

## Alfred Health GP News

**Welcome to the May edition of Alfred  
Health GP news.**

**We welcome your feedback and suggestions.**

**Contact us for any queries**

**on 9076 2620, or email us at [gp.liaison@alfred.org.au](mailto:gp.liaison@alfred.org.au).**

### **Improving care for patients with COPD and heart failure**

Alfred Health is working to improve the integration of care for our chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and heart failure patients together with GPs and community services. We have established strong collaboration between a number of inpatient units and Emergency across Alfred Health, as well as the HARP services in the community. We have introduced standardised sets of evidence-based interventions that have been demonstrated to improve outcomes for these patients. These sets of interventions, called 'Care Bundles', have now been implemented across Alfred Health.

The bundles – the result of collaboration between General Medicine, Respiratory, Cardiology, Emergency, Aged Care Medicine and HARP – provide patients presenting with an exacerbation of COPD or heart failure with consistent, quality care regardless of how or where they are admitted. Patients are also provided with an Action Plan to initiate self-management in a timely way if they experience an exacerbation of symptoms, and are advised to see their GP for further management. A copy of this Action Plan will be sent to the patient's GP.

For further information or to arrange a practice visit to provide more information, contact:

Assoc Prof Harvey Newnham for COPD on 9903 0198

Dr Ingrid Hopper for heart failure via email [I.Hopper@alfred.org.au](mailto:I.Hopper@alfred.org.au).

### **Better Care Victoria E-Referral project**

Demand for outpatient services at Alfred Health is increasing. 231,188 patients were seen through Alfred Health outpatient clinics during 2014-15, and 160 referrals are currently received each day. The waitlists for appointments in high demand clinics such as Orthopaedics are growing by up to 1000 patients per year.

Alfred Health has received a grant from the Better Care Victoria Innovation fund to implement a 'whole of systems' approach to the management of outpatients. The project aims to:

1. Optimise health and wellbeing in the community for patients with non-urgent medical conditions who require specialist care input from a specialist outpatient clinic environment.
2. Provide timely access to outpatient services for all appropriate outpatient referrals
3. Improve workflow processes to facilitate prompt and appropriate management of new referrals
4. Improve referral workflow to facilitate ease of making a referral for General Practitioners
5. Refine delivery of care to offer a broader scope of benefit to patients waiting on the non-urgent waitlist

One aspect of this exciting project will see us implement an integrated electronic referral system that will enable information to be securely sent electronically between health care providers. Additionally, referrals generated from within participating practices' software will embed clinical decision making support and referral guidelines within the referral template. Referring GPs will have immediate access to up to date guidance to ensure that patients referred are suitable and appropriately investigated when accepted onto the Alfred Health Specialist Clinic appointment wait list. This will enable the clinics to appropriately triage patients, with the aim to improve time to treatment for all patients on the waiting list.

Five local practices are participating in the pilot phase of the project, which aims to enable electronic referrals by September 2017 for these sites.

### **Practice tip: Radiotherapy for skin cancers**

Radiotherapy plays an important role in the management of non-melanoma skin cancers, and can offer an alternative to surgical excision. This may be advantageous particularly in the elderly. Local control of skin cancer is as good as surgery in T1 and T2 lesions, and radiotherapy achieves good cosmetic and functional results.

Dr Raj Hedge is the consultant radiation oncologist at Alfred Health Radiation Oncology who specialises in skin cancer management. Appointments can be arranged in a timely manner and there is no delay in treatment time. If you would like to discuss any cases regarding suitability or for an opinion regarding referral, please contact Dr Hedge on 0406 084 718.

### **GPs are invited to attend Grand Rounds at The Alfred**

The Alfred Hospital Grand Round is the premier weekly event on campus where physicians, surgeons, radiologists, pathologists, anaesthetists, researchers, Alfred Health registrars and other trainees enjoy a convivial and educational atmosphere with a broad cross-section of their colleagues. GPs are warmly invited to attend.

The Alfred Grand Rounds are held **each Thursday in the AMREP seminar room, from 12.30 – 1.30pm**. Lunch is provided from 12pm. Each session begins with a 5 minute clinical vignette for discussion, followed by the main presentation of 45 minutes duration, with time for questions.

The program includes speakers from most disciplines, including medicine, surgery, anaesthesia, trauma and the on-site research institutes.

Upcoming Grand Rounds are:

Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> May 12.30-1.30pm AMREP Seminar Room, The Alfred	Aged Care/Rehabilitation
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> May	Palliative care
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> June	Oncology
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> June	Melbourne Sexual Health

For further information or to receive details of each week's Grand Round by email, please contact Mary Toye on 9903 0198, or email [m.toye@alfred.org.au](mailto:m.toye@alfred.org.au).

### **GP Liaison at Alfred Health – we're here to help!**



Our GP Liaison team – Dr Josie Samers and Tracey O'Connell – are here to assist you in navigating Alfred Health. Whether it's a missing discharge summary, assistance with getting an outpatient appointment or suggestions on how we can do things better, we are here to help. Our office is attended on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays; phone 9076 2620 or email us [gp.liaison@alfred.org.au](mailto:gp.liaison@alfred.org.au).



*If you do not wish to receive this newsletter please email us at [gp.liaison@alfred.org.au](mailto:gp.liaison@alfred.org.au).*