

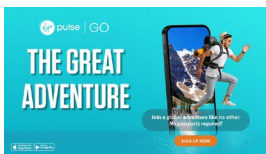
## May 2022

We are getting closer to winter now and you can feel it in the air. The mornings and evenings are definitely crisper - even with the return of the incessant rain! There's still time to book in for your annual flu shot. There are some appointments still available at the Health Service, though they are being snapped up so check out the article below and get in quick.

Have you got an HP laptop with a swollen battery? Our article tells you what to do, and provides some tips to prevent it from happening. We also have a great tip for staff with keyboard-heavy roles - how to use Dictate in Word! Our article on footwear in research facilities shows you how to protect your feet, and we've also got an article on how to reduce the risk of contracting Japanese encephalitis, plus a very important Safety Alert on how to safely work with hydrofluoric acid (tip - if at all possible, don't!).

The VP GO health and wellbeing event is now open - you can join now to start using the platform, and put your team together for the Destination GO activity challenge. Don't miss the Benestar webinar, Balancing Your Life, plus a special event for parents and carers on how to support children after major events. We've got Mental Health First Aid training, plus online suicide prevention training from the Black Dog Institute. There are still places available in both courses.

One last thing - we've had a rise in the number of slips, trips and falls due to all the rain and slippery conditions. Please, everyone, take care out there.



## Get Ready for VP GO!

VP GO is a chance to improve your health in ways that work for you, with teammates by your side. It's a wellbeing platform that meets you where you're at.

As part of your wellbeing journey, you'll be embarking on an action-packed 9-week team-based activity challenge - Destination GO. Destination GO is a virtual race around the world, and however you get there, whether you walk, run, do yoga at home or bike around town, is up to you!

The VP GO app is packed with easy ways to make small, healthy changes and provides you with a personalised wellbeing program:

- Daily tips to fit wellness into your routine
- Personal, guided Journeys that let you choose how to get healthier
- Set up your own mini-challenges with friends and colleagues
- Learn and track healthy habits, then watch your progress in real-time
- See how far you've come with two free health assessments

You can [sign up now for VP GO](#) and start using all the fantastic features of the platform. Once you're in, don't forget to join the Destination GO challenge and start putting your team together!



## Benestar Webinar - Balancing Your Life

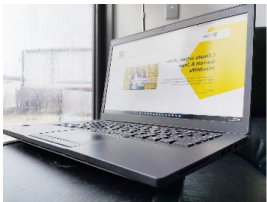
Join Benestar on Tuesday 24 May for a webinar on Balancing Your Life. This webinar is free to join for all UNSW staff members. Balancing Your Life will help you to:

- Take stock of your current life balance and evaluate your expectations
- Value yourself, your goals and your priorities
- Understand the issues and risks of being out of balance
- Explore strategies to achieve a realistic life balance

The webinar will be held on Teams from 12pm-1pm on Tuesday 24 May. Benestar webinars are no longer recorded, so you will not be able to view a recording after the event. Please attend at this time if you are available and you are interested in the topic.

[Please click here to register.](#)

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## Swollen laptop batteries

IT Services have recently received reports that some older HP laptop batteries have become somewhat contorted or swollen over time. The battery swelling can be significant enough to impact other components of the laptop. The vendors have confirmed that a swollen battery does not present a safety issue but to protect hardware from potential damage, the battery should be removed from power and replaced immediately.

Contact the ITU Service Centre to discuss your options for the replacement of any swollen batteries. There are also guidelines to consider ([in this full article](#)) to reduce the chances of this happening.

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## Flu Vaccines 2022

The influenza vaccine will be arriving at the UNSW Health Service in late April 2022. Flu vaccines are free for all current UNSW staff and students and are strongly recommended. Any flu vaccine-related appointments will be bulk billed.

### Why is the flu vaccine so important this year?

The flu vaccine will reduce the number of people who get the flu and therefore the number of people needing hospital beds as a result of severe flu, limiting the impact on the health system. It is possible to get the flu and COVID-19 at the same time which will likely cause significantly worse symptoms.

