



DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2019

Welcome

Dear Colleagues

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the winter edition of our twice yearly newsletter. As always we have a wide variety of news and updates to share. This edition includes updates from our WSU GP alumni who are growing in number and enthusiastically teaching our students and modelling best practice care in the community. Congratulations to all who have been part of achieving this outcome!

For the first time this year we are hosting an experienced Sri Lankan GP who is completing his post graduate qualification in General Practice with an overseas attachment in our department. Read about Dr Rupasinghe's research in asthma and look out for his call for GP interviewees in the near future!

We have two worthy award recipients to announce and a number of updates on changes to the teaching PiP and our program at WSU, as well as a helpful reminder about assessment of students placed in your practices.

I am reluctant to use this newsletter as a platform for fund raising however we have included information about three opportunities for tax free donations to awards/scholarships that may interest GP colleagues noted below:

- We are calling for GPs who may wish to sponsor a named prize for high student performance in General Practice (**see OPPORTUNITY TO DONATE TO A STUDENT AWARD**).
- The Nick Collins Memorial Fund provides a scholarship for a student to attend the RACGP Annual Conference (**see NICK COLLINS AWARD**).
- We have reached the end of a 5 year funded exchange program for our students and those of a new Medical School in Kathmandu. I am happy to chat to anyone interested in sponsoring this program at a total cost of approximately \$5,000/ year (**see NEPALI EXCHANGE PROGRAM**).



We have also included some snapshots of our campus based learning activities which you will see give our students a taste of some of the skills required in general practice. These sessions have evolved in response to student and alumni feedback and are greatly valued by our students.

As always we are indebted to our GP Supervisors. We are now teaching students in general practice across all years of the program – no wonder our alumni are attracted to GP careers! I believe we are changing the GP landscape in western Sydney- thank you all for your contribution to this valuable work!

Warm Regards

Jenny Reath

Professor Jenny Reath
Peter Brennan Chair of General Practice

GP Conjoints

Thank you to all our GP Conjoints. We greatly value your commitment and contribution to our teaching and research activities here at Western Sydney University. If your name is not on this list your conjoint status may have expired. Please contact Vicki Bradley v.bradley@westernsydney.edu.au and she will assist you!

Dr Akber Alamyar, Dr Ali Alsamail, Dr Aline Smith, Dr Alison Lyon, Dr Andrew Knight, Dr Angela Kwok, Dr Anna Pham, Dr Billie Whiteson, Dr Bruce McGarity, Dr David Cosgriff, Dr David Le, Dr David Lim, Dr Deepa Garg, Dr Deepa Mahananda, Prof Diana O'Halloran, Dr Eshwar Madas, Dr Fatemeh (Mehrnoosh) Abdolalian, Dr Fiona Mackintosh, Dr Frank Keh, Dr Furio Virant, Dr Hani Bittar, Dr Ivan Parise, Dr James Aitken, Dr Jane Leete, Dr Jaspreet Saini, Dr Jenny James, Dr Joseph Lombardo, Dr Julie Ong, Dr Jurriaan Beek, Dr Hani Bittar, Dr Hannah E.van Werven, Dr Kailanathan Ayngkaran, Dr Kam Cheung Glen Au-Yeung, Dr Ken McCroary, Dr Kun Yun Kelvin Hon, Ms Letitia Campbell, Dr Louise McDonnell, Dr Ling Yoong, Dr Magdy Girgis, Dr Matthew Gray, A/Prof Michael Fasher, Dr Michael Burke, Dr Nyen Ling Yoong, Dr Milan Djukanovic, Dr Olataga Alofiva-Doorbinna, Dr Paul Fishburn, Dr Penny Burns, Dr Rajkumar Rajalingam, Dr Ramesh Pillai, Dr Raymond Seeto, A/Prof Ronald Chin, Dr Rosemary Isaacs, Dr Sanjay Kapuwatte, Dr Sarah Gani, Dr Sayeed Khan, Dr Stephen Hampton, Dr Suresh Nair, Dr Susan Sunwoo, Dr Sushil Anand, Dr Thomas Fung, Dr Tim Senior, A/Prof Walter Kmet, Dr Walid Jammal, Dr Yasin Shahab,

Update from the Department of General Practice

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

This year we are very pleased to welcome Dr Maithri Rupasinghe, a GP from Sri Lanka who is undertaking his post-MD overseas training with our Department. Dr Rupasinghe will be shadowing Drs Seelan in their practice and taking other opportunities to learn about the Australian health system whilst he is with us. He is also undertaking some qualitative research exploring challenges for GPs and practice nurses in western Sydney in assessing and managing asthma. Please look out for an invitation to meet with Maithri to discuss your experiences in this area!

