

IS THIS A SUPERCLINIC?

The Commonwealth and NSW Governments are spending millions of dollars on GP Superclinics and integrated primary health care initiatives such as Health One. The Model Teaching Practice (MTP) is an integrated primary health initiative that was launched in 2006. It is a partnership between the Institute of General Practice Education Inc (IGPE), the general practice vocational regional training provider for South and South Western Sydney, and a privately run general practice on the outskirts of South Western Sydney. The MTP was selected after a competitive selection process open to all level one practices.

The aims of the MTP were to develop:

1. Excellence and innovation in teaching and research. Excellence and innovation in teaching includes registrar involvement in medical student teaching (vertical integration of teaching and learning) and the horizontal integration of teaching and learning of the multidisciplinary team (specialist, nurses, paramedical personnel).
2. Excellence in research is being achieved by high quality practice notes and data coding to facilitate their use in audit and research. Links with the university to provide research skills training for practice staff and organise regular research meetings with the purpose

of encouraging questioning to improve patient care. The identification of a research 'leader' in the practice has facilitated this process. To enable the practice to develop research and teaching excellence there has been a need for updated practice equipment, technological innovations and more integration with paramedical personnel to improve patient care.

The practice has 9 VR GPs, up to 4 GP registrars and accommodates up to 4 medical students. Integrated into the purpose-built practice are a pharmacy and dentist. Paramedical staff consists of 4 RNs, a community health nurse, a cardiovascular nurse, psychologist, dietician, counsellor and practice visits by a dermatologist and an orthopaedic surgeon. The practice was given financial assistance for administrative help (half day per week) and some funding for the principals to implement and organise some components of the model teaching practice. Funding was also available to upgrade equipment to a high standard necessary for registrar teaching and for an incentive scheme to encourage improvements in the quality of patient data. Professional support and mentoring was provided by IGPE and research support by UNSW.

Achievements To Date

Vertical integration of teaching has been achieved with high acceptance and satisfaction of all those involved.

Horizontal integration of teaching is highly valued by all members of the practice team.

The integrated primary care experience has proved both personally and professionally satisfying for GP registrars.

| Inside this issue: | |
|--|---|
| From the Editor | 2 |
| Brisbane Initiative | 3 |
| RACGP Projects | 3 |
| Notre Dame Update | 4 |
| A New Institute for Health Care Research | 5 |
| Introducing a New Member | 6 |
| Travelling Fellowship Winner | 7 |
| News & Events | 8 |

(cont' pg 4)

President's Message

I am delighted to have been elected as the new President of AAAGP. I have been involved with AAAGP through membership of the Executive Committee for the last two years and, in particular, on the Education and Training Working Party. I strongly believe in the role our organisation has to play in lobbying government and advocating for academic general practice and primary healthcare.

In the previous year the Education and Training Working Party has represented AAAGP members at a number of national meetings relating to community based education and the GP Super Clinics. I would like to think that our representations at least shifted Government thinking to include explicitly undergraduate medical education as a core function of the GP Super Clinics.



We will continue over the next year to argue for greater recognition and support for general practice-based education and primary care research. As discussed at the Annual General Meeting, the thorny issue of the organisation's name and inclusion of primary care researchers from Australia and New Zealand will also be reviewed this year. We welcome comments from members on our organisation's name through a Facebook discussion forum recently established for this purpose.

Finally, I would like to thank two people for their tireless contributions to AAAGP over many years: Prof Mark Nelson, our former President and member of the Executive for 9 years, and Debbie Mutton, who has been invaluable as Secretariat for the last 4 years.

Prof Jon Emery
University of Western Australia

From the Editor

Welcome to the final newsletter of 2008 and my first newsletter as editor. I am looking forward to the opportunity to be more actively involved in the AAAGP and to developing more links with fellow members during my time in this position.

Medical education and its role in the new super clinics is featured in this issue. George Kostalas describes some of the work he has been driving to integrate undergraduate and registrar training in a super clinic in South Western Sydney. Jon also draws our attention to this topic in his first "president's message" as it is an area that the AAAGP feel has been neglected by policy makers. Many of you attended the recent WONCA conference in Melbourne, for those who missed it Faline Howes reflects on some of the highlights of the meeting. Marie Pirotta updates us on the latest meeting of the Brisbane Initiative cohort.

