



Bulli Medical Practice

Autumn Newsletter 2016



Solar Electricity at BMP

Bulli Medical Practice will be contributing to reductions in green house gases after installing a large scale solar panel system at the practice for electricity generation. The new system has fifty photo voltaic panels and on sunny days will generate almost all of the practices daytime energy requirements.

The idea originally came from Dr Tas Karakaidos who is interested in environmental issues. After further investigation, it was decided to install the system to try to offset our large energy consumption. The practice has taken a number of measures over recent years to improve energy efficiency such as installing improved ceiling insulation, replacing halogen lighting to energy and heat efficient LED globes and encouraging all members of the practice team to switch off lights and other equipment when not in use.

Despite this, the practice still consumes large amounts of energy during business hours with lighting for consultation rooms, multiple refrigerators for vaccine and pathology storage, multiple computer terminals and air conditioning for patient comfort.

We are fortunate to have a large northern facing roof space which was well suited for photo voltaic panels and the process for installation was extremely well managed by our project partner Todae Solar. Apart from the largest delivery truck to ever negotiate the car park at Bulli Medical Practice the installation process was very smooth and disruption to patient services was minimal.

We are glad to be playing our part in helping the environment and will continue to look at ways we can improve our environmental footprint.

Women's Health Update

Drs Blaze, Gunasekera and Delaney attended the Annual Women's Health Update held at the University of New South Wales.

This year, the intensive program comprised 18 lectures with experts discussing a variety of women's health issues. This included some difficult to talk about areas such as incontinence and end of life planning. There were also worthwhile updates on menopause, chronic pelvic pain and osteoporosis.

It was an unusual girls day out, but well worth the effort.

Dr Saroja Gunasekera, Dr Julie Blaze and Dr Louise Delaney



Opening Hours

**8am - 8pm Monday to Friday
8am - 12 noon Saturday.
All urgent appointments will be
seen on the day of request
Onsite patient parking available.**

Influenza Season 2016

It's that time of year again when we start to get prepared for the influenza season.

Just a few facts about influenza:

- ◇ Influenza viruses are mainly spread by droplets made when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It can also be spread through touching surfaces where infected droplets have landed.
- ◇ A new influenza vaccine is prepared each year to best match the strains predicted for the coming influenza season.
- ◇ Influenza can occur throughout the year but usually peaks in winter.
- ◇ The symptoms are fever, chills, cough, sore throat, muscle aches and joint pain, headache and fatigue, sometimes nausea; vomiting and diarrhoea can occur (more common in children than adults)

Influenza can be prevented by an annual influenza immunisation each year before winter.

The influenza vaccine is free for:

- ◇ All individuals aged 65 years or older
- ◇ All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples aged 15 years and older
- ◇ Pregnant women
- ◇ Individuals aged 6 months and over with medical conditions predisposing them to severe influenza

Bulli Medical Practice keeps the influenza vaccine in stock for those wanting to purchase it.

There are two influenza vaccines available for the 2016 influenza season - Trivalent and Quadrivalent. The key difference between these is that the Trivalent offers coverage for three strains of influenza, while the Quadrivalent covers these same three strains as well as including a fourth strain for increased protection.

New Online Appointment Provider: HotDocs

We are changing our online appointment provider due to the discontinuation of DocAppointments. We are now using HotDocs which has the same security and functionality. Apologies for any inconvenience caused during this transition.

The online booking buttons on the Bulli Medical Practice website will now link you to HotDocs. You can also download the HotDocs app for your iPhone or Android from the App Store or GooglePlay, or visit their website: www.hotdoc.com.au.

After Hours Service

Contact Radio Doctor Illawarra on 4228 5522. All visits are bulk billed. In an emergency call 000.



Patient Identifiers

Patient identifiers are:

- ◇ Patient name (family and given name)
- ◇ Date of birth
- ◇ Gender (as identified by the patient themselves)
- ◇ Address

Patients will be asked for three of the above identifies when making an appointment, checking in their arrival, before a consultation with a Doctor or nursing staff, and when confirming consent for medical treatment. Identifiers will also be asked for when requesting results and communicating with a member of the Practice team.

