



# Primary Care Clinical Unit

GP Newsletter  
June 2021

With 2021 well underway, we write again to thank you and your practice team for teaching UQ medical students in your practice and/or for participating in UQGP Research practice-based research projects. UQ medical students consistently rate their experience in general practice very highly, so a big 'thank you' to all involved.

We are responding to your feedback and requesting that students provide practices with a photograph and short paragraph introducing themselves in preparation for their time in your practice.

We encourage students to make the most of their time in general practice, including learning from other practice staff and allied health professionals, bearing in mind that the PIP payment is for teaching provided or directly overseen by a GP. Students can assist with the COVID-19 vaccination rollout provided they have completed the vaccination training. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to provide challenges to our daily lives and practices. In the event of future lockdowns, we envisage that student placements in general practice will proceed as usual. Senior medical students are accepted as part of the care team and continuing placements is essential to training our future workforce. Training in telehealth, and under challenging conditions, including mask-wearing and physical distancing, is part of modern medical practice.

We are launching a series of short video clips of our GP teachers sharing their tips for teaching and supporting students (<https://medicine-program.uq.edu.au/academic-disciplines/general-practice>).

**Recruiting practices to take Year 1 or 2 students for half day per week:** We are actively recruiting practices to host Year 1 or 2 medical students for 8 to 14-week longitudinal placements, for half day per week. This is a wonderful opportunity to expose students to general practice early in their training and to provide them with the opportunity to follow patients over time. With your support, general practice has an exciting and promising future ahead in the new UQ MD medical curriculum. *Please contact us if you are interested and encourage your colleagues to become involved in teaching.*

**UQ Academic Title:** GPs who teach medical students in practice or participate in UQ research projects are eligible to apply to become Academic Title Holders. This entitles you to access the UQ library, have a UQ email and apply for Mayne Academy funding for research projects.

**A/Prof Katharine Wallis**

Acting Head, Primary Care Clinical Unit

**A/Prof Nancy Sturman,**

Acting Head, Mayne Academy of General Practice

*“They were eager to share other aspects of medicine that were not taught like lifestyle, what kind of doctor you want to be, approach to difficult situations.”* Year 3 MD student GP Block 2021

Medical students highly value teaching by general practitioners - do you have GP colleagues and friends who may also be interested in teaching?

The Primary Care Clinical Unit at The University of Queensland is looking to increase medical student placements in general practice. If you would like to work with us in mentoring and teaching our newest junior colleagues, please get in touch via [med.gp@uq.edu.au](mailto:med.gp@uq.edu.au). You can get involved through two main types of teaching in primary care:

1. **Year 3 General Practice Course Students** do six-week blocks in a practice, with a minimum of 28 sessions (half day, minimum three hours).
2. **Year 2 Urban Longitudinal Integrated Community Care Students** do one session (half day) per week for 14 weeks.

Teaching of medical students attracts a PIP per session and can contribute to your CPD program. Find out more: <https://medicine-program.uq.edu.au/overview/mayne-academies/general-practice/gp-teachers>

### Would you like to mentor medical students?

*My personal advisor has shared a lot of his personal experience and advice on how to manage the stress and workload.* Year 1 MD student

The **UQ MD Personal Advisor Network (PAN)** is seeking medical practitioners to provide individualised support for medical students across their course and foster a spirit of community and connectedness. Personal advisors will typically have responsibility for one to three students and are asked to meet with students 3-4 times a year via phone, online (e.g. via zoom or skype) or face-to-face.

For more information see the [Personal Advisors Network web page](#) or contact Emma Ryan [med.personaladvisors@uq.edu.au](mailto:med.personaladvisors@uq.edu.au)

## Staff Profiles



**Nilla Wen** is the General Practice (GP) Course Administrator within the Primary Care Clinical Unit. She has been working at the University of Queensland in various roles and faculties since 2018, and in the Higher Education Sector since 2009. Nilla is particularly interested in process improvement and fostering strong stakeholder relationships.

In the GP course, Nilla's focus is managing the allocation process for the Year 3 clinical placements, and supporting curriculum development and implementation to achieve optimal learning objectives for students.

Outside of work, Nilla enjoys travelling with her family. She also likes singing, one of her favourite activities is to visit the Karaoke



**Ina Jenkins** is a Student Coordinator for the Year 3 General Practice Course. She has joined the Primary Care Clinical Unit (PCCU) this year after returning from parental leave.

Prior to this, she worked with the Year 1 MD Program students in the Royal Brisbane Clinical Unit and is excited to be back supporting the students and seeing them progress through the program. Ina is enthusiastic about assisting the GP clinics, students and GP tutors to facilitate the best outcomes for all and is delighted to be working with the collaborative PCCU team.

Ina enjoys spending time with her young family and with a past life as an interior designer is still always on the lookout for ways to spruce up her home.



**Sandii Comer** Sandii Comer is a Student Coordinator for the Year 2 Urban LInCC (UL) Program. Her UL role with PCCU offers engagement with year 2 students, GPs and their practice managers and research opportunities. She is also a Student Coordinator at Mater Clinical Unit (MCU) and finds the two roles complement each other as she enjoys the different aspects each role provides and it is rewarding to see a familiar face with a UL student continuing to year 3 at MCU.

