DEAN’S UPDATE

Welcome to the next edition of our School Newsletter.

The establishment of the School of Medicine at the University of Western Sydney in 2007 had the immediate effect of creating opportunities for students in Greater Western Sydney to aspire to a career in Medicine. Already, the UWS School of Medicine is helping to address critical medical workforce shortages and is strengthening the health system through medical training and research.

PRIZE CEREMONY

The School of Medicine’s third Year 5 Prize Giving afternoon was held on the 6 December 2013. The purpose of this event was to congratulate and celebrate the most outstanding students in the School’s 2013 graduating cohort and acknowledge the generous support of prize donors who formally present the awards. Further information on this event is available on the School’s website.

OPENING OF NEW AMS HEALTH FACILITY IN WALGETT

Fiona Pacey, School Manager, represented the School at the official opening of a new health facility for the Prevention and Treatment of Chronic Disease in Walgett in September 2013. The Facility was officially opened by the Governor of NSW, Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir AC, CVO, in conjunction with the Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service (WAMS) Chief Executive Officer, Christine Corby. The School of Medicine was recognised as a partner in having supported their successful application for funding to the Health and Hospitals Fund. The project also included the delivery and fit-out of a number of demountable ‘units’ to increase the short-term accommodation available at the service.

Fiona Pacey, the School’s Administration Manager was very excited to visit Walgett even if only for a day to witness the activities of another Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCCHO) as well as the building that she had previously discussed with WAMS staff during the preparation phase of the grant application.

Currently UWS Year 5 medical students spend 5 weeks undertaking an immersive attachment in 16 ACCHOs across NSW whose staff, like those at WAMS, provide learning opportunities, guidance and support for students to develop and deepen their understanding of Aboriginal health issues. In this way students develop their ability to appropriately treat Aboriginal patients. We are very grateful to all those Services, their staff and patients for this valuable contribution to student learning.

The School congratulates WAMS on this exciting new facility and the commitment of the organization to developing and providing services to support the health needs of their community.
THARAWAL ABORIGINAL CORPORATION – 30TH ANNIVERSARY

The School is pleased to formally congratulate the Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation (TAC) in Airds on its 30th Anniversary. A number of staff and students attended the celebratory ball at the Campbelltown Catholic Club in November 2013. The School enjoys a very strong and vibrant partnership with TAC enabling students to undertake an introductory visit during the first week of their MBBS program to Aboriginal culture as well as participate in the delivery of specialty clinics and collaborative engagement around curriculum.

The School congratulates TAC on their 30th Anniversary and wishes them many more years of collaborative engagement.

Professor Brad Frankum, our Deputy Dean, was interviewed live on Channel Seven’s national afternoon news magazine program, The Daily Edition. During the segment, children’s food allergies and research showing a link between food allergies and Vitamin D were discussed.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Professor Vaughan Macefield, who has been appointed the new President of the International Society for Autonomic Neuroscience (ISAN). This is the first time the position has been held by a person who specialises in human autonomic neuroscience, and will contribute to increasing the profile of UWS School of Medicine.

Dr Joanne Lind who has won an Office of Learning and Teaching Award for Teaching Excellence. This is a great achievement and national recognition in a highly competitive field.

Dr Slade Jensen has won the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research 2013 Excellence in Teaching Award (awarded $5,000). In addition he was recently asked to join the Australian Society for Microbiology’s (ASM) National Scientific Advisory Committee. As part of his role he will act as a program chair for the ASM 2015 Annual Meeting, the most prestigious Microbiology conference in Australia.

RESEARCH GRANTS

Louisa Jorm, Kathleen Falster, Deborah Randall and collaborators were successful in their application for an NHMRC Project Grant, titled: ‘Seeding success: identifying factors that contribute to positive early childhood health and development in Aboriginal children’. This project has received funding of $672,081 over three years and will commence in 2014.

Janette Perz and Jane Ussher were successful in their application for an ARC Linkage grant. This project will examine the sexual health beliefs and practices of women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities who are recent migrants to Australia and Canada. The project has received funding of $271,144 from ARC and $129,000 from partners over 4 years, commencing in 2013.

Jane Ussher and Janette Perz were successful in their application to the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia. The project, which will examine gay mens’ experiences of prostate cancer, has received funding of $288,450 over 2 years, commencing in 2013.

