



GP News

Connecting healthcare for the benefit of patients

First time mothers hesitant about childhood vaccination



First-time mums are more hesitant and undecided about childhood vaccinations compared to mothers with children, and only two thirds of all mothers believe they receive enough information on vaccines during pregnancy.

The new study, published in *Vaccine*, involved more than 460 patients from the Royal Women's Hospital, and was led by researchers at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

Lead author Dr Margie Danchin said that, most importantly, this study provided evidence that new and improved information and communication on childhood and maternal vaccines needed to be provided to pregnant women.

"Trusted healthcare providers such as GPs, midwives and obstetricians play a very important role in discussing vaccination. It's important to have this discussion early. This would help to reduce vaccine hesitancy for all mothers in pregnancy and post-delivery, particularly for first-time mothers, as pregnancy is a key vaccine decision-making time point." Dr Danchin said.

[Read more about the study on the Women's website.](#)

Flu vaccination: the best protection for pregnant women

Pregnant women are a high priority group for influenza vaccination, due to the risk of increased morbidity and mortality. Pregnant women are five times more likely to end up in ICU than non pregnant women, and there is an increased risk of premature delivery and even death in newborns and very young babies.

Although vaccination remains the best protection for pregnant women and their newborn babies against influenza, overall vaccination rates remain low with only 1 in 3 pregnant women being vaccinated.

There is no evidence that the flu vaccination will harm an unborn baby.

Research tells us that GPs have an important role to play because women are more likely to be immunised against influenza if it is recommended by their doctor or midwife.

All GPs are urged to include the influenza vaccine as part of their routine antenatal care.

Influenza vaccine is available free to pregnant women on the National Immunisation Program. It can be given at any time during pregnancy and is of benefit all through the year.

At the Women's, we advise pregnant women to see their GP for both their influenza vaccination (at any time during pregnancy) and their pertussis vaccination (ideally between 28 and 32 weeks gestation, but it can be given up until delivery).

Partners/carers are also strongly encouraged to have a pertussis booster if they have not received a booster in the past 10 years (with partners eligible for free pertussis vaccine in these cases).

See the Department of Health video [Flu vaccination and pregnancy – Free flu shots for pregnant women](#) or refer to the [Better Health Channel](#).

For your attention!

- **Referrals to the Women's**

Just a reminder to include the need for an Interpreter and BMI in all referrals to the Women's.

If an interpreter is required and this is not included in the referral, waiting times can unfortunately be prolonged.

If a woman has an elevated BMI that is not identified in the referral, timing of ultrasounds can be affected causing inconvenience and potentially an additional visit for the woman.

- **Sexual counselling clinic**

This clinic has temporarily suspended external referrals, but will continue to provide a service for internal referrals (existing Women's patients). Women currently on the waiting list will receive an appointment in due course.

- **Essure contraceptive device**

On 31 May 2017, the Therapeutic Goods Administration was informed about the manufacturer's decision to discontinue the distribution of the permanent contraceptive device, Essure in Australia.

The Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods entry will be cancelled and there will be no further implantations of Essure in Australia.

If you have already referred a woman for an Essure implant, she will still be seen at outpatients at the Women's and other methods of contraception will be discussed with her.

For more information see the [Essure hazard alert on the TGA website](#).

- **Peer support for women diagnosed with cancer**

Counterpart (formerly BreaCan) is a Victorian service that connects, supports and informs women with breast or gynaecological cancer to live well. Women in Victoria who have experienced breast or a gynaecological cancer are welcome to access the service free of charge.

GPs are encouraged to refer their patients to this community-based support service which has trained peer support volunteers with a lived experience of cancer who can provide emotional and practical support. Counterpart also offers a range of information, resources and well-being sessions with qualified health professionals that complement the medical system and other cancer support services.

Visit the [new Counterpart website](#)

- **The Endocrine and Metabolic Service at the Women's**

This service specialises in endocrine issues affecting women and their partners in the reproductive age group. The commonest reproductive endocrine problem is polycystic ovarian syndrome, which requires comprehensive assessment and a holistic plan of management.

[The Endocrine Clinic](#) follows a coordinated team approach with fertility specialists, an endocrinologist, dietitian, counsellors and a supportive nursing team. The HealthWise program also provides an individualised lifestyle program for participants.

For referrals use Fax: 8345 3036 (the usual Fast Fax number). For enquiries please contact Endocrine/Reproductive Services on P: 8345 3200

Professional development

Perineal Trauma Masterclass, Friday 10 November

The College of Surgeon at East Melbourne.

8.45am -12.45pm: Interactive Seminar

1.30am - 4.pm: Hands-on Surgical Workshop

Presented by The Pelvic Floor Unit, Royal Women's Hospital.

The day will include a mixture of interactive and didactic learning sessions to facilitate clinicians in their management of patients who have sustained perineal trauma in childbirth. An optional afternoon workshop for medical clinicians (obstetricians/GPs/trainees) involves a hands-on experience in the skills laboratory repairing pig sphincters.

[See the Women's website for more information](#)

Pelvic Floor Symposium, Saturday 11 November

Royal Women's Hospital Conference Room

8.30am - 1pm: Lectures

2pm - 5pm: Practical workshop

Presented by The Pelvic Floor Unit, Royal Women's Hospital.

The symposium will cover recent updates and management of pelvic floor disorders including pelvic organ prolapse, urinary incontinence, and anorectal dysfunction. Lectures will be followed by practical training in conservative therapy and surgical management of pelvic floor disorders.

[See the Women's website for more information](#)

Seminar on Pregnancy, Neonatal and Infant Issues, Saturday 18 November

An annual seminar on pregnancy, neonatal and infant issues presented by The RCH and the Women's

The Royal Children's Hospital, Ella Latham Lecture Theatre

8.45am – 1.30pm (registration 8.15am)

Registration fee: \$48.00

Topics

- Travel, pregnancy and infants
- Heart murmurs
- Neonatal and infant infections
- Sleep and the unsettled baby
- Musculoskeletal issues in pregnancy
- Shared care maternity guidelines
- Tricks of the trade for improving Specialist Clinics access

*topics subject to change

RACGP CPD and ACRRM PDP points pending

No refunds will be provided after Friday 10 November 2016.

[Online registration](#)

[Bookmark the GP Professional Development page on the Women's website](#)

Contacts

GP Liaison Unit

Unit Head Dr Ines Rio
ph: 8345 2064
email: gp.liaison@thewomens.org.au

Shared Care Coordinators
Simone Cordiano and Jane De Marco
ph: 8345 2129
email: shared.care@thewomens.org.au

Fast Fax Referral: fax: 8345 3036
GP Quick Access Number ph: 8345 2058
The Women's Switchboard ph: 8345 2000

PAS Health professional line (03) 8345 3061 (not for use by women needing the service).

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