

Visit yourHealth.gov.au

The Australian Government has developed a new website called [yourHealth](http://yourHealth.gov.au). Described as an engagement and consultation tool, it provides all kinds of useful information and feedback opportunities about the national health reforms for health professionals and the community.

The website allows you to [register](#) for regular email updates about health reform as implementation progresses, or you can rely on your Wednesday Wire to distil the information and bring you what you need to know.

Let's talk: what do you think about the future for divisions?

Here's an extract from a recent media release issued by Federal Health Minister Nicola Roxon:

"The first group of Medicare Locals (around 15 organisations) will commence operation in mid 2011, with the remainder commencing in mid 2012. The first group will be drawn from the Division of General Practice network and where possible the Medicare Locals will be drawn from those Divisions of General Practice that have the capacity to take on the roles and functions expected under the new arrangements."

Just what those exact roles and functions are we don't know at this stage. And how the "capacity" of divisions will be judged is also unknown. This is frustrating, to say the least.

"...Medicare Locals will be drawn from those Divisions of General Practice that have the capacity to take on the roles and functions..."

We're keen to hear your views on where divisions fit into the future of health reform. Many of you seem wary of partnerships or mergers with other divisions. What are Medicare Locals and where should the boundaries be? (There's a separate story about potential boundaries on this page.) Where should we position ourselves? How will divisions change and what will they look like?

Once the Government's Expression of Interest documents are released (we anticipate in the next few weeks) SGPN CEO Sam Ireland will be travelling throughout the region to talk with you and to listen to your views.

Details about the format and timing of these visits will be provided in a future Wednesday Wire.

Feedback on potential boundaries for Medicare Locals and LHNs

As part of the national health reforms, the Australian Government will invest \$416.8 million over four years to establish a network of primary health care organisations (Medicare Locals) across Australia. The first batch of 15 Medicare Locals will be set up utilising the existing Divisions of General Practice and therefore the boundaries are of vital interest to us.

The Department of Health and Ageing is seeking views from interested parties about the potential boundaries for Medicare Locals and you can have your say [here](#) if you like.

Of course we will be making a submission and we're keen to hear your views. CEO Sam Ireland will be out and about shortly (see *Lets Talk*) to discuss these issues with as many GPs in the region as possible.

Meanwhile, AGPN have their own ideas

The Australian General Practice Network commissioned their own report suggesting potential geographic boundaries for primary health care organisations.

The work was submitted to the Minister for Health and Ageing on 1 July. Known as the [Cranny Report](#) (prepared by Carla Cranny & Associates) the modeling has not been endorsed by AGPN and it is worth noting that many divisions, including ours, were unhappy with the lack of consultation at division level about the boundaries and their implications. Indeed, the Minister has made it clear the report "does not represent a government view of the number or boundaries of Medicare Locals".

The report is in two parts (189 and 145 pages respectively) and is available at www.yourhealth.gov.au. We will provide a local analysis in next week's Wednesday Wire.

Nominate NOW for AGPN Board

Divisions have been asked if they would like to nominate GP candidates for the AGPN board. If you are interested in nominating for one of the six elected director positions (three of which must be GPs), please contact CEO Sam Ireland at SGPN as soon as possible – phone 4474 5100 or [email](#). We must submit nominations, including a nominee form and profile, by 30 July.

As background, AGPN adopted a new constitution last year whereby member divisions will elect six Elected Directors to the AGPN Board to serve from the 2010 AGPN AGM.

The Australian Electoral Commission has been contracted by AGPN to manage the nomination and ballot phases. Here's a [link](#) if you'd like more information, including the key dates.

What's on? Education and events for GPs, PNs and practice staff

'Difficult Conversations' Thursday, July 22, Batemans Bay

Learn to talk honestly and openly with people no matter how delicate the topic or powerful the individual. An all day course presented by the Centre for Community Welfare Training. Click [here](#) for more information or go to www.acwa.asn.au.

'The Accidental Counsellor' August 3 & 4, Merimbula

Workers who are not employed as counsellors often find themselves placed in a counselling role as a result of issues or requests for help that arise from contact with clients in their workplace setting. A two-day course presented by the Centre for Community Welfare Training. Click [here](#) for more information or go to www.acwa.asn.au.

Family Planning NSW Annual Conference and Open Day

Saturday, 14 August, Family Planning NSW offices at 328-336 Liverpool Road, Ashfield. Get the latest information on reproductive and sexual health in just one day. \$175 and 13 Category 2 points. Click [here](#) for information and registration.

[Cancer Learning](#) is an online professional development website designed specifically for health care professionals working in cancer care. Developed by Cancer Australia in association with leading Australian professional bodies and cancer organisations, Cancer Learning offers a broad range of evidence-based information and learning opportunities. Those of you still getting WW by fax can visit www.cancerlearning.gov.au.

SGPN recommends...

Aged and Dementia Care Symposium Friday 22 October, Batemans Bay

*Nursing and Allied Health CPD hours: 7
Medical: 10 Category 2 points with RACGP and 5 PDP points with ACCRM*

You will have received the program and registration for the Aged and Dementia Care Symposium SGPN is co-hosting on Friday 22 October at the Batemans Bay RSL Soldiers Club. Held in conjunction with GSAHS, Alzheimers Australia and the NSW Government, this is a symposium for primary, acute, community and residential care providers.

The full day program featuring expert speakers includes Dr John Worthington, the senior staff specialist neurologist at Liverpool Hospital speaking about stroke and dementia, Dr Susan Kurrle discussing the latest research in Alzheimer's disease, and Dr Mike Bird will present the myths and realities of non-pharmacological clinical interventions in dementia.

Here's a [link](#) to the program and registration form on our website. Alzheimers Australia is managing the registrations.

What we did this week... (a little slice of SGPN life)

Our MEND coordinator Nina Holland has been rushed with enquiries from Eurobodalla and Bega Valley parents interested in helping their children better manage their weight and get healthier. We've promoted the MEND program through schools and in local media, and Nina gave a great interview to ABC Radio last Tuesday to talk about childhood obesity and the benefits of the MEND program.

Last Tuesday night in Queanbeyan, cardiologist Dr Chris Allada facilitated a particularly interactive CPD evening with Queanbeyan and district GPs.

The event was hosted by SGPN and with CEO Sam and workforce officer Sue Berry in attendance, GPs took the opportunity for a robust discussion about the future of divisions within the national health reform framework.

New round GP Superclinic funds

The 2010 round of the Federal Government's (GP Superclinics) Primary Care Infrastructure Grants is now open. \$355.2 million is available for an additional 23 new GP Superclinics and to upgrade facilities in around 425 general practices and health services.

Three levels of funding ranging up to \$500,000 are available for capital works projects that support:

- Expanding or upgrading a practice to increase the number of doctors, nurses or allied health staff
- Expanding services, including after hours services
- Training of new doctors and other health professionals together in a GP Super Clinic-style facility.

Further details from www.health.gov.au/tenders or www.health.gov.au/gpsuperclinics or call Linda Brown at SGPN if you'd like to discuss the possibilities.

New online learning module for PNs: STI & Blood Borne Virus

A new and exciting online course developed by the NSW STI Programs Unit (STIPU) and the Australasian Society of HIV Medicine (ASHM) gives practice nurses the necessary skills in managing sexually transmitted infections (STI) in their patients.

The course can be found at www.apna.asn.au then click on online learning. **And get this:** The first 200 NSW practice nurses to register receive the course for free! Email education@apna.asn.au with your name, address and email contact details. APNA will then send you a link to commence the course at no charge.