



STRATEGIC PLAN –2021-2023
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL PRACTICE
School of Medicine, Western Sydney University
Reviewed November 2020

MISSION & VISION

The Department of General Practice will work collaboratively to deliver best practice teaching and learning experiences so that WSU Graduates will understand and value the many roles of General Practitioners in Primary Health Care, and are inspired to consider a career in General Practice, particularly in areas of need.

To achieve this vision the Department will build the teaching and research capacity of the General Practitioners and other primary health care providers who work with us. Our research agenda will focus on contributing to the evidence base in primary health care and general practice education.

VALUES

In alignment with the mission of the School of Medicine, the work of the Department of General Practice will be informed by the following core values:

Social Justice

We promote equity, prioritising areas of need in health, education and the healthcare workforce.

Collaboration

We work collaboratively within the School of Medicine, and more widely across Western Sydney University and beyond. We will build and sustain respectful and effective partnerships with General Practitioners and other primary health care providers, their related organisations, teaching and healthcare institutions and with the communities in which we work.

Excellence through innovation

We use innovative, evidence based teaching and research activities that are informed by and will inform other programs, locally, nationally and internationally.

People focused

In all our work we value people and respond to the needs and hopes of the patients, students, colleagues and community members with whom we work.

KEY RESULT AREAS

- Strengthen the Department of General Practice within the School of Medicine and beyond
- Deliver a sustainable best practice learning and teaching program in General Practice
- Grow the General Practice / Primary Health Care research capacity
- Engage with local communities to inform our work and build mutually beneficial sustainable relationships

STRATEGIES

Strategies	Tasks	Role	Timeline	Outcomes/ Indicators	Update April 2021
1. Build and develop the Department of General Practice within the School of Medicine and beyond					
1.1 Recruit staff to carry out core responsibilities and seek funding for additional staff as required	Clarify roles/ responsibilities	Peter Brennan Chair	Ongoing	Unit has staffing capacity to achieve work targets	Two 0.8 FTE Admin officers. Shared services have not covered additional tasks and interim support provided through SoM for additional tasks. SL and research roles filled
	Seek funding as required	Chair and Deanery	Ongoing		All staff orientated
	Recruit and orientate new staff	Peter Brennan Chair and HR	Ongoing		
1.2 Develop knowledge and skills of staff members	Complete training and seek opportunities for advancement as required	GP Team	Ongoing; 12 monthly review	Staff have appropriate level of knowledge and skills	Staff encouraged to undertake training as required Database of training undertaken maintained Steve Trankle on WSU academic senate All engage in university performance review
	Target conference attendance	GP Team	Ongoing; 12 monthly review		Staff attending conferences Database maintained on X-Drive (also on Compass) All staff encouraged to attend relevant conferences All engage in university performance review

	Support study and training for additional qualifications	Chair	Ongoing		Jenny Reath completed PhD
1.3 Maintain effective team communication	Convene regular meetings with agreed agenda	GP Team	Ongoing	Staff are aware of each others' roles, responsibilities and key work commitments. Actions are delivered within the agreed timelines. Shared documents can be readily sourced Effective communication is maintained between meetings Meetings are held across all sites of activity	Meetings convened: Team meetings (2 monthly); Research Meetings (2 monthly); Curriculum Meetings (monthly).
	Map and Maintain shared drive	Admin staff and GP Team	Ongoing		X Drive urgently in need of re-mapping – waiting Admin staff opportunity
	Share calendars	Admin staff and GP Team	Ongoing		Calendars shared via outlook.
	Establish and implement agreed E Mail protocol	GP Team	Ongoing		Email protocol reviewed and agreed by team
	Use Zoom for communication cross campus/ RCS	GP Team	Ongoing		Meetings usually held in Campbelltown on Tuesdays when most staff are on the same campus. Zoom available for Rural Sites
1.4 Establish and maintain effective administrative processes	Develop and maintain a procedure manual and support documents	Admin Officer	Ongoing	A working document is kept current for staff reference Support documents developed e.g. staff travel/ conference databases	SOP de-graded - Re-formatting as soon as Admin have opportunity. In meantime task instructions posted in folder on X Drive
1.5 Establish and maintain good relationships with other units of the SoM, the wider university and community	Map key meetings and ensure Dept of GP representation	Chair and all staff	Ongoing	Dept of GP representation at key meetings All key internal and external stakeholders are able to access information about the Dept of GP	All staff attending relevant meetings
	Report back at team meetings re outcomes of meetings attended	GP Team	Ongoing		Reporting back attended.
	Establish and maintain database of contacts	Admin Officer	Ongoing		Two databases held by Department and In Place Database also populated with practice placement information

