

The Elms Family Medical Centre

Quarterly Newsletter

Keeping you in touch with developments at our Medical Centre

www.theelms.com.au



Autumn 2014

The Elms turns twenty in May this year, and has seen many changes over its “lifetime”. We were the first general practice to be accredited in the Central Highlands region, meaning that The Elms achieved and maintained excellence in all key criteria for quality medical practice. We were one of the earliest adopters of computerised medical records and continue to embrace advances such as tele-health (online video) consultations with specialists in Melbourne, and enabling patient uptake of the Australian Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record (PCEHR). Our clinic was early to recognise the important role of nurses, and incorporated a practice nurse as part of the team long before it became the standard. The Elms has overseen the training of over sixty specialist General Practitioners in its capacity as a post-graduate placement. The last few years has seen The Elms expand the breadth of services offered, now including psychologists, podiatry, physiotherapy, diabetes education, visiting specialists, women’s ultrasound, and diagnostic pathology, all within larger newly renovated premises.

We thank all our patients for their support over these twenty years and for making everything possible.

Doctor news

We recently fare-welled Drs Jessie Low, Asha Jacob, Manju Nadiger and Chuong Nguyen. Jessie, Asha and Manju successfully passed their final Fellowship examinations for the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), and have completed their rotations with us. Jessie has moved to Sydney with her partner, and Asha and Manju have returned to Melbourne to be closer to their families. Chuong has also completed his placement with us, and will be heading to Tasmania for the next stage of his post-graduate experience. We wish all of them well as they continue their careers in general practice.

At the same time, we welcomed Drs Carolyn Sebastian and Sue Lee. Carolyn received her medical degree with Honours from Monash University and previously completed placements at the Western Hospital. Sue also graduated from Monash University and prior to The Elms has had general practice experience working in Point Lonsdale, as well as completing the Diploma of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. Both Carolyn and Sue are studying toward the Fellowship of the RACGP and will be working full-time at The Elms.

Our core permanent GPs remain unchanged with Drs Rob Hosking, Woody Wu, Nyree O’Connor, Anmar Naoum and Amit Kumar consulting full-time, and Dr Alfey Ordukaya continuing his registrar placement. Since starting at The Elms in November last year, Dr Amit Kumar has settled in well and has quickly established himself as a popular doctor with his patients. Dr Rakhi Basu remains on extended leave as she completes an Advanced Diploma in obstetrics in Ballarat.

Receptionist news

We were sad to see Debbie Belcec leave to take up a position in medical reception closer to her home. Due to changing family commitments with her young children, Debbie could no longer regularly commute to Bacchus Marsh. We are sure that she will be as highly valued in her new position as she was at The Elms, and we wish her the best. Arlene Faulkhead is the newest member of the Elms family and she takes over Debbie’s role as one of our medical receptionists. Arlene has previously worked in office and administrative roles and will be a great addition to our reception team.

Medical student news

Since 2011, The Elms has been providing year-long placements for third year medical students from the Deakin University School of Medicine. We would like to welcome Melinda Pattanasri as our Deakin University medical student for 2014. By being embedded at The Elms and Bacchus Marsh for the whole year, Melinda will learn and gain experience in clinical medicine outside of the large regional and metropolitan hospitals. We greatly appreciate our patients for giving Melinda the opportunity to learn through their interactions with her during consultations.

On a related note, we are proud to announce that our 2013 Deakin University medical student, Genevieve Commins, received excellent marks in her end of year examinations, achieving a distinction grade. Well done, Genevieve!

Bulk-billing availability

Although we are a private clinic, to ensure that disadvantaged patients have equitable access to the highest level of care, The Elms continues to offer bulk-billing to holders of a pension card, a Veteran's Affairs Gold card, a Health Care Card, and the unemployed.

Bar codes on prescriptions

Patients may have noticed that our printed prescriptions now have a bar code at the bottom. This code forms part of a new secure system that is designed to reduce errors when your prescription is dispensed at a pharmacy. Instead of manually typing in what is on your prescription into their dispensing software, the pharmacist can use a scanner to read the prescription bar code, just like at the supermarket check-out. The system is not only faster, it is more accurate, and reduces the danger of prescriptions being altered or forged. Prescriptions otherwise function in the same way they always have.

Influenza immunisations now available

The immunisation against the 'flu virus is now available for the 2014 strains. This annual injection is provided free to all eligible patients. Those eligible include all who are over 65 years of age, pregnant women at any stage of pregnancy, Indigenous people aged 15 years and over, residents of nursing homes or in long-term care facilities, and anyone over the age of 6 months with a chronic medical condition putting them at risk of influenza such as diabetes, severe asthma and heart disease.

Eligible patients should contact our reception staff for an appointment with our practice nurse to receive the injection. A prescription is not required and the visit with our nurse will be bulk-billed. For non-eligible patients, a prescription from your doctor is required to purchase the injection from a pharmacy prior to administration by our nurses.

Bowel cancer screening program

We encourage our patients to participate in the free bowel cancer screening program being offered by the Australian Government to people when they turn 50, 55, 60 and 65 years of age. The test looks for invisible blood in the stool, hence the name Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT). Eligible people will be automatically sent a test kit in the mail. The patient then collects two small samples of faeces in the privacy of their own home to be submitted for analysis. If invisible blood is detected in either sample, then a colonoscopy is usually indicated.

By having the FOBT, patients can reduce their risk of dying from bowel cancer through earlier detection and treatment. As of 2015, the program will be expanded to include people turning 70 years of age.

“We are proud to be an Accredited General Practice”

