Fact Sheet

Establishing a new general practice

When establishing a new general practice or taking over the ownership of an existing practice in rural Western Australia, there are many things to consider. There are planning stages as for any new business and additional considerations when operating a medical practice.

The following provides a guideline for consideration. Please note this list is not exhaustive.

**Business Planning**
- Business structure or legal entity (sole trader, medical company, discretionary trust, service business)
- Development of business objectives (financial, strategic and operational)
- Establishment of your team of external advisors (accountant, financier and legal)
- Identification of stakeholders and assistance organisations (Rural Health West, Medicare Local, Shire/Local Government Authority)
- Risk analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- Building
  - Consulting rooms, nursing station, treatment room, reception and waiting room fit out
- Council approval
- Design, layout and parking
- Disability access
- Land, purchase, lease
- Location

- Medical and office equipment
- Security
- Temperature control

**Finance**
- Australian Taxation Office requirements (Australian Business Number, Business Activity Statements)
- Banking (bank accounts, EFTPOS)
- Establishing billing practices and a chart of fees
- Establishment of business budget(s)
- Establishment of Medicare Australia / Department of Health operations (ECLIPSE, Easy Claim, Online Claiming, PCEHR, PBS)
- Financial planning, cash flow
- Payroll systems
- Purchasing procedures
- Reconciliation of accounts

**Operational**
- Filing systems
- Hours of operation
- Identification of suppliers (stock, stationery, consumables)
- Insurance (medico, business, public liability)
- Management of hazardous waste
- Marketing, promotion and signage
- Pathology services / companies
- Patient feedback, complaints management
- Patient registration

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Quality improvement practices
Scheduling appointments
Services offered

Policies and Procedures
Accreditation against the RACGP Standards
Business interruption procedures (emergency)
Codes of practice, compliance
Confidentiality, privacy and intellectual property control
Destruction and / or archiving of medical records
Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)
Sterilisation and infection control
Vaccination and drug management – storage and security, cold chain, legislative requirements
Information and Communications Technology
Disaster recovery plan
Hardware (computers, printers, scanners, fax machine, shredder)
Software (finance, practice management, clinical records)
Source a provider or IT Support
Telehealth and e-health
Telephone systems
Website development

Clinical management
Continuity of care (handover, after hours etc)
Legislative requirements for the acquisition, use, storage and disposal of Schedule 4 and Schedule 8 medicines
Management of personal health records
Procedures and management of results, follow up, registers and recalls
Purchase of medical stock and supplies

Human Resources
Annual reviews
Contracts and agreements
Payroll operation
Performance management
Position descriptions
Staffing
Clinical (medical practitioner(s), nursing)
Non-clinical (practice manager, receptionist(s), administrative, cleaning)
Superannuation
Taxation
Training and induction

Medical practitioner requirements
Clinical supervision (if required)
Medical Board registration
Medical Indemnity
Medicare Provider Number(s)
Overseas trained doctor restrictions
Area of Need
District of Workforce Shortage
Immigration and visa obligations
Ten Year Moratorium

Practice Nurse(s)
Clinical supervision of enrolled nurses
Endorsement of registration (additional qualifications and expertise)
Professional boundaries, competencies and guidelines
Professional indemnity insurance
Resources

- Australian Association of Practice Managers (AAPM) http://www.aapm.org.au/
- Business Enterprise Centre www.becaustralia.org.au
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry www.cciwa.com
- Doctor Connect http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au
- GPA ACCREDITATION plus http://www.gpa.net.au/
- Rural and Regional Health Australia http://www.ruralhealthaustralia.gov.au
- Small Business Centre www.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au
- Small Business Development Corporation www.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au

Further reading

- Successful Practice Management: Exceeding Patient Expectations. Colleen Sullivan and Geoffrey Meredith; Edited by Ellie Gleeson; October 2012

Professional education

- Australian Association of Practice Managers (AAPM) http://www.aapm.org.au/
- Medical Administration Training www.medtrain.com.au
- The Private Practice www.theprivatepractice.com.au
- UNE Partnerships Pty Ltd www.unep.edu.au

For more information on how Rural Health West can support your practice please contact telephone: 6389 4500 Email: workforcesupport@ruralhealthwest.com.au

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