				Database and Website are up to date	Consideration required re ongoing efficiencies in database management.
	Establish and maintain Dept of GP Website	Research Assistant	Ongoing; 6 monthly review		Supervisor Web page established Dept GP website updated regularly Chair leading with RA assistance
	Publish and disseminate regular newsletters	Research Assistant	6 monthly		Newsletter emailed, faxed and posted on website twice a year with in-between email updates. On line version started 2015
	Review tasks and activities 12-monthly Report annually on achievements of the Dpt of GP and disseminate to key stakeholders	Chair and GP Team	Ongoing	End of year review of the strategic plan is conducted A report is compiled and disseminated in February/ March each year	Reviewed April 2021 Newsletter provides update Updated plan posted on website
1.6 Maintain adequate equipment and infrastructure	Monitor ongoing needs	Chair and Admin Officer	Ongoing	The department is adequately supported to work effectively	Adequate support Places at Blacktown All staff are equipped with a working space and adequate equipment.
	Identify additional requirements and funding support	Peter Brennan Chair and Admin Officer	Ongoing		As required
	Establish Asset Register	Admin Officer	Ongoing	Accurate and up to date register of Dept. assets	Teaching equipment register including research assets established and regularly updated Computer lease and asset register held by Shay Carter

2. IMPLEMENT AND CONTINUALLY IMPROVE A BEST PRACTICE LEARNING AND TEACHING PROGRAM IN GENERAL PRACTICE

Strategies	Tasks	Who	Timeline	Outcomes/ Indicators	November 2020 review/ comments
2.1 Deliver, evaluate, and continually improve our General Practice curriculum	Deliver GP curriculum in urban sites, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Outcomes & curriculum map • GP Placements & BtB sessions • Clinical attachment descriptors • Reading list and Resources • Supervisor's Guide • Conference Week • Assessments • Work with our Rural Clinical Schools to deliver GP learning outcomes and teaching program at rural sites. 	Chair /Senior Lecturers/ Admin Team / GP Team	Ongoing	Timely delivery of GP teaching and learning materials to allow adequate student and supervisor preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 & 2 MD placement program implemented, adapted due to COVID restrictions, further modified for 2021 due to logistic and administrative constraints (Year 2 placements cancelled after 2021) • Year 3 GP placements modified for MD cohort • Year 3 and 5 placements and assessments modified during COVID pandemic, including catering for students undertaking AIM placements • Contribution to Year 1, 2, 3 and 5 Barrier assessments (questions and marking) • Conference week teaching delivered in Years 3, 4 and 5 with lectures/workshops in Years 1-2 • New Clinical Attachment Descriptor (CAD) and assessment forms for 2021 completed • vUWS site for 400811, 400977 and 400978 populated and published. GP folders in 400861/401276 and 400862/401277 updated with learning material • Readings and resource list, supervisor guide with FAQs for students and supervisors reviewed and updated • PBLA review in progress, regular calibration workshops for PBLA markers Year 1 & 2, 3 and 5 GP curriculum reviewed 2020
	Continue to benchmark our curriculum against best practice and external reference points	Chair / Senior Lecturer 1 and 2	Ongoing	Curriculum is referenced to external benchmarks including literature and accepted professional standards.	GP curriculum development informed by key external developments e.g. RACGP curriculum, comparison with other medical schools' GP curricula

