

The Elms Family Medical Centre

Quarterly Newsletter

Keeping you in touch with developments at our Medical Centre

www.theelms.com.au



Winter 2015

Access to parking close to the clinic has suffered over the past few months as a result of the Village Shopping Centre upgrade works. Patients will have noted that the direction of traffic has been reversed in the underpass connecting the western (Aldi) car park and the post office quadrangle car park. It is anticipated that once completed, the car park in front of the clinic will have additional spaces for disabled parking, as well as better traffic management.

Doctor news

Dr Sue Lee has successfully passed her specialist general practice examinations and has been awarded the qualification of Fellow of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (FRACGP). General Practice is a recognised medical specialty and all doctors wanting to specialise as a GP must complete post-graduate training and examinations. We congratulate Sue on her achievement.

We have had Dr Nyree O'Connor call in to say hello in between placements as she completes the Postgraduate Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene through the University of Melbourne. So far, she has been working in the Northern Territory and will soon head off to Thailand for her next stint.

Many of our doctors are involved in roles besides consulting at The Elms, such as teaching, examining, committees and professional organisations. For example, Dr Rob Hosking is a member of two advisory groups within the National Prescribing Service which develop guidelines for appropriate diagnostic testing and medication prescribing. Rob is also the deputy chair of the National Standing Committee for e-Health within the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Another of our team, Dr Amit Kumar, has recently been involved in the development of the Djerriwarrh Health Services (Bacchus Marsh Hospital) End of Life Pathway document as the medical practitioner representative on the palliative care working group. This document outlines the management protocols for the medical treatment of patients receiving palliative care at the Bacchus Marsh Hospital and will be used throughout the Djerriwarrh Health Services.

We are proud that our doctors have such diverse roles and responsibilities beyond their usual commitments at The Elms.

Psychologist news

Ms Eloise O'Reilly, psychologist, commenced consulting at The Elms in May and is available every Thursday. She provides psychological counselling for children, adolescents and adults, and has a special interest in anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, relationships, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and substance use management.

She may be consulted privately (no Medicare rebate although a rebate may apply if you have appropriate private health insurance) or through your doctor under a Mental Health Care Plan (Medicare rebate available). Please discuss your eligibility for the Medicare rebate with your doctor.

Appointments to see Eloise can be made by telephoning Ranges Psychological Services on 0425 240 021.

Free whooping cough immunisations

As of 1st June 2015, the Victorian Government will fund free whooping cough (pertussis) immunisation for all pregnant women from 28 weeks gestation and their partners. Additionally, all parents/guardians of newborn babies born on or after 1 June 2015 will be eligible to receive the vaccine free while their baby is still less than six months of age.

Patients who are eligible for the free whooping cough immunisation can make an appointment to see our clinic nurse by booking through reception. These visits are bulk-billed.

It is recommended that extended family and friends who will come into contact with newborn babies should also have a booster against whooping cough. Please speak with your doctor about a prescription for the injection, which can also be administered by our nurse (bulk-billed).

Free Influenza immunisation

As the influenza season typically starts in July, it is definitely not too late to have your influenza immunisation. The injection is free for people over 65 years of age (or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged six months to less than 5 years, or 15 years and over), pregnant women, and anyone aged six months or older with a medical condition that puts them at increased risk of influenza complications.

Eligible patients can make an appointment to see our clinic nurse by booking through reception. These visits are bulk-billed.

Patients not eligible for the free vaccine can obtain a prescription by placing a request (no charge) at reception and then booking in to have the injection given by our nurse (bulk-billed).

Expansion of the BreastScreen Australia program

The BreastScreen Australia program has recently widened its inclusion criteria to target women up to the age of 74 years. The main focus group for screening mammograms is now 50 to 74 years. However, women from 40 years of age and those over 74 years of age can participate in the program if they choose. The two-yearly mammograms performed by the BreastScreen Australia program are free of charge.

Keep in mind that screening mammograms are only for women who do not currently have breast-related symptoms. If you already have symptoms, then it is important to speak with your doctor first as it may be more appropriate to have other types of testing.

Women interested in joining the Breast Screen program can make an appointment by registering online at www.australia.gov.au/breastscreen or by telephoning 13 20 50.

Expansion of the National Bowel Cancer Screening program (NBCSP)

The NBCSP has been updated so that two-yearly bowel testing for all Australians aged 50 to 74 years will be phased in over the next five years. In 2015, the 70 to 74 year age group will be invited to perform the stool blood-detection (faecal occult blood) test. The remaining age groups will be included from 2016 to 2020. Participation in the NBCSP is free of charge.

People who already have bowel symptoms, such as passing visible blood or an unexplained change in bowel habits, should speak with their doctor first as the NBCSP is designed for people who do not have symptoms.

The test kits will be mailed automatically to eligible people, and further information can be found at www.australia.gov.au/bowelScreening or by telephoning 1800 118 868.

“We are proud to be an Accredited General Practice”

