

chair's chatter



As 2011 draws to an end, it's somewhat poignant to note that this time next year GPA South Gippsland will be part and parcel of a much larger organisation – the new Gippsland Medicare Local – so this in fact will be the last time that I, as Chair of the Division, will be able to wish

you a joyful festive season, and a happy, healthy New Year.

On behalf of our Board of Directors I would like to thank you most sincerely for your support over the past 11 years. I think you will agree that together we have achieved much, and that those achievements now form a solid foundation to build upon in the future.

I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of Rhett and his team at GPA South Gippsland. Despite the distraction of uncertainty about what the future will hold, our people have remained focussed and committed to delivering a first-class service to our members and ultimately to improving the health of the communities we are here to serve.

We are looking forward with much anticipation to all that the New Year will bring, and to continuing to work with you and for you.

Season's Greetings to you all.

Linda



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For more informaton about Medicare Locals and the Primary Health Reform agenda, go to www.gpasouthgippsland.com.au If you have any questions, or would like to discuss this in more detail, please call Rhett McLennan on 5674 0900.

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nps administration support:	Sharlene Dowthwaite
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wanted

newsletter contributions for the Division newsletter are welcome. Fax, post or email your copy. The Division reserves the right to accept or reject all material submitted for publication.

disclaimer

the views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of GPA South Gippsland.

Our newsletter is available in electronic form. If you would like to receive it in this form rather than hard copy please contact Mandy or Claire at the Division on (03) 5674 0900, or alternatively, it is available on our website.

ceo's report

Rhett McLennan
Chief Executive Officer

Season's Greetings to all our members and readers.

A big thank you goes out to Sara for organising our family day on the 27th of November. The rain gods were kind to us and all the kids (and parents) had a great time on the train from Korumburra to Loch. We are definitely going to miss Sara as she leaves for a period to have her second child. We wish her and Matt all the best for the smooth arrival of a new playmate for Archie.

Congratulations are in order for Immunisation coordinator Jo Hillbrick who was asked to present her kindergarten initiative to the state-wide immunisation coordinators' meeting at GPV last month. It is testament to Jo's lateral thinking that she has been asked to present at state-wide meetings on a number of topics over the years. Well done Jo.

I'll keep the pats on the back going and congratulate Paul Greenhalgh and Anna Langley for teaming up to bring together a thought provoking session on refugee health in Wonthaggi in conjunction with local health services and Bass Coast Shire Council. As we move closer towards Medicare Local time, more collaborative projects will be required so it's good to see some of our team already taking steps towards creating those links.

As we move into our final "silly season" as GPA South Gippsland I would like to take the time to thank all the people that have been involved in our organisation in some way throughout the year. Whether it was attending one of the 81 further education events that we held this year, involved in one of the 8 regular working groups we convene, been one of the 316 people that came into our offices for a meeting or one of the 115 that our program coordinators came out and met with or even an avid reader of our fortnightly updates, newsletter or website, it is the people we work for, and with, that make GPA South Gippsland a great place to work, and for that we thank you.

Merry Christmas

nps

Sharlene Dowthwaite
NPS Administration Coordinator

The NPS program has had another successful year meeting all our targets for participation in 2011. I would like to especially thank all the Practice Managers for their ongoing support and co-operation with organising NPS education sessions at their respective clinics. Also I would like to thank my work colleagues for their continuing assistance and support. I look forward to the ongoing delivery of the NPS program during 2012 and wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

life style modification program

Imp

Paul Greenhalgh

CDM Prevention & Management Coordinator

It is with great pleasure that I report that South Gippsland Hospital now have a Life! Program facilitator. Jaci Lamb, Registered Nurse and Diabetic Educator undertook her training a couple of months back and is now in full swing with her first group. I congratulate the leadership that South Gippsland Hospital have shown to support her in this role and the Foster and Toora Medical Centre's commitment to helping identify patients for the group based lifestyle modification program.

Wonthaggi Medical Group is currently conducting a Saturday Life! Program group. This Saturday group planned to attract 40-49 year olds into the traditionally 50 plus group, although only managed to enlist one within the target group. Despite the lack of 40-49 year olds, seven participants in total were recruited.

