

## **Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital GP Liaison Officer Summer Newsletter 2009-10**

It's been another busy year at the 'Eye and Ear', especially in our emergency department who have triaged 41,766 presentations in 2009, (~2/3 eyes and 1/3 ENT). Our Outpatient Bookings Unit handled over 15,000 referrals, of which almost 50% were from GPs. We provided over 13,000 inpatient services and over 173,000 outpatient services. We treated over 6,000 cataracts, performed half of Victoria's public general eye surgery, up to 90% of specialised eye surgery, and almost all public cochlear implant surgery.

For your convenience we have an ENT and Ophthalmology Admitting officer who is available 24/7 for GP's, to use this service call our switch on 9929 8666

### ***Letters from ED to GPs***

Templated letters have improved letter writing rates to GPs to around 40% of all non-review patients, discharged from our Emergency Department, who have nominated a GP. I'm pleased to report that this has remained consistent as measured at regular intervals throughout the year 2009. If you have any suggestions about our correspondence or any other way that we can support GPs let me know.

### ***Outpatient Bookings Unit and Referrals***

In 2009, we applied lean thinking methodology to streamline our outpatient booking process. Currently, over 90% of referrals are triaged within 48 hours. For more information about referrals or to download referral templates, please visit <http://www.eyear.org.au/healthprofs/gpinfo.asp>

### ***Templated outpatient letters to GPs***

A number of our Outpatient Clinics now have easy to use template letters to improve communication with GPs about their patients' condition and treatment received at the Eye and Ear. During 2010, we will be monitoring the use of these template letters and also seeking GP feedback.

### ***Community Eye Care Partnership News***

The demonstration project has now come to a close and reports are being finalised. So far it has demonstrated that it is appropriate and safe for the hospital to refer patients with Diabetes (with minimal or no disease), Glaucoma and stable AMD, for monitoring by community practitioners (including 1 GP and 11 Optometrists). The benefits to the patient include; being seen in a timely manner, closer to home in the community and development of relationships with a community practitioner, as well as enabling the hospital to cope with lengthened waiting lists and improve access for other patients in need. Our next challenge is to integrate this model into the routine practices within the hospital Outpatient Clinics, so that patients fitting the criteria can be followed up in the community for routine monitoring, rather than being reviewed at the hospital annually (or at greater intervals).

### ***HealthSmart Clinical Systems***

The Eye and Ear is one of the two lead agents who will implement the HealthSmart Clinical Systems, which is a state-wide hospital computerised clinical record. Go live for stage 1 is planned for March 2010. Stage 1 will involve receiving pathology results electronically, e-prescribing, recording of clinical information in patient electronic files and automated discharge summary generation. Discharge summaries will be electronically sent to the referring/nominated GP.

***No more handwritten discharge summaries!***

## **GP Education**

### **GP educational evening sessions**

In 2010, we are planning to run some GP educational evening sessions, in collaboration with the Melbourne GP Network. Please contact the MGPN or me for more information.

### **Clinical Attachments**

I am able to arrange for GP's to spend 1-2 days shadowing an Eye or an ENT registrar in our emergency department, please contact me if this is of interest.

### **Melb Uni Dept of Otolaryngology Audiol workshops.**

#### **Is your message falling on deaf ears?**

The University of Melbourne Department of Otolaryngology offers a range of professional development sessions and workshops catered to medical professionals throughout the year. Since one in six Australians currently has some form of hearing loss many professionals will be dealing regularly with a significant number of hearing impaired clients. Participation in these sessions aims to broaden knowledge of the audiological and diagnostic considerations of ear dysfunction. Please see the website for more details:

[http://www.medoto.unimelb.edu.au/clinical\\_services/professional\\_development\\_sessions](http://www.medoto.unimelb.edu.au/clinical_services/professional_development_sessions)

#### ***Is there anything else you would like to know?***

We encourage input from GPs about our correspondence or any other way that we can support GPs. If you have any suggestions please contact me directly.

#### ***GP Liaison Contact Details:***

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