



Reflections on 20 years of service

By Brooke Hutchings

Over the past 20 years, we've grown from a two-consult room, one treatment room practice with paper files, to an 11 consult room, two treatment room fully computerised practice. From three GPs to 13, and hopefully more to come!

I've moved the paper files more times than I would like to remember, worked in a demountable in the car park, built the first practice website, changed medical and administrative software, started online bookings and electronic reminders, and more.

I started on reception and moved to administration, I've learnt payroll and invoicing. As well as training other staff, I've gained the qualification of medical practice assistant. And I've work alongside excellent staff these past 20 years!

Thank you for giving me a chance 20 years ago when I was just a kid and had no idea what I wanted to do with my life. I'm really proud to work at Bulli Medical Practice and to be part of what it has become today.

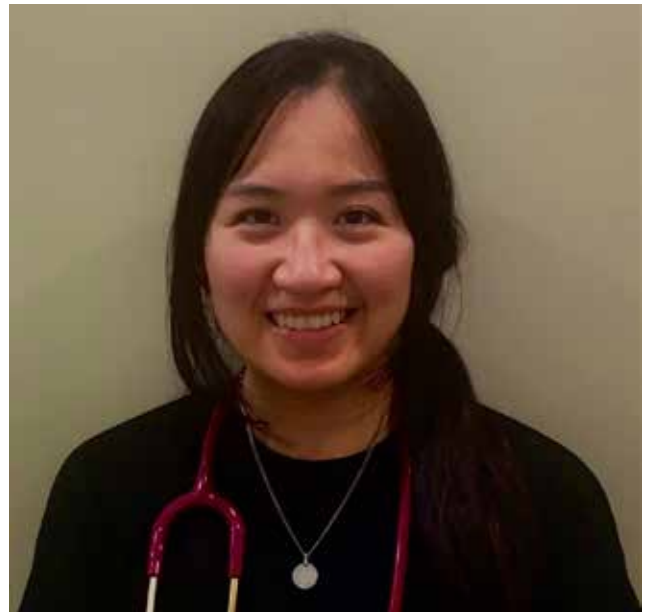
Welcome Anniella Vashti!

Anniella is a third-year student at the University of Wollongong's Graduate School of Medicine.

She has commenced a placement with Bulli Medical Practice (July 2023 to June 2024) and will be involved in all facets of the practice.

Previously Anniella studied a Bachelor in Nursing as well as a Graduate Diploma in Cardiovascular Nursing and a Graduate Certificate in Intensive Care Nursing. In addition, Anniella has recently completed a United Nations Diploma.

For the past eleven years, Anniella has worked in Tasmania as a nurse in various roles including an anaesthetic nurse, intensive care nurse, cardiac interventional nurse, and an associate nurse unit manager.



Immunisation News: Shingles Vaccination

The more efficacious shingles vaccine, Shingrix®, is due to become part of the national immunisation program from 1 November 2023 for:

- All adults aged 70 years (only)
- First Nations Australian adults aged 50 years and older.
- Immunocompromised people aged 18 years and older with conditions at 'high risk' of herpes zoster reactivation.

Shingrix® can be purchased as a privately funded vaccine for any adults 50 years and over.

Shingrix vaccination involves two doses, administered with a two months interval.

People who have had shingles can be immunised at the recommended age, at least 12 months after their confirmed case.

More information about Shingrix will be provided via website and social media in coming months.

Women's Health: Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)

By Dr Hayley Glasson

Urinary Tract Infection (or UTI) is an infection in any part of the urinary system, including the kidneys, bladder and urethra.

Around one in two women will develop a UTI in their lifetime, compared to one in 20 men, due to a short and straight urethra. Babies and older people are also at higher risk.

Symptoms

The most common symptoms of an UTI include:

- The need to urinate more frequently and urgently than usual
- Pain or burning sensation during urination
- Cloudy, pinkish coloured urine with a strong unpleasant odour
- Pelvic or lower abdominal pain
- Feeling unwell, fatigued and achy.

If you experience the symptoms of a UTI it is important to visit a health professional as soon as possible.

If left untreated, UTIs can worsen and lead to more severe complications, especially if the infection reaches the kidneys.

If the UTI progresses and affects the kidneys, additional symptoms may include fever and pain in the back usually on one side, just below the ribs.

Diagnosis of UTIs

Your GP can diagnose a UTI through review of symptoms, physical examination, and a urinalysis or urine culture.

They can perform a urinalysis during your appointment and send off a urine sample to be examined by a laboratory.

Other possible causes for the symptoms, such as a sexually transmitted infection, may need to be ruled out through other investigations.

Treatment and recurrent UTIs

Most UTIs are effectively treated with a short course of antibiotics. Occasionally UTIs can become recurrent.