The Lifestyle Modification Program funding has now ceased and despite this the facilitators working group, which was set up during the project life, will continue to meet quarterly. The purpose of the group is to strengthen and build partnerships, and to build the capacity (of facilitators and allied health professionals involved) to deliver the program. With this in mind, the vision is to improve the quality of life of people living in the South Gippsland catchment by working together collaboratively to prevent type two diabetes.

important

Please note that from this month, non-members of GPA South Gippsland will incur a \$20 fee to attend CPD events. This fee will help to recover some of the catering costs. Delegates will receive an invoice after the event. I appreciate your understanding regarding this matter. Of course, membership forms for eligible health professionals are available from our website or by contacting Mandy or Claire. Thank you.

immunisation

supporting hpv immunisation in general practice

Jo Hillbrick

Immunisation Coordinator

In November 2006, the Australian Government announced funding for a HPV vaccination program. The HPV vaccination program is listed on the National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule and funded under the Immunise Australia Program.

An ongoing school-based program is routinely delivered to girls in the first year of secondary school. Girls in Victoria who commence the HPV immunisation course in Year 7 have until the end of Year 8 to complete the three-dose course free-of-charge. In addition to school settings, immunisations can also be obtained via public council immunisation sessions or a general practitioner. Therefore General Practice clinics in Victoria are required to provide the HPV vaccine (doses one, two and three) for free to all girls who meet these criteria. Older girls requesting HPV immunisation must purchase the vaccine at approximately \$150 per dose.

General Practice orders for the HPV vaccine need to be made through the Department of Health on 1300 882 008 and the National HPV Vaccination Program Register needs to be notified of each dose given. The Register can be contacted on 1800 478 734.

Vaccine coverage rates released by the Register show that in Victoria, only 73% of school girls are completing the full three doses required. This is a drop-off of around 10% of girls who have the first injection.

In order to increase uptake and completion of the HPV immunisation course, it's imperative that we continue to educate girls and their parents on the importance of the vaccine in helping to prevent cervical cancer, and to remind them of the time restriction they have to complete the course at no cost.

Cancer Council Victoria is currently rolling out a Department of Health-funded communications initiative to help address this issue. General Practices can assist by proactively promoting these key messages to girls in Years 7 and 8 and their parents, and by encouraging them to complete all three vaccine doses.

season's greetings from the south coast primary care partnership.



The South Coast Primary Care Partnership staff and members would like to thank all those involved with us over the 2011 year.

There are many things to celebrate for the 2011 year:

- **Great staff.** Thanks to
Mel Hibbins – Primary Health Support Coordinator
Tess Angarane – Health Promotion Officer
Anna Langley – Act-Belong-Commit Project Officer
Catherine Robinson – Service Coordination Online Module Project Worker.
Mandy Geary – Executive Officer to March 2011 and
Vicki Bradley – Executive Officer from March 2011 to 4th January 2012.
- **Our members.** Thanks to our members and partners who have provided support and collaboration in our key areas of work
Partnership
Health Promotion
Service Coordination and
Integrated Chronic Disease Management.
- **Our auspice and office colleagues.** Thanks to GPA South Gippsland for great partnerships and their support as auspice for the South Coast Primary Care Partnership. Thanks to GPA staff for their support in conducting our business and for including us in support of their business in supporting the health of our community. Thanks to the GPA staff as welcoming and inclusive office colleagues.
- **Thankyou and Goodbye.** Vicki is leaving the South Coast PCP after 8 ½ years to take up a position in one of our local governments. I would like to extend my thanks to our staff, all our members, GPA South Gippsland – our office colleagues and our partners for their generous support and partnerships over the time. I look forward to seeing you around in my new role.

Vicki Bradley
Executive Officer

mental health

thank you and merry Christmas! Just a short message to everyone who has supported and provided their time to the mental health program in 2011.

