



'We make a vital contribution to medical care in the Illawarra.'



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Dear Doctor / Practice Manager

We are currently accepting applications for new members of our respected, not-for-profit, after hours medical service, Wollongong Medical Service Cooperative Ltd (WMSC), trading as Radio Doctor Illawarra.

We pride ourselves on being the only AGPAL accredited, medical deputising service and Co-operative undertaking after hours medical services in patients' homes in the Illawarra.

From Scarborough in the north to Shellcove in the south, we have been providing this respected, high quality, after hours service to thousands of families in the region since 1974. We continue to operate as a successful, not-for-profit co-operative organisation, comprised and run by local medical practitioners.

**On average, Radio Doctor Illawarra:**

- Provides over 18,000 in home medical consultations each year
- Has over 280 Member Medical Practitioners
- Provides over 130 hours per week of after hours medical coverage for our Members

We make a vital contribution to medical care and are well respected by other healthcare providers in the region. However we do not act as an emergency service, nor are we a replacement for a patient's regular Medical Practitioner. Our role is to provide urgent medical care for your patients when you are not available.

Attached is additional information on our organisation and services, including membership application forms. Please don't hesitate to contact our office on 4227 3251 if you have any further questions.

I look forward to welcoming you or your practice as new members to the respected Radio Doctor Illawarra service and helping us continue to maintain high quality, after hours patient care in the region.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Darryl Bryant**  
**CHAIRMAN**  
**WOLLONGONG MEDICAL SERVICES COOPERATIVE LIMITED**  
**TRADING AS RADIO DOCTOR ILLAWARRA**



## WHY SHOULD YOU OR YOUR PRACTICE JOIN?

- Quality, reliable after hours care for your patients on nights, weekends and public holidays, all year round
- Provides you with hassle-free after hours arrangements, supporting a more balanced work-home lifestyle
- Low cost, deductible business expense
- Electronically-delivered patient reports from any visit our locum Doctors make to your patients, ensuring continuity of care
- We are AGPAL accredited, fulfilling the requirement for you or your practice's After Hours Practice Incentive Payments (PIP)
- Subscription fees, billing arrangements and coverage hours are designed to align with the new After Hours PIP system
- Membership assists in fully meeting your practice accreditation standard (RACGP Standards criterion 1.1.4)
- Provision of marketing and informational materials for your practice and patients
- Administrative support and Member assistance during business hours
- You become a shareholder of our respected After Hours Medical Co-operative operating since 1974

## STATISTICS



18,000  
IN HOME  
MEDICAL  
CONSULTATIONS  
PER YEAR



OVER 280  
MEMBER MEDICAL  
PRACTITIONERS



134 HOURS PER WEEK  
AFTER HOURS  
MEDICAL COVERAGE



## 'Local Medical Practitioners concerned about after hours care.'

### ABOUT US

Radio Doctor Illawarra (RDI) is the trading name for Wollongong Medical Service Co-operative Limited, which was established in 1974 by a group of local Medical Practitioners concerned about after hours care for their patients in the region.

As a co-operative, Doctors join as Members for a common purpose and outcome.

- We are proud to offer a bulk billing home Doctor service that operates across the Illawarra, from the Sea Cliff Bridge starting at Scarborough through to Shell Cove in the south.
- We operate on weeknights, weekends and public holidays, all year round and employ local drivers to chaperone our locum Doctors.
- We are a fully AGPAL Accredited Medical Deputising Service and a full member of the National Association of Medical Deputising Services.
- Radio Doctor Illawarra is not an emergency service, nor a replacement for a patient's regular Medical Practitioner and our locum Doctors do not treat wounds or prescribe S8 drugs.

### How we operate

Locum Doctors and Members provide their services on a roster based, shift system during the following periods:

**Weeknights (Monday – Friday):**  
6pm - 6am

**Weekends:**  
Saturday 12pm midday - Monday 6am

**Public Holidays:**  
24 hours

### All year round

- Our Doctors and drivers operate out of our fully equipped, clean and comfortable premises.
- Patients phone our call centre (02) 4228 5522 and Doctors are assigned jobs accordingly.
- Locum Doctors provide a report of all patient consultations to the Radio Doctor Illawarra business office, which is then promptly sent electronically to the patient's Member Doctor.

