

RRADO PROMOTES REGISTRAR RESEARCH



Dr Rachel Lee is a GP registrar in the final stages of her training at a community health centre in Melbourne. Rachel is the current Registrar Research and Development Officer (RRADO) for General Practice Education and Training. The RRADO role involves supporting registrars undertaking research, answering queries from registrars and academics and representing registrars on research committees.

The RRADO also runs the annual Registrar Research Workshop - an intensive 3-day mix of didactic topics and hands-on experience. This year's workshop is in Melbourne from 29-31st of May.

The RRADO is involved in selection and support of registrars undertaking Academic Posts during their GP training. There are 20 places per year, allocated in two competitive application rounds and limited to 6 months full-time or 12 months part-

time. The package includes salary for the registrar, funding for professional development and 'on-costs' for the host institution.

Academic posts have previously been driven by the registrar's research questions. However, a growing number are joining existing projects. This is encouraged as long as the registrar is responsible for a section of the project and has a quality research experience. GPET is currently exploring the options around streamlining the application process and possibly creating more 'set-posts'. The RRADO is interested to hear your views on this to help improve the current system for academics and registrars.

For more information about the RRADO or Academic posts please look at the website <http://www.agpt.com.au/praxis.php/category/view/163> or contact Rachel Lee on rrado@gpet.com.au 0427-284-927.

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President's Message

I am particularly looking forward to the upcoming GP&PHC Research Conference as it is being held in my home town. If Hobart in winter does not excite you can I say that the weather is moderated by the maritime environs and that having a warming coffee or local Pinot Noir or sparkling wine (both of which I can recommend) around an open fire in a 200 year old pub is a possibility. Besides the natural environment is spectacular.

We will also be presenting the inaugural Bridges-Webb Medal. This award is to recognise members who have made and will continue to make international standard teaching or research contributions to academic activities in the general practice environment. Charles Bridges Webb himself will present it and it would be great for as many members as possible to acknowledge his contribution to academic general practice by being there when he does.

Post the meeting we will be holding a Heads of Department meeting ostensibly to workshop new

ideas (and practical grounded ways of achieving them through improved political lobbying) for academic general practice. If anyone is staying on for the weekend I may organise a bushwalk on the Sunday, not too strenuous but life affirming. If the weather is fine we could go to the Hartz Mountains National Park. This is 80 minutes drive from Hobart and is part of the World Heritage Wilderness area. Those who are less fit can walk to the Tarns (mountain lakes) for lunch and those more fit can climb Hartz Peak which has spectacular views over the South-West. If the weather is inclement I thought we could go to Cape Raoul with its 450m sea cliffs (highest in Australia) and spectacular dolerite columns complete with seal colony.

Looking forward to seeing you here.

Prof Mark Nelson
President AAAGP

From the Editor

There is much to feel positive about Academic General Practice when reading this edition of the newsletter.

We learn of Registrar Research and Development Officer, Rachel Lee being kept very busy fostering and supporting those general practice registrars who are already developing their research practice. Let's hope that those who read this will do what they can to foster and support the strategic and valuable role of the RRADO! I also draw your attention to Rachel's invitation to contribute ideas on the directions in which registrar research is heading.

Dimity Pond has some good news relating to the provision of CME to GPs by University Departments, and we celebrate Jon Emery and UWA's new collaboration with the English National School for Primary Care Research.

It is wonderful to welcome Mieke van Driel to our shores and her enthusiasm for her craft is appreciable as she describes her journey to a leadership role in evidence based medicine. Tom Brett is obviously the person to see for those wanting pointers on

primary care research partnerships, having shared with us Notre Dame's secrets for success (well perhaps not so secret now).

Those of us who have been lucky enough to live in or visit Tasmania know exactly what Mark Nelson is talking about as he entices us to head to this beautiful part of Australia for the "Health for All" GP & PHC Conference in June. Mark's writings will no doubt induce you to clear a few days either side of the conference and the newsletter highlights some exciting programmed events which you won't want to miss.

Many thanks to Debbie Mutton for her time and effort in preparing this newsletter. Thank you also to all those who have responded to the invitation and yes, at times coercion to contribute articles.

Sincerely,

Graeme Horton

Discipline of General Practice
University of Newcastle

BOND WELCOMES EBM EXPERT AS NEW HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Introducing Prof Mieke van Driel.....

