



Primary Care Clinical Unit

GP Newsletter
February 2021

Welcome to 2021 and thank you for your continued support during these uncertain times in our united goals to train the next generation of doctors and to conduct research to improve primary care for all. General practice rose to the challenges and opportunities that 2020 brought and will no doubt rise to the challenges that 2021 holds in store, in particular regarding roll-out of the COVID19 vaccination programme.

The Faculty of Medicine at UQ is undergoing a restructure to create and brand a Medical School. We do not yet know what this means for the PCCU but will keep you informed as plans become known. The curriculum review and restructure of the medical programme continues apace. The curriculum review team recognises the important role that general practice plays in the health system and the importance of student training in general practice. The new programme MD2023 has not yet been decided but may increase student exposure to general practice.

Regardless, we are looking to increase the number of affiliated GP practices, not only to host our students but also to participate in research opportunities. Please encourage your colleagues to become part of our vibrant GP teaching and research network. With your support, general practice has an exciting and promising future ahead. We look forward to working with you.

A/Prof Katharine Wallis
Acting Head, Primary Care Clinical Unit

A/Prof Nancy Sturman,
Acting Head, Mayne Academy of General Practice.

“Practising history taking & examination skills. And watching an experienced GP. I would love to have some procedural experience.”

Year 2 MD student 2020 in response to being asked what activities they would like to do during an Urban LInCC placement.

Welcome to UQ GP teaching in 2021 from the Practice Engagement team!

You recently received a happy New Year message from your friendly Practice Engagement team, Dr Rory Melville and Dr Alison Green, and this article provides a summary of that message.

Thank you for the warm welcome we receive when travelling around the region to visit your practices.

MD students rate the GP placement very highly, and value the one-on-one consultant supervision and mentorship you provide.

I believe that both GPs...were exemplary. They are wonderful teachers and brilliant doctors who I look up to. I think I have gained invaluable experience and have greatly improved in my clinical skills under their guidance. This has been one of the best academic experiences I have had at UQ (total of 6 years now!). I wish to bring this to the OME's/UQ's attention (or an equivalent for evaluating GPs!)

Thanks to pragmatic feedback we receive from our GP teachers, the GP team is able to give helpful tips to students, including

- Avoiding use of smart phones during consultations: easily misinterpreted by patients, use pen and paper for making notes during a consult
- Avoiding bringing large bags into practices

As you would expect, from time to time students give feedback about things which they feel did not go as well. There are some common themes we see, and so we make the following suggestions:

- Encouragement of questions: Many of us were taught in a way in which we were admonished for not knowing the answer to a question. Medical Education experts now recommend strategies such as acknowledging what the student *does* know, and setting the task of going away, reading up and being ready to discuss at the next session. More teaching tips are here: <https://medicine-program.uq.edu.au/overview/mayne-academies/mayne-academy-general-practice/gp-teachers>.
- Dress standards: It is very appropriate for a practice, eg

via the Practice Manager, to outline expectations at the start of a placement. If it is felt that a student is consistently not meeting the standard, we recommend that you contact the PCCU rather than discussing the student's clothing directly with him/her.

- Feedback that references a student's gender or cultural background: we recommend that this be strictly avoided, in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct which "seeks to create an environment where all persons are treated equitably and with respect, encouragement and recognition."
<https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/1.50.01-code-conduct>
- Students study us carefully and take in absolutely everything. Some refer to 'the hidden curriculum'. It is so important to be able to let off steam and debrief with colleagues about the humorous and challenging times in General Practice. We recommend being mindful that sometimes it won't be appropriate to debrief in this way in front of a student, who is still on-the-way to understanding the broader context and subtleties of medical practice.

If you ever have a concern about a student, or teaching workload in your practice, please contact the PCCU as soon as possible. You are our valued colleagues and we enjoy trouble-shooting! We look forward to continuing to work with you in 2021.

Teaching Focused Article

Teaching and learning in general practice: ethical and legal considerations for GP teachers and medical students.

The general practice setting provides a learning environment that creates a unique ethical and legal milieu for the general practitioner, the patient and the student. It is a less formal, more intimate and less anonymous setting than the hospital environment, and GPs often have long-established relationships with patients and detailed knowledge of their circumstances. The small business environment of general practice exposes students to a lean, fast-paced clinical environment, and issues of healthcare funding and affordability.

One-on-one teaching and the relative isolation of both GPs and students from their peers are characteristic of the teaching setting. Patient presentations are unpredictable, students and practitioners are vulnerable to unintended breaches of confidentiality and boundary crossings, and there is a potential for a broad range of ethical issues to surface.

All these factors have implications for patients, students and GP teachers, and for patient consent to student teaching.

