

## Welcome to the October edition of Alfred Health GP news

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

### **New Statewide Specialist Clinic referral criteria to be launched in public hospitals**

From 1 November 2019, all Victorian public hospitals will begin assessing new adult referrals for select core conditions against the statewide referral criteria for three specialties: ENT, Vascular and Urology. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has developed standardised referral criteria for six specialties in consultation with health services and PHNs.

Implementation of the statewide referral criteria within Victorian hospitals will be gradual, with the first three specialties launching **in November 2019 (ENT, Vascular and Urology)**, followed by Neurology, Gynaecology and Gastroenterology from 1 February 2020. In accordance with these changes, the Alfred Health Referral Guidelines for ENT, Vascular and Urology will be updated for the conditions included in the Statewide Referral Criteria from 1<sup>st</sup> November.

DHHS are committed to the ongoing development of statewide referral criteria, with an additional five specialties expected to be released throughout 2020.

The statewide referral criteria provide guidance to referring clinicians about which patients will be seen in adult public specialist clinics and what investigations are required to support triage. Referrals that do not meet the statewide referral criteria are expected to be declined by all Victorian public hospitals. When a referral is declined, referring clinicians will receive correspondence from the health service explaining why the referral has not been accepted.

If a referral is declined due because it is missing essential information, the referring clinician must resubmit the entire referral again in full. Patients will not receive an appointment or be placed on an appropriate waitlist until a complete specialist clinic referral has been received.

The new statewide referral criteria will be available on the [SEMPHN website](#), alongside related clinical and referral pathways from October 2019. Alternatively, the statewide referral criteria can be viewed on the official DHHS website at [src.health.vic.gov.au](http://src.health.vic.gov.au). This project is supported by the Victorian Government.

## Integrated care community of practice events



Did you know that dental conditions rank as the third highest avoidable reason for presenting to hospital in our region? This series of Community of Practice events will look at some of the challenges and celebrate the wins in delivering oral health care in the form of a panel discussion from dental experts in our community.

This series of free events that are held across the Alfred Health catchment area are open to all health and social providers including general practice, council services, community services, community health, hospitals, dental services, social services, social groups, exercise groups, home services, community pharmacies etc. Breakfast will be provided at the morning session and light refreshments at all others.

Our aim is to bring together clinicians and providers of health and social services with a view to further increasing service awareness and networking connections to facilitate the provision of wraparound services to vulnerable citizens in our community. Through improved communication and understanding, we can deliver greater care.

Please register via the try booking link in the flyers or as below so we have accurate numbers for catering.

### Stonnington and Port Phillip

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October @ 07:00-08:30, St Kilda Sports Club

<https://www.trybooking.com/BDYCD>

### Casey

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October @ 18:00-20:00, Balla Balla Community Centre

<https://www.trybooking.com/BEDFJ>

### Bayside and Glen Eira

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October @ 18:00-20:00, Caulfield RSL

<https://www.trybooking.com/BDYOZ>

### Kingston

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> October @ 07:00- 08:30, Woodlands Golf Club

<https://www.trybooking.com/BDYPE>

## Alfred Health Renal Service

The number of Victorian residents with chronic kidney disease (CKD) and ultimately requiring dialysis and kidney transplant over the past decade has grown significantly and this increase in demand is projected to continue. Factors affecting the higher prevalence of CKD include an ageing population and the high prevalence of risk factors such as hypertension, obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

The Alfred Health Renal Service, in partnership with primary health care clinicians, aims to provide the highest quality of care to all our CKD patients. The service strongly supports and promotes building a relationship based on trust and mutual respect with our primary health care colleagues and views this as a key factor in achieving better outcomes. The Alfred Health Renal Service now take this opportunity to promote our service and assure our colleagues that the Alfred Health service is well placed to meet increasing demands and can provide comprehensive care to CKD patients that you refer for specialised care.



*Professor Rowan Walker, Director of Renal Services Alfred Health*

The service's core beliefs are:

- Patients are the reason why we are here - they are the focus of what we do.
- How we do things is as important as what we do. Respect, support and compassion go hand in hand with knowledge, skills and wisdom. Safety and care of patients and staff are fundamental.
- Excellence is the measure we work through every day through research and education we set standards for tomorrow.
- We work together. We all play vital roles in a team that achieves extraordinary results.
- We share ideas and demonstrable behaviours that inspire others to follow.