Elizabeth Conroy was successful in receiving funds from Mission Australia for a project titled “Evaluation of the Inner City Drift Project”. The project has received funding of $45,000.

Louisa Jorm and UK collaborators were awarded a grant by the Chief Scientist’s Office, Scotland, for a project titled ‘Avoidable Scottish Hospitalisations’. The project received £187,820 (via the University of Aberdeen) over two years, commencing in 2013.

Illumina MiSeq Grant

Dr Slade Jensen was successful in receiving $20,000 of consumables and labour by Illumina (and the Ramaciotti Centre) for the sequencing of 50 bacterial genomes. Additionally Dr Slade Jensen, Associate Professor Sebastian vanHil (UWS conjoint), and Dr Bjorn Espedello were awarded $15,000 by AstraZeneca to explore the potential usefulness of the antibiotic Ceftaroline in salvage therapy, especially in the case of isolates selected for by vancomycin failures (e.g. vancomycin resistance).
intermediate S. aureus). Vancomycin is a last line glycopeptide antibiotic used for the treatment of S. aureus bacteraemia.

Associate Professor Karen Vickery (Macquarie University), Professor Iain Gosbell, Dr Slade Jensen and the Whiteley Corporation were awarded $354,000 (over 3 years) by the ARC to develop new agents to efficiently remove biofilms from hospital surfaces.

**PUBLICATIONS IN 2013**


Two presentations were delivered at Leaders in Indigenous Medical Education (LIME V) Connection by the Indigenous Health and Rural staff in August. Eight of our Indigenous students attended as well as two Indigenous UWS graduates.

Professor Brad Frankum, Ms Cris Carriage and Ms Jenny Akers talk was entitled ‘Meaningful Engagement of Senior Medical Students with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations’.

It outlined the process undertaken by the University of Western Sydney School of Medicine in committing to genuine community engagement with ACCHO partners in order to realise the goal of placing every final year medical student in a full-time, 5 week, immersive placement in an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.

In addition, a paper titled ‘Mentoring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander general practice registrars’ was the chosen topic of Dr Tim Senior and his colleague, Dr Dannielle Arabena on behalf of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

These presentations enabled the School’s indigenous program and staff to take a place on the national Indigenous medical education scene.

**International Lead in Medical Education, Professor Cees van der Vleuten**, of the Department of Educational Development and Research, University of Maastricht visited the School in April 2013 and has another visit planned for April 2014.

Cees, who has been appointed Adjunct Professor to the UWS School of Medicine in recognition of his ongoing contributions, has been advising us on our review of assessment in the MBBS program.

This review is examining the quality and validity of our assessments – how well do they ensure that our graduates are safe, competent – and excellent – medical practitioners? In order to do this, Cees conducted training in clinical assessment, and provided workshops and seminars on health professional educational research at our Campbelltown and Clinical School sites.

As part of Tony Succar’s PhD research, he developed a Virtual Ophthalmology Clinic which allows medical students to formulate a diagnosis and treatment plan on virtual patients before practicing on real patients. In November 2013, Tony presented the results of this research at the Annual Nepean Scientific Day Conference 2013 at the University of Sydney and was awarded the Best Oral Presentation for Educational Research at the ceremony.

Professor Phillipa Hay was invited to speak as keynote at the Austrian Eating Disorders meeting in the exquisite Tyrol region in October. She also had the opportunity to give two workshops and thus was well able to highlight the work being done ‘down under’ to researchers and clinicians in Central Europe.

Dr Joanne Lind has received national and international media coverage for her journal published research which found Australian women who breastfeed their children have reduced odds of developing high blood pressure before the age of 64.

Dr Lind and colleagues investigated the relationship between breastfeeding history and the prevalence of high blood pressure in 74,785 Australian women who were aged 45 years and over. The researchers report the longer a woman breastfeeds, the lower is her likelihood of having high blood pressure later in life.

Following the distribution of a UWS Media Release the story was initially reported by newswire service, AAP and republished by more than 10 Australian newspapers including: The Australian, Herald-Sun, The Adelaide Advertiser and Newcastle Herald. Radio news stories were broadcast by 2UE and 3AW.

Online coverage was extensive both in Australia and internationally with more than 30 sites carrying the story. Key news websites include: Sky News, Daily Telegraph, The Australian, Herald-Sun, The Courier-Mail, Nine News, SBS News, Bigpond News and the international news sites Daily Mail and Daily Mail On Sunday in the United Kingdom.
Dr Slade Jensen and Conjoint Associate Professor Sebastiaan van Hal have written an informative background article on bacterial genomics for The Conversation website.

