



Bulli Medical Practice

Spring Newsletter 2017



Spring Fever

While most of us look forward to the warmer weather, patients who suffer with hay fever or seasonal allergic rhinitis may not be so excited about Spring.

The most common allergens include pollen, dust mites, animal dander and mould spores. Symptoms include a runny nose, sneezing and itchy, watery eyes.

Management includes identifying the triggering allergen if possible, and avoiding that allergen if possible. Medication including anti-histamines and intra-nasal corticosteroids have been found to be safe and effective, even if used long term.

For long-term sufferers, your GP can discuss the potential of immunotherapy (desensitisation injections).

Staff & Community News

- ◇ Farewell to Chris who is retiring after nearly 20 years of service (see article over page)
- ◇ Good Luck to Brooke and Anna who are both going on maternity leave
- ◇ Welcome back Feon who has returned from maternity leave
- ◇ Welcome to Dr Ben Bartlett who is joining our team of GPs (see article this page)
- ◇ Congratulations Rebecca Jeffery for completing her nursing re-registration.

Welcome Dr Ben Bartlett

Bulli Medical Practice is delighted that Dr Ben Bartlett is joining our team at the end of September. Ben will be working on Mondays from 9am – 5pm and Wednesdays from 2pm – 8pm.

Ben recently returned to live in the Illawarra to reconnect with friends and enjoy his new grandson.

Ben worked as a GP in Coledale for many years, interspersed with practice in Aboriginal health facilities in Central Australia.

Along with his considerable experience in general practice, Ben offers acupuncture services for a variety of symptoms including pain management.

Ben's other areas of interest include mental health, paediatrics, musculoskeletal disorders and chronic disease management.

He graduated from the University of Sydney in 1972, and has worked in general practice and public health in a range of settings.

He is still addressing Aboriginal health disadvantage through his work with the Literacy for Life Foundation which is conducting the Aboriginal Adult Literacy campaign in western NSW communities.



Prostate Cancer Management

Recent research findings into the early diagnosis and management of prostate cancer have challenged the approach to diagnosis. This may concern many of our male clients and their families.

There are many conflicting health messages given by various interest groups regarding prostate cancer. This can lead to anxiety and confusion about how this common cancer should be managed.

Cancer of the prostate does not have the same evidence base for early screening as other conditions, such as breast cancer (mammography) and cervical cancer (pap smears) for women.

Research into prostate cancer has demonstrated the need for an individual approach to assessing risk for men, rather than a broader, community wide approach (such as is used for women with breast and cervical cancer).

Our team of GPs at Bulli Medical Practice are very happy to discuss this further with our male clients and their families.



Global Corporate Challenge

Once again, the staff at Bulli Medical Practice stepped up and took part in the Global Corporate Challenge. The Challenge involves staff wearing a pedometer all day, for 100 days, which counts every step they take.

This year we entered two teams with seven members in each team. 'Baby Got Track' includes Keely as captain, along with Alex, Victoria, Tayla, Naomi and Dr Jeff Hall. 'Pimp My Stride' includes Phillipa as captain along with Rebecca, Brooke, Karen and Drs Julie Blaze, Melissa Overton and Michael Hanson.

And the winning team for 2017 is:

'Baby Got Track!'



Insect borne illness

A routine part of a travel health consultation at BMP is education and assessment of your risk of contracting an insect borne illness, such as malaria, dengue fever, Japanese Encephalitis, Zika and Chikungunya.

The risk of contracting malaria will be identified and strategies to prevent mosquito bites will be discussed. If necessary, malaria prophylaxis tablets will be prescribed. The risk of contracting malaria has reduced over the years due to eradication efforts funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. However, the risk of other insect borne illnesses such as dengue fever is on the increase.

Dengue fever is a viral disease spread by the Aedes mosquito. An estimated 40% of the world's population is living in dengue endemic areas including subtropical areas of Asia, Oceania, Africa, Central and South America and the Caribbean. These are common travel destinations for our clients, particularly Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. We regularly diagnose dengue fever in returning travellers.

The Aedes mosquito breeds close to dwellings and is found mostly in shady areas. It bites during daylight hours, making it difficult to avoid outdoors. Travellers are advised to cover up with long sleeved tops, long pants, shoes and socks when the mosquitoes are most active. They should also apply insect repellent with DEET as the active ingredient (eg. RID, Tropical Strength Aeroguard). Vaccination for dengue fever is not yet available in Australia. It only provides moderate benefit for people who live in endemic areas who already have some immunity (ie. it is not recommended for tourists).

The disease presents as fever, headaches muscle aches and typically a rash. Many cases resolve with supportive therapy without complications. Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever, a more severe form of the illness, is life threatening and is usually associated with a second or subsequent infection. If you have fevers after travelling to areas of risk, you should have a blood test as a matter of urgency.

CDC Yellow Book is a great source of information regarding travel health risks and is available free online.

