

School of Medicine - General Practice Newsletter

Issue 1 / September 2010

Special points of interest:

- Our Vision and Core Values
- Staff Profiles
- Research Support Information
- GP Supervisor Term Dates

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From the Peter Brennan Chair

Welcome to our first edition of the UWS Department of General Practice Newsletter! We hope this semi-regular quarterly newsletter will keep you up to date with the work of the UWS Department of General Practice and be a source of useful information for General Practices in Greater Western Sydney.

We commenced at the School of Medicine in early 2010 building on the good work of Professor Ian Wilson and his team of GP advisors – Drs Anett Wegerhoff, Carina Law, Jay Ramanathan, Matthew Gray and Michael Fasher.

Whilst the focus of this newsletter is on activities at UWS, we work closely with other Universities in the area as well as Divisions of GP and GP Regional Training Providers. We aim to work collaboratively in Greater Western Sydney (GWS) to build General Practice teaching and research capacity.

Our students are fortunate to be studying in an area that offers great learning potential both in the communities of GWS and in the General Practices of this area. Year 3 students who have spent one day a week in GWS General Practices during their 10 week Medicine in Context terms tell us how much they enjoy the experience and a number express an interest in working in General Practice once they graduate.

Since February we have been busy developing a General Practice curriculum for our students who started rural General Practice placements in Bathurst and the Northern Rivers in July.

The commencement in February 2011 of our 5 week urban GP rotations, will provide a challenge as well as an exciting opportunity to inspire our students with the career potential of outer urban General Practice.



We are keen to hear from you if you would like to participate as a GP supervisor. For more information please visit our web page at http://www.uws.edu.au/medicine/som/general_practice or contact us at any time.

Finally, we need some creative input to provide a catchy name for our newsletter! Please send us your ideas and we will provide a prize for the best suggestion!

We are looking forward to working with you!

Jenny Reath
Peter Brennan Chair

First Wave Scholarship Program

Congratulations to UWS student Abbir Ouban for completing the General Practice Registrars Australia (GPSN) Schwartz First Wave Scholarship Program through the Institute of General Practice Education (IGPE).

This highly acclaimed national scholarship program is coordinated by the GP Student Network and provides an opportunity for medical students in the early years of their studies to experience General Practice.

We have recently advertised for two positions in 2011 which will be run through WentWest, our GP Regional Training Provider in the west of Sydney.

Staff Profiles

Jennifer Reath

MBBS Dip RACOG FRACGP M Med

Peter Brennan Chair of General Practice

Jenny Reath is the Foundation Peter Brennan Chair of General Practice at the University of Western Sydney. Professor Reath has worked for most of her career in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health including as a general practitioner in Aboriginal Com-

munity Controlled Health Services in both urban and rural Australia for more than 20 years. She continues as a part time General Practitioner at the Aboriginal Medical Service Western Sydney where she has worked for over 15 years.

Professor Reath has held a number of intersecting roles across General Practice and Indigenous Health. Prior

to her appointment at UWS she was Associate Professor of Indigenous Primary Health Care at the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health at the University of Sydney as well GP Manager of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit.

Wendy Hu

MBBS DipPaed MHA PhD FRACGP

Associate Professor, General Practice

Wendy graduated with the University Medal in Medicine from the University of Sydney (USyd) and went on to specialise in General Practice with special interests in child health.

Prior to starting at UWS she was the Associate Director of Education at the Children's Hospital at Westmead,

where she has worked in clinical, research and senior management roles. Wendy's professional and research interests include curriculum design; evaluation and quality improvement of medical education; teaching and assessment of core graduate skills; medical risk and uncertainty; doctor-patient and organisational communication; lay experiences of illness and healthcare; health services research; and qualitative and interdisciplinary approaches to research.

At UWS, Wendy hopes to build on the considerable energy of the School of Medicine to assist in developing a vigorous program of education and research excellence in the Department of General Practice. Her current priorities are to develop the General Practice related components of the MBBS program and various collaborative projects in clinical education and research.

Sara Rosenkranz

MS PhD

Research Officer

Sara hails from Kansas State University, where she earned her PhD in Human Nutrition in May of 2010. Her research has been in the area of Cardiopulmonary Exercise Physiology, with an emphasis on the impact of lifestyle influences on airway health in children. Previously, Sara served as a Lab Manager and Project Coordinator at the Community Health Institute in

the Department of Kinesiology at Kansas State University. She has been involved in community outreach projects involving: Nutrition and physical activity interventions in after-school programs; the impact of media literacy on healthy nutrition and physical activity related purchases; and the impact of a gardening club on fruit and vegetable consumption, sedentary behaviour and BMI in children.

Sara will be working closely with Jennifer Reath, Peter Brennan Chair of

General Practice and Associate Professor, Wendy Hu focusing on helping to plan the research agenda, and building GP research capacity. Current projects Sara is undertaking include support of ongoing projects such as an evaluation of a community based health promotion project, assisting in analysis and evaluation of the GP curriculum, initiation of new research including projects for students in Year 4, and supporting new as well as ongoing GP research interests.