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

In April Dr Steve Trankle attended the Association for Death Education and Counselling conference in Atlanta USA. He presented on his recently published paper **“Are We Making Progress on Communication with People Who Are Near the End of Life in the Australian Health System? A Thematic Analysis”**.

In June, Penny attended the International Society of Otitis Media conference in Los Angeles, where our team had a presentation on Establishing an Otitis Media Clinical Trials Network in Aboriginal Medical Services in Australia. This is an interesting international conference which brings together basic scientists, public health practitioners and clinicians from different specialties who are working on ear and hearing health. There was a strong focus on the increasing understanding that the microbiome of the middle ear needs to be considered at in its entirety, both the helpful bacteria and the pathogens, to determine how vaccines and treatments can overcome serious middle ear disease. Shelly Chadha, Medical Director of the WHO programme for prevention of deafness and hearing loss emphasised the importance of looking at otitis media through a public health lens given the disproportionate effect on marginalised communities.

AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCES

Lawrence presented at Notre Dame University's School of Medicine Research Conference on April 15th. The theme was “Working with Disadvantaged Populations”. He described the needs for sensitive and collaborative qualitative research with the culturally and linguistically diverse populations, and the challenges, pitfalls and joys of researching this vulnerable group. His

presentation was well-received and he hopes this will lead to future collaborations in this field.

MULTIMORBIDITY AND ITS IMPACTS

Jenny and Lawrence have reviewed and revised a presentation originally developed for Year 5 students providing evidence of the impact of multimorbidity on patients, GPs and the health system. The confronting statistics and the real life impact have been presented to GPs from the Mt Druitt GP Association, NSW AMA, and SWSPHN. This presentation has also provided an opportunity to highlight some of the health systems reforms with which we are working including Patient Centred Medical Home Transformations and Integrated Health Care.

PENNY RETURNS FROM HER CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP STUDY TOUR - LESSONS FROM THE US AND CANADA

Penny was honoured to receive a Churchill Fellowship this year, studying access to primary care for people with substance use problems and people leaving prison. Given the majority of people in prison are there for crimes related to substance misuse or mental health issues, providing effective care to this group is vital – and will keep them out of prison and prevent deaths. This is a hot topic in the US and Canada right now, where the opioid epidemic is still rampant. As a result, many states have quickly enacted policies and strategies to increase the care available to people who use drugs, both in jails and in the community. The public health response is very evident, and provides guidance to us here in Australia.

Penny notes “I was struck by the way the patient centred medical home model enabled care delivery to people with chronic disease, and included those struggling with addictions. Opioid addiction is increasingly managed in primary care in the US, with integrated models connecting GPs to specialist services for initial mentoring and then as required. Buprenorphine is the mainstay of GP treatment, who are supported by nurses and/or other team members given various titles such as recovery coaches or care coordinators.”

Penny with Mayor James Diossa and Dr Mike Fine in Central Falls, Rhode Island. Their sophisticated public health and medical response to the opioid epidemic has included the opening of a “Neighbourhood Health Station” - a large, enhanced primary care centre which actively reaches out to engage otherwise marginalised community members into health care.

AWARDS

Dr Michelle Crockett, one of our GP Supervisors has been honoured this year with an Order of Australia Medal for service to medicine. Michelle is a co-principal of Riverstone Family Medical Practice and senior GP clinical editor at WentWest HealthPathways. She has been president of Nepean Medical Association since 2008, and is a member of the steering committee for Primary Mental Health Care and GP Psychiatric Liaison Service at WentWest.