The opportunity to engage and inform public debate via The Conversation is available to all UWS researchers.

Dr Michael O’Connor led the development of a regenerative medicine exhibit which opened on Oct 2 (International Stem Cell Awareness Day) at Questacon, Canberra, and three UWS images were selected for inclusion: Dr Michael O’Connor “Can you see the light?” Prof. John Morley “Neural networks”; Dr Vincent Ho “Ashley’s story – A reflective gastroparesis patient”.

During a recent sponsored visit to Lanzhou, China, Michael was officially appointed Visiting Professor to Lanzhou University Second Hospital and The Second Clinical Medical College of Lanzhou University. A Memorandum of Understanding between UWS and Lanzhou University is under development.

Michael gave an oral presentation at the Australian Gastroenterology Week conference (October 2013) on results (generated by PhD student Patricia Murphy) from his stem cell/bioinformatics/gastric motility collaboration with Dr Vincent Ho. Additionally he led the 4th Annual UWS Human Pluripotent Stem Cell Workshop which was held in October 2013.

Three PhD students received travel awards from the National Stem Cell Foundation of Australia to present posters at the ASSCCR stem cell meeting in Brisbane in October 2013.

A Graduate Certificate in Knowledge Translation, new course proposal, is currently being reviewed within the PhD Pathways discussion as part of the UWS Our Futures project.

BATHURST RURAL CLINICAL SCHOOL

BATHURST 2013 NAIDOC CELEBRATIONS

NAIDOC celebrations are held across Australia to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC is celebrated not only in Indigenous communities, but by Australians from all walks of life. The Bathurst Rural Clinical School staff took the opportunity to participate in the Bathurst celebrations in Peace Park on 21 September 2013 to support the local Aboriginal community.

Led by Ian Kennedy, the Indigenous Placement Support Officer, a stall was established promoting healthy living and displaying the UWS School of Medicine promotional material. Medical students and staff were on hand to provide information on the School’s programs. It was an excellent opportunity to promote the activities of the Bathurst Rural Clinical School and to introduce the medical students to the local Aboriginal community.

CULTURAL DAY 2013

As part of their Rural Orientation the ten UWS medical students joined by three staff members from the Bathurst Rural Clinical School were guided by Wiradjuri Elder, Mr Bill Allen, to important and relevant aboriginal sites in and around Bathurst. The day’s activities provided important insights for the students before they embarked on their placement at the Orange Aboriginal Medical Service. It broadened everyone’s horizons and instilled a deeper sense of respect and sensitivity.

LISMORE UNIVERSITY CENTRE OF RURAL HEALTH (UCRH) UPDATE

In November 2013 the Lismore UCRH farewelled its 18 long term UWS students for the year as they headed off to their electives. It was a busy end of year as the students finished their attachments in Aboriginal health, community research, general practice, haematology, mental health, oncology and surgery.
The UCRH held the first Mental Health OSCE in its new building, the Nyumbalighu Simulation Centre. Nyumbalighu, pronounced as Nyoombaleegu, comes from the local dialect from Lismore and is used to describe the traditional way local Aboriginal people learned. The centre houses purpose built simulation rooms, consultation rooms, video-conferencing facilities, the education team offices and a common area for students. We look forward to the students return in 2014.

Nyumbalighu Simulation Centre

AN AFTERNOON IN THE COUNTRY

In October the return of the Eureka Cup, a friendly game of soccer between University of Western Sydney long stay medical students (the Westies) and University of Wollongong long stay medical students (the Woolies) was held in the back paddock at Dr Jane Barker’s rainforest chalet. The day was the perfect opportunity for students to visit a rural property, socialise, relax and enjoy some healthy competition. The game was (fairly) refereed by Dr Charlotte Hall, UWS Sub-Dean and the Woolies numbers were given a boost with the addition to their team of Dr Michael Douglas, Deputy Director Education, UCRH. The end of the game saw the Westies as the winners for 2013.

2013 winners of the Eureka Cup!

STUDENT UPDATES

Malik Salgado, Paul Lai, Julie Park, Kunwardeep Bhatia and Angelia Tjokrowidjaja attended the Australasian Gynaecological Endoscopy & Surgery Society (AGES) meetings, with Associate Professor Harry Merkur, when held in Sydney.

