

General Practice Newsletter

Counties Manukau Primary Care

General Practice Newsletter from Counties Manukau DHB and Middlemore Hospital.

News from the GP Liaison desk

Referrals

We have an increasing problem with referrals for First Specialist Assessments (outpatient appointments) being faxed to incorrect fax numbers.

This results in delays in processing the referrals and there is a risk of the referrals going astray.

The FAX number for Outpatient appointments is 276 1600.

The fax number 276 0078 is for ACUTE referrals for admission and is located in the Emergency Care Department.

HEALTHPOINT (Healthpoint.co.nz) has up-to-date contact and fax numbers for the majority of DHB services. Extra services are being added and updated on a daily basis. To access the service directly the GP is required to register on-line, which is a one off process designed to add security to sensitive service access numbers.

Ineligible patients - we need your help!

Over the last 3 years CMDHB has charged patients who are ineligible for publicly funded healthcare whether the patient requires inpatient or outpatient referral. Where a patient was born outside of NZ or the referral does not state the country of birth, we require appropriate documentation including passport and/or work permits etc. to identify paying patients. We invoice patients for the full costs of treatment who fail to provide this information.

From a patient flow point of view the sooner we know of a patient's residency situation, the better the patient's experience of the hospital process.

We need your help to identify all ineligible patients by:

- Providing country of birth and if appropriate, date of entry to NZ
- Advising ineligible patients there will be a cost

If this information is not received on the referral form, we request patients to provide this information within two weeks from date of hospital admission or date of receipt of referral. If this information is not received we will automatically invoice the patient for all costs incurred or return the referral to the referrer.

For more information on the eligibility criteria for publicly funded healthcare, please visit the Ministry of Health website at www.moh.govt.nz or phone Kelly Mansfield, 09 276 0060.

Dermatology Referrals

Counties Manukau DHB is now conducting adult dermatology clinics at the SuperClinic. Patients are seen in our area and do not have to travel into Auckland except for tertiary services.

All referrals for Dermatology First Specialist Assessment (Specialist Opinion) are to be faxed to the Super Clinic on 2771600 or post to Superclinic, Private Bag 98-743, South Auckland Mail Centre.

Please note that at this time it is an adult service only and all paediatric referrals will be referred on to Auckland DHB.

Referrals to Community Ear Clinics

Many children are referred to these clinics without a referral letter or without being prescribed a wax softener, when the referral is for wax removal.

This results in the children having to have a second appointment which is not ideal and is an avoidable nuisance for the family.

Please contact the clinic in your locality for an appointment and if it is for wax removal prescribe a wax softener with instructions on when and how to use.

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GP Help Desk:
Ph 270 4723
Fax 277 1600

Pandemic Planning

The Ministry of Health has issued several comprehensive guidelines which are available on their website (moh.govt.nz). One of these guidelines stipulates that the national stockpile of materials including drugs and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) will not necessarily be released at the first sign of an epidemic. It is expected that all health facilities will have enough stocks of PPE to cope with the first 1-2 weeks. The PPE list given includes gloves, masks (surgical and N95), disposable gowns and face masks or goggles. It also recommends that suitable hand washing gel and disposable towels for hand drying are available.

Each practice will therefore need to assess their own projected usage and arrange to purchase and store sufficient items to manage over the first weeks.

The Ministry also points out that there is an OSH requirement to provide for a safe working environment for all employees and that this applies during an epidemic situation.

Ophthalmology News

Training:

Following the Ophthalmology CME evening in September the Ophthalmology Dept is offering to train any GP who wants to learn how to manage meibomian cysts in the practice setting.

These sessions will be on a Friday afternoon for 1-2 hours and all those attending will be given a Chalazion clamp.

Dr Carolyn Hope is happy to attend cell groups to advise on measuring Visual Acuity.

For both activities please contact Dr Russell Smart
E-mail rsmart@middlemore.co.nz
or Ph. 276 0044 ext 4743

New Diabetes Retinal Screening Service (DRS)

CMDHB is pleased to announce a new expanded DRS Service. Screening will now take place in the community as well as Manukau SuperClinic, and aims to reduce waiting time and improve accessibility for patients.

We wish to ensure patients with the highest need are offered appointments as a priority and at the most appropriate location. To support this it is important we have current medical information such as HbA1c, history of other co-morbidities, and type and duration of diabetes as these all impact on the risk of developing diabetes-related eye disease and are important considerations when determining appropriate grading and recall intervals. To as-

sist the referral process we have a standard referral form available as an electronic template to be uploaded into your PMS system, as well as a tear off pad. These resources are available from Louise Cook, DRS Co-ordinator, 262 9536, 021 617 069, cookl@middlemore.co.nz.

Please remember the catchment boundary for CMDHB community services to the north does not extend as far as Otahuhu. This means patients who live in the Otahuhu area will need to be referred to **Auckland Diabetes - Centre Fax: 631 0709.**

The Women's/Sexual Health Integration Project

This project is part of the overall Sexual Health Plan for CMDHB. There are a number of other work-streams focusing on Youth, Schools, Primary, Alternative Education, and Specialist Sexual Health Services. Keith Allenby and Nettie Knetsch are the project sponsors.

So far we have completed an initial current state assessment and have met with all the PHO groups as well as many GPs and nurses out in the primary areas.

We are completing a series of workshops to draft the priority areas and desired outcomes under the project's scope. Once this is fully drafted I will be back out to the key stakeholder groups to validate the decisions and make modifications as/ if required.

Areas of priority include reducing the unwanted pregnancy rate and reducing the incidence and impact of sexually transmitted infections.

Please contact me if you would like to meet or email with your suggestions, comments, or questions. I am based within Women's health at Middlemore Hospital.

