**saundersstreetclinic**

**37 Jackson Street, Wynyard, TASMANIA. Phone 6442 1700**

**Newsletter February 2017**

**Opening hours**

Monday - Thursday 9am-1230 pm, 2pm-5 pm ( Dr’s in teaching session until 2.30 pm Thurs)

Friday 9am-1230 pm, 2.30pm-5 pm

Saturday, Sunday, Public Holidays closed

**After hours arrangements**

Please phone the surgery number, you will be given the number for Health Direct which is a phone triage service providing advice by the Federal Government. This service will contact the doctor on call at Saunders Street if necessary, following assessment by a registered nurse and in some cases by a doctor. If your concern is about **a medical emergency** call the ambulance service on **000**-there is no charge for ambulance call-outs in Tasmania.

If the matter is urgent but not an emergency call **Health Direct 1800 022 222**. A registered nurse using triage protocols will take your call. If necessary the call will be transferred to a GP at GP Assist in Hobart and if that GP thinks a call out or house call is warranted a GP from this clinic will be contacted.

**Medicare Freeze**

A bulk billed standard appointment for non-concession card holders or children over 16 is $37.05. The Government's freeze on Medicare rebates could ultimately cost the health system more than any savings the Federal government claims to make by the protracted Medicare freeze.

This is because doctors were "time squeezed" and struggling to provide the quality care that could prevent health problems escalating and needing more costly interventions, such as hospital care.

Some 600,000 hospital admissions a year are thought to be avoidable, and each one costs around $5,000, according to the National Health Performance Authority.

"The point is that GPs are amazing value for money," Sydney GP Dr Oliver said in an interview on RN's Health Report.

"I don't know of any other profession that would accept an eight-year freeze on an increase in their pay."

The most common consultation for GPs is one that lasts less than 20 minutes. For this they are reimbursed $37.05 from Medicare.

Current and previous governments have failed to increase this amount, which is slated to remain the same until 2020, despite the increase in the cost of delivering services.

This freeze has prompted some medical practices to increase the fees they charge patients and reduce their bulk-billing rates.

But many argue they can only pass so much onto patients and GPs themselves are left unfairly bearing the brunt of the rest of the shortfall.

"GPs are doing amazing work to save the healthcare system money and to save people," Dr Oliver said.

"[But] the more that GPs get squeezed, the less time they are going to be able to spend with people and healthcare is going to suffer as a result. And so is the budget.

"Sometimes the problem can be solved in, say, eight minutes, and that's great. But sometimes it requires much more than that."

## The stress toll

Dr Oliver said if the situation does not change, she cannot continue to work as a GP.

"I'm going to stop doing it if it stays like this," she said.

"I am a good doctor, I have patients tell me that I'm a great doctor, but I'm not going to keep doing it for this amount of pay, and for the drain and the toll that it takes on my life, I can't.

"I spent a huge amount of time and effort and tears and blood and money to become a doctor.

"I'm really proud to be one and I know that it's a fantastic privilege and I love my job.

"But I physically and mentally can't keep doing this under these bulk-billing arrangements and with this Medicare freeze.

"GPs need help."

(<http://www.abc.net.au/news/health/2017-02-17/gp-hits-out-over-medicare-pay-freeze/8276284> )

**Chlamidia**

Genital chlamydia is caused by the Chlamydia trachomatis bacterium and is the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI) in Australia.

Chlamydia trachomatis infection (sexually transmitted infections only) is a notifiable condition1

Chlamydia trachomatisis usually transmitted sexually.

## Signs and symptoms

Genital chlamydia occurs in both men and women, though up to 25% of infected men and 70% of infected women may not have any symptoms, and may not know they have the infection. This doesn’t mean the infection is trivial as complications can develop even in people without symptoms. Having a current sexually transmitted infection also increases the risk of getting [Human immunodeficiency virus infection (HIV)](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+topics/health+conditions+prevention+and+treatment/infectious+diseases/human+immunodeficiency+virus+infection+hiv+and+aids/human+immunodeficiency+virus+hiv+aids+infection) infection if you are exposed to HIV.

Chlamydia trachomatiscan cause conjunctivitis (inflammation of the lining of the eyelids and eye) in both adults and babies. Babies born to infected mothers can become infected as they pass through the infected cervix and may develop conjunctivitis or pneumonia (lung infection or inflammation) caused by Chlamydiasoon after birth.

A small proportion of people infected with Chlamydia trachomatisdevelop joint pain.

Having Chlamydiainfection does not result in immunity, and so re-infection is common. It is likely that the most serious complications (infertility, pelvic inflammatory disease and blindness) are the result of repeated infections.

### Males

In men, Chlamydiamay produce a urethritis (infection of the urethra, the urinary canal leading from the bladder to exit at the tip of the penis). A discharge from the penis may be present but many infections have no symptoms. Occasionally, infection may spread to the epididymis (storage tubes for sperm that are on top of the testes), which can be very painful and may lead to infertility.

### Females

Although most infected women are without symptoms, it is women who suffer the most serious consequences of genital Chlamydiainfections. In women, the cervix (opening of the uterus at the top of the vagina) becomes infected. From the cervix, the infection may spread to the Fallopian tubes, which are tubes leading from the ovary to the uterus, causing pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). Pelvic inflammatory disease due to Chlamydiais often without symptoms but if untreated may lead to scarring of the Fallopian tubes and ectopic (tubal) pregnancy or infertility.

## Diagnosis

Chlamydiainfection is best diagnosed by examination and PCR (polymerase chain reaction) testing in a pathology laboratory of a sample of cervical or urethral discharge. PCR tests on urine specimens may be used for screening in people without symptoms.

The infection cannot be diagnosed from a blood test.

## Incubation period

(time between becoming infected and developing symptoms)

1 to 3 weeks.

## Infectious period

(time during which an infected person can infect others)

Unknown, probably many months if untreated.

## Treatment

Effective antibiotic treatment is available on prescription from a doctor. However, if infertility develops, there is no simple treatment.

For more information on treatment options, see the [Chlamydia brochure (PDF 112KB)(opens in a new window)](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/resources/chlamydia)

## Prevention

* Practise safer sex.
* No sex until antibiotic treatment is completed and your usual sexual partner has completed treatment.
* A follow-up test must be done to make sure that treatment has cleared the infection.
* All sexual partners need to be contacted, tested and treated, if indicated. Even if partners have no symptoms they may be able to transmit infection to other sexual partners.
* Testing to exclude other sexually transmitted infections is advisable.

<http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+topics/health+conditions+prevention+and+treatment/infectious+diseases/chlamydia+genital/chlamydia+genital+-+including+symptoms+treatment+and+prevention>