Kelly, M., Sturman, N. Pakchung, D. (2020), Teaching and learning in general practice: ethical and legal considerations for GP teachers and medical students. *Med. J. Aust.*, 212: 403-405.e1. <https://doi.org/10.5694/mja2.50593>

2021 general practice placement dates

3rd year GP Placement Block

Block 1: 18 January – 26 February
Block 2: 1 March – 9 April
Block 3: 19 April – 28 May
Block 4: 28 June – 6 August
Block 5: 9 August – 17 September
Block 6: 27 September – 5 November

2nd year Urban LInCC

Semester 1: 15 February – 21 May
Semester 2: 12 July – 22 October

UQGP Research

Practice-based research network news

This network enables practice staff and PCCU researchers to work together on research projects to build the evidence-base and improve primary health care for all. We welcome your practice and practice staff to be part of the network.

Update on projects: The “3-Domains toolkit for driving medical assessment in older drivers” project is ongoing with practice staff using the screening toolkit during driving medicals. Interviews with GPs, practice nurses and older drivers about the toolkit will start soon. Research team: GPs Katharine Wallis, Geoff Spurling, James Matthews, and Rory Melville; and Marini Mendis and Theresa Scott. The “Teaching in the time of COVID” project is in the write up stage.

Research seminars: are held alternate Wednesdays 12 – 1pm, where researchers present and discuss their research. We welcome your attendance and send zoom invitations to your practice.

Recruiting GPs and practices for research: Researchers often approach us to recruit for their research projects, for example surveys and interviews. Some projects offer remuneration for participation. UQGP Research has an Academic Advisory Committee which assesses all applications. We are very careful to forward to you only invitations for projects that are relevant to general practice and that include GP or practice nurse researchers.

Get in touch: Express interest or let us know your research interests or burning questions relevant to your daily practice. Contact us via email to: uqgpresearch@uq.edu.au or speak to one of the GP liaison Rory Melville or Alison Green.

Research focus

“They Were Willing to Work with Me and Not Pressure Me.”

Standard approaches to addressing prenatal tobacco use are often individually focused on health behaviour change, excluding the contexts and causes of women’s smoking. Such approaches risk stigmatising those who smoke to cope with complex stressors, particularly pregnant Indigenous women experiencing social disadvantage and systemic racism.

This paper presents promising findings from a smoking cessation during pregnancy intervention at the Inala Indigenous Health Service. Indigenous women and their supports were provided intensive wraparound care, in conjunction with tailored smoking cessation support.

Over one-third of pregnant women (36% (4/11)) had quit at the three-month assessment, with two remaining smoke

free one month postpartum. Nearly half the participants reported a quit attempt during the program, nearly all reported a reduction in the number of cigarettes smoked, and participants and health professionals all reported high levels of satisfaction with the intervention. Important program characteristics enabling these outcomes included: relationship-based care, holistic wraparound care, flexibility, individualised care, and culturally orientated care. Combined, they fostered program accessibility and cultural safety for Indigenous women, and the delivery of smoking cessation support that was highly relevant to women’s lived circumstances.

These findings provide important insights for how healthcare workers can support pregnant Indigenous women through trauma-informed and non-stigmatising approaches

Lyall, V.; Guy, J.; Egert, S.; Pokino, L-A.; Rogers, L.; Askew, D They Were Willing to Work with Me and Not Pressure Me”: A Qualitative Investigation into the Features of Value of a Smoking Cessation in Pregnancy Program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* **2021**, *18*, 49.

Recent PCCU articles

Borg S, Donald M, Totsidis K, Quinn N, Jackson C, ‘Improving quality in general practice using the Primary Care Practice Improvement Tool (PC-PIT) with Primary Health Network support.’ *Australian Journal of Primary Health* 10 December 2020; 484-491 <https://doi.org/10.1071/PY20192>

Jungo, K.T., Mantelli, S., Rozsnyai, Z. *et al.* **General practitioners’ deprescribing decisions in older adults with polypharmacy: a case vignette study in 31 countries.** *BMC Geriatr* **21**, 19 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-020-01953-6>

Dingle G.A., Sharman L., Haslam C., Donald, M., Turner C., Partanen R., Lynch J., Draper G & van Driel M. (2020) **The effects of social group interventions for depression: A systematic review.** *Journal of Affective Disorders.* **Volume 281**, 15 February 2021, Pages 67-81. doi: 10.1016/j.jad.2020.11.125.

Donald M, Jackson C, Byrnes J, Vaikuntam B, Russell A, Hollingworth S, ‘Community-based integrated care versus hospital outpatient care for managing patients with complex type 2 diabetes: costing analysis.’ *Australian Health Review* published online 8 December 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1071/AH19226>

If you would like to receive a copy of any of these articles, please contact us at med.gp@uq.edu.au

For further details, please contact: Primary Care Clinical Unit:
med.gp@uq.edu.au
<https://medicine-program.uq.edu.au/academic-disciplines/general-practice>



CREATE CHANGE