	Continue to review GP curriculum in light of other SoM teaching	Chair / Senior Lecturer 1 and 2	Ongoing	GP Curriculum is relevant and does not duplicate other learning opportunities	GP teaching regularly reviewed and re-aligned with SoM curriculum roadmap. Conference Week content compared with other Yr 3-5 CWs for 2020/2021. Consultation with conference week leads for Years 3-5 MiC curriculum, CAD, CAA, Supervisor's guide updated New teaching sessions developed in 2020 Continued liaison with Population Health, PPD and clinical disciplines through Year Committee meetings. Umbrella curriculum mapping of GP teaching across the curriculum revised in 2020
	Consult with communities and GP stakeholders including Universities, PHNs, Training Providers, and Educators	Chair /Senior Lecturers	Ongoing	Communication with other university departments of general practice through AAAPC and Annual HOD meeting Regular documented meetings with RTPs and GP Organisations.	Peter Brennan Chair liaising with GP Synergy Regular meetings with PHNs - through PEER (Partners in Education, Evaluation and Research), Clinical Council NBM PHN and workforce committee and meetings with CEO SWS PHN Consumer engagement lead taken by Brahm Marjadi on behalf of whole of SoM Little engagement with social media
	Seek further opportunities to include interprofessional learning	Chair / Senior Lecturer 1 and 2	Ongoing	Students, supervisors and staff evaluate interprofessional learning opportunities as being effective.	Continuing CW wound care workshop with nursing, podiatry and medical input, musculoskeletal medicine workshop with physios and GPs continue during Year 4 & 5 campus-based learning, social worker input at a domestic violence workshop in Year 3 and prescribing workshops with pharmacists for Year 5 conference week. Yr 5 GP students required to visit 4 community-based health professionals and teach their peers a skill they have learned Ongoing commitment to Tahmoor (Wollondilly), Bankstown, Parramatta and Warragamba community Health days Homeless health community engagements conducted in coordination with SONM and others from School of Health Sciences via STITCHES collaboration – though few events in 2020 due to pandemic

	Recruit alternative primary health care attachments and set up combination GP/ special interest rotations	Team to identify opportunities	Ongoing	Students have opportunities to complete Year 5 rotations that include areas of interest such as Justice health and Aged care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justice Health continues to be very popular. Aged Care: partnership & MoU with RSL Lifecare also Kennedy Health care and Bupa on hold for 2020 – will be reviewed for 2021;
	Conduct student and teacher evaluations of GP curriculum	Chair / Senior Lecturer 1	Ongoing	Documented Evaluation Plan for GP curriculum. Annual report of evaluation results. Students, supervisors and staff evaluate GP attachment as an effective learning strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student and GP Supervisor evaluations of Yrs 1 - 5 2019/20 have been collated and reported. Feedback generally positive from students and supervisors, constructive comments addressed as able. Overall good CW evaluations received, presentations, workshops and timetabling adapted in light of student and academic feedback. Formal evaluation of Justice Health placement completed. Individualised feedback being provided to GP supervisors as needed
	Develop improvement strategies from evaluations and other inputs such as external benchmarks	Chair / Senior Lecturers	Ongoing	Annual review of program, including Learning Outcomes Ongoing implementation of improvement strategies	Program reviewed annually with modifications. CW evaluation informs ongoing CW planning. Feedback from students and GP supervisors taken into account.
	Build teaching capacity within the Department of General Practice through staff training and professional development	Academic GP Team members	Ongoing; review 12-monthly	See 1.2	Teaching and learning resources shared. Professional development plans developed with Head of Department. PD provided every second Team meeting
2.2 Recruit and support GP and community Supervisors	Ongoing recruitment of new GP practices	Senior Lecturer 1 and 2 / Admin Officer	Ongoing; review 6-monthly	At least two recruitment cycles per annum in each location.	Recruitment strategy is documented and is being implemented by Senior Lecturers and Admin Officer. Continued recruitment of new supervisors through EoI, snowballing, informal contact & student self-selection; regular practice visits by SLs Geo-targeted recruitment based upon student place of residence and student self-placements.