Outside work Sandii enjoys time with her family ranging in ages from grandmother, parents, adult children, school age child, and grandchildren. She enjoys exploring new places, reading, cooking, eating and exercising.

## 2021 remaining general practice placement dates

### 3rd year GP Placement Block

**Block 4: 28 June – 6 August**  
**Block 5: 9 August – 17 September**  
**Block 6: 27 September – 5 November**

### 2nd year Urban LInCC

**Semester 2: 12 July – 22 October**

## UQGP Research

This practice-based research network enables GP practices and PCCU researchers to work together to develop and conduct practice-based research projects, building the evidence-base for primary health care.

### Update on projects:

- **The 3-Domains toolkit for driving medical assessment in older drivers:** Participating practices are using the screening toolkit tests in older drivers. Marini is interviewing older drivers, GPs and practice nurses about their experience using the toolkit in practice. Research team: Katharine Wallis, Geoff Spurling, James Matthews, Rory Melville, Theresa Scott and Marini Mendis.
- **Supporting safe cessation of long-term antidepressants in general practice:** This project is to develop and pilot test in general practice resources for both GPs and patients to support safe cessation of long-term antidepressants. Research team: Katharine Wallis, Maria Donald, Nancy Sturman, David King, Suzanne McDonald.

**Get in touch:** We welcome new practices and staff. Let us know your burning research question, sign-up to attend our research seminars via Zoom (alternate Wednesdays 12-1pm), and/or join the network. [uqgpresearch@uq.edu.au](mailto:uqgpresearch@uq.edu.au) or speak to one of the GP liaison Rory Melville or Alison Green.

## Research focus

**Reducing Medical Admissions and Presentations Into Hospital through Optimising Medicines (REMAIN HOME): a stepped wedge, cluster randomised controlled trial.**

A number of our teaching practices participated in this study which investigated whether integrating pharmacists into general practices reduces the number of unplanned re-admissions of patients recently discharged from hospital.

Adults discharged from one of seven study hospitals and prescribed five or more long term medicines or having a primary discharge diagnosis of congestive heart failure or exacerbation of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease were provided with a comprehensive face-to-face medicine management consultation with an integrated practice pharmacist within seven days of discharge. This was followed by a consultation with their general practitioner and further pharmacist consultations as needed.

By 12 months, there had been 282 re-admissions among 177 control patients and 136 among 129 intervention patients. ED presentation incidence and combined re-admission and ED presentation incidence were significantly lower for intervention patients. The

estimated incremental net cost benefit of the intervention was \$5072 per patient, with a benefit–cost ratio of 31:1.

The study demonstrated that a collaborative pharmacist–GP model of post-hospital discharge medicines management can reduce the incidence of hospital re-admissions and ED presentations, achieving substantial cost savings to the health system.

Freeman CR, Scott IA, Hemming K, Connelly LB, Kirkpatrick CM, Coombes I, Whitty J, Martin J, Cottrell N, Sturman N, Russell GM, Williams I, Nicholson C, Kirsas S, Foot H. Reducing Medical Admissions and Presentations Into Hospital through Optimising Medicines (REMAIN HOME): a stepped wedge, cluster randomised controlled trial. *Med J Aust.* 2021 Mar;214(5):212-217. doi: 10.5694/mja2.50942. Epub 2021 Feb 12. PMID: 33580553.

## Funding opportunities for General Practitioner Academic Title Holders

We have funding of up to \$1000 each for a small number of **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) projects**. Please contact Associate Professor Nancy Sturman ([n.sturman1@uq.edu.au](mailto:n.sturman1@uq.edu.au)) if you have ideas for leading, or contributing to, a general practice SOTL/medical education project

We also have funding for up to two **practice-based research projects**, up to \$5,000. Please contact Associate Professor Katharine Wallis ([k.wallis@uq.edu.au](mailto:k.wallis@uq.edu.au)) if you have ideas for leading, or contributing to, general practice-based research.

Some of these funds must be allocated by the end of this year. We would be delighted to hear from you.

## Recent PCCU articles

**Approaches for discontinuation versus continuation of long-term antidepressant use for depressive and anxiety disorders in adults.** Van Leeuwen E, Driel ML, Horowitz MA, Kendrick T, Donald M, De Sutter AIM, Robertson L, Christiaens T. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2021, Issue 4. Art. No.: CD013495. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD013495.pub2.

**Antibiotic prescribing patterns of general practice registrars for infective conjunctivitis: a cross-sectional analysis.** Cherry MD, Tapley A, Quain D, Holliday EG, Ball J, Davey A, van Driel ML, Fielding A, Spike N, FitzGerald K, Magin P. *J Prim Health Care.* 2021 Mar;13(1):5-14. doi: 10.1071/HC20040.

**Antidepressant use in general practice: A call to action.** Wallis KA, Donald M, Moncrieff J. *AJGP.* 2021(in press)

**A mixed methods evaluation of screening for hearing loss using the hearScreen™ mobile health application, in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children presenting to an urban primary health care service.** Spurling G, Tyson C, Askew D, Reath J. *Australian Journal of Primary Health.* 2021 [in press]

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

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



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