This is a fitting honour for an outstanding colleague who has served western Sydney communities for over 30 years – congratulations Michelle!

We are also thrilled to announce Associate Professor Penny Abbott's recent promotion. After her successful completion of a PhD and her award of a Churchill Fellowship, her promotion to Associate Professor is a well-deserved and appropriate acknowledgement of her achievements.

Congratulations Penny – our Department is greatly enhanced by your academic achievements and by your generosity in sharing your expertise!



GP Supervisor/ Practice Manager News

UPDATE ON YEAR 1 MD PROGRAMME

Western Sydney University's School of Medicine welcomed a new batch of excited first-year medical students in February. It was great to meet some of them and hear of their varied and interesting backgrounds. This cohort of students, all going well, will graduate with an MD degree in 2023. In addition to the demanding problem-based learning course work and clinical learning MBBS students have been doing, MD students will be keeping a portfolio of their learning over the five years of the course, and will also be embarking on a "scholarly project" that they will complete over the final 3 years of their course. The scholarly project may be research, an educational project or a community development project. Please contact Lawrence (lawrence.tan@westernsydney.edu.au) if you have any suggestions for a project that an MD student may be able to undertake in your practice or in your community beginning in 2021.

Another exciting modification to the curriculum is commencement of GP placements in second semester of Year 1 for 1/2 day per month, continuing in first semester of Year 2, ideally in the same practice so that students will develop an appreciation for our role in providing continuity and coordination of care. This means high demand for GP placements in 2019 and 2020 as we have students in all five years requiring placements of different lengths in urban and rural locations. We are grateful to GP supervisors who have agreed to take more than one first-year student and also students from senior years in their practices (on different days). We are confident both students and supervisors will find their experience of GP placement a rewarding and educational one.

If you have not already responded to Sharon with your available dates for second semester of 2019, please contact her on s.lawrence@westernsydney.edu.au or Ph: **4620 3933**.

NEW PIP ARRANGEMENTS

Medicare Payment Schedule 2019

Cut-off dates for submitting claim forms	Quarterly Payment Month
24 July, 2019	August
24 October 2019	November

2019 Metro Placement Dates (Semester 2)

Year 3 MiC Students: Metro	Year 5 GP Students: Metro
MiC 4: 27 May –28 June, 2019	Metro 4: 24 June – 26 July, 2019
MiC 5: 22 July –23 August, 2019	Metro 5: 29 July – 30 August, 2019
MiC 6: 26 August –27 September, 2019	Metro 6: 16 September – 18 October, 2019
MiC 7: 30 September – 1 November, 2019	Metro 7: 21 October – 22 November, 2019

PIP forms and how they are processed changed from the end of 2018. These changes are summarised below:

- We will complete and sign the university certification section of the Teaching Payment claim form before the student attends the teaching session. This will be sent to the practice with the confirmation of student placement letter. It will be dated with the last day of the rotation. This signed and stamped form must be printed and completed by the practice.
- Once the student has completed their training sessions, both the student and the GP Supervisor are required to sign the claim form to verify the training sessions have occurred.
- The owner/authorised signatory of the practice then completes the "Practice declaration" section and submits the completed and signed form to the

Australian Government Department of Human Services for payment as per the instructions on the form.

- The practice must provide the student with a copy of the completed paperwork on the final day of placement.
- Some corporate practices may not be able to sign PIP forms – these forms may be processed centrally.
- Practices must retain a copy of the teaching payment claims for 6 years.

For any questions please contact Vicki Bradley on **02 4620 3896** or v.bradley@westernsydney.edu.au

For more information, please contact the PIP Helpline on **1800 222 032**, or visit humanservices.gov.au

TEACHING AND ASSESSMENTS

Assessment is an important part of teaching as it both motivates learning, and provides students feedback on what they are doing well and what areas they need to work on. The end-of-placement Clinical Attachment Assessment (CAA) in Year 4/5 makes up 50% of their total mark for general practice, the other 50% coming from their written assignments marked on campus.

