



General Practice Clinical Unit GP Newsletter

May 2023

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your practice team for providing excellent learning experiences in general practice for UQ medical students. The students consistently rate their experience in general practice very highly as you can see from some of the quotes below. There is increased opportunity for clinical teaching in general practice from 2024 when every UQ Year 2 medical student will have one day per week in general practice over 14-16 weeks, in addition to the existing 6-week intensive placement in Year 3 or 4. It is by exposing students to positive experiences in general practice that we can attract graduates into choosing general practice as their career of choice.

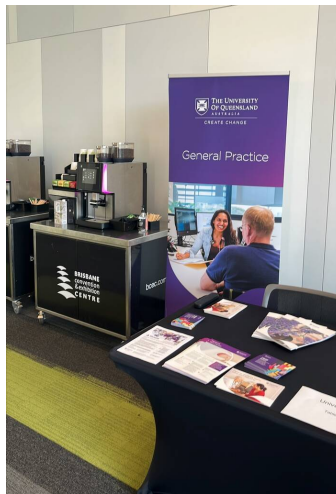
Thank you also to those practices who are participating in research. We are growing the UQGP Research network of practices contributing to developing the evidence base for a high-quality primary health care system. As GPs ourselves, we understand the stress that practices are under, and we ensure that participating in research imposes as little burden as possible and is well remunerated. It is good to see that the Government too is beginning to listen to the call for increased support necessary to continue the important work that we do in general practice. Here's to a brighter future together.

Katharine Wallis

Mayne Professor and Head, Mayne Academy of General Practice
Head, General Practice Clinical Unit

Announcements

We were delighted to meet up with many of our GP teachers who dropped by our University of Queensland stand at the recent 63rd RACGP Clinical Update Weekend. Drs Alison Green, Michaela Kelly and Cherri Ryan were at the stand and spoke with many GPs who expressed interest in teaching UQ medical students and joining the UQGP Research network. The University of Queensland General Practice Clinical Unit would like to thank the RACGP for providing this opportunity.

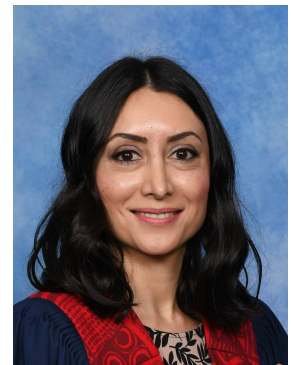


People

Staff update

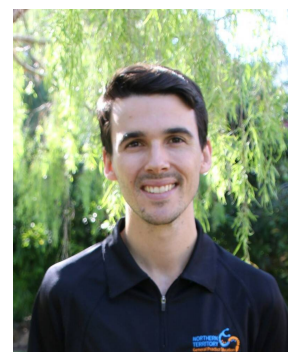
Dr Parvin Delshad

Hello, My name is Parvin Delshad (MD, FRACGP) and I have recently joined the General Practice Clinical Unit in Herston. I graduated as a Doctor of Medicine from BUMS in Iran and moved to Australia in 2016. I work as a part-time GP in north Brisbane. My clinical interest is in women's health and mental health. I enjoy teaching general practice and look forward to a productive partnership with you to shape the next generation of medical practitioners for a healthier Australia.



Dr Andrew Webster

Hi! I am Andrew Webster and I have recently joined the GPCU based in Herston as a part-time GP academic. I recently relocated from Darwin, where I lived and worked for the past 9 years. My clinical interest is in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and my research interest is in using clinical data to understand variations in access to primary care. I remain closely involved with Danila Dilba Health Service in Darwin, through an ongoing role supporting the growth of their research agenda and strategy. I'll be starting a clinical role as a GP in Brisbane in the next few months, and I'm looking forward to getting to know the local health system. See you around soon.



Congratulations

Dr Jenny Job, Director of Research, Centre for Health System Reform & Integration, won both the People's Choice and Meritorious Award's at the Implementation Science Health Service Conference March 2023 when presenting 'Using the Implementation Research Logic Model (IRLM) to guide implementation and evaluation of eConsultant in Queensland