	Regular communications with GP and community supervisors.	Chair / /Senior Lecturers	Ongoing; review 6-monthly	Provision of timely feedback on teaching. Program of visits to GP and community supervisors	Phone or personal contact with new supervisors. Contact with Year 1 - 5 supervisors as needed with 6-monthly thankyou letters and evaluation forms. Qualtrics for GP Evaluations Ongoing Face to face visits or phone calls with interim email/fax useful info
	Training and teaching support for GP and community supervisors	Academic GP Team members	Ongoing; review 6-monthly	At least two training sessions offered to GP and community supervisors per annum	New supervisors receive in-person or telephone orientation prior to taking students Supervisor workshop with U Syd held second half of 2020 Evidence Based Journal Clubs on hold
	Promote GP and community supervisor participation in student research projects	Peter Brennan Chair / / Community Res Lecturer	Ongoing	Disseminate information and support Supervisors of Community Research Projects	Supervisor manual and Dpt GP newsletter includes CR information. GPs interested in research invited to be involved in MD scholarly projects Opportunistic advertising at GP meetings. Email invitation sent to GP supervisors and conjoins GP supervisor research w'shops under consideration for 2021
	Work with Rural Clinical School staff to implement tasks under Strategy 2.2 at rural sites.	Chair with Rural Team	Ongoing; review 6-monthly	As above for Rural Clinical Schools	Programs in NR and Bathurst going well. Rural supervisors invited to combined online workshop in 2020 GP Dept collaborating with CSU in Joint Program in Medicine to commence in Orange in 2021
2.3 Provide GP expertise to appropriate components of the WSU MBBS program	All Years: provide a GP and community based perspective to MBBS curriculum. Offer teaching opportunities to GPs, including ICMs, PBLs, portfolio interviewing, PPD, MiC and CW.	Academic GP Team members	GP team	GPs teach in relevant parts of the MBBS program. Up to 20% of assessments in the MBBS program to be based in General Practice and/or primary care settings.	Yr 1 & 2 workshops and 3 - 5 CW taught by practicing GPs and role models. GP questions contributed and marked in Yr 1-5 written assessments. Student evaluations of CW and Yr 5 attachments include question on relevance of GP Dept of GP advised on renewed Year 1-2 PBLs Dept GP coordinating Prescribing Skills Assessment for Year 5 students
	Orientation of new students	Academic staff to develop and implement		Students perceive General Practice as	JR and SLs attend and present at orientation / welcome of new students SLs present on self-care at orientation for new domestic and international students

		orientation for new students		relevant to their medical training and value the expertise of their GP teachers.	
	Year 3: Medicine in Context Develop and implement learning outcomes for GP attachments.	Chair/ Senior Lecturer 3	Ongoing; review annually		MiC Attachment Descriptor and curriculum revised for 2020
	Year 4: Electives Develop and advertise electives in GP and community settings.	Senior Lecturer 2	Ongoing		Electives suspended in 2020 due to COVID
	Honours and Summer Scholarships Develop and supervise students in research projects including in Departmental research.	Academic GP Team members	Ongoing		SoM Website being updated. Opportunities advertised for summer scholarships and Honours students. Two annual GP Synergy student scholarships supervised by Research team in 2020 completed. One applicant for 2021. Five students completed a supervised Community Research project 2020.
2.4 Support and encourage student interest in General Practice beyond the teaching program	Establish presence at student events, including Orientation	GP team	Ongoing	Students are aware of the work of the Dept of GP and regard the team as being accessible.	Attend Orientation Week events for new students. Student Prizes for GP Year 3 (MiC) and Year 5, as well as Dermatology Prize
	Engage with student groups including GPSN and MedSoc	GP team	Ongoing		Regular meetings with GPSN and support for their events.
	Encourage student membership of RACGP	GP team	Ongoing; review 6-monthly		Advertised resources and in Year 5 CW Fund raising for Nick Collins Scholarship for student to attend RACGP Annual conference Award suspended in 2020 due to COVID.
	Offer mentoring to interested students	Academic GP Team members and Conjoints	Ongoing; review annually	Students with an interest in General Practice are supported and encouraged in that interest	Formal mentoring program on hold but informal mentoring by Year 1 GP supervisors encouraged