The multidisciplinary Alfred Health Renal Service is staffed by dedicated, highly skilled individuals working together to achieve the best results throughout the patients' CKD journey. The following services are offered:

- A Renal Outreach Service that specialises in providing education tailored to the patient's CKD stage and includes CKD management through lifestyle modifications, renal replacement therapy options (dialysis, non-dialysis and transplantation) discussions, and provides support to help patients make an informed decision about their care;

- A Home Therapies Unit with a Nurse Practitioner-driven State leading Peritoneal Dialysis Service;
- The fastest growing Kidney Transplant Service incorporating deceased donor and living donor transplantation including participation in the national paired kidney transplant program;
- Acute Kidney Injury (acute renal failure) and Chronic Haemodialysis Units at Caulfield, Sandringham and Alfred sites)
- Links with Peninsula Health and associated services (Frankston, Hastings and Rosebud);
- A range of Chronic Kidney Disease and Transplant Clinics plus other specialist clinics (HIV metabolic, post lung transplant and renal-diabetes service) including Telehealth Consultations, off-site CKD education sessions and soon to commence Renal Supportive Care Clinic;
- Social Work, Nutrition and Pharmacy Services that provides specialist dietary, social work support and pharmaceutical care for managing patients across the spectrum of renal disease in both inpatient and ambulatory settings.

## **“Number of pregnancies may increase the risk of heart failure later in life...” – Dr Anna Beale**

A study by the Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute and The Alfred lead by Dr Anna Beale has looked into why women who have been pregnant at least three times have more severe heart failure and may be at increased risk for developing heart failure later in life. Heart failure with preserved ejection fraction is a disease where healthy heart tissue becomes stiffened and loses its ability to relax and fill with blood.

Those women who had at least three children were not able to exercise as long, the pressures in their heart rose higher during exercise and they had stiffer arteries, particularly in their lungs.

“We hypothesised that because the heart has to change for pregnancy and it changes back, and if you repeatedly do this, this then leads to stiffening of the heart muscle” said Anna.

You can read Anna’s article in full [here](#).

For further information about The Alfred Heart Failure Clinic can be found [here](#).

## **New Palliative Care Assessment and Treatment Service**

The newly established Palliative Assessment and Treatment Service (PATS) is available to receive referrals from GPs and other primary health providers who may require specialist palliative care assessment, advice and treatment for their patients outside of hospital.

PATS specialist staff are able to provide:

- Palliative care assessment and interventions by a clinical nurse consultant or doctor in the community, including in nursing homes;
- Assistance with symptom management at any phase in a life-limiting illness;
- Guidance with decision-making relating to care during a life-limiting illness, including advanced care planning advice;
- Advice relating to all aspects of end of life care;
- Support in family meetings when discussing difficult or complex palliative care situations.

PATS accepts referrals directly from GPs, staff in nursing homes, hospitals and other community service providers.

To make a referral or for more information, contact PATS on 0419 770 087 Monday – Friday 8am – 4.30pm. After hours messages will be returned the following business day.

## **Comings and goings in the GP Liaison Service**

We are delighted to welcome a new member to our GP Liaison team –Mandi Van Beveren, who will be taking up the role of GP Liaison – eReferral. Mandi will be able to assist GPs and practice staff with queries and navigation, and provide support, training and assistance for practices who have Alfred Health SENT (BPAC) eReferral in their practice. Mandi will be part of the GP Liaison Service whilst Amelia Matlock undertakes exciting project work as the VICM eReferral Project Lead, which will expand eReferral further within our region.

Our VICM Project Manager, Lucy Bassett, has moved to a new role in care coordination in the Western suburbs. We wish her all the very best in her new position and are grateful for all her work and dedication to the VICM project.

Our GP Liaison team – Dr Josie Samers (GP Consultant), Tracey O’Connell (GP Liaison), Amelia Matlock (VICM eReferral Project Lead) and Mandi Van Beveren (GP Liaison – eReferral) – 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 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; phone 9076 2620 or email us [gp.liaison@alfred.org.au](mailto:gp.liaison@alfred.org.au).

We welcome your suggestions and feedback.

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