

VFPMS NEWLETTER

Health Professionals Working Together to Keep Children Safe

An online learning tool is now available to assist health professionals in understanding the important role they play in protecting children's health, well-being and safety.

This resource is accessed via the VFPMS website and provides a sound and easily accessible way of learning about recognising and responding to vulnerable children, the service system that supports those children and the roles and responsibilities of health service staff.



www.vfpms.org.au/childrenatrisk

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

E-Learning Resource	1
Regional Profile	1
Quality Assurance Meas-	1
VFPMS Seminar Report	2
Picture Gallery: VFPMS	3
Practitioner Profile: Peter	4

Regional Referral Data July 2009—Nov 2009

Only a few short months to report but already demonstrating the responsive regional network

Region	Health Service Area	Number of Patients
Grampians	Ballarat	5
Barwon/South West	Geelong	8
	Warrnambool	20
Lodden Mallee	Bendigo	7
	Mildura	1
Hume	Shepparton	4
	Wangaratta	1
Gippsland	Sale	1

"VFPMS provide high quality medico-legal reports"

ATTENTION!

New Quality Assurance Measures

VFPMS must ensure that it provides high quality medico-legal reports.

On 1st December VFPMS will tighten up procedures for payment of forensic paediatric medical services.

From 1st December 2009 VFPMS payment will be forwarded to service providers ONLY IF

1. The medical report is in VFPMS format (or close to it)
2. The report has been peer reviewed by VFPMS tertiary level experts
3. The report was approved by VFPMS prior to the release of the report to Child Protection and/or Police

VFPMS is available for advice and consultation ALL HOURS on 1300 661142. If the above requirements are not met then service providers will not be reimbursed for their services.

Link to VFPMS Report Format:

<http://www.vfpms.org.au/pages/MedicalReport.php>

Towards a Competent Network

A Review of the VFPMS Seminar: Increasing Competency in Caring for Vulnerable and Abused Children

“My attendance has increased my confidence and decreased ignorance and reluctance to deal with future cases of suspected abuse”

“it would be great to have teaching like this for all the trainees on a yearly basis”

“Very relevant and practical”

“A great concept. Please make it an annual event”

These are just a few of the positive comments and feedback received in relation to the inaugural VFPMS regional practitioners Seminar. Presentations by experienced forensic and paediatric colleagues from VFPMS, VIFM and across regional Victoria had the audience enthralled with topics ranging from clinical intricacies of fractures, burns, bruising and abusive head trauma through to the complexities of giving evidence in court and writing good medical reports.

“My attendance has increased my confidence and decreased ignorance and reluctance to deal with future cases of suspected abuse”

The 50 or so medical practitioners and nurses from both Victoria and Interstate were able to take advantage of the opportunities to network and engage in conversation with colleagues from across Australia, sharing knowledge, experiences and no doubt, a few funny tales.

VFPMS is leading the way in the provision of quality education and opportunities for increasing confidence and competence in the provision of forensic paediatric medical care. The trainees and medical students in attendance certainly enjoyed the teaching of some of the State’s leading experts in this important and vital area of work.

VFPMS would like to thank all the speakers for their valued contribution and all the delegates for their enthusiastic participation.

The table shows a brief summary of some of the feedback from delegates. They indicate that the event was well organised and that the subject matter and speakers were valued and useful. Many helpful comments were shared indicating some useful topics and ideas for the next event.

	Rating (%)
Overall Seminar Rating	89 %
Organisation	93 %
Subject Matter	90 %
Speakers	90 %
Increased competence	79 %
Value for Daily work	82 %



Regional Practitioner Profiles

The next in the series of profiles of colleagues working across Victoria aimed at linking the VFPMS regional network.

The 'Roving Reporter' captures another candidate in bringing the VFPMS network of practitioners into view.

This edition introduces **Peter Eastaugh** from Shepparton in the Hume Region of Victoria. Peter has been a familiar face in the region for over 30 years and is a strong supporter and advocate for regional patients, their families and the clinicians that treat them.

"Don't do paediatrics if you are not intuitively a paediatrician"



How long have you been working with vulnerable children
What have been the highlights of your career to date?

I began my training in 1973 mainly at the Royal Children's Hospital. I became a consultant in 1981. I have been working with vulnerable children for the whole of my career. The highlight of my career would have to be the sheer privilege of working with many children over several generations. It is wonderful to meet the children of children I have treated over the years. There is nothing more rewarding than to be out for dinner in town and to hear "hello Dr Peter".

Do you have an area of specialism or expertise? Why?

Working with vulnerable children has been my specialism for many years, working alongside child protection agencies to ensure children get access to health care.

Is there a person, discovery or experience that has been significant influence on your professional career?

That has to be the pragmatic and pioneering work of Howard Williams. He was passionate about community paediatrics and it was this work that ensured my whole career has been dominated by social welfare.

Can you tell us a bit about the region where you currently practice?

Shepparton is two hours north of Melbourne. It is the fruit capital of Victoria and has some of the oldest and best wineries. It's a large regional city but has great access to three major rivers – the Goulburn, the Murray and Broken Rivers, so there are lots of activities such as walking, fishing and boating. The weather is very gentle but can be very hot and dry in the summer. There is even an ever changing exhibition of life-sized 3D fiberglass cows, "MooovingArt" which brings a whole new meaning to street art.

What are the great things about living or working in your region?

Being a paediatrician in regional Victoria is a wonderful opportunity to be part of a community. There is a fantastic local community as well as a dedicated and hard working professional community in Shepparton. The greatest success in this region is the multi-disciplinary way of managing children. Everyone knows who every one else is and what part they are playing in the community. I visit local schools and talk to the teachers and psychologists. Being a paediatrician works best when you are part of a care team for the child.

In your experience, what are some of the challenges that face the doctors and paediatricians in your region?

The tyranny of distance and the isolation are the most difficult things; the isolation from professionals in my discipline and always needing to take time out and travel to access education and training. Getting tertiary opinion is challenging. Also the workload is great in regional practice as there is very little cover. It's often the resident or registrar and you.

If you were able to visit anywhere in the world for a relaxing two week holiday where would you go, who or what would you take and why?

I am about to embark on my dream holiday, a 5 week 4x4 trip across the Kimberley with my off-road camper. I'm going bush and wouldn't dream of doing all that without my lovely wife. Why, because we are the best of friends.

What do you do to unwind at the end of a stressful day?

I retreat to my shed and my tools to build timber furniture. I always have a long term project on the go using wood like cedar and jarrah. I enjoy reclaiming waste and turning it into something beautiful for either myself or one of the children.

Do you have any tips or 'words of wisdom' for others?

Being a paediatrician takes intuition. Don't do paediatrics if you are not intuitively a paediatrician. It's something you are born with and cannot learn.

Website News

The VFPMS website is getting an overhaul. Gradually the site is being refined and augmented with useful links and information. A recent addition is the regional pages. You can now access contact details for a range of practitioners and services via the referral pages for regional Victoria

http://www.vfpms.org.au/pages/R_and_R_claim.php

These pages also contain information about the process of offering a forensic paediatric medical service in regional Victoria. The site contains a flow chart to inform practitioners when and how to write reports and to make a claim for your time and expertise.