I moved to Australia to take up the position of Professor of General Practice at Bond University, Queensland. However, it wasn't the change of season that inspired this move. A few months earlier I had participated in the Oxford "Brisbane Initiative" meeting on leadership in primary care research, where Chris Del Mar, Parker Magin (Uni Newcastle) and John Furler (Uni Melbourne) introduced me to Australian GP research and hospitality. The opportunity to be part of it all did not need much thought.

My unconventional career path started in The Netherlands where I trained as GP. It took me overseas with Médecins Sans Frontières to Asia and Africa, and

then to London for a Master's in public health. In Ghent, Belgium, I met "evidence-based medicine", something new that was a perfect match of my main interests, primary care and epidemiology. I started developing a methodology of literature reviews for national consensus conferences and was editor of an EBM journal for 10 years. Appraising evidence and noticing how poorly it was used in patient care, provided inspiration for my PhD thesis on the implementation of evidence in clinical care.

I explored the gap between knowledge and practice and developed a model for research and implementation. Many challenges still lay ahead in teaching a new generation of

physicians and researchers. It's great to be part of the Australian research community that is such a source of inspiration overseas.



Prof Mieke van Driel
Faculty of Health Sciences and
Medicine
Bond University

Notre Dame Harnesses GP Support for Research

Research is alive, well and succeeding on the general practice front. Notre Dame Fremantle's General Practice and Primary Health Care Research unit recently received research funding from the Pfizer Independent Research Grant scheme.

The study sought to estimate the rate of Chlamydia infection in young men attending general practitioners in the Perth metropolitan area and assess behavioural factors associated with having the disease. Sexually active men (15-29 years) were recruited from nine general practices. The recruitment, treatment and follow-up of patients actively involved GPs in the research process.

Participants were required to provide a urine sample and also completed a short questionnaire regarding their sexual behaviour. If a participant returned a positive PCR result, the treating doctor was contacted by a researcher 2 weeks following the test to assess patient follow up.

We have recruited approximately 400 participants to date. This success can be attributed to the relatively low demands from the study on GP time, the applicability of this research to general practice, enthusiastic GP researchers and a flexible, proactive research team. We hope to publish our findings later this year.



A/Prof Tom Brett
Director, PHC RED program
School of Medicine
University of Notre Dame
Freemantle

AAAGP VICTORY FOR UNIVERSITIES PROVIDING RACGP QA&CPD POINTS

The RACGP QA&CPD Program has changed quite significantly for the 2008-2010 triennium. Those organizations, such as University Departments and Regional Training Providers who wish to offer QA&CPD points for activities such as research participation, teaching and education workshops for supervisors will find that they will not be able to simply submit applications for Category 2 points as they have in the past. These must now come as endorsed and accredited provider activities. Applications for the more complicated Category 1 points will still be accepted but will cost \$220 per application.

How does someone from a department or RTP become an endorsed or accredited provider? Individual provider training costs \$1650 per person and takes several days, including an online learning module. A contract costing \$1100 must also be entered into. For a department or RTP there is an additional consideration that the person trained may not stay with the organization throughout the triennium, and someone else may need to be trained in their stead.

Alternatively, the organization can purchase a provider package, which covers the contract and training for up to 4 people, as well as other benefits. The cost for this quoted in the QA&CPD material is \$1650 per department (RTPs are not specifically mentioned). While some universities may have already paid this sum, covering their Departments of GP, many will not, and individual Departments may find this quite a considerable impost.

The AAAGP Executive was concerned about this issue, so Mark Nelson made representations to the College for special consideration for University Departments of GP. We now have in writing a response that University Departments of GP can take a \$550 provider package providing the above benefits under the "Other interest groups" designation. While still a considerable impost, AAAGP feels that this is much more reasonable for struggling university departments.

Prof Dimity Pond
Disc General Practice
Newcastle University

Help make a difference to the medical workforce!

In light of the highly publicized and significant national health problem of the shortage and maldistribution of doctors in the Australian medical workforce, the Doctors' e-Cohort Study is examining factors influencing the career decisions of Australian doctors and medical students, and the recruitment and retention of doctors in metropolitan, rural and remote regions.

To participate, log on to the study website at <http://www.e-cohort.net/> <<https://exchange.uq.edu.au/exchweb/bin/redir.asp?URL=http://www.e-cohort.net/>> and follow the prompts.