We encourage GP supervisors to consider the student's stage of learning and mark them according to how they perform as compared to other students in their cohort. The majority of students will be around the middle of the marking scale. Try not to be overly generous nor overly harsh. It is quite reasonable to complete the CAA in a private location so as not to be unduly influenced by the student's presence. Then please go through the CAA with the student to highlight any constructive verbal or written feedback.

Thank you once again to all our GP supervisors who are now teaching medical students from Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 in their practices. Please contact Vicki v.bradley@westernsydney.edu.au if you have any questions or concerns about assessments or student performance, and one of the senior lecturers will get back to you promptly.

GP Supervisor/Practice Manager News **continued**



JOINT PROGRAM IN MEDICINE – PARTNERING WITH CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY (TAEMCKNIGHT)

In 2018, the Federal Government announced a budget allocation to develop a new Joint Program in Medicine between Charles Sturt University (CSU) and Western. The joint program is a part of an initiative known as the Murray-Darling network of medical schools, which will also see whole medical degrees being delivered in Orange, Dubbo, Wagga Wagga and a number of sites in Victoria. The CSU/Western program is currently under development with an experienced joint team from both universities. CSU will see the first admissions of around 30 students, starting in 2021 on the Orange campus of CSU. The program aims to train doctors in a regional location for a regional population, with more information being provided in the Central West in coming months.

OPPORTUNITY TO DONATE TO A STUDENT AWARD

At the end of the final year of our program students are honoured for outstanding achievement. We are fortunate to have an award donated by Dr Anna Pham (one of our longest standing GP Supervisors) to a student who scores top marks in their general practice training. A previous donor has recently withdrawn and there is opportunity for additional award donations, as students tend to bunch at the top end in their results and it is sometimes difficult to pick one "winner"!

Philanthropic donations to WSU are tax free and supported through the Office of Advancement who produce annual donor reports and facilitate invitations to graduation ceremonies for donors.

Please contact Jenny on **0412 586 135** or at j.reath@westernsydney.edu.au if you would like to learn more about what such an award would involve.

Student News

YEAR 5 CONFERENCE WEEK

In February conference week, Year 5 students had a very enjoyable teaching session on skin, with a lecture on common dermatology topics and a practical suturing workshop facilitated by Dr Lawrence Tan, our GP registrar Dr Jess Bedford and guest dermatologist lecturers Dr Brian Wallace and Dr Rob Paver.



YEAR 4 CAMPUS LEARNING

Year 4 students had a range of interprofessional learning experiences organised by the Department of GP in June, including learning about musculoskeletal examination from physiotherapists, wound management from podiatrists and nurses, GP consulting skills from a range of experienced GP facilitators, and presentations on ENT, Refugee Health and Justice Health.

YEAR 3 CONFERENCE WEEK

The GP teaching team also provided workshops for Year 3 students in July, including primary prevention, secondary prevention, disaster management and domestic violence. Workshops were interesting, hands-on and interactive and students appreciated the teaching provided.

NICK COLLINS AWARD

Calling all who knew and loved Nick to assist us to support a WSU student to attend the RACGP 2019 conference in Adelaide this year!

We greatly appreciate the generosity of those who have given previously and are seeking donations so that we can continue to offer this award to deserving students into the future.

To donate please follow this link to [Dr Nick Collins Memorial Fund](#)

GP STUDENT NETWORK

In April, our WSU GP student network collaborated with Rural Health Union of Western Sydney to provide an interdisciplinary clinical skills night. Attended by approximately 100 students from medicine, nursing and midwifery, paramedicine and physiotherapy, it was an evening of engaging and practical learning experiences. Students rotated through 8 stations practising important hands-on clinical skills, such as ear examination with otoscopes, taught by Professor Jenny Reath. We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of Welch Allyn who provided otoscopes for the evening.



Alumni News



Drs Josh Stephenson, Jesse Hall, Anna Pham, Jenny Reath, Nirusha Karunaratne, Daniel Buckingham, Winston Lo (Craig Mattern absent)

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY AT PICTON FAMILY MEDICAL CENTRE

"Have you seen who is working at Picton?" went the email from Penny Lee our medical student support officer.

No fewer than FIVE of our graduates are working with long-standing supervisor and student prize donor Dr Anna Pham. Jenny and Winston were quick to arrange a visit and a celebration lunch in April. How proud are we in the photo above!