These identifiers are very important because we have a number of patients who have the same family and given name and unless three identifiers are established the incorrect patient may be booked in to see the Doctor.

We appreciate that the majority of our patients have been attending the Practice for many years and are familiar to our staff. For safety and maintenance of patient confidentiality it is important that these identifiers are still confirmed.

Continuing the Family Tradition

From the early 1960s until 1984, Judy Cambridge was a practice nurse for Dr William Feneley at Bulli Medical Practice. We are delighted that Judy's granddaughter, Alexandria Pritchard, is one of our valued Practice Nurses.



Alexandria Pritchard and Judy Cambridge

Guide to Doctor Availability, Autumn 2016

	MON		TUES		WED		THUR		FRI		SAT
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM
Dr Julie Blaze	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		*
Dr Jeff Hall	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		*
Dr Jemima Grant	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			*
Dr Saroja Gunasekera	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	*
Dr Michael Hanson			✓	✓		✓		✓			*
Dr Amy Harkness					✓	✓			✓	✓	*
Dr Anastasios Karakaidos	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	*
Dr Helen Maclean	returns from maternity leave early May. Check website/Facebook for updates.										
Dr Nathan Beckman	✓	✓					✓	✓			*
Dr Louise Delaney				✓						✓	

*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.

Weight Management Program

Our Weight Management Program is back in full swing. It's easy to lose motivation when Christmas, New Year parties and social occasions are on everyone's calendar. Our patients taking part in the Weight Management Program are all committed individuals who are keen to stay on track.

The current tally for the program is around 337kg in total weight loss, which is an amazing feat for all concerned. Everyone is trying hard to lose some kilos and maintain a healthy lifestyle by walking 30 minutes most days. If you are interested in trying to achieve this too, speak to your GP or one of the Practice Nurses.

Andrea Whitton, Practice Nurse

After Christmas, we sent a letter to all patients enrolled in the Program encouraging them to maintain their focus. We are pleased that several patients have resumed their regular visits. Most managed to maintain their weight or are ready to trim back one or two kilos gained over the 'silly' season.

One of the key elements of the Program is maintaining the goal to reach a healthy weight. It is a long term project and it's not a disaster if 'life gets in the way'. We can help you to re-focus and start again.

Dr Julie Blaze, General Practitioner

Staff & Community News

- ◇ Farewell to our Finance Administration Coordinator, Jenny Hamilton, and best wishes for your future endeavours.
- ◇ Congratulations to Brooke and Mark on their recent engagement.
- ◇ Dr Helen Maclean will be returning from maternity leave at the start of May.
- ◇ Bulli Medical Practice now proudly sponsors Sandon Point Board Riders Club and Scarborough Board Riders Club.
- ◇ Farewell and best wishes to two members of our valued medical team, Dr Peter Garbett and Dr Rockey Lui. Peter and Rockey have always worked in various roles for the Local Health District in addition to working at Bulli Medical Practice. Both have decided to extend their roles in the Ambulatory Care Team and the Emergency Department at Wollongong Hospital. We appreciate all they have contributed to our practice over the past ten years and the care they have provided our patients.

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 \$36.70. 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.

Appointments

Sometimes our doctors are running late for appointments and this can be frustrating and inconvenient for patients. It is not that our doctors have arrived late, or are taking their time, it is usually because the patients they have seen before you have had complex issues that have taken more time than expected. Doctors only need to spend an extra four minutes with each patient, and they'll be running an hour late by 1pm!

Please remember that the doctors at Bulli Medical Practice respect that your time is important, and they do their best to run to time. There are a number of ways that you, our patients, can help to improve this situation.

Remember the length of time of a standard appointment (15 minutes) and this is usually only enough to cover one health issue. A "shopping list" of issues to cover is welcome, but a list with multiple items usually cannot be completed in a single consultation. Keep the list for a subsequent visit.

If you have a number of health issues to discuss, or a complex health issue then PLEASE book a longer appointment. Level C appointments are 30 minutes and Level Ds are 45 minutes. Please see our fees schedule for out-of-pocket expenses. You can also telephone reception in advance to determine if your doctor is running to time.

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

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 available in our waiting room (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 from Bulli Medical Practice then please let us know. Talk to either your doctor or the receptionist 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.