QuIK Tip

Summer Planning and Disaster Preparedness

! With global warming and the Bureau of Meteorology raising an El Niño alert in Australia, we are expecting to have a hot and dry summer with the strong possibility of bushfires. This QuIK Tip is to help prepare you and your practice for summer and to be able to respond to any potential emergencies.

☐ 1. Prepare your practice

General practices play a key role in informing patients and responding to health concerns of the community. Having an up to date emergency plan including a process to communicate any practice closures to your patients is a requirement to meet RACGP standards for accreditation.

- Appoint a designated staff member who can update your website and/or send notifications to your patients.
- Contact Capital Health Network (CHN) at 6287 8099 or email primarycare@chnact.org.au to communicate any practice changes should you be required to activate your emergency plan.

These resources can assist your practice in creating an emergency plan:

- Managing Emergencies in General Practice - RACGP
- Power Outage Checklist - The Energy Charter
- Preparing a General Practice for a Disaster- ACT and SNSW Healthpathways

☐ 2. Review relevant HealthPathways

- Burn Injuries
- Heat-related Illness
- General Practice Management During a Disaster
- Post Natural Disaster Health
- Preparing Patients for a Disaster

☐ 3. Review your digital health capability and infrastructure

- CHN Digital Health QuIK Step
- Australian Digital Health Agency
- My Health Record

☐ 4. Identify your vulnerable patients

Identifying your vulnerable patients will assist you to develop emergency action plans with them and prioritise care. Your POLAR software is an essential audit tool that can identify and group your patients. Visit the Knowledge Base to learn how to filter your patient list or contact the QI Team.

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5. Prepare your patients

It is important to educate patients, particularly those who are vulnerable, on how to prepare for a potential emergency. The following resources might be helpful:

- Air Quality Health Advice Portal – ACT Government
- First Aid for Asthma Charts – National Asthma Council (NAC)
- Home Emergency Kit – ACT Emergency Services Agency
- Plan for Natural Disasters and Emergencies – NDSS
- Staying Well During Hot Weather – ACT Government

6. Relevant health resources

- Bushfires and Asthma Factsheet –NAC
- Information for GPs in Disaster Affected areas – RACGP
- Thunderstorm Asthma – NAC
- Sun Safety – Cancer Council Australia

7. Stay up to date

- AirRater App
- Air Quality in the ACT – ACT Government
- Canberra Forecast – Bureau of Meteorology
- Canberra Pollen Count and Forecast
- Chief Health Officer Alerts – ACT Government
- Fires Near Me – NSW Rural Fire Service
- Incident Updates – ACT Emergency Services Agency

8. Get to know care options over the holiday season

Ensure patients know where to access the right healthcare at the right time when you are closed. The Medicare Urgent Care Clinic in Woden will operate over the holidays, providing episodic care for urgent conditions. For after hours care options visit our website or visit the healthdirect Service Finder

9. Staff support and wellbeing

- AccessEAP – Free counselling provided by CHN for those working in general practices, pharmacies and allied health settings.
- Drs4Drs ACT Support for doctors and medical students
- Nurse and Midwife Support - NM Support
- Peer Support and Counselling- Nurse Midwife Health Program
- Self-care and Mental Health Resources – RACGP
- TEN – The Essential Network for Health Professionals - Black Dog Insitute