

## Weight Management Program in the Spotlight

The Bulli Medical Practice Weight Management Program was recently featured in a video produced by Coordinaire, the Primary Health Network for the South Eastern NSW Region.

The video describes how staff and patients have embraced the Weight Management Program which was developed three years ago by Dr Julie Blaze.

*“General Practice is well suited to supporting patients with weight problems because the existing relationship between the doctor and patient is built on honesty and trust,”* said Dr Blaze.

The initial 12-week program involves weekly visits with a practice nurse and monthly reviews by your GP. It includes referral to allied health practitioners (dietitians and exercise physiologists) and education on a range of topics. Ongoing maintenance is tailored to individual circumstances.

The average weight loss achieved by our patients over the 12-week program is 8.64kg. Other benefits experienced include lowered cholesterol levels, lowered blood pressure, increased exercise and improved wellbeing.

*“There are many success stories and patients have told us they value the accountability of regular visits, the openness of staff and the support provided with maintenance,”* said Dr Blaze.

*“Hopefully the video will motivate more patients to join our program and inspire other practices in the region to offer similar programs for their patients.”*



Dr Julie Blaze developed the Weight Management Program.

## Staff Highlights



Above: Dr Jeffrey Hall presenting Lauren Hart with the 2019 Employee of the Year award at our recent Christmas party.

Below: Rebecca Couchman with Kathy Mercer (retiring at the end of 2019). Thanks for your wonderful contribution and best wishes, Kathy.



# STOP!

## SPOT CHECK

- Do you protect your skin?
- Do you check your skin?

Australia has the highest rates of melanoma in the world. 2 in 3 Australians are diagnosed with some form of skin cancer by the age of 70. Melanoma is the third most common cancer in Australia, with a death every five hours due to melanoma.

*"The good news is that melanoma is often identifiable at an early stage where simple treatment can result in a complete cure,"* said Dr Michael Hanson.

Dr Hanson has considerable experience in skin cancer screening and management. He worked as a doctor in Queensland (which has the highest rates of skin cancer in Australia) and was mentored by a clinician from the Melanoma Institute.

### Risk Factors

There are many risk factors that increase the chances of melanoma, including:

- fair skin
- high mole count
- family history
- pattern of sunburns throughout life, especially during childhood.

### Prevention and Self-Checks

Try to become familiar with the look of your skin, so you can pick up any changes that might suggest a skin cancer. Look for:

- any crusty, non-healing sores
- small lumps that are red, pale or pearly in colour
- new spots/freckles or moles changing colour, thickness or shape over a few weeks or months.

If you notice a strange new mole on your skin or an old mole that's started changing, it's important to see your GP right away. Some people at higher risk require regular, planned skin assessments. Dr. Michael Hanson leads our Skin Check Clinic but skin check consultations are available with all GPs.

### Diagnosis and Treatment

Your GP will conduct a skin check using a magnifying instrument called a dermoscope. If they find anything concerning, they may recommend cryotherapy or other non-surgical treatments, or biopsy or referral to a dermatologist. You will need to make a subsequent appointment if surgical treatment is required.

Contact reception on **4284 4622** or book online to make an appointment for a skin check.



Dr Michael Hanson leads Bulli Medical Practice's Skin Check Clinic.

## Practice News

- Congratulations Lauren Hart, voted Employee of the Year by her peers.
- Farewell Kathy Mercer who is retiring at the end of 2019. We all wish Kathy a healthy, happy retirement with lots of interesting travel and walks.
- Brooke Hutchings will take maternity leave from December 2020. Best wishes Brooke!

## Christmas/New Year Opening

Monday 23rd December	8am - 5pm
Tuesday 24th December	8am - 3pm
Wednesday 25th December	closed
Thursday 26th December	closed
Friday 27th December	8am - 4pm
Saturday 28th December	8am - 12 noon
Monday 30th December	8am - 5pm
Tuesday 31st December	8am - 3pm
Wednesday 1st January	closed
Thursday 2nd January	normal hours.

## GP Availability Summer 2020

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, the roster changes regularly, as doctors take holidays from time to time. Your best guide to availability is visiting our online booking page (via our website) or calling reception on 4284 4622. Please note:

- Dr Michael Hanson works alternate Mondays and Fridays every second week.
- Dr Jeffrey Hall works Mondays every second week.
- Doctors alternate on Saturdays as part of a roster. Please check via Facebook or ask at reception.

	MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SAT
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM
Dr Julie Blaze		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Dr Ben Bartlett	✓	✓			✓	✓					
Dr Rebecca Goodman	✓	✓			✓	✓					✓
Dr Saroja Gunasekera	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
Dr Jeff Hall	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Dr Michael Hanson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Dr Amy Harkness					✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Dr Helen Maclean	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓
Dr Anna Putnis	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
Dr Katrina Heggie			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	

### 45 – 49 years? Get a Health Assessment to Check Risk of Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is a leading cause of blindness, amputation, heart disease, kidney failure and early death.

People at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes:

- people with a family history of diabetes
- 55 years + (risk increases with age)
- 45 years + and overweight and/or high blood pressure
- over 35 years and from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- over 35 years and from Pacific Island, Indian subcontinent or Chinese cultural background
- women who have given birth to a child over 4.5 kgs (9 lbs) or had gestational diabetes or Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome.

If you are aged between 45 and 49 years, you're entitled to a health assessment with one of our practice nurses and GP. Health assessments establish your risk of developing diabetes or other chronic health condition.

They also determine any lifestyle changes or other measures that will help prevent or delay the onset of chronic disease.

*"Health assessments are a great opportunity to gauge your overall health and make sure you are up to date with screenings, immunisations and other preventative checks. This will help to ensure that you'll stay healthy in middle-age and beyond,"* said Dr Jeff Hall.

Book your 45 -49 year health assessment by contacting reception on 4284 4622. This assessment is funded by Medicare and incurs no out of pocket expenses.

#### Reduce your Risk

Ways to delay or prevent the onset of diabetes:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Regular physical activity
- Making healthy food choices
- Managing blood pressure and cholesterol.

## 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.

## 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.

## **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 \$44.80.

We accept cash payments and 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.

## **New Look for 2020**

In 2020, we are celebrating our establishment for 125 years as a medical practice. We are one of the oldest in Australia.

To celebrate, we've updated our logo, colours and website. Let us know what you think about the new look.

## **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](mailto: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.

## **Bulli Medical Practice**

74 Park Road, Bulli NSW 2518

Monday to Friday 8am - 8pm

Saturdays 8am - 12 noon

Closed Sundays.

If you need to see 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](http://bullimedicalpractice.com.au)  
or call 4284 4622.**

 **Bullimedicalpractice**