Penny Abbott

MBBS MPH FRACGP

Senior Fellow, General Practice

Penny has been a GP in Western Sydney since 1991, working predominantly at the Aboriginal Medical Service Western Sydney (AMSWS) and with Justice Health. As well as her

clinical practice she undertakes GP registrar teaching, management, health promotion and research activities at the AMSWS. She serves on multiple committees and advisory groups at local, state and national levels, following her particular interest areas of health promotion, Aboriginal health, GP research and chronic dis-

ease. Penny's current focus at the Department of General Practice is to increase the engagement of GPs in Western Sydney in primary care research and to promote primary care research that is relevant and important to general practice and to the community.

Charlene Thornton

BN Grad Dip Mid MSc Med (Res) MSc (Clin Epid) PhD (submitted)
Clinical Epidemiologist

Charlene Thornton has a background in nursing, midwifery, parent and child-birth education and epidemiology. She comes to us having recently submitted

her PhD examining outcomes for women and babies following hypertension during pregnancy - a national and international collaboration.

Charlene has worked previously at the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre at the University of Sydney and her areas of expertise include systematic reviews,

clinical trial project management and the study of the hypertensive disorders of pregnancy. Charlene brings these skills to the DGP in the role of clinical epidemiologist - providing design and management assistance to our students to assist them in creating, running and hopefully publishing their own group general practice research projects.

Suzie Mazzotta

Administrative Officer

Suzie joined the department in January 2010 and brings with her extensive experience gained from working in various

roles within Sydney South West Area Health Service. Suzie's background is in administrative management and supervision, coordination of medical training and education, data management and quality improvement activities.

Suzie's responsibilities include the provision of high level administrative support to Jenny Reath, development of the department's administrative processes and to coordinate year 5 GP student rotations.



Department of General Practice Team
Jenny, Suzie, Sara, Penny, Wendy, Charlene (not pictured)

Our Vision and Core Values

Mission & Vision

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

To achieve this vision, the Unit 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 School of Medicine, the work of the Department of General Practice will be informed by the following core values:

Social Justice

We promote equity, prioritizing areas of need in health, education and the health-care workforce.

Collaboration

We work collaboratively within the School of Medicine, and more widely across the University of Western Sydney and beyond. We will build and sustain respectful and effective partnerships in General Practitioners and other primary

health care providers, their related organizations, 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.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Engaging the Community in General Practice Education

Currently we are developing the General Practice teaching program for University of Western Sydney medical students. The School of Medicine offers a 5 year undergraduate medical course with a focus on immersive learning opportunities. General practice teaching occurs in the 3rd and 5th year of the course, when students are placed in general practices in the community.

In building a community engaged curriculum, we have reviewed the literature and mapped the Medical Program in Years 1-

4 to ensure that the General Practice curriculum is learner centred and integrated with other elements in the program. We also plan to consult with other Schools of Medicine nationally and internationally to determine best practice in community engaged curriculum development.

A key part of our development process is to find out what General Practitioners, patients, community members, UWS students and others believe is important to learn, and what are the local opportunities for learning about General Practice and health care in the community.

To that end we have recently completed

an on-line survey of students, community members, health care professionals, GPs and GP organisations, to gain an awareness of what these key partners think we should be teaching medical students about General Practice and how best we can deliver this learning. We are currently analysing the survey responses and will be publicising the results in the near future.

This information will inform the ongoing development of the medical student curriculum in General Practice and in particular "Conference Week", an intensive week long teaching program, planned for early February 2011.

In each issue we will be featuring our GP Supervisors. In this issue Anna Pham describes her highly engaging presentation to medical students about her journey into a successful career in general practice.

Promoting Careers in General Practice

UWS held a Careers In Medicine Night on the 20th August, organised by the students themselves through Medsoc.

Representing the GP profession, I was humbled to be granted my 10 minutes of fame, and shared the podium with our prominent colleagues like Professor Tim Cartmill (paediatric cardiac surgeon), Dr Luis Gallur (anaesthetist), Dr Helen Parsons (medical administrator) and Dr Joo Shin (pathologist) - just to name a few.

I must confess to my mild-moderate level of anxiety leading up to the presentation. The audience, I thought, was going to be a tough bunch - young, intelligent, inquisitive, and analytical. How do I effectively communicate to them that general

practice is, and becoming increasingly more so, a vital primary medical and dynamic profession.

After sharing my own personal career journey, explaining to them the fine working at Picton Family Medical Centre, I informed them what we GPs already know - that it is a rewarding career, emotionally and financially, that along with relationship building with our patients. There is opportunity for personal challenge and expansion of our interests beyond medicine into business management, education / teaching, research, special interests etc. And, I had national and international data to support the claim that general practice provides "value for money" in terms of expenditure of the health dollar. Basically there is a tipping point (USA have past it, Australia is there) where for every dollar extra you spend on specialists you actually in-

crease mortality/morbidity rates - for every extra dollar spent on primary health care you decrease/morbidity mortality rates.

