



## UPDATE

### Inner West Sydney Medicare Local

Inner West Sydney Medicare Local has started an ambitious practice visiting program to engage directly with the more than 2000 private allied health practitioners who practise locally.

During these visits, staff outline the support IWSML is able to offer local allied health practitioners. This includes practical assistance with practice accreditation, understanding MBS items, developing quality improvement recall and reminder systems, and eHealth record system registration. The IWSML also provides access to a free interpreting service for Allied Health Practitioners who register with the Medicare Local.

Every month the Medicare Local holds a large group multidisciplinary continuing professional development event for allied health practitioners and general practitioners. To get on our mailing list please email [office@iwsml.com.au](mailto:office@iwsml.com.au)

All allied health practitioners working locally are welcome to join the Central Sydney Allied Health Network, the allied health arm of the IWSML governance structure. See our website [www.iwsml.org.au](http://www.iwsml.org.au) for information.

### Redfern, Croydon, Marrickville Health Centres

Marrickville Health Centre is working with RPA Women and Babies to host a Midwifery Group Practice antenatal outreach clinic at the centre.

This new clinic, which starts this month, will have a slightly different model of care to the existing MGP antenatal outreach clinic at Croydon Health Centre. The Marrickville clinic will aim to establish an antenatal continuity of care model focussing on building links with Child and Family Health and supporting student midwives to develop an appreciation for continuity of care.

It will provide pregnant women convenient access to antenatal care in a local health centre within their community.

Croydon, Marrickville and Redfern Health Centres will partner with District gastro and liver services to promote the Hepatitis B clinic at Croydon and Marrickville Health Centres. The clinic started last year and is run by a Hepatitis B Clinical Nurse Consultant to support GPs in the assessment, management, education and counselling of people with chronic hepatitis B. Referrals and bookings to the Hepatitis B clinic could be made on 9378 1100 (Croydon Health Centre) or 9562 0500 (Marrickville Health Centre).

## Australian first Aboriginal detox program



*Professor Kate Conigrave and Dr Jonathan Brett of RPA's Drug Health Services*

### RPA's Drug Health Services has helped establish Australia's first outpatient detox program for indigenous Australians with drinking problems.

Sydney LHD Professor of Addiction Medicine, Kate Conigrave, said the program was developed in collaboration with the University of Sydney and the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service (IAMS), currently running a trial in the Illawarra.

"Until now, alcohol detoxification for Aboriginal Australians has happened in a residential treatment service but there is a real shortage of beds, even if there is a court order for someone to stop drinking or face imprisonment," said Professor Conigrave said.

"There are other barriers for residential treatment as people might not have the required childcare or transport, and there is a lot of shame associated with admitting yourself to a detox program. It takes a lot of courage."

Professor Conigrave and Dr Jonathan Brett helped the IAMS manage long standing concerns regarding non-residential detox services for Aboriginal people due to a much higher likelihood of physical illness including diabetes and kidney problems.

The program carefully screens clients to ensure that it is safe for them to detox at home and involves careful monitoring.

"We helped the IAMS apply for funding, provided training and gave them access to clinical protocols from our local health district and elsewhere around the state that specialise in at home detox services," Professor Conigrave said.

"The evaluation of this trial will be very interesting and whatever we learn from the project we will disseminate through all Aboriginal health networks.

"I applaud the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service for this incredibly productive initiative."