### Can I get the flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time?

Yes, both flu and COVID-19 vaccines can be given at the same time. If you are aged over 65 or are immunocompromised, now is the time to book in. UNSW Health Service will provide separate clinics for these appointments.

### Do I have to come to the Health Service?

Yes, you will need to come to the clinic to have your vaccination. We will be taking bookings online via our [HOTDOC booking platform](#).

### When will the flu clinic commence?

The annual staff influenza clinics for 2022 will commence Wednesday 27 April 2022 and run until Friday 17 June, from 9am - 12.30pm. We are also offering Saturday clinics. Please visit [HOTDOC Online appointments](#).

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### Japanese Encephalitis

Japanese encephalitis is caused by a mosquito-borne virus, detected in parts of SE Queensland, New South Wales, the Northern Territory, Victoria and South Australia. Do you undertake fieldwork where mosquitoes are likely to be present, such as creeks, waterways or dams? Do you work with or around pigs? If yes, then you need to consider the risk of contracting Japanese encephalitis in your Risk Management Form and need to apply relevant controls to prevent or minimise exposure. SafeWork Australia has released [Japanese encephalitis: duties of employers under the model WHS laws](#) which gives employers guidance on what is required to eliminate or minimise the risk of exposure. For more information, please refer to your [Safety Contact](#).

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### Mental Wellbeing: Supporting children after major events

Parents and carers do all they can to protect their children from harm. However, life can bring major events that have an impact on our children's lives. Children may experience the hardship that significant events bring, or witness horrors through media that they aren't mature enough to manage effectively on their own.

In this session, parenting expert Dr Rosina McAlpine explores:

- What constitutes a major event for a child
- Ways children might react after a major event
- Deciding if your child needs professional care
- What parents (teachers, carers, grandparents) can do to assist
- Question and answer session

Working parents and carers will develop the knowledge and confidence they need to help their children successfully navigate major life events and assist them through the recovery process.

To register for the Work-Family Support Program, [please click here](#).

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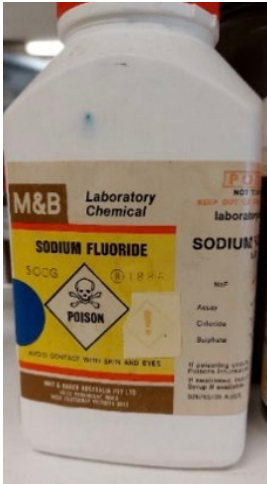


### Fully enclosed footwear in our research facilities

What are fully enclosed shoes? According to AS/NZS2243.1:2010, protective occupational footwear should be all leather, all rubber or all polymeric, with a low-profile heel. They are required to be worn in all research facilities, workshops and maker-spaces to reduce injuries to feet and may need to protect from multiple hazards identified in your workplace, such as slipping, mechanical, hazardous substances, thermal, electrical, static.

Pictured left is an example of a fully enclosed 'low shoe' design which would be considered the minimum coverage for your feet. Shoes can provide greater coverage, such as ankle, calf, knee-high and thigh boots. For more information, refer to your Supervisor, Lab Manager or [Safety contact](#).

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## Working with Hydrofluoric acid (HF) and HF precursors

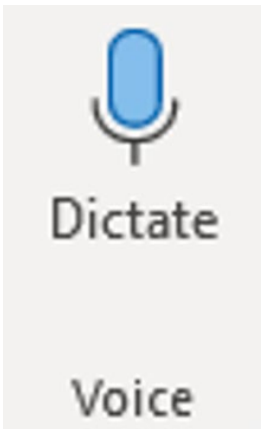
During a lab inspection, a bottle of sodium fluoride was found on a bench shelf instead of in a toxic storage cabinet. Calcium gluconate, the countermeasure for HF exposures, was not available in the first-aid kit.

