

## New sun exposure and protection guideline

By Dr Luke Harvey

A new guideline published in February 2024 aims to update advice about sun exposure and protection for Australia's diverse population. The guideline was endorsed by leading experts in skin cancer including the Cancer Council. The guideline aims to balance the harms and benefits of sun exposure. The main risk of sun exposure is skin cancer, while the main benefit is that it allows your body to make vitamin D, which has many important functions including bone health.

The guideline divides Australians into three groups based on their risk of skin cancer. Those at higher risk of skin cancer need to be more cautious about sun exposure than others.

### High risk

- Very pale skin that burns easily and tans minimally
- Prior history of skin cancer
- Family history of melanoma and/or
- Taking immunosuppressant medication.

High risk people should avoid sun exposure where the UV index is  $>3$ , as well as applying sunscreen daily, and adequate coverage with clothing including hats and sunglasses. Shade should be sought wherever possible. Vitamin D requirements should be discussed with your doctor.



### Intermediate risk

- Darker white, olive or light brown skin that burns minimally and tans to light or moderate brown.

These people should apply sunscreen as part of their daily routine where the UV index is  $>3$ , and use sun protection as above if they will be outdoors for longer than needed to maintain vitamin D levels (about 10-20 minutes in Sydney during summer).

### Low risk

- Dark brown or black skin.

The guideline does not recommend routine sunscreen application for this group. These people may need sun protection if outdoors for  $>2$  hours where the UV index is  $>3$ .

To find out more, visit: [www.qimrberghofer.edu.au/news/new-sun-safety-advice-tailored-for-australias-diverse-population/](http://www.qimrberghofer.edu.au/news/new-sun-safety-advice-tailored-for-australias-diverse-population/)

If you notice changes in your skin, book an appointment with your GP for a skin check.

## Change in opening hours

Please note these changes to our opening hours in late December, early January:

Monday 23rd December: 8am - 5pm

Tuesday 24th December: 8am - 4pm

Wednesday 25th December – CLOSED

Thursday 26th December – CLOSED

Friday 27th December: 8am - 6pm

Saturday 28th December: 8am - 12 noon

Sunday 29th December – CLOSED

Monday 30th December: 8am - 5pm

Tuesday 31st December: 8am - 4pm

Wednesday 1st January – CLOSED

Thursday 2nd January – resume normal hours.

## Adolescent mental health – how parents can help



By Dr Nikita Robins

Adolescents are increasingly struggling with poor mental health. The two most frequently cited issues thought to have had a negative impact on youth mental health are:

1. The global pandemic and lock downs, and
2. The digital age and the availability of smart phones and social media.

If you, or your adolescent child, are struggling with mental health, you are not alone and there are things (and people) that can help.

### Helping a teen with mental health issues

#### Open communication

Check-in with how they're feeling, listen to them without judgment, validate their experience and encourage them to keep talking. Some things can be resolved or eased by sharing and feeling understood. If your teen is not interested in speaking with you, encourage other supporters such as a GP, family friend or school counsellor.

#### Healthy coping skills

Help them identify their emotions, encourage them to come up with strategies to manage stress or distress. Examples might include: some form of body movement, listening to music, being creative, deep breathing or mindfulness, focusing on positive self-talk and things that are within your control, writing a gratitude journal.

#### Supportive home environment

Establish healthy daily routines with nutritious food and drink, regular physical activity and good sleep routines. Establish restrictions on screen time and social media use.

#### Take care of your own mental health

Day-to-day and bigger picture world challenges are tough on everyone, and parenting can bring out our own emotional and psychological

difficulties. Looking after your own mental health will better equip you to help your teenager do the same.

#### Seek professional help and use available services

If you are concerned, consult with a GP or mental health professional. Provide your teen with crisis helpline numbers Lifeline: 13 11 14, Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636. (Note: both services also have online chat options).



### HotDoc Notifications

Bulli Medical Practice uses the HotDoc patient engagement platform to connect with our patients. Patients can use HotDoc to make online appointments, and we use HotDoc to stay connected to you via appointment reminders, SMS recalls, patient forms etc.

We received feedback that some patients are getting too many notifications from the practice. We have used this feedback to review the type and frequency of these communications, and we have removed and/or reduced some of these notifications.

Moving forward, the best way to manage your own notifications is via the HotDoc app. When using the app, you will receive appointment reminders as a push notification and you can control how these notifications are delivered to your personal device.

Wishing all our patients and  
their families a happy &  
healthy festive season



## Need a doctor out of hours?

Wollongong Radio Doctor 4228 5522  
GP Helpline 1800 022 222

## GP Availability Summer 2025

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.
  - Dr Rebecca Goodman works Friday mornings every second week
  - Dr Saroja Gunasekera offers telehealth medicine.
- \* Doctors alternate on Saturdays as part of a roster. Please ask at reception.



## Welcome to our new nurse, Jacyln Allbon

Jackie joined us in October as a general practice nurse to cover Alex's maternity leave. Jackie has experience as a nurse, midwife and lactation consultant in both hospital and general practice settings. She has a special interest in maternity care from antenatal to postpartum, through to child health checks.

	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 Luke Harvey	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Dr Helen Maclean	✓	✓	✓				✓				*
Dr Meaghan Miller-McConochie			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Dr Berlinda Png			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Dr Nikita Robins	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	*
Dr Elliot Wichlinski	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

## 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 \$59.15.

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](http://bullimedicalpractice.com.au)  
or call 4284 4622.**



**Bullimedicalpractice**

## Staff News

Sienna joined the administration team in August as a casual receptionist. Sienna is working with us whilst she completes her nursing degree at university.

Alexandria Pritchard is now on maternity leave.

Welcome Jacyn Allbon who joined us in October as a general practice nurse to cover Alex's maternity leave.

Tayla left the practice in October to take up a psychology specialty role and continuing her studies.

## 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](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.