## FEES

- You will firstly need to become a shareholder by purchasing 50 x \$1 shares.
- Your subscription fees are based on Standardised Whole Patient Equivalent (SWPE) figures, which are also used to calculate your After Hours Practice Incentive Payment (PIP). **This year your fees will be \$1.50 per SWPE.**
- A full time doctor generates approximately 1000 SWPE per annum.
- Therefore, for a full time doctor, one year's subscription fee is \$1500 + GST.
- This is only \$125 per calendar month.

### What if I don't know my SWPE figures?

SWPE figures are calculated by your practice for the purpose of claiming the PIP payment. If for some reason you cannot calculate them, you will need to let us know the number of full time equivalent (FTE) doctors at the practice and we will base your subscription as: 1 FTE=1000 SWPE per year and bill you accordingly.

If your practice is registered for Practice Incentive Payments (PIP) then your SWPE figures are available from Department of Human Services – Practice Incentives Program, phone 1800 222 032.

### How do I calculate Full Time Equivalent (FTE) doctors for my practice?

A full time doctor is assumed to work 40 hours per week; simply total up the number of hours all doctors work in your practice in an average week and divide by 40.

#### Example:

**A practice has the following doctors working on average per week:**

**Dr 1 works 45 hours per week**

**Dr 2 works 20 hours per week**


**Dr 3 works 40 hours per week**

**Total hours = 105/40 = 2.625 FTE**

**Total estimated SWPE 2.625x1000 = 2625 PER YEAR**

### What if we aren't an accredited practice?

This does not affect your membership of Wollongong Medical Service Co-operative however it does mean you are ineligible for After Hours Practice Incentive Payments.



'We operate on weeknights,  
weekends and public holidays.'

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### To join follow these simple steps:

1. Decide if you wish to join as an individual or as a whole practice.
2. Complete the attached 'Application for Shares Form'. This must be signed by the applicant Doctor or Practice Principal.
3. Complete the attached 'Membership Information Form'.
4. Once the form/s are completed please return by post, fax or email to:

**PO Box 214,  
Fairy Meadow, NSW 2519  
Fax: 02 4229 3008  
Email: [generalmanager@radiodoctor.com.au](mailto:generalmanager@radiodoctor.com.au)**

5. Once your application is received and accepted, you will then be sent an invoice for the \$50 shares and the next three months subscription fees, including payment method details.
6. Once payment is received, we will confirm your membership in writing and you will be sent membership poster and promotional materials for distribution to your patients.

### What happens next?

- You will receive relevant promotional and marketing materials for display at your practice or online to advise patients that our after hours service is available to them.
- In order to receive patient reports, Healthlink software may need to be installed on your practice management system. This software integrates seamlessly and is already installed in many practices - [see www.healthlink.net](http://www.healthlink.net).
- Every three months, you will be asked to provide your updated SWPE or FTE figures in order for us to prepare the subscription invoice for the upcoming quarterly period.

'We make a vital contribution to medical care.'



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## What are our rights and responsibilities as a member?

- All members (including practice members) are required to be available for patient care outside of our operating hours:

**Monday to Friday 6am to 8am**

**Saturdays: 8am to 11am**

Calls to you will be triaged through our service.

- As a Member, you or your practice will be listed on a backup roster and should be available for duty on specified dates, if necessary. This is rarely required due to our extensive availability of locum doctors but you will receive suitable notice and payment.
- As a Member of the Co-operative, Members have the opportunity to participate in the affairs of the organisation, including voting rights, Board representation and other business which is defined in the Rules and Regulations of WMSC Ltd\*, providing their subscription fees are up to date.
- Member Doctor(s) must refer patients after hours to our service.

\*The full Rules and Regulations of WMSC Ltd are available to members or prospective members by request.

## Further questions

Please feel free to contact the General Manager by phone or email on **02 4227 3251** or **generalmanager@radiodoctor.com.au** with any questions you may have.

## SERVICE AREAS



Call Centre: (02) 4228 5522  
Office: (02) 4227 3251  
Fax: (02) 4204 9049  
enquiries@radiodoctor.com.a