- ✦ I want to thank all of the medical practice staff and doctors for their continuous support and always making it so easy and a pleasure to visit the practices.
- ✦ I also want to thank my large team of psychologists, social workers, and counsellors for the ongoing support for Better Outcomes and Rural Primary Health Services – I couldn't do this without each and every one of you!
- ✦ A very special thank you to each of the Mental Health Nurses in the practices, Denise, Carlene and Kerri – Anne! You have been a blessing to not only me, but to your patients and staff that you work with.
- ✦ And a huge thank you to the staff at GPA and South Coast Primary Care Partnership that I work with every day for their encouragement, assistance and for making our workplace an enjoyable place to be. Special thanks to Mandy and Claire for never making me feel that my requests of your time are too onerous! Always a smile and a prompt response – thanks girls.
- ✦ Thank you also to our Board who are always supportive of the Mental Health Program and support me to actively promote good mental health
- ✦ Lastly, as most of you are aware, we will become Medicare Local in July next year. I am really looking forward to the changes that this will bring and the opportunity for new challenges, programs and working with a new range of people as well as those that I currently work with.

To each of you, your families and loved ones – I hope you have a lovely Christmas and eat and drink far too much. Enjoy a much earned break and my best wishes for a safe and Happy New Year. I'll look forward to seeing you all again for a new and exciting time in 2012!

Judy Tiziani
Mental Health Coordinator

continuing professional development cpd



Paul Greenhalgh
CPD & Registrar Support Coordinator

Enhancing Refugee Health in Bass Coast was an accredited CPD event with ACRRM and RACGP held on the 28th November. Whilst this event was led by GPA South Gippsland it would not have been possible without the kind contribution of resources from the Bass Coast Shire Council (BCSC), the Royal Children’s Hospital (RCH) and Bass Coast Community Health Service (BCCHS). I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr Mel Thompson, the key speaker and fellow from the RCH, Registered Nurse Tammy Charles from BCCHS, and Berni Murphy from BCSC for their time and effort. Their contribution made the night the success it was. 21 delegates from a broad range of organisations and health professional backgrounds attended.

The event which was held in the Bass Coast Council Chambers covered the following topics: health problems which affect children / young people from a refugee background, catch-up immunisation, and acknowledge barriers to this in this population, cultural and language influences on health care, and be accessing interpreter services, screening and treating low vitamin D levels.

Evaluation indicated that an excellent presentation was received.



Pictured left to right are Anna Langley (Program Coordinator, GPA South Gippsland), Dr Mel Thompson (Refugee & Immigrant Health Fellow, Royal Children’s Hospital), Tammy Charles (Primary Care Nurse, Bass Coast Community Health), and Berni Murphy (Social Planning Team Leader, Bass Coast Shire Council).

A draft schedule for 2012 is outlined below and has been developed based on the results from the VMPF survey conducted in October. Please keep an eye on our website for all CPD details.

Description	Location	Month / Date TBC
Drug/alcohol dependence management (adolescent and adult)	Foster	23-Feb
Chronic Pain Management	Leongatha	22-Mar
Respiratory Medicine	San Remo/Newhaven	26-Apr
Genetics research	Inverloch	30-May
Paediatric Medicine	Wonthaggi	27-Jun
Digestive Health	Leongatha	25-Jul
Oncology, focus on breast cancer	Foster	30-Aug
Diabetes Management	San Remo/Newhaven	20-Sep
Gynaecology	Wonthaggi	24-Oct
Men’s Reproductive Health	Inverloch	28-Nov



gpa south gippsland family day



Grey skies greeted our Family Day on the South Gippsland Railway but, with promises of sunshine in the afternoon, we marched on for what would turn out to be a great family day out!

Everyone met at the Korumburra Train Station in the recently restored refreshment room for a finger food lunch. It was wonderful to have Dr Iain McConachie from King Street Clinic in Yarram there, who was able to share experiences from his younger days where travelling on the train line from Cranbourne to Yarram used to take five hours. The children busied themselves over lunch with craft activities that included making take home pictures of elaborate trains.

Come 2pm it was time to board the train, although it was running almost 40 minutes late. Nevertheless, there was plenty of action at the station to keep the kids amused while trains and carriages were moved about along the tracks. Once we were finally able to board, it was time to sit back and enjoy the very scenic 30 minute trip to Loch, with a stop about half way there to take photos of a couple of the region's gorgeous waterfalls.