Lesley Powell

Project Manager

Women's/ Sexual Health Integration Project

Counties Manukau DHB

Ph:(09) 276 0044 Ext: 2852

Cell Phone: (021) 555 792

Email: powelll1@middlemore.co.nz

CME

November 15th 2005

Diagnosis and Management of Anaemia

Brief presentation from POAC

Pandemic Planning and Personal Protection Equipment/ processes for general practice.

Outpatient Management of Severe Iron Deficiency

Not all patients with severe iron deficiency need to be referred for inpatient transfusions and investigations.

1. Patients with compensated iron deficiency may not need blood transfusion. Oral or parenteral iron therapy is effective
2. Patients with severe iron deficiency without overt bleeding should have Coeliac disease serology done before referral
3. Younger females with iron deficiency should be thoroughly and objectively assessed for menstrual blood loss
4. Older patients with iron deficiency without dyspepsia, dysphagia or altered bowel habit should have Upper and Lower GI endoscopy
5. Priority one endoscopy is performed within 4 weeks in most cases
6. Average wait of the referral before it is graded by a consultant could be 2 weeks
7. Please liaise directly with the Gastroenterology Registrar/Gastro Hotline or a consultant for all priority one referrals. This will reduce the time to the procedure or consultation significantly
8. It is important to know that all urgent referrals are dealt with very promptly and most of the times the delay is in communication. We are happy to be approached for any such requests

Ravinder Ogra

Gastroenterologist
Middlemore Hospital

A Timely Reminder

Christmas is not far away!

To lower the potential increase of admissions to hospital of elderly patients during the Christmas holiday period:

- Are there any patients on your case load that were admitted to hospital Christmas 2004 with family away on holiday?
- Do you have elderly patients under your care being cared for by family?
- Does the family have a plan for alternative care over Christmas?
- Are they linked into resources to provide caregiver relief?

Should you require any assistance in knowing what supports are available please contact the Care Co-ordinator Nurses, Acute Care Team for Medicine at Middlemore Hospital.

Phone (09) 276 0000

Pager 93 8455

Cell phone 021 530 547

Health Scholarships Available

Do you want to study health or do you work in the health field and want to upskill?

The South Auckland Health Foundation may have a health scholarship available for you! Now's your chance to apply for financial support to help you study in 2006.

There are three scholarship categories:

- Foundation scholarships for undergraduate study
- Maori and Pacific scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate study
- Mental health scholarships for postgraduate study

Applicants for Foundation and Maori and Pacific scholarships must be Counties Manukau residents. Applicants for mental health scholarships need to be working in the Counties Manukau community.

Scholarships will cover one year of student fees for study in a health related course. All applicants must be committed to working in the Counties Manukau community on completion of their study.

Applications close on 4 November 2005. For an application pack or further information, please contact the South Auckland Health Foundation, tel 09 270 8808, sahfoundation@middlemore.co.nz.

Primary Health Care Reference Group

Primary Health Care Reference Group invites all nurses working in the community & primary care to attend an evening to meet other nurses from around this area with the idea of building networks and understanding how & where nurses are working.

Time: 7-9pm

Place: Manukau City Council -The Gallery 31-33 Wiri Station Rd

Drinks and nibbles provided

Nurses representing their organisation have the opportunity to bring a display board for the interactive walk about.

Further info contact Sue on 2951280 or email Karyn on KSangster@middlemore.co.nz

Pressure Ulcer Pilot Project

General Practitioner Information

Project Sponsor

Chris Fleming - General Manager, Surgical & Ambulatory Care

Clinical Sponsor

Bruce Peat – Head of Department, Plastic Surgery

Project Leader

Annie Tyson – Acting Service Manager Plastics, Hands and Dental

Clinical Nurse Specialist

Anne Goddard

Surgical and Ambulatory Services at Counties Manukau District Health Board have set up a Pressure Ulcer Clinical Nurse Specialist Service Pilot Project, following Mr Bruce Peat's presentation at the 2005 Science Fest: "Cost of Treating Patients with Pressure Sores in the Department of Plastic Surgery at Middlemore Hospital". The study highlighted the cost at \$29,000 on average per admission with a significant recurrence of pressure ulcers at around 30%.

The pilot project will determine the most appropriate system of care for adult patients with a pressure ulcer. It will synthesise all current activity related to the management of the patient with a pressure ulcer into a single co-ordinated delivery system.

The pilot will assess the efficacy of a Pressure Ulcer Clinical Nurse Specialist, interfacing with primary and secondary services. This would allow nurse-led community assessment of patients at risk with follow up and ongoing assessment of treated patients to reduce the incidence and severity of patients with pressure ulcers, thus reducing the morbidity and costs associated with a patient with pressure ulcers.

The aims of the project include:

- Identifying the pressure ulcer population
- Identifying the gaps between current practice and best practice based on international benchmarking
- Identify current and planned projects and initiatives
- Implement appropriate evidence based model of care
- Measure the number of readmissions following the commencement of the project
- Analyse cost benefits

As General Practitioners knowledge and expertise are critical to the success of the project we wanted to inform you of this study and ask for your assistance. The project is for six months, until the end of February 2006.

You can help by:

- Informing us of your patients
- Letting us know what guidelines you follow
- Letting us know what referral criteria you use
- Highlighting ongoing problems you, your staff or your patients have between the primary and secondary setting

All information or assistance would be much appreciated.

Please email AGoddard@Middlemore.co.nz

GP Help Desk:
Ph 270 4723
Fax 277 1600

Newsletter contacts:

Surya Sami

Ph 276 0044 ext 2151
ssami@middlemore.co.nz

Tom Bracken

Ph 276 0044 ext 2152
021 986 007
tbracken@middlemore.co.nz