ALISON CALLAGHAN REPORTS FROM MORNINGTON ISLAND

Alison (nee Thorn) took a break from her usual role at Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation to spend two weeks on Mornington Island in May. Alison commented:

"It's been an eye opening and wonderful experience. The clients are lovely but very sick (1 in 20 on the island will end up on dialysis at some point). I've had some really sick kids including an RFDS retrieval to a paediatric ICU."

UPDATE FROM DR NISHA GARG

Nisha writes: I was part of the second cohort of WSU – graduating in 2012 – back when it was UWS. I completed my internship and residency at Westmead adults before moving across to Westmead children's for an SRMO year prior to entering General Practice. I undertook my GP training in Picton before coming to practice in Roselands.

UWS was a tight knit cohort and the clinical supervisors in the hospital and general practice setting were always very engaged and eager to involve us. It has been lovely to cross paths with alumni, current faculty and students and to see how far these ties extend. Early involvement with the Western Sydney community gave us an understanding of the determinants of health specific to the region and general practice. I feel we have a unique insight into individuals and their family as general practitioners and I hope to impart on students and registrars how special that privilege is.

Jenny responds: It is so good to see our alumni like Nisha not only becoming great GPs, but taking our students and role modelling for them what a difference general practice makes!



ALUMNI SURVEY

We are about to post our first analysis of the alumni survey on our website. You will be pleased to read how many of our students trained in western Sydney and, though at this stage we are not reaching all our GP alumni, it is exciting to hear about their pathways into GP! Please keep an eye out for this first snapshot of our graduate progress.

...SPEAKING OF SNAPSHOTS – WELCOME TO ALUMNI BABIES!

Can you guess the parents of these two cuties? Meet Miles Alexander Cosgriff! and Daniel O'Brien – loved and photographed by brothers Junior and Elijah (sons of Sarah Galloway)!



Our Communities

NEPALI EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Over the past 5 years, a philanthropic gift from a local GP, has provided a successful student exchange program, enhancing the learning and patient outcomes of WSU and Patan Academy of Health Science, Nepal (PAHS) medical students.

HERE IS WHAT OUR STUDENTS HAD TO SAY...

I had the opportunity to study with the third-year students in their clinical rotations in Patan Hospital. This was an eye-opening experience and I was able to shadow doctors and get involved first hand with the healthcare system of Nepal. I had ample opportunity to see the differences between the healthcare provision of Nepal and Australia. One thing that struck me was the efficiency in use of minimal resources – the Emergency Department of the hospital was quite a small room, with beds placed side by side, with not even a curtain to separate each of them. The resuscitation bay was a small alcove, with the bare essentials needed for patients to receive urgent care. Furthermore, the patients I saw presented with illnesses which I had never been exposed to in Australia, including such conditions as tuberculosis, malaria and malnourishment in children



A PAHS STUDENT WROTE...

The opportunity made me feel worthy and gave a tremendous boost to my self-confidence. It reinforced my passion and commitment to serve the disadvantaged and unprivileged people throughout the globe. Steve Jobs said- "Do what you love". The reverse is just as true- "Love what you do" I am sure that my experience and understanding will be perfectly reflected in the form of love to my profession, compassion, empathy, kindness and more importantly in relentless passion in my work ethic for my life mission in my future. I truly hope that these exchange programs which are really worth doing continues for the fortunate future medical students as well.

Unfortunately, the initial donation of funds from 2014 has now been distributed to the last scholar and we do not want to see this program end. The International Clinical Placement Scholarship program's success is up to you. We are seeking tax deductible gifts to continue this program and invite you to become part of the success. Please give at give.westernsydney.edu.au

Anish Dhakal (PAHS exchange student August 2017) and Lucas Mok



Prof Reath with 2018 PAHS students Pratibha Mahato and Niharika Malego

Research Updates

MEASURING QUALITY GENERAL PRACTICE

WentWest, the Western Sydney Primary Health Network, is engaged in a range of initiatives to improve healthcare in Western Sydney including Integrated Care, Patient Centred Medical Home (PCMH) transitions, and Health Care Homes. It is an opportune time therefore for us to work with WentWest to consider how quality general practice in an Australian context can be measured.