With a half hour stop in Loch, the group headed off to the local park, where it was time for the kids to have some fun with a train piñata! Needless to say, this activity didn't last long and, with bellies full of sweets, the rest of the Loch stopover was spent playing games of cricket and football. Soon enough it was back on the train and on the return trip to Korumburra train station.



All in all I think everyone thoroughly enjoyed the family day. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the families who came along and participated in the day.

Sara Donohue
Workforce Coordinator

clinical risk management



Limited Adverse Occurrence Screening (LAOS) has now been functioning in all small rural health services in Victoria since 2002 following a long pilot process from 1994. As the turnover of health service staff and general practitioners (GPs) continues to grow, I thought it opportune to include in this newsletter a refresher on how the system works.

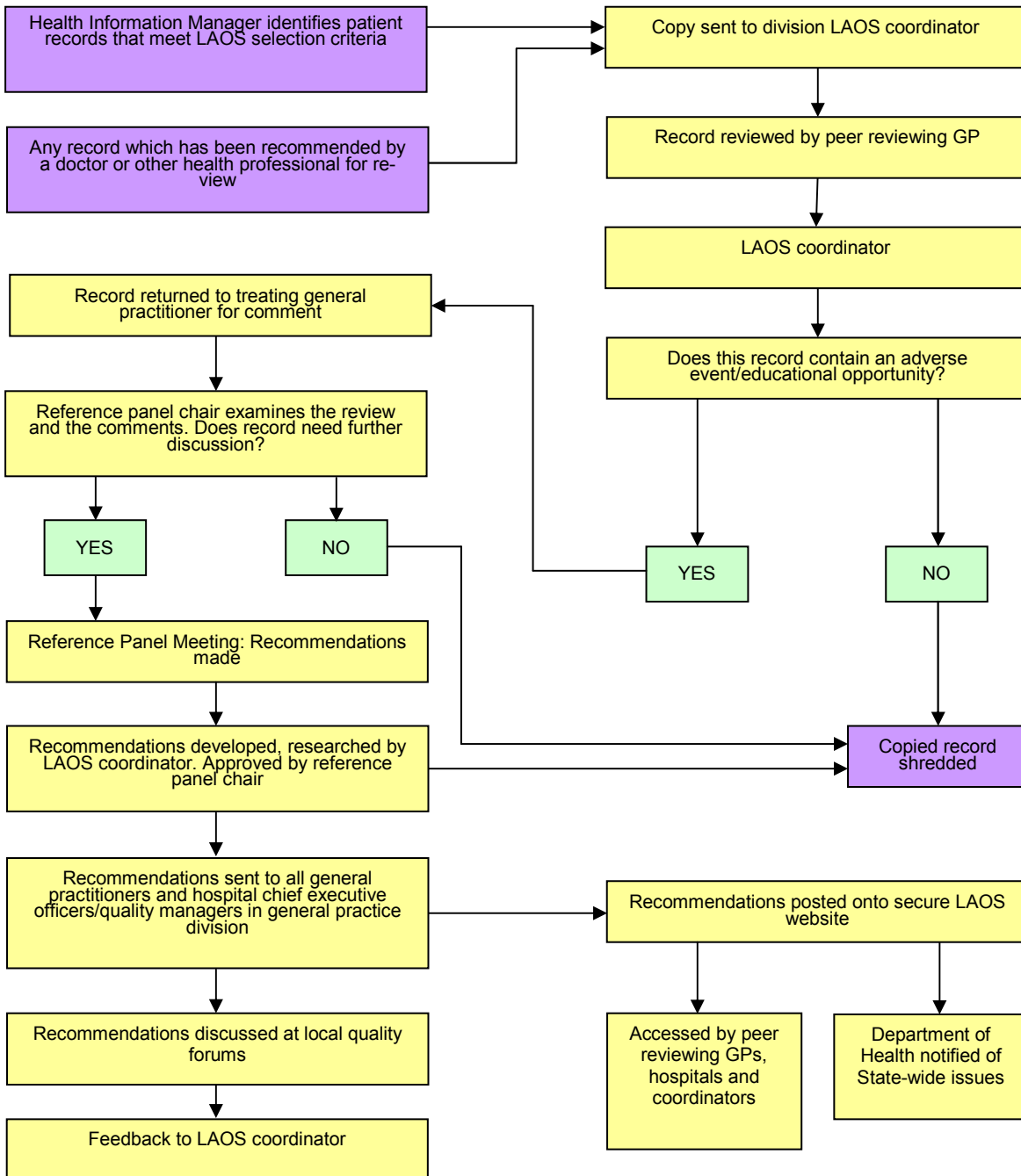
All GPs with admitting rights to small rural health services are participants in the program and, although attempts are made to keep everyone informed, this is not always possible due to their workload pressures and knowledge of changes to the workforce.

