheet](#) to support quality reporting of antimicrobials in the Australian context. The guideline, developed by the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia, is intended to improve clinical care for patients and support antimicrobial stewardship.

UWA Dementia App study

Investigators from the University of Western Australia are seeking interested general practices and GPs to be involved in a study testing AusTAPER, a new online application to help GPs navigate deprescribing and medication management with older patients diagnosed with dementia. The study is funded by the NHMRC and approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of UWA. Participants will be remunerated for their time. Contact Ms Jenny Tasker on 08 9224 4516 or email wacha@uwa.edu.au for further information.

Detect type 1 diabetes early with free screening tool

Type1Screen offers free type 1 diabetes risk screening for two to 30 year olds who have a family member with type 1 diabetes. People who are found to test positive are monitored closely and, if they develop type 1 diabetes, will be offered education and started on insulin early to avoid serious illness. For more information visit www.type1screen.org or email type1screen@mh.org.au

2. The referral form including patient and GP information is available on the [RPH website](#) (and soon on the FSH website). Fax to 6477 5199 or email: RPH.OutpatientReferrals@health.wa.gov.au
3. The GCA Clinic appointment information (attached to the on-line referral form) should be given to the patient with the appropriate clinic time ticked.

The on call rheumatology registrar/consultant should still be called for referrals for all patients with suspected giant cell arteritis. Patients with transient or persistent loss of vision, for whom immediate review in clinic is not available, may be advised to attend the RPH ED for urgent assessment. Other patients will be seen at RPH within 72 hours of referral whenever possible.

Dr Monica Lacey
Hospital Liaison GP FSHFH
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Available: Monday and Thursday

Rockingham General Hospital

Endocrinology Department

The Endocrinology Department at Rockingham General Hospital offers public patients living in the Rockingham and Peel region access to endocrinologists, diabetes educators, a dietician, a podiatrist and a psychologist. The department offers care of patients with type 1 diabetes (including insulin pumps), complex type 2 diabetes, gestational diabetes, thyroid, pituitary, adrenal, bone and gonadal disorders.

Following assessment, patients can be further supported through the Diabetes Telehealth Clinic, the Diabetes Complications Screening Clinic, SMART1E education program for adults with type 1 diabetes, or clinical psychologist review.

Referral for endocrinologist-led diabetes and endocrinology clinics is through CRS. Referral for diabetes educators, the dietitian or the podiatrist is direct to RGH via fax on 9599 4737. For urgent referrals, please call a consultant Endocrinologist to discuss the patient, and fax the referral directly to RGH on 9599 4737. A consultant endocrinologist is also available Tuesday to Friday (during normal working hours) for advice via the hospital switchboard on 9559 4000.

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Education Events



TADPole: The 'Heartsink' Consultation-Managing Complex Needs

Patients with multiple physical, mental, alcohol and other drug issues often face many challenges. Health practitioners may experience 'heartsink' in trying to respond to these difficult problems.

The Edith Cowan University Systems and Intervention Research Centre for Health and WA Primary Health Alliance invites GPs and practice nurses to attend an interactive session that includes a conversation about the patient and health practitioner experience and expectations, resources and an approach to managing complex issues within time and resource constraints.

Date: Saturday 19 October
Time: 08:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Venue: Tompkins on Swan
 Cnr Dunkley Ave and Canning Highway
 Alfred Cove

Accreditation:
 5 Category 2 RACGP QI&CPD points.

Registration:
 For more information and to register, visit:
www.wapha.org.au/event/tadpole-the-heartsink-consultation-managing-complex-needs

In case you missed the September clinical feature...

Visit our [online news hub](#) to read Protracted Bacterial Bronchitis in Children by Dr Andre Schultz from the Telethon Kids Institute.

GP & Practice Team: Advanced Care Planning Education Event - Albany
 WA Primary Health Alliance
 Wednesday 9 October

Immunisation and Cancer Screening Education
 WA Primary Health Alliance
 9, 10, 11, 15, 16 October

GP Breakfast Roundtable: MBS Re-examined
 AMA WA and MBS Taskforce
 Thursday 10 October

GP & Practice Team: Advanced Care Planning Education Event - Greenwood
 WA Primary Health Alliance
 Saturday 26 October

Chronic Pain Management Webinar
 ECU & WA Primary Health Alliance
 Monday 21, Thursday 24 October

ARMED - Annual Review of Metabolism, Endocrinology and Diabetes
 FSH, Diabetes WA and WA Primary Health Alliance; HealthPathways WA
 Saturday 2 November

Rockingham General Hospital: Linking Primary to Tertiary Care PLUS CPR Refresher
 Rockingham Peel Group, RGH, and WA Primary Health Alliance; HealthPathways WA
 Saturday 9 November

TADPole: Treating Alcohol and Other Drugs in Primary Care
 WA Primary Health Alliance
 Saturday 16 November

Australasian Doctors' Health Conference
 Rural Health West
 Friday 22 - Saturday 23 November

For more information on upcoming GP education events or to register, visit wapha.org.au/events