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New Tender: Managing an unwell child in the after hours period



North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) is looking for providers to deliver an education and training program to improve the confidence of parents and caregivers in managing an unwell child in the after hours period.

The tender, to the value of \$325,000 over two years, will focus on parents and caregivers of children of up to four years of age in the Wyndham, Melton and Hume local government areas.

In the NWMPHN catchment, the highest rate of reports to the emergency department in the after hours period is for children between zero and four years of age.

The primary reason this age category is so high is due to parents and caregivers perceiving the condition to be too serious and complex to be managed by a general practitioner.

Face to face education sessions targeting specific childhood conditions, such as asthma, have been proved to reduce unnecessary presentations to the emergency department.

This tender will provide parents and caregivers with the confidence and reassurance they need to more effectively assess whether their child needs urgent medical attention. The education program will also increase awareness about the many after hours health services available so that going to the emergency department is not seen as the only or default position.

NWMPHN CEO Adjunct Associate Professor Christopher Carter said that this will increase parents' and caregivers' skills in responding to and managing an unwell child, which will in turn decrease the perception that only hospitals can provide proper care.

"Our data showed that parents were worried about making the right call when their child is unwell in the after hours period," Associate Professor Carter said.

"This tender aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of parents so they feel more confident about making the best and most appropriate decisions when it comes to the health of their children."

The training program will be available in a range of languages, as approximately 44 per cent of residents in the NWMPHN catchment area were born in a country other than Australia.

Applicants are encouraged to submit innovative tenders and will need to register and apply through Tenderlink. Visit <https://www.tenderlink.com/mpcn/>

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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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