Dear Colleagues,

I hope you have all been able to enjoy some summer holidays and are looking forward to an interesting 2017. We have a number of educational activities scheduled for the first half of this year at which I hope you will join us. I am pleased to confirm that despite some concerns with new RACGP requirements, ACT health have signed an Accredited Activity Provider Service Agreement with the RACGP and hence we will continue to provide GP education with CPD points for this upcoming 2017 – 2019 triennium. The new $2 upload fee to us when we lodge your attendance, remains in place and we will consider how best to manage this within any budget before to provide education! The RACGP have introduced their FLAN component this triennium and I encourage you to complete this early and let us know particular learning needs you have identified, so we may take this into consideration with the CPD planning/topics across the ACT.

The GPLU teams would like to remind you that they are here to help you with your clinical enquiries and encourage you to contact them. Sharon Hindmarsh, Sharron Mills-Thom and Orana Wyss (Canberra Hospital) and Morag McNaught (Calvary Hospital) are all very experienced RNs with comprehensive knowledge of the health system. For system concerns, feedback or suggestions please call myself (Canberra Hospital) or Julie Carr (Calvary Hospital) directly or email/fax call the GPLUs and we will respond. If you find it is too late to phone messages – WELL ALWAYS RETURN YOUR CALL even when we don’t immediately have a solution! In 2016, the Canberra hospital GPLU responded to over 3000 enquiries and sent out more than 2500 documents to GPs to assist with patient care. Approximately half of all the enquiries related to Outpatient services.

Unfortunately there continue to be extended waits across many outpatient departments and we encourage you where possible to refer patients to private rooms. Please note that if you have a patient with an urgent/semi urgent condition you will need to contact the specialty teams to let them know you are sending information about a patient you are concerned needs to be seen soon. Routine registration and triage may result in unacceptable delays for such patients. The GPLU can assist if you have difficulties speaking to the appropriate registrar or consult.

A big thank you to the 86 respondents for our annual General Practice survey which was distributed via “The What’s New in the GP!” newsletter and by fax to all practices in the ACT at the end of last year.

There has been one common question asked each year, which is to rate overall communication from both hospitals.

We have been asked by the Chief Nurse of the various units in the different hospitals to rate overall communication above average or excellent (52.5% for Calvary Hospital). These are improving every year which is pleasing but we will continue to emphasise the importance of timely communication with GPs, in particular regarding sending of pathology and imaging results and the need for follow up post discharge.

If you have specific concerns you wish addressed, please do not hesitate to contact us all.

Tanya

Reminder – Information sent out in December regarding Gestational Diabetes

New Changes to GDM are now in place and are causing some patients to be questioned for information.

Changes include:
- Random BGL with routine early antenatal bloods in high risk patients and only proceed to early GTT in those with BGL 7 or higher.
- Diagnostic criteria for the 75g GTT have changed
  - A 50g load is NOT recommended in the ACT.

Full details are available on Health Pathways and on GPHealthnet.

A helpful patient information sheet called “Screening for Diabetes in Pregnancy” is available on both sites. It is recommended that patients read this prior to having their GTT so they can understand the implications of Gestational Diabetes for themselves and their baby.

Tanya
Welcome Dr Jane Wells

Canberra Hospital is pleased to announce the appointment of a new ophthalmologist, Dr Jane Wells. She has recently commenced and will provide specialty retinal services, adding capacity for the ever-growing cohort of patients requiring regular intra-vitreous injections for macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy. Additionally, she will be adding a new service to the hospital, providing specialty management of inflammatory diseases of the eye in a multidisciplinary setting.

Dr Wells will be picking up the care of a number of Dr Essex’s patients and you may be asked to provide a new referral, even if the existing one is indefinite. Thank-you in advance. Dr Essex will continue to provide care to patients requiring retinal surgery.

New referrals to Dr Wells would usually come from other ophthalmologists, however if you have a patient with confirmed uveitis or retinal disease requiring ongoing care in a public setting, referrals can be directed to fax number 6174 5866 or the on-call ophthalmology registrar for emergencies.

Rohan Essex Ophthalmology Clinical Director

CT services in Medical Imaging, Canberra Hospital

Following service access improvements at Canberra hospital medical imaging over the last 6 months the waitlist for outpatients requiring CT studies has been significantly reduced. Medical Imaging can now offer patients a bulk billed appointment with 48-72 hours.

Urgent studies can be accommodated with 24 hours. Medical Imaging referral forms for Canberra hospital are available on GP healthnet (www.gphealthnet.gov.au) in the Resources tab under templates and referral forms.

Are you a medical practitioner working in the ‘Deep End’? The ‘Deep End’ is a concept that was developed in Scotland to describe primary care for the most marginalised and poor people in a population. A group of GP’s has started to meet to provide networking and collegiate support, case sharing and patient advocacy. We are medical practitioners that work with deprived populations within Canberra and the surrounding region (e.g. prison population, drug and alcohol clients, refugees, homeless). We meet every six weeks at a rotating venue.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 22nd February. If you are interested in finding out more, please email Dr Liz Sturgies at deependcanberra@gmail.com

Welcome Dr Jane Wells

Welcome back Julia - Mental Health GP Liaison Nurse

Julia Heffernan has returned from leave into her Mental Health GP Liaison role.

Julia will be working Tuesday – Friday and can be reached on 6205 1403 or 0434 851 537 for Mental Health related queries.

Canberra Hospital GP Liaison staff will be coordinating the following GP education events in 2017, so please mark the dates in your calendars if you would like to attend.

Canberra Hospital upcoming GP education events - save the dates!

- ‘S8 Prescribing in the ACT - Issues and updates’ – Saturday 25th March (half day)
- ‘Gynaecology update day’ – Saturday 13th May (evening event)
- ‘Hepatology/Hepatitis C’ update – Tuesday 2nd June (evening event)
- ‘Gynaecology update day’ – Saturday 13th May (all day event in collaboration with CHN)
- ‘Gynaecology Cancer’ update – Thursday 22nd June (evening event)

For further information please contact the TCH GPLU on 6244 4183

ACT Government Health Directorate
Canberra Hospital and Health Services