Medicare Item 16400 - Practice Nurses as Providers of Antenatal Services: Pilot Training Program

In February 2007, a new Medicare item was introduced for an antenatal service to be provided by a midwife, nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker on behalf of a medical practitioner, for eligible practices in RRMA 3-7 areas.

The Department of Health and Ageing engaged the Royal College of Nursing Australia (RCNA) to develop a training program to support the role for registered nurses in providing antenatal services under this Medicare item. Work on the training commenced with the development of competency standards which were based on input from key stakeholders, including the Australian General Practice Network. The competency standards were developed for registered nurses in general practice providing an antenatal service to patients on behalf of the general practitioner at or from an eligible practice in RRMA 3-7 area.

Subsequent to this, RCNA appointed Monash University, School of Nursing and Midwifery to develop a training program in line with the competency standards to meet the education and training needs of registered nurses. We are pleased to advise that the training program is now ready to be piloted.

The program involves a combination of on-line study and a mandatory clinical placement. Monash University will provide assistance to participants to organise the placement. Financial support is also available to cover travel, accommodation and salary costs associated with undertaking clinical placements.

Further information for registered nurses or midwives who may be interested in enrolling in the training program is available from: http://www.generalpracticenursing.com.au/site/index.cfm?PageMode=indiv&module=NEWS&page_id=35117&leca=239
New MBS Healthy Kids Check

New MBS Items (709 and 711) are now available to assist medical practitioners and practice nurses to undertake Healthy Kids Checks.

The purpose of the Healthy Kids Check is to ensure every four year old child in Australia has a basic health check to see if they are healthy, fit and ready to learn when they start school. The Healthy Kids Check will promote early detection of lifestyle risk factors, delayed development and illness, and introduce guidance for healthy lifestyles and early intervention strategies.

More information is available at:

New MBS Item - Type 2 Diabetes Risk Evaluation

A new MBS item, the Type 2 Diabetes Risk Evaluation (item 713) is available for eligible patients as of 1 July 2008.

The Type 2 Diabetes Risk Evaluation forms part of the ‘COAG - reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes’ initiative to address the significant growth in type 2 diabetes in Australia. The new item is available for patients aged 40 to 49 (inclusive) who are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes, as determined by the Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool. Patients assessed as being at high risk can be referred to relevant interventions, including subsidised lifestyle modification programs run through Divisions of General Practice.

This new item puts a greater focus on illness prevention by enabling GPs to review patients’ risk factors and to instigate early interventions to prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.

More information is available at:

Practice Nurse Leadership and Development Program

Applications are now open for the 2008 Practice Nurse Leadership Program.

The Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) in conjunction with the University of New England Partnerships (UNEP) has established a Practice Nurse Leadership and Development Program. The program was first delivered in 2007.

The Practice Nurse Leadership and Development Program will assist in raising the professional profile of practice nursing as an important area of nursing practice. It will also provide a career pathway for those practice nurses interested in venturing into leadership and management roles. The Program is open to both Practice Nurses and nurses employed by Divisions of General Practice.

The Practice Nurse Leadership and Development Program runs over a 12 month period. The program is delivered by two three day workshops and distance learning. The first workshop is scheduled for 15-17 September 2008 in Adelaide.
For more information on the Practice Nurse Leadership Program please go to the following website

To download the enrolment form please go to:

Stories from the Frontline RCNA General Practice Nurse Conference

The 2008 RCNA General Practice Nurse Conference will be held from the 25-27 November at the Novotel Pacific Bay Resort in Coffs Harbour. The call for abstracts is open on the RCNA website; http://www.rcna.org.au/UserFiles/file/RCNA%20GPN%20CFA%20for%20email.pdf

The call for abstracts closes on 8 August 2008.

AGPN are once again assisting RCNA in sourcing practice nurses who would be interested in presenting in the “Stories from the Frontline” Session. This session provides an opportunity for first time presenters to give a short presentation of around 10 minutes sharing their experience of practice nursing. This session has been rated very highly by delegates at previous conferences.

To register your interest or seek further information please contact Toni Rice at trice@agpn.com.au or (02) 6228 0850. Please note that presenters in the Stories from the Frontline session will receive financial support to cover travel expenses and registration costs, through the Divisions Network NiGP Program. Closing date for Expressions of interest for the Stories from the Frontline session is 1 August 2008.

Development and Delivery of an e-Learning Training Package to Support Medicare Item 10997

AGPN, in association with their partner organisations, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and the Royal College of Nursing Australia, held a meeting for key stakeholders for the e-Learning project in Canberra on 24 June 2008. The meeting was well attended and included representatives from the Department of Health and Ageing, Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council, the Expert Advisory Panel and the National Reference Group. All organisations expressed strong support for the project.

Monash University presented results of the audit and gap analysis of existing training programs and resources, and their recommendations of module specifications. The Expert Advisory Panel consists in part of professional representation from each of the disease-specific organisations; Alzheimer’s Australia; Cancer Council of Australia; National Heart Foundation; Arthritis Foundation; Diabetes Australia; National Asthma Council of Australia.

The current phase of the project involves content modification of recommended best practice training resource programs as a result of Monash University’s audit. The pilot phase of the project will commence in October 2008.
National Resource Library (NRL)

No new resources have been added to the NRL during the month of May 2008. AGPN encourages every division to access the NRL and upload new resources to promote sharing among the divisions.

For assistance to upload resources to the NRL or enquiries for the NRL contact Beta Chakraverty on bchakraverty@agpn.com.au or (02) 6228 0858.

Other News

APNA National Conference

Growing from six nurses around a coffee table in 2001 to over 1400 members, APNA will hold its inaugural national conference in May 2009.

The conference will present opportunities for nurses to come together and learn from international and national experts, debate the challenges facing the profession and hear about innovative models of care.

For more information visit: www.apna.asn.au/conference

Contact the Editor

Information in this newsletter is for the use and benefit of all members of SBOs and Divisions, so please pass it on, and recycle the whole, or parts, of this publication to your members with due acknowledgements to AGPN.

If SBOs, Divisions and other readers have information for, or comments on, AGPN Nursing News please contact Toni Rice on 02 62280850 or email trice@agpn.com.au