Powerful data.

Back to my student audience, they listened - wide eyed. They were respectful, friendly, warm and receptive. They laughed on cue. They gasped in awe at our good work. They clapped loudly. They were gracious enough to come up to me after the talk with more really good questions about the profession.

I'll be having the 5th year medical students at Picton sometime soon. I am looking forward to showcasing our profession and its intricacies to them.

Dr Anna Pham, Picton Family Medical Centre



BARGO MEN'S HEALTH FORUM

In June 2010 a group of UWS students attended the Wollondilly Men's Health Day where they provided health checks for participants.

The students enjoyed the opportunity to meet the men and commented on how many expressed appreciation of their GPs.



RESEARCH INFORMATION

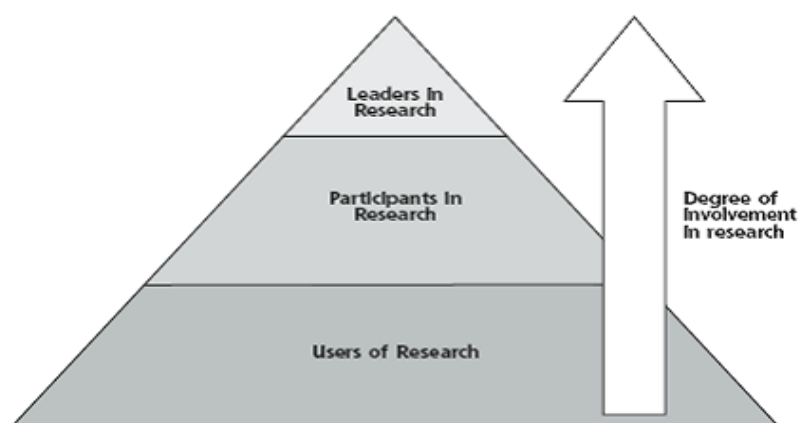
Support for GP research

We hope to be able to increase the ability of the Department of General Practice to promote opportunities and support for primary care research in western Sydney. You may be interested in working with the UWS Department of General Practice and developing your research skills or you may have some burning ideas for important research questions and need some help in setting up a research project.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.
Contact Sara at s.rosenkranz@uws.edu.au or on 4620 3894.

Sara Rosenkranz, PhD &
Penny Abbott, MBBS MPH FRACGP

Figure 1. Glasziou's triangle: different levels of research engagement.



Notes: Leaders in research are those who design, find funding for, conduct, and publish research. They are often academics (but not necessarily so). Only few such leaders are necessary for a healthy family medicine discipline.

Participants in research are those who participate in every sense (that is, they are engaged in it intellectually, understand and feel aligned with the purpose of the research, could describe the project to a third party, and are interested in the results. They usually are sufficiently part of the research to earn authorship. (This distinguishes them from less engaged participants who are asked to, or are paid to, simply recruit patients for a project, such as run by a pharmaceutical company).

Users of research are all clinicians, but to a greater or lesser degree. Ideally all clinicians should consciously incorporate research into their clinical practice.

Glasziou's triangle

Glasziou's triangle is a simple but apt representation of the ways GPs can be involved in research. There is a large base of GP users of research, as we make our clinical decisions every day.

Some GPs become active research participants, either through their own research initiatives or by taking part in larger clinical trials. A smaller number are needed to become research leaders.

As we go forward in our careers we can develop the skills which allow us to increase our research involvement and "move up the triangle"!

A great example of GP involvement in research at all levels of Glasziou's triangle.

Do spirometry and regular follow-up improve health outcomes in general practice patients with asthma or COPD? A cluster randomised controlled trial

(Michael J Abramson, Rosa L Schattner, Nabil D Sulaiman, Kate E Birch, Pam P Simpson, Eleonora A Del Colle, Rosalie A Aroni, Rory Wolfe and Francis C K Thien) - Med J Aust 2010; 193 (2): 104-109.

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Become a GP Supervisor in 2011

2011 GP Term Dates

31 January – 4 March	UWS Year 3 MiC students 2 sessions per week for 5 weeks
7 March – 8 April	
16 May – 17 June	
20 June – 22 July	
22 August – 23 September	
26 September – 28 October	UWS Year 5 GP students 6 sessions per week for 5 weeks
14 February – 18 March	
21 March – 22 April	
25 April – 27 May	
4 July – 5 August	
8 August – 9 September	
26 September – 28 October	
31 October – 2 December	

If you would like to become a GP supervisor or you are interested in finding out more information, please contact us.

We will notify the University of Sydney of any expressions of interest in the West of Sydney, as we share recruitment and placement processes across both universities in the west.