



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Faculty of
Medicine

Primary Care
Clinical Unit

GP Teaching Newsletter

March 2017

Welcome to 2017! A lot has happened over the break with the most obvious being our change of name: we are now the *Primary Care Clinical Unit* within the *Faculty of Medicine*. We are very pleased that the General Practice team remains together and can continue business as usual.

The Medical Program is now visibly at the core of the 'Faculty of Medicine' that has a new governance structure under a Medical Dean to reflect this change. Last month we welcomed Professor Stuart Carney in this role. Stuart is a psychiatrist from the UK who brings a wealth of experience in medical education that acknowledges the crucial role of primary care. We look forward to working with him.

One of the first activities of the Faculty this year was to revisit the 'semesterisation' of phase 2. This offers exciting opportunities for integrating clinical teaching in semester-long (rather than 8 week) blocks. We will keep you posted.

We are delighted that we have been able to secure an extension of the Urban LInCC program for 2nd year medical students. Another group of carefully selected students will have the privilege of learning from experienced GP teachers over 13 or 24 weeks during the year.

This year we welcome three GP registrars who will be with us for the year and participate in all teaching activities in the unit. They each also work on their own research project, learning the ropes of research and contributing to strengthening the evidence base of our discipline. It is lovely to have these bright young minds on our team. Welcome!

At the annual GP teachers evening in December 2016 we discussed what makes our discipline so unique, what students can learn best in GP. In this edition we summarise the ideas and thoughts about teaching and learning 'continuity of care'.

We look forward to many more inspiring discussions with all of you and thank you for your ongoing support.

Professor Mieke van Driel, Head of Discipline and Head, PCCU

Featured profile: 2017 Academic registrars



Emma Pappalardo completed her MBBS at Monash University in 2013, and worked in Melbourne before moving to Brisbane and starting General Practice training. She works part-time as a GP registrar at a practice in Highgate Hill. Her research project explores GP Registrars' experiences with antenatal care, using the ReCEnT (Registrar Clinical Encounters in Training) database. She hopes this will inform registrar training and improve care provided to pregnant women in GP.



Hayley Thomas graduated from the University of Queensland in 2011 and completed her residency at Redcliffe Hospital and the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. She is now working at Majellan Medical Centre in Scarborough. Her research project focuses on whole person care in general practice. Specifically, she is completing a systematic review on how whole person care is understood in the general practice context.



Ryan Williams always wanted to be a doctor and, following an enjoyable career in language teaching, graduated from the UQ School of Medicine in 2011. He is currently working at Stonewall Medical Centre in Windsor. In his (limited) spare time, Ryan conducts the Queensland Medical Orchestra.

In his Academic Post, Ryan is researching the perspectives of patients with severe and persistent mental illness - with a specific focus on their perceptions regarding barriers and enablers to access of primary care.

2017 remaining GP rotation dates:

13th March - 5th May
17th July - 8th Sept

15th May - 7th July
18th Sept - 10th Nov

Teaching and learning about continuity of care

Learning about continuity of care is a key outcome of the General Practice rotation for medical students, but sometimes it can be difficult to maximise this learning in such a short period of time.

Students' focus is often on the knowledge and skills they can acquire in their GP rotation. They do not recognise the importance of the relationship we have built over time with our patients and how this impacts patient care and patient outcomes. It is what makes GP so effective, efficient and rewarding.

How can we teach this concept or impart its meaning to our students?

The first step is to think about how you define continuity of care, how you practise it, and discuss this with your student.

Various definitions cover aspects such as the longitudinal doctor patient relationship, continuity of clinical management and co-ordination of care.

For students it also involves learning about the natural history of a disease and its outcomes, and the barriers to providing/receiving good continuity of care.

Other ways to further this learning could include:

- When medically appropriate, ask the patient to come back when the student will be there; encourage the receptionists and practice nurses to book patients to return when the student is in the practice.
- Encourage the students to develop professional relationships with the patients by providing opportunities for them to interview patients and be involved in their care.
- Ask the student to talk with patients about their experiences of continuity of care. This could include what their understanding of continuity of care is, the positive and negative aspects, why it is important, and what barriers exist to providing/receiving continuity of care.
- Assign the student a patient or family who attends regularly and is likely to be seen a few times within the 8 weeks so they can follow up on all the visits, and discuss with you afterwards. This can be a patient who is attending the treatment room regularly or is seen in the consulting room.
- Ask the student to follow up on pathology or radiology or other specialist results for patients they have seen.
- If you see a patient who sees lots of specialists or allied health professionals, discuss how you coordinate the care – what you write, when you contact the specialist etc.
- Try to brief the student about each patient before they are seen so they can understand the background knowledge you already have about that patient.
- If the student is seeing the patient on their own, ensure they have the notes prior to the consultation.

The General Practice rotation is a great opportunity for students to expand their scope of clinical practice. Our experience as clinicians is vital in their learning and incorporating teaching with a focus on continuity of care conveys a very important aspect that can not necessarily be learned from a book.

Academic Title Holders for General Practitioner Teachers

The Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences proudly acknowledges the dedicated work of its many externally-funded health professionals, including our general practitioner teachers. To recognise the work of these health professionals the Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences awards individuals with academic titles.

To apply for an Academic Title please go to <http://www.uq.edu.au/health/academic-titles>

VISIT US <https://general-practice.medicine.uq.edu.au/> or contact DGP Administrator dgpadmin@uq.edu.au

medicine-program.uq.edu.au