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## Study bringing specialist and primary care together for better child health



A new pilot study is aiming to boost child health care in the primary care system by placing specialist paediatricians in local general practices.

The Strengthening Care for Children project, backed by the Royal Children’s Hospital and North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network, has recruited five general practices in the NWMPHN region to take part during 2017-2018. The pilot is funded by the Victorian Government agency Better Care Victoria.

The study examines the impact on child health outcomes of providing greater specialist support to general practice in treating and managing paediatric patients.

Participating practices receive a co-located experienced Royal Children’s Hospital paediatrician on a weekly basis for patient co-consultations, as well as a monthly, in-practice case conference for health professionals with the paediatrician. They will also be able to access the paediatrician via phone and email for same-day advice.

NWMPHN CEO Adjunct Associate Professor Christopher Carter said building stronger connections between specialist services and primary care can improve health outcomes for children and young people.

“GPs already provide quality medical care to children every day, and this project will give them the resources and support needed to provide an even better level of care,” A/Prof Carter said.

Professor Harriet Hiscock, Paediatrician and Project Lead, said she is delighted to be able offer paediatric support to families close to their home, with greater continuity of GP care for common child health conditions.

The pilot study began in February and will run until late 2018, covering practices in Bacchus Marsh, Gisborne, Newport and Northcote. For more information please contact Jessica Holman, NWMPHN Quality Project Lead, on 03 9347 1188 or <mailto:jessica.holman@nwmpnhn.org.au>



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## ABOUT PHNs

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health, PHNs began operation on 1 July 2015 and are responsible for coordinating primary health care and facilitating improved health outcomes in their local community. Melbourne Primary Care Network operates the North Western Melbourne PHN.

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We acknowledge the peoples of the Kulin nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our work in the community takes place. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

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