Guide to Doctor Availability, Spring 2017

	MON		TUES		WED		THUR		FRI		SAT
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM
Dr Julie Blaze	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		*
Dr Ben Bartlett	✓	✓				✓					*
Dr Nathan Beckman	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓			*
Dr Jemima Grant	✓	✓					✓	✓			*
Dr Saroja Gunasekera	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		*
Dr Jeff Hall	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	*
Dr Michael Hanson			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		*
Dr Amy Harkness					✓	✓					
Dr Helen Maclean	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			*
Dr Melissa Overton			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Dr Anna Putnis	on maternity leave from Bulli Medical Practice										

*Not every Saturday, doctors work on a rotational basis for Saturdays. Please check with reception.

For more information on our doctors, their qualifications and areas of interest, please visit the website.

We have provided the timetable above as a guide to which doctor works on which days, as this may help you when scheduling your next appointment. Please note, the roster changes regularly, as doctors take holidays from time to time.

For further information regarding doctor availability, please check our Facebook page Bulli Medical Practice and Travelvax Centre.

Technology Update

We have installed the latest version of our practice software (Best Practice) to ensure that we are keeping on top of technology.

A particular useful function of this new version of the software is completion of driving medical forms online.

This means information from driving medical examinations is immediately sent to the Roads and Maritime Service for our clients.



Farewell Chris!

After almost 20 years at Bulli Medical Practice, Chris is retiring!

Chris has been an instrumental member of staff, working across a range of roles including administration manager and senior receptionist.

She guided staff through several renovations and physical adjustments to the practice, as well as changes in management.

Her dedicated service over the years was greatly valued, and we'll all miss her warm, chirpy manner, positive approach and sense of fun.

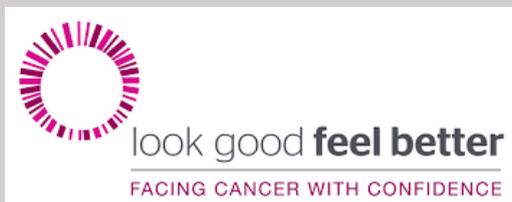
Good luck, Chris! We wish you happiness, health and lots of relaxation during your retirement!

Look Good Feel Better

Look Good Feel Better is a free community service program that provides useful information and tips specifically tailored to help women deal with the appearance-related side effects of cancer treatment.

Programs are currently run in Balgownie by Barbara Dent. For more information visit:

<https://lgfb.org.au/programs>



Fees Policy

Bulli Medical Practice is a not a bulk billing practice. It is our policy that payment for consultation is made at the time of your appointment.

Please see our website or ask at reception for our full fee schedule. The out of pocket expense for a standard Level B consultation (15 minutes) is \$40.95 however an increase may occur in November. We accept cash payments and have EFTPOS facilities (debit and credit card: Visa & Mastercard but NOT American Express).

Medicare rebates may be claimed in person at a Medicare office, or can be sent online directly to Medicare and you will have the option of receiving your rebate via cheque or direct deposit into your nominated bank account.

If payment cannot be made on the day, an account can be issued incurring an administration fee of \$15 which is not Medicare rebatable.

Skin Check Clinic

Now is the time to get a skin check in the lead up to Summer. The Skin Check Clinic, conducted by Dr Michael Hanson, continues to run every Tuesday from 2 - 6pm by appointment only.

This clinic is provided in addition to skin check consultations which can be provided by all GPs at Bulli Medical Practice. Contact reception to make an appointment or book online via HotDoc.



Weight Management Clinic

As the weather gets warmer, people often become motivated to get outdoors, exercise and lose weight. Studies have shown that the best way to lose weight and keep it off is sticking to a weight loss plan.

To join the Bulli Medical Practice Weight Support Clinic, contact our reception or speak to your doctor at your next visit.

Privacy & Medical Records

Your medical record is a confidential document. It is the policy of the practice to maintain security of personal health information at all times and to ensure that this information is only available to authorised members of staff. The Practice adheres to the national privacy principles. A copy of our privacy policy & communication policy are available on request at reception.

Reminders, Recalls & Results

We are committed to providing preventative health care and may send you a reminder notice from time to time. If you do not wish to be a part of this system, please let the staff know at reception. Note that we also participate in government reminder systems such as the Childhood Immunisation Register and the Pap Smear Register.

Please telephone the Practice between 12 noon and 2pm weekdays to find out the results of any tests that have been ordered by our doctors. Patients that require immediate action in relation to test results will be contacted by the Practice to arrange an urgent consultation so that they can discuss the test results with a doctor.

We are moving towards an electronic reminder system. If you would like to receive text or email reminders please inform the reception staff and ensure they have your current email address and mobile telephone number.

Feedback & Continuous Improvement

We value your feedback and encourage you to complete a general feedback questionnaire (which you can deposit in the secure box) or by emailing feedback@bullimedicalpractice.com.au. We endeavour to respond to your suggestions as soon as possible and to continuously improve our service. From time to time we might also ask you to complete a confidential evaluation as part of AGPAL accreditation.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the care that you receive then please let us know. Talk to either your doctor or reception staff and we will try our best to help. We believe problems are best resolved within the Practice as this helps us to continuously improve. If however, the problem is not resolved, you may wish to contact the NSW state government authority for dealing with medical complaints. The address is: Health Care Complaints Commission, Locked Bag 18, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012.