LAOS is a GP peer review program which encourages GPs to become involved in health service quality improvement and system issues which we believe has occurred over time. The 6 Co-ordinators work from a lead Division throughout Victoria, my area is Gippsland and I work from the Inverloch office of GPA South Gippsland. The flowchart on the following page provides an overview of the State-wide program.

Dot Humphrey-Lesque
CRM Coordinator

clinical risk management (cont. from page 6)

LAOS Medical Record Flow chart



I am happy to provide any further information if, and when required, and can be reached at the Division on 03 56740900.



I wish all our readers, and especially those involved in LAOS, a very joyous and safe festive season and look forward to continuing our working relationship in 2012.

Dot Humphrey-Lesque Program Coordinator



bowel

cancer screening program

As we go to print, three out of the four eligible practices have agreed to participate in the key activities assigned to this project. Practices that utilise the Medical Director 3 clinical software, receive pathology results electronically, are familiar with the PenCAT, and willing to install the Primary Care Sidebar are eligible.

GPA South Gippsland has received some funding from the Department of Health to assist with the implementation of the project which aims to improve the uptake of bowel screening in general practice. Research has identified the lack of GP endorsement as a significant factor in people's decision not to participate in bowel screening. Therefore, it is anticipated that a key CPD event will increase GP endorsement (screening request) and thus uptake by patients.

General Practitioners will be invited to attend the educational event in February 2012 which will highlight the prevalence of Bowel Cancer in Victoria, the evidence that supports early detection and the screening guidelines, and the Primary Care Sidebar functionality.

Some marketing resources will also be displayed within clinics to promote the guidelines to the general community and, whilst not available as yet, it is anticipated these will be circulated in the New Year.

GPA South Gippsland will work with the practices to extract data to monitor progress and evaluate if these interventions are seeing any short term impact over six months in 2012.

aged care access initiative acai

Almost six months into the 2011-12 program, all eligible and willing Residential Aged Care Facilities are starting to see contracted Allied Health Professionals consult their Low Care Residents. Podiatry, Exercise Physiology, Dietetics, Social Work and Physiotherapy services have been recruited again and have commenced consulting.

The ACAI is a commonwealth funded program that aims to improve access to primary care for low care residents of aged care facilities, independent to the existing Medicare benefits Schedule.

Paul Greenhalgh



gpa workforce coordinator

Sara Donohue has commenced maternity leave and GPA wishes Sara, Matt and Archie all the very best as they await their new arrival.



southern gp training - registrar / pgppp support

The South Cluster Group will be meeting for the last time shortly and this indicates a milestone for many.

With another year finished some of the registrars will be leaving our catchment to pursue their careers elsewhere early next year. GPA South Gippsland wishes GP registrars the best beyond February 2012, whether involved in the Southern GP training program or moving on. Furthermore, we hope success ensues for all registrars vying for Vocational Registration in the near future.

The last of the Prevocational General Practice Placement Program interns for 2011 are with us at arguably the best time of year. With the weather improving, the water temperature at our beaches on the rise and the festive spirit flowing, we can only hope that they'll come back as Registrars one day!

I can report that Victor Go, who was at Foster during the year, has signed up for the GP Registrar program and we are delighted with this news – I imagine we'll see him in South Gippsland again in the future.

Paul Greenhalgh