Students attend AGES meeting accompanied by Assoc. Prof. Harry Merkur

Each year AGES holds three scientific conferences, and this year the theme was “Management of Female Pelvic Floor Disorders”.

The 5 students were given free registration to attend the entire conference, giving them a unique opportunity to witness how a real, live, specialist conference works. The students were most enthusiastic about the meeting and gave very good feedback about their experience.

Justin Surjadi (Year 5) was part of the City2Surf medical team from Western Sydney Local Health District (Blacktown and Mt Druitt Hospitals). The team consisted of 4 doctors, 4 nurses and they were situated at a scout hall near the finish line at Bondi beach, and received patients either via ambulance transport or direct walk-ins. As it was a warm day, a number of patients arrived with signs of heat exhaustion and dehydration.

Justin’s role was to scribe all patient activities from the moment they entered the door to signing their discharge papers at release. He gained invaluable experience in working in an uncontrolled environment outside of the hospital and observing how to treat seriously ill patients with hyperthermia and signs of heat exhaustion. He also enjoyed the experience and would highly recommend future medical students to take advantage of this valuable opportunity.

Local children enjoying the Desert Harmony Indigenous Festival

DESSERT HARMONY INDIGENOUS FESTIVAL

Our Rural Student Club, RHUUWS, was represented by three students at the Desert Harmony Indigenous Festival in August 2013 in Tennant Creek.

Stuart Plant signed up along with Lilia O’Connor and Kenny Cho. The aim was to involve and celebrate a people and a culture, often sidelined or often seen as an inconvenient fit with western life.

The purpose of the visit was to promote health and health careers to local kids. This was to be achieved through a health promotion stand at two key events for local youth – an informal athletics carnival and an arts and cultural festival.

Our medical students plastered over 100 arms & fingers, explained the internal organs to dozens through the assistance of anatomy model “Gutsy Gus” and gave away promotional merchandise too. They also played games, ran races, rolled under parachutes, were ‘stacked-on’ by groups of kids, threw Frisbees, coloured-in and so, so much more. The experience was as rewarding for the Tennant Creek children as it was for the medical students from the city studying health careers at UWS!

RHUUWS (roos) on the road to the Desert Harmony Indigenous Festival in Tennant Creek
Emma will be completing her internship at Royal Darwin Hospital in 2014 in order to gain further clinical experience with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and in tropical medicine. “I’d like to return to Borroloola as a doctor but it’s hard to know where I’ll ultimately end up.”

Dana Slape, Year 5 medical student, had her abstract “Does an Action Plan Improve Adherence and Treatment Outcomes in Children with Complex Atopic Dermatitis?” successfully accepted at the World Congress of Paediatric Dermatology 2013.

Dana was also selected to be involved in a co-presentation at the Leaderships in Indigenous Medical Education (LIME) conference in Darwin in August 2013 and the Health Workforce Australia (HWA) conference in November 2013.

In addition her winning the prestigious Aurora Indigenous Scholars International Study Tour award in October was a potentially life-changing opportunity. This award provides opportunities for Indigenous students to gain insight into the options of undertaking postgraduate study overseas, particularly United Kingdom and USA.

Jayanthi Raman, (PhD) student, has been awarded a full NSW Institute of Psychiatry Research Fellowship for 2014.

BUILDING STRONGER HEALTH CARE TEAMS: UWS STUDENTS CARRY OFF NATIONAL AWARD

UWS Team Alan Dyason, Elham Zolfaghari, Heidi Jennings, Kate Thomson, Mauli Trivedi and Nirav Patel were fantastic ambassadors not only for our university, but their individual professions and for health care as a whole. Their place as the 2013 TT HealthFusion Team Challenge (HFTC) Winning Team was awarded by a panel of judges based wholly on the exemplary teamwork, collaboration and sportsmanship shown on the day and they should be commended on their efforts.

The HFTC is an annual national competition for students studying in the health sciences. It is designed to promote effective interprofessional collaboration and teamwork through a shared learning experience while fostering the next generation of health care leaders.

The HFTC hosts a range of events each year around Australia and overseas, of which the TT HFTC is the pinnacle event for Australasia and the program’s flagship competition. During the TT HFTC, each team is required to prepare a comprehensive patient management plan in response to a complex case study over several weeks. Teams then present their plans live before an audience and panel of expert judges before responding to a range of challenging unseen extension activities and reflection exercises. The team that demonstrates a mastery of teamwork and collaboration over the course of the day is declared the winner.