The overall aim of this research project is to define high quality primary healthcare in an Australian context. We will develop an evidence based suite of indicators and measures of high quality general practice and test our findings with GPs and other members of the GP team. The final agreed set of indicators will enable practices to evaluate their progress in achieving quality targets and in the future, potentially to forecast the likely impact of practice improvement on key patient outcomes.

Supporting this work, we have recently received \$100,000 in funding from an Ainsworth grant (Quality Equity and System Transformation in Primary Health Care: QUEST PHC). This grant will help us establish an expert research team in Western Sydney on improving quality general practice. We also plan to include a further 3-4 PHNs beyond Western Sydney in this research.

New Publications

Purdie S, Creighton N, White KM, Baker D, Ewald D, Lee CK, Lyon A, Man J, Michail D, Miller AA, **Tan L**, Currow D, Young JM. Pathways to diagnosis of non-small cell lung cancer: a descriptive cohort study. *Primary Care Respiratory Medicine*. 2019; DOI: 10.1038/s41533-018-0113-7

Dao J, Spooner C, **Lo W**, Harris MF. Factors influencing self-management in patients with type2 diabetes in general practice: a qualitative study. *Australian Journal of Primary Health Research*. 2019; DOI: 10.1071/PY18095

Littlewood J, Hinchcliff R, **Lo W**, Rhee J. Advance Care Planning in rural New South Wales from the perspective of general practice registrars and recently followed general practitioners. *Australian Journal of Rural Health*. 2019; DOI: 10.1111/ajr.12525 onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/ajr.12525

D'Antoine H, **Abbott P**, Sherwood J, Wright M, Bond C, Dowling C, Lehmann D, Eades A, Bessarab D. A collaborative yarn on qualitative health research with Aboriginal communities. *Australian Indigenous Health Bulletin*. 2019; 19(2).

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL PRACTICE ACADEMIC & RESEARCH STAFF

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Professor Jenny Reath

Peter Brennan Chair of General Practice
(02) 4620 3725
j.reath@westernsydney.edu.au

Dr Penny Abbott

Senior Lecturer (Tue/Wed)
(02) 4620 3560
p.abbott@westernsydney.edu.au

Dr Miriam Brooks

Senior Lecturer (Tue/Fri)
(02) 4620 3896
miriam.brooks@westernsydney.edu.au

Dr Lawrence Tan

Senior Lecturer (Tue/Fri)
(02) 4620 3896
lawrence.tan@westernsydney.edu.au

Dr Winston Lo

Senior Lecturer (Wed/Fri)
(02) 4620 3561
w.lo@westernsydney.edu.au

Dr Steven Trankle

Research Fellow
(02) 4620 3930
s.trankle@westernsydney.edu.au

Dr Maithri Rupasinghe

Visiting Fellow
(02) 4620 3127
M.Rupasinghe@westernsydney.edu.au

Dr Christine Metusela

Research Officer (Mon/Tues/Fri)
(02) 4620 3894
c.metusela@westernsydney.edu.au

Dr Jessica Armstrong-Kearns

Research Officer
(02) 4620 3937
j.armstrong@westernsydney.edu.au

Ms Robyn Walsh

Clinical Trials Coordinator
(02) 4620 3486
r.walsh@westernsydney.edu.au

Ms Emma Busby

Research Assistant (Tues)
(02) 4620 3822
e.busby2@westernsydney.edu.au

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Ms Vicki Bradley (Mon-Thurs)

Administrative Officer
(02) 4620 3896
v.bradley@westernsydney.edu.au

Mrs Sharon Lawrence (Tues- Fri)

Administrative Officer
(02) 4620 3933
s.lawrence@westernsydney.edu.au

Ms Nicole King (Mon-Wed)

Administrative Officer (WATCH Trial)
(02) 4620 3562
n.king@westernsydney.edu.au

Contact information

1300 897 669
study@westernsydney.edu.au

Western Sydney University
Locked Bag 1797
Penrith NSW 2751 Australia