Staff and students working with HF are reminded that HF is a corrosive and toxic acid that can cause serious burns and even death. The risks of working with HF or HF precursors must be assessed and eliminated or reduced.

In the event of exposure, urgent first aid is crucial, even for minor exposures as the full extent of injuries may not be immediately obvious.

Anyone working with HF products or HF precursors, please read this [Alert](#), review your documentation and contact your Supervisor, Lab Manager or [Safety contact](#) for further guidance.

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## How to Dictate a Document in Microsoft Word

For those who use the keyboard for much of your work (writing & reviewing research papers, writing proposals, typing lengthy emails) the Dictate function, available in Word, can assist in reducing keyboard use. The Dictate function is a quick and easy way to get your thoughts and ideas out, create drafts, outlines and notes without having to type them.

Access the Dictate function in any Word document. Go to the Home tab and click on "Dictate".



This function can also enable auto-punctuation & filter sensitive phrases, all in your preferred language!

[More details here.](#)

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**Recognise and Respond**  
Online Course

## Recognise & Respond - Suicide Prevention

UNSW Health is pleased to partner with Black Dog Institute to offer subsidised Suicide Prevention training to UNSW students and staff.

*Recognise and Respond: Suicide Prevention for Everyday Life* aims to assist in reducing and preventing suicide in Australia by equipping people with the skills to intervene with someone who is contemplating suicide.

The self-directed e-learning module is comprised of four main learning components:

- recognising the signs of suicide
- having a conversation with and supporting the person
- providing help to the person
- self-care

For more information and to register, visit the information page [HERE](#).



## Legacy chemicals and poor storage

A group of technical staff were cleaning out a laboratory in preparation for the arrival of a new group, when they came across a substance, Polymethylsiloxane (PDMS), inappropriately stored in a laboratory cabinet drawer. PDMS can cause eye irritation in humans and one person was exposed as the lid was not secured. Individuals and Group Leaders should use the [Cessation of Laboratory Activities Checklist \(HS7126\)](#) before vacating a space or leaving UNSW. Lab users should report hazards such as inappropriate chemical storage, to the person responsible for the space, for timely action. Contact the [Safety team](#) for guidance.



## Slips, trips and falls

This year's rain has contributed to an increased number of slips and falls. If you see a hazard, don't walk past. Please [log it in our system](#) as a hazard! Things that can cause you to slip include slippery surfaces (polished, wet, greasy), the wrong footwear (loose-fitting, worn soles, heels getting caught in grating). Most trip hazards are low, hard to spot obstacles, such as uneven flooring, loose mats, worn stair treads, open drawers, untidy tools, and electrical cables. A fall due to a slip or trip can occur from low heights, such as steps, stairs, kerbs, ditches, and wet, sloping surfaces.



## Mental Health First Aid for Staff

UNSW Sydney is proud to be recognised as a Gold Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Skilled Workplace, showing our commitment to building a mentally healthy workplace. Students and staff at UNSW are encouraged to get involved by undergoing training to become a Mental Health First Aider (MHFAider) and build local MHFA networks in their Faculties and Schools.

MHFA is subsidised for all UNSW staff through Strategy 2025 funding that

is dedicated to enhancing UNSW's support for students and improving student mental health. The training is available at a reduced rate of \$75. Check out upcoming course dates [HERE](#) or contact [mhfa@unsw.edu.au](mailto:mhfa@unsw.edu.au) to discuss in group training options.

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## **Medibank Health Insurance Reviews**

Medibank consultants will be available for one-on-one appointments for staff in May.

Any staff members who are interested in discussing their health insurance needs or reviewing the policy they already have are invited to make an appointment. Whether you are with Medibank or another insurer, or have no health insurance at all, this could be a good time to review your situation.

Currently, Medibank is offering 6 weeks free plus 2 and 6 month waits waived on extras for new members who join between 11 May and 10 July. All staff are entitled to a 9% discount on the Medibank Corporate Inc product suite.

[Click here](#) if you wish to make an appointment for a one-on-one consultation.

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