3. BUILD GENERAL PRACTICE / PRIMARY HEALTH CARE RESEARCH CAPACITY/OUTPUT

Strategies	Tasks	Who	Timeline	Outcomes/ Indicators	November 2020 review / comments
3.1 Plan and implement research agenda	Engage with other Universities and PHNs/ RTOs to identify opportunities for collaboration	GP Team	Ongoing	Dept. of GP is actively engaged in a range of relevant research.	Current projects total 19, Completed 45 (pending papers 11), Shelved and On Hold 12. External funding for 6 current projects and external partnering in 5 projects JR/ PA contributing to partnerships in 7 SPHERE streams ST contributing at Leaders Alliance - Western Sydney Diabetes Research planned with 8 PHNs and Digital Health CRC 2021-23 JR chairing Steering Committee for MoU between NBMPHN and WSU
	Seek research opportunities with other Units in the School of Medicine	GP Team	Ongoing		ST, PA and JR members of THRI ST attending meetings with THRI and REDI
	Evaluate and prioritise research opportunities using research screening tool	GP Team	Ongoing		Priority list is actioned at each Dept Research Meeting when required.
	Identify and disseminate research funding opportunities	GP Team	Ongoing		Funding opportunities are discussed at each 2 monthly Dept Research Meeting. Updates added to X Drive
	Attract competitive funding	GP Researchers	Opportunistic		One current NHMRC Grants (\$4.1M total NHMRC funding to date) Signed off on a 24 month DHCRC funded evaluation - QUEST PHC (\$506,895) developing Quality Indicators of General Practice Funded evaluation of afterhours telehealth service in Residential Aged Care facilities in Nepean Blue Mountains 2020-2021 (\$67,907) Funded Evaluation SWSPHN My Care Partners program 2020-2023 (\$109,972)
	Develop potential "shelf" research projects	GP Team	Ongoing		Current Research Activities_Internal include shelf projects included on X-Drive file

3.2 Build postgraduate opportunities	Identify and promote Post Graduate research opportunities in the Department	GP Team	Ongoing; review 6 monthly	Students and registrars complete research projects through the Dept. of GP Increased number of GP Supervisors with post graduate research qualifications	Opportunities for post graduate quals advertised on website from 2018
	Promote and provide opportunities for GP Registrar attachments	Chair / Senior Fellow	March 2011 - ongoing		3 Registrars 2021
	Create and promote opportunities for GP supervisor to achieve postgraduate research qualifications	GP Team	Ongoing		SoM research support opportunities advertised to GP Conjoints Information disseminated to supervisors and conjoints through newsletters, personal invitation
3.3 Build GP research capacity/output	Engage with other Universities and DGPs/ RTOs to plan and deliver research/ training to GPs	GP Team	Ongoing; review 6 monthly	GPs in Greater West Sydney are liaising with GP Unit to partner in research projects	No EB Journal Club conducted in 2020. Considering research training workshops in 2021. Consider Research open day 2021
	Work towards the establishment of a GP Practice Based Research Network (PBRN) in western Sydney	Peter Brennan Chair / Senior Fellow / Research Officer	Ongoing; review 6 monthly		JR in discussion with Sphere Clinical Trials Network and working with AAAPC on MRFF application
	Identify, develop and support research opportunities for GP trainers and GPs in western Sydney	GP Team	Ongoing		GPs with interest in research noted in Database Currently supervising, Ivan Parise, in self-funded GP research. Maithri Rupasinghe, visiting Fellow from Sri Lanka, completed research in 2020 supervised by Research Team, while also working with GPs in western Sydney Hannah van Werven is a visiting Fellow from Netherlands worked with Natalie Cochrane, a WS GP, on the Quality Indicators in GP project until 2020
3.4 Maintain individual staff research interests	Take leave/ attend meetings as required and agreed upon	GP Team	Ongoing; review 6 monthly	Staff of the Department have active research involvement reflected in funding and publications	GP Researchers have attended numerous electronic meetings, fora and seminars and several conferences in 2020.