This can be due to inadequate treatment of the initial infection (as can happen with antibiotic resistance), or an ongoing underlying abnormality (eg. chronic constipation or genitourinary syndrome of menopause).

If you have ongoing symptoms despite treatment, your GP can help investigate and manage.



Caring for the Carers

By Clinical Associate Professor Saroja Gunasekera

Carers are people in our community who provide invaluable unpaid care and support to family members/friends living with a disability, mental illness, chronic or terminal illness, or frail elders.

The caring role may vary from supporting daily activities such as showering, dressing, shopping, through to managing medications, administration and providing emotional and social support. There are over 2.65 million carers across Australia, and 70% are women, with the average age of 54 years.

The physical, mental, financial, and social impact of the caring role should not be underestimated. And because carers are often so busy looking after the needs of others, they struggle to find the time to attend to their own health.

Carers are encouraged to visit their own GPs and get strategies to help them manage their health to minimise carer fatigue and avoid burn-out, to help them maintain their own quality of life.

Difficult as it can be when time and energy poor, it is critical carers stay physically healthy, eat a healthy diet, limit alcohol, try to get 7-9 hours of sleep each night and exercise regularly. Health direct has some tips on [improving sleep](#), and [how to get more active](#).

There are other services available for carers which provide social and emotional support including the [Australian Government's Carer Gateway](#) which provides free professional phone counselling and an online carer forum which is a safe, anonymous space to connect with other carers and support one another.

Carer Gateway provide [tailored support packages](#) where carers may be able to get a range of practical supports like planned respite and transport services.

Importantly, Carer Gateway provide emergency respite care for the person in need in case the carer becomes ill or injured. Call 1800 422 737 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

[Carers NSW](#) also provides information, education and training, resources, and referrals to support carers.

New TYRO EFTPOS Machines

Bulli Medical Practice has implemented a new TYRO EFTPOS machine at reception.

The new system will give you the option of receiving your rebate instantly from Medicare at the time of payment, onto a debit card (physical card not phone).

For all other card-holders, rebates can still be processed at reception and rebates will be paid by Medicare into your nominated bank account.

Please note, we still do not accept American Express or cash payments.



Congratulations to Susan Hughes who recently turned 101! And thanks for bringing the yummy donuts to share with Alex and the team as part of your celebrations.

GP Availability Spring 2023

The table (below) is a guide to which doctor works on which days. This may help when scheduling your next appointment.

The roster changes regularly and doctors take holidays from time to time. Your best guide to availability is via online booking (via our website) or call us on 4284 4622.

Please note:

- Dr Michael Hanson works alternate Mondays and Fridays every 2nd week.
- * Doctors alternate on Saturdays as part of a roster. Please ask at reception.

	MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SAT
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM
Dr Victoria Beyer	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Dr Julie Blaze		✓	✓		✓	✓					*
Dr John Deady			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Dr Hayley Glasson	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			*
Dr Rebecca Goodman	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					*
Dr Saroja Gunasekera			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			*
Dr Jeff Hall			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		*
Dr Michael Hanson	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	*
Dr Amy Harkness					✓	✓			✓	✓	*
Dr Helen Maclean	✓	✓	✓				✓				*
Dr Meaghan Miller-McConochie			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	*
Dr Berlinda Png			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Dr Nikita Robins	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	*

Fees Policy

Bulli Medical Practice is 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 \$49.25.

We have EFTPOS facilities (debit and credit card: Visa & Mastercard but NOT American Express).

Medicare rebates will be sent online directly to Medicare and you will receive your rebate via 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.

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 is available at reception and on our website.

Bulli Medical Practice

74 Park Road, Bulli NSW 2516

Monday to Friday 8am - 6pm

Saturdays 8am - 12 noon

Closed Sundays.

If you need a doctor outside of hours, call: Wollongong Radio Doctors 4228 5522 or the GP Helpline 1800 022 222.

In an emergency call 000.

New patients always welcome!

Book online today:

**bullimedicalpractice.com.au
or call 4284 4622.**



Bullimedicalpractice

Other Practice News

- ◇ Just a reminder to all patients that our car park is open!
- ◇ Welcome to our new medical student, Anniella Vashti, who will be with us until June 2024. Read more in the cover story.

Reminders, Recalls & Results

Please telephone the Practice after 10am 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 a consultation so that they can discuss the test results with a doctor.

We are committed to providing preventative health care and participate in government reminder systems and registers.

We offer a SMS reminder system. If you would like to receive SMS reminders please inform reception and ensure they have your current mobile telephone number. If you do not wish to be a part of this system, please notify reception.

Feedback & Continuous Improvement

We value your feedback and encourage you to complete a general feedback form (which you can deposit in the secure box at reception) 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.