In each newsletter we like to feature a new member and highlight the diversity of interests in the AAAGP membership. November's new member is Paul Grinzi who has been doing some exciting work on geo-mapping with academics from the Robert Wood Foundation. There is an exciting new institute at James Cook University which brings together academics from a range of disciplines with a focus on health in communities in tropical Australia and new faces at the RACGP Research Unit

Finally I would like to thank Graeme Horton for all his hard work editing previous editions of the newsletter. The good news for all of us is that this will free up more of Graeme's time to investigate the impact of climate change on our health.

See you in 2009!

Sarah Dennis
Senior Research Fellow
University of NSW

Members in Action

Nick Zwar was recently awarded an NHMRC project grant of over \$1 million for the *Quit in General Practice* project which will assess the impact of an intervention that includes the GP, practice nurse and Quitline in supporting people to stop smoking

Jeremy Bunker was awarded the NICS Evidence into Practice Prize at the WONCA Conference in Melbourne for a project to assess the effectiveness and feasibility of case finding of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) by practice nurses in general practice. The research team included Nicholas Zwar, Sanyjot Vagholkar, Sarah Dennis, Guy Marks and Alan Crockett.



Report on the third meeting of the original Brisbane Initiative cohort September 2008

The Brisbane Initiative is the result of a group from academic general practice from around the globe, who met to consider the future of academic primary care and general practice. One strategy they developed was to identify and offering training to early career primary care researchers who may become leaders of the next generation. The original cohort meet for the first time in Oxford in 2006, and some members meet again in 2007 for a day meeting at the UK Society for Academic Primary Care conference.

In September, the original cohort of the Brisbane Initiative meet for the third time. This meeting was held at a conference venue in the picturesque countryside just outside of Maastricht. Coincidentally, the latest cohort was having their first meeting at the same time in Oxford. This third group is the only one to have no Australians involved.

Our meeting was generously hosted by the department at Maastricht, led by Prof Geert Dinart, with two of our BI colleagues, Mark Spigt and Loes van Bokhoven. Maastricht is in a southern narrow 'finger' of the Netherlands, just a short bicycle ride from both Belgium and Germany. This region is quite different to the rest of Holland, with hills, forests and a more multicultural feel in its restaurants and shops. The venue was a hotel in the hills.

The eight participants out of the 14 original group who were able to attend were 7 GPs (two women and five men) and 1 physiotherapist, now a full-time researcher. Of the original 14 members, one is now a Professor General Practice at St Andrews in Scotland, several have completed their PhDs and gone onto postdoctoral research and many have had babies!. The intense two day program consisted

(cont' pg 7)

The RACGP Projects, Research and Development Unit (PRDU)

The PRDU is a research unit within the NSW & ACT Faculty of the RACGP. The Unit is based in North Sydney, and led by Professor Charles Bridges-Webb. The aim of the PRDU is to promote and conduct clinical research in primary care. We conduct research that is intended to assist GPs to provide quality care to their patients, and to guarantee the highest possible standards of care to the community.

The PRDU is involved in a range of activities:

- We conduct our own research projects
- We collaborate with universities and other organisations to represent the RACGP in major research projects
- We support GPs to conduct their own research. GPs who would like our assistance to conduct their own research can contact us for advice.

We are currently involved in research areas including dementia, cardiovascular health, and doctor-patient communication.

Welcome Dr Winston Lo

We are pleased to welcome Dr Winston Lo to our team, as our new research officer. He graduated from the University of Newcastle, and gained his FRACGP in 2006. He attended the GPET Registrar

Research Workshop in 2004 and thence went on to be involved with several research projects, including a collaborative project on doctors' health as an academic registrar. He has practised in a variety of general practices in Sydney, including Aboriginal and refugee health, and has been involved with SIGPET as a medical educator. We look forward to his contribution to our ongoing research.

Health Goals: Encouraging doctor-patient communication to improve cardiovascular health. Health Goals is a clinical audit developed by the PRDU. The aim of the audit is to enhance doctor-patient communication in managing lifestyle risk factors for cardiovascular disease. The audit provides a template to help GPs and patients decide on lifestyle goals, and to follow up on whether these goals have been achieved.