The 2013 TT HFTC hosted teams from some of the nation’s top universities which included Deakin University, Griffith University, Queensland University of Technology, The University of Queensland, The University of Sydney and The University of Newcastle. Team UWS progressed to the Final Top Four based on their performance in the heats and went on to win the Challenge by a considerable margin of points. By winning the premier competition of its kind in Australasia, UWS has highlighted amongst its peers not only the quality of its health programs but the quality of its students as well.

In June 2013, Najali Prakash, Catrina Bines, Jason Wu, Matt McAlpine, Paige Darlington and Rob Thompson ran in the Gold Coast Airport Marathon to raise money for Tharawal Aboriginal Health Service.
SCHOOL UPDATES

The School of Medicine’s Anatomy Department ran its second and third anatomy trivia night in both semesters 2013. These nights are designed to prepare students for their upcoming practical anatomy exam, whilst being a fun way to raise money for charity and those less fortunate. An amazing $1473 was raised for Bowel Cancer Australia and $2000 for a water well in Afghanistan.

We wish to thank all the students who attended and the kind academics who donated their valuable time.

BRAIN BEE PROGRAM

The School of Medicine, in partnership with UWS Schools Engagement, hosted the NSW State Finals of the Australian Brain Bee Challenge in August 2013.

MACARTHUR CLINICAL SCHOOL

2013 was another important year for the Macarthur Clinical School (MCS). The clinical program was delivered with excellence and enthusiasm by a number of passionate educators – to whom we offer our sincere thanks.

Structured student feedback from the Introduction to Clinical Medicine and clinical attachment programs have affirmed that our educational goals are on track, whilst at the same time provide opportunities to continue to renew and further develop the program.

In 2014, one of our goals with the Blacktown Clinical School will be to explore ways in which we can better support the professional, educational and research interests of our clinical teaching staff.

In terms of clinical skills teaching we are pleased to have acquired six new ECG machines which will be incorporated into the teaching program from next year as will the use of a SIM man.

OSCEs for 2013 went off well and we wish to acknowledge the extraordinary contribution of all patients, volunteers, examiners and staff. This is a time-intensive but essential process that is vital in assessing the clinical skills of our students.

The MCS has been involved in research collaboration with the University of Melbourne’s Learning Environments Applied Research Network (LEaRN). The study is titled, "Informal Learning in Hospital Corridors: Implications for design and technology". Part of the study involved observing medical student learning encounters in hospital corridors. The observations, field notes and annotated maps will depict student movement and locations of their activities, including the frequency and duration. The final results and findings will be available in 2014.

We are pleased to announce that our list of UWS conjoint appointments continues to rise. During 2013 six appointments were renewed and three promotions offered.

We would also like to congratulate Macarthur Clinical School’s new appointees: Dr Matthew Chiew, Dr Kelvin Hon, Dr Dilan Jayawardena, Dr Kishor Kadappu, Dr Randall Kelly, Dr Richard Lim, Dr Jacqueline Loprete, Dr Peter Manders, Dr Andrew Oar, Dr Vishal Patel, Dr Kent Robinson, Dr Alfred Wong and Dr Mei Ling Yap. Thank you for your commitment to teaching UWS medical students.

Campbelltown Hospital’s Communication and Customer Service Award for October was presented to Dr Matt Crilly, UWS MBBS 2012 graduate. Matt is an intern at Campbelltown Hospital and was nominated by patients. Well done.

Sadly, our work colleague, Kim Bugallo passed away on 22 November 2013 after a long illness. Kim was a wise advisor to colleagues and students alike, and beyond that role she also became a close and valued friend to a number of her colleagues.
SCHOOL STAFFING

Congratulations to Ruth Goldsmith who celebrated her 10 year anniversary in October 2013. Sadly though Ruth has decided to retire from UWS in February 2014.

Andrew Korda, Jens Coorssen, Gerald Muench, Soon Lee and Melinda Wolfenden also celebrated their 5 year anniversary with UWS in June/July 2013.

Other departures from the School were Shamila Malik, who has taken up a position with IT, working on the student placement system project. We also said farewell to Louella McCarthy who has been appointed Associate Professor and Academic Leader: Community Engagement, at the Graduate School of Medicine, University of Wollongong.

SCHOOL LOCATIONS

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