For enquiries about the study, please email info@doctors.ecohort.net

Mission & Goals

Formed in 1983, AAAGP aims to promote & develop the discipline of general practice through:

Encouraging originality, questioning & exploration of ideas within the teaching & research environment.

Providing a forum for exchange of information & ideas.

Encouraging shared academic activities.

Fostering & supporting career development in academic general practice.

Supporting the continuing development of academic general practice.

UWA LINKS WITH ENGLISH NATIONAL SCHOOL FOR PRIMARY CARE RESEARCH

Professor Jon Emery, Chair of General Practice and Head of the School of Primary, Aboriginal and Rural Health Care at the University of Western Australia, has been appointed as the first formal international collaborator with the recently formed English National School for Primary Care Research (NSPCR).

One of the key themes of NSPCR research is the prevention and early diagnosis of serious disease including cancer.

Founded in October 2006, the NSPCR is a partnership between the five leading academic centres for primary care research in England - the

Universities of Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Manchester and Oxford - and is part of the National Institute for Health Research.

Professor Emery already has two major joint research projects in the pipeline with the Cambridge group in which he is helping research novel techniques of diagnosis of malignant melanoma and Barrett's oesophagus.

As part of his new appointment, he is a Clinical Senior Research Associate at Cambridge University in addition to his full-time Faculty position at UWA.

Professor Emery's new role creates a link between the Faculty and the new Primary Care Research group. It is allowing his department to run international research in Australia and the UK.



Prof Jon Emery

The AAAGP newsletter is published in Mar, Jul & Nov each year and welcomes letters to the editor and also articles about issues of interest to our members.

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Or visit our website: www.aaagp.org

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- As a member of AAAGP, you have access to an email list including all our members. If you have any information to share, or questions you would like answered in relation to teaching and or research in the general practice environment, email Debbie Mutton for the address. ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●



Photo of Tassie courtesy of Prof Mark Nelson

“Health for All” GP & PHC Conference

Hobart Convention Centre 3-7 June 2008

Members Meeting

All members are encouraged to attend our members meeting Wed 4 June 5.00-6.30. Guests are welcome.

Gala Dinner

Wed 4 June 7.30pm. Cafe Toulouse, Harrington St, Hobart. French cuisine with retro decore. Members \$85, non-members \$100. Register via the conference website or contact Debbie for assistance.

Bridges-Webb Medal

The winner of this prestigious award will be presented at our Gala Dinner by Charles Bridges-Webb. Nominations (members only) close 2 May. For details and to complete the online nomination form go to:
http://www.aaagp.org/BridgesWebb_medal.htm

First Time Presenter

The winner will be presented at the close of the conference with \$250 book vouchers and a certificate. Don't forget to apply if you are presenting for the first time. Download an application form:
http://www.aaagp.org/Documents/Forms/App_best_first_time_presenter.pdf

HOD Meeting

To be held after the conference on Sat 7 June 8.30-3pm at the School of Medicine Boardroom a short walk from the convention centre.

Invitation to early postdoctoral and post-Masters researchers

A breakfast meeting for the Friday morning of the GP&PHC Conference in Hobart on June 6 has been organised for early career primary health care researchers. The purpose of the meeting is to explore the setting up of peer learning sets of early career primary care researchers and ways to facilitate collaborations between Australian early career primary care researchers. These might be along the lines of existing UK models.

Professor Jane Gunn will speak at the meeting on aspects of the forging of research collaborations.

Invitations are extended to Researchers who are:

- Early postdoctoral
 - Early post research-Masters
 - Close to submission (PhD, Research Masters) and who intend to pursue a research-focussed career
- as well as
- PHCRED Mid-career Fellows

This is an initiative of AAAGP and the meeting is being supported by the Dept of GP, Uni of Melbourne and the Disc of GP, Uni of Newcastle. If you would like to attend the meeting please RSVP the conference secretariat. Enquiries to
j.furler@unimelb.edu.au or
parker.magin@newcastle.edu.au

FOR A3GP MEMBERS ONLY Lobbying Lunch

'Everything you ever wanted to know about political lobbying but were afraid to ask!'

Wednesday 4th June 12 - 1.30pm

Enjoy an informal lunch with Prof Nick Glasgow and Prof Michael Kidd and ask them the hard questions about lobbying for better deals for primary care research and teaching in the great halls of power in Canberra.