Health Goals is offered as a Clinical Audit activity for the 2008-10 Triennium. GPs can register now to earn 40 QA&CPD points.

For more information about the Research Unit and our current projects, see our website:

www.racgp.org.au/nswact/research

email: nsw.research@racgp.org.au

or phone (02) 9886 4749.

New Clinical Positions at Notre Dame

Academic recognition for the many experienced general practitioners who make significant contributions to medical education and training (both undergraduate and postgraduate) and research has not always been a prominent feature of Australian medical schools and universities. In appointing four distinguished Western Australian general practitioners to adjunct positions as Clinical Associate Professors at the School of Medicine, The University of Notre Dame Australia, Fremantle sends a clear message of support and recognition of the central role of GPs in medical education and research at the school.

The newly appointed GPs are:

Clinical Associate Professor Peter Wallace OAM, Pinjarra

Clinical Associate Professor Frances Cadden, Greenwood

Clinical Associate Professor William Walker, Mandurah, and

Clinical Associate Professor Frank Jones, Mandurah.

Each of the four GPs has over 20 years experience

in providing medical services in their individual practices and communities. All are involved in the teaching and training of both undergraduate medical students and GP Registrars and all have shown a strong commitment in supporting the development of the Notre Dame medical school.

A/Profs Cadden, Walker and Jones have made significant contributions to the 'Fremantle Primary Study - a pilot study into risk factor modification for cardiovascular disease' at their respective practices. The study has acted as a vehicle to provide hands-on early career research experience to many GPs, practice nurses and medical students. A/Prof Wallace is the current chair of the Western Australian General Practice Education and Training (WAGPET) board.

The Notre Dame School of Medicine Fremantle is delighted to have such esteemed general practitioners involved in curriculum delivery at the school and hopes that this recognition of their key role in medical education and research will inspire many of their colleagues to follow in their footsteps.

Congratulations!

Is This a Super Clinic?

(cont' from pg 1)

The research excellence is developing and the ground work such as increasing the proportion of medical notes adequately coded (ICPC 10) is underway. Regular research meetings have been instituted in the practice and the next steps are to develop audits and research projects using the practice data.

Discussion

Integrated primary care can be successfully developed in a private general practice setting with limited financial support. The MTP allows for vertical and horizontal teaching and shaping of skills and knowledge which is valued by GP registrars and medical students alike. Integration of primary care allows for improvement in patient care



and is personally and professionally satisfying for those involved. Improvements in practice data provide the platform to develop a research culture in the MTP. The financial implications for the practice have not yet been assessed. This is a "work in progress" and the practice has not yet realised its full potential. Some of the principles and processes involved in the development of this practice may

be applicable to the development and success of initiatives such as Health One and Integrated Primary Health Care centres.

Dr George Kostalas
Institute of General
Practice Education Inc
(IGPE)

Dr John Schwarz and Dr Matthew Gray pictured above in front of the surgery which has become the Model Teaching Practice with support from George Kostalas.

Farewell from our Former President

After 2 years as president and 9 years on the executive (7 as treasurer) I have stood aside to allow a new executive to drive the agenda of your organisation over the next 12 months. I am not sure I accomplished all I had hoped during my tenure but I am particularly pleased with the Bridges-Webb Medal as a token of us recognising our own. Jane Gunn was a deserving first award recipient.

One disappointment I had in the last year was the change in the federal government. This is not to expose any particular political leaning, it is just that a change in government took us from an electorally unpopular government who were willing to listen to new initiatives, perhaps in desperation, to an incoming government whose election was underwritten by industrial relations and education rather than health. The policy towards primary care / general practice seemed to be "Superclinics" and not much

else. We at least got undergraduate teaching and research on to that agenda.

I wish incoming president Jon Emery all the best, especially for his initiatives around Community Clinical Schools. I also wish other members of the executive (continuing Dimity Pond and Marie Pirotta and retiring Graeme Horton) and committee all the best for the coming "interesting times".

Lastly I wish to acknowledge the help from our secretariat, Debbie Mutton for her years of service that was critical to the functioning of the organisation.