				Staff have skills appropriate to the work of the Department	
	Report back on external meetings	GP Team	Ongoing; review monthly 6		Reports of meetings are given at Dept of General Practice Research Meetings
	Support research capacity development and opportunities for research for Dept of GP staff	GP Team	Ongoing; review monthly 6		Training in use of research tools and qualitative research methodologies are regularly being undertaken. Penny completed PhD 2018 Jenny completed PhD 2020 Miriam completed Masters (2018).
3.5 Incorporate a research focus into departmental activities whenever relevant	Incorporate a strong evaluation framework into all appropriate activities	GP Team	Ongoing; review 6 monthly	Key departmental activities are evaluated	Regular evaluation of all teaching. ROs assist academics as required. Steve and Lawrence supervising a GP Synergy scholarship student analysing Year 5 students' "Self-Evaluation Core-learning check Lists" Evaluation of EBJC program submitted for publication (Miriam Brooks).
	Document and disseminate all appropriate departmental initiatives through preparing papers for publication and conference presentations	GP Team	Ongoing	Department members publishing in high ERA ranked journals Department members presenting at key national conferences	All DGP academics have published research in 2020 and presented at conferences. Research reports for funded work have been accepted for ERA ranking. Promoted through THRI and DGP newsletters.

4. ENGAGE WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO INFORM OUR WORK AND BUILD MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS					
Strategies	Tasks	Who	Timeline	Outcomes/ Indicators	November 2020 review / comments
4.1 Develop and implement a plan for ongoing community engagement in teaching and research activities	Establish Reference / Advisory Group structures and develop regular program of engagement	Chair / Admin Team	Ongoing	A process for community engagement is developed and implemented	Dept GP convened a Consumer Engagement Workshop in 2019 and report provided in early 2020. Dept of GP Consumer Strategy under development. Brahm Marjadi developed SoM consumer engagement strategy
	Build skills in consumer engagement	GP Team	Ongoing		Penny attends Wentwest PHN Consumer Council
	Identify teaching opportunities for community engagement	Chair	Ongoing		Students supervised by GP academic team offering health checks at community engagement events 2019: Homeless health hubs Parramatta/ Bankstown/ Macarthur, Aboriginal Education Consultation Group camps, Bankstown Wellness festival Suspended from March 2020 due to COVID
	Inform the community of teaching opportunities via email / website	GP Team	Ongoing		Website/ Staff profiles/Newsletter up to date Databases enable email communication
	Keep the community informed of outcomes from community engagement	GP Team	Ongoing; review 6 monthly		Newsletter disseminated twice a year Website up to date
4.2 Attend relevant community meetings / events	Maintain community mailing lists	Admin Team	Ongoing; review 6 monthly		Nil currently
	Join email community bulletin lists	Admin Team	Ongoing; review 6 monthly	Nil currently	

4.3 Seek opportunities to extend teaching to communities	Assess communities interests/ needs through community engagement above	GP Team	Ongoing	Dept. GP actively engaged in teaching in communities of GWS	Nil currently
	Plan and implement community education events	GP Team	Ongoing		Nil in 2020 – for consideration in 2021
4.4 Support engagement with international communities	Support staff interests and engagement	Chair and other academic staff	Ongoing	Dpt GP staff are actively engaged with a variety of international teaching and research endeavours	Penny Abbott on conference organising committee for WEPHREN –2021 – UK conference on prison healthcare
	Create teaching and research opportunities for the Department and the wider university including for students	GP Team	Ongoing		Nil currently
4.5 Use GP networks to connect with community	Discuss with GPs, potentially through GP research training networks and PBRNs, strategies to connect with the community to build a community engaged research agenda	GP Team	Ongoing	Research activities within the Department are undertaken in close collaboration with relevant communities	Research continues with Pacific Islander communities in western Sydney and within the clinical trial network of AMSs in the ear health research

Current Staff as at November 2020

Peter Brennan Chair – Jenny Reath
Associate Professor – Penny Abbott
Senior Lecturers – Lawrence Tan, Miriam Brooks, Winston Lo
Academic Registrar– Tasnuba, Pervez, Olivia Missiakos, Yvonne An.
Administrative Officers –Vicki Bradley, Sharon Lawrence
GP Researchers – Natalie Cochrane, Ivan Parise
Associate Research Fellow - Steve Trankle
WATCH and INFLATE Trial Research Officers – Robyn Walsh, Courtney Weston
Research Administration Officers –Nicole King, Samantha Ryan