Prof Mark Nelson
University of Tasmania

A New Institute for Health Care Research

A new institute has been established at James Cook University which brings together the academic expertise across the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Molecular Sciences into a cohesive united research structure. The aim of the institute is to improve health in rural, remote, Indigenous and tropical communities. This strategic collaboration will create synergies and maximize the effectiveness and research output of the faculty, as well as increasing its attractiveness as a location for visiting academics and postgraduate students.

The Faculty of Medicine, Health and Molecular Sciences at James Cook University has a strong reputation for providing education and research across the fields of medicine, public health and tropical medicine, nursing, allied health and rehabilitation sciences, biomedical, molecular and veterinary sciences, with a particular focus on issues relevant to rural, remote, Indigenous and other tropical communities. Health care innovation born of necessity is supported in northern Queensland by a critical mass of population and intellectual capital. The health and health care services of underserved populations in the tropics have been recognized by the University as areas of strategic research development, and thus there is an exciting opportunity to shape a research cluster focusing on factors affecting the health of rural, remote

and Indigenous populations (both in Australia and in neighbouring countries), based on a shared commitment to the human rights of underserved tropical populations. This focus will be ensured through research programs studying, designing and evaluating affordable, effective and sustainable health care interventions and delivery models in these settings and through programs studying particular population groups and common health issues across these groups.

There is growing recognition that much of the excess morbidity in populations relates to a failure to apply what is already known. For the health sector to respond effectively to particular health issues in underserved populations, a nuanced understanding of community realities is required. This involves considering health care technologies, workforce models, the current policy environment, sustainable delivery structures, use of information technology, need for co-investment in social capital, advocacy around determinants and so on. Interventions with underserved populations should aim to strengthen local health care, be informed by local priorities, expand health workforce capacity, foster community involvement and deal with misinterpretations across cultural paradigms through education and application of the evidence-base.

(cont' pg 6)

New Member - Paul Grinzi

1. What do you do?

I've been at the Department of General Practice at the University of Melbourne since 2004, when I started as an academic GP registrar. My role this year has centred on completing my Masters of Medicine research thesis. I've been researching the training experiences of GP registrars, in regards to clinical alcohol management. I've also been involved in undergraduate and vocational teaching over the past 5 years as part of my role here at Melbourne, and was the inaugural APHCRI/Graham Centre Visiting Fellow for 2007.

2. What attracted you to research?

I had always considered research whilst I was a medical student, but could never see myself working in the scientific laboratories I'd been exposed to as a medical student. After completing a BMedSci research year during my undergraduate course at Monash University my perceptions were permanently altered. I was lucky enough to have some fantastic general practice mentors who provided me with the freedom and opportunities to learn about the research process, within a community medicine context. Not a white coat or Bunsen



burner to be seen! As I started my GP training in 2003, I then had the opportunity to participate in the GPET Registrar Research Workshop. This residential intensive week sparked an interest in research which led to my academic role at the University of Melbourne the following year.

3. Any tips for others?

I still perceive myself as a novice researcher, but there are a couple of 'tips' that have worked for me. Firstly, set yourself small deadlines and involve others in them - eg arrange to provide a verbal update to a trusted colleague next week. This forces me to work to these targets, and because I've involved someone else, I'm less likely to let the deadline pass. Secondly, learn how to describe your research both very quickly (eg 30 second spiel) and in more detail (a few minutes) - there are many times when you need to get your project's message across, and the ability to do so effectively and in a time-efficient manner can facilitate better networking with others.

Cheers, Paul

New Institute for Health Care Research (cont' from pg 5)

Although there is considerable academic expertise across these areas already in the faculty, they have not previously been brought together into a cohesive united research structure, and strategic collaboration will create synergies and maximize the effectiveness and research output of the faculty, as well as increasing its attractiveness as a location for visiting academics and postgraduate students.

For further information about the Institute for Health Care Research with Underserved Populations and senior positions available please contact: Dr Sarah Larkins Ph: (07) 47813139 or sarah.larkins@jcu.edu.au or see http://www.jcu.edu.au/tropicalleaders/JCUPRD_035973.html

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.

Travelling Fellowship

2008 Winner

The winner of our 2008 Travelling Fellowship is Joel Rhee. Joel is a lecturer of General Practice with the University of NSW.

Dr Rhee will visit A/Professor Geoffrey Mitchell and his colleagues for two weeks to learn about the various strands of research that is going on at the University of Queensland. Dr Rhee has research interest in primary care, ageing and general practice palliative care so he will focus on learning about various projects on discharge planning, single

patient trials, care of caregivers and early cancer care.

This trip will also provide an opportunity for Dr Rhee to present his work on general practice palliative care research, and work towards his PhD submission. The trip will also provide opportunity for Dr Rhee to network with researchers and academics at the University of Queensland and to plan a joint research project and / or a paper. Congratulations Joel!!

Thanks from our 2006 Recipient

I wish to convey my sincere thanks to AAAGP for the opportunity provided me. I believe that without my visits to the institutions I would have been unsuccessful in obtaining a PhD scholarship to support my studies.

I am now completing a PhD project looking at gender and chronic illness, so I continue to maintain links with Academic General practice as chronic illness is

primarily a primary health care concern.
Kind Regards,
Petya Fitzpatrick

Read Petya's report of her Travelling Fellowship on our website:

http://www.aaagp.org/TravelFellowship/Travelling_Fellowships.htm

Brisbane Initiative (cont' from pg 3)

mainly of each participant giving a detailed account of their career progress over the last two years, and then a presentation of their research activity with a view to possibilities for personal or departmental

collaboration to be explored. The outcomes of the meeting for each participant were documented, and include a paper describing the experiences, which is being written by the group.



Pictured: Hosts Prof Geert Jan Dinant and Dr Mark Spigt in their offices

THANK YOU!!

AAAGP would like to thank the following general practice departments for their financial support for the 2008/2009 financial year:

University of Tasmania
University of Melbourne
University of Western Australia
University of Notre Dame
James Cook University
Monash University
University of Adelaide
University of NSW
University of Sydney
Flinders University
University of Newcastle
Bond University
University of Queensland

Important Notice!!

The Australian Government has posted a Discussion Paper titled:
'Towards a National Primary Health Care Strategy'.

All members are strongly encouraged to read sections 5 and 9 as there are a number of issues we could respond to. Make your submission directly by 31 January. Alternatively, you are welcome to email your comments to our president Jon Emery by 13 January as Jon will be composing a response from AAAGP -
Jon.Emery@uwa.edu.au

To view this document go to:

[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/D66FEE14F736A789CA2574E3001783C0/\\$File/DiscussionPaper.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/D66FEE14F736A789CA2574E3001783C0/$File/DiscussionPaper.pdf)

The 2009 RACGP Research Foundation Grants Round is opening soon! Start developing your research proposal

Developing a strong research culture in general practice

Applications for the 2009 RACGP Research Foundation Grant round open on Tuesday 9 February and close on Wednesday 15 April 2009 (5pm EST). Application forms and detailed information on each award will be available soon at the Research Foundation website www.racgp.org.au/researchfoundation.

Up to \$120,000 in scholarships, grants and awards will be offered in 2009 by the Research Foundation to encourage more general practitioners to conduct research. New and emerging researchers are encouraged to apply. The Research Foundation aims to promote research capacity within general practice by offering grants, scholarships and awards for researchers into family medical care, indigenous health, motor vehicle trauma, integrative medicine and more.

GPs interested in applying for one of these grants are advised to begin developing their research ideas, reviewing literature and contacting experienced GP researchers who are willing to provide mentoring or supervision either through the RACGP at www.racgp.org.au or the Primary Health Care Research & Information Service on www.phcris.org.au/phcred/. For more information please visit www.racgp.org.au/researchfoundation or contact Ana Lucia da Cruz, RACGP Research and Grants Program Administrator by email on research@racgp.org.au or telephone 03 8699 0481.

Coming Events

WONCA 2009 - Asia Pacific Regional Conference
4-7 June 2009
Theme - Building Bridges
Hong Kong

GP & PHC Research Conference
17-19 July 2009
Theme to be advised
Melbourne Conference Centre
<http://www.phcris.org.au/conference/2009/index.php>
AAAGP will again be hosting their annual Gala Dinner. We will also be awarding the Bridges-Webb medal and also awards for the 2 Most Distinguished Papers and the Best First Time Presenter. More details will follow in next year's newsletters!

RACGP GP'09 The Conference for General Practice
1-4 October 2009
Perth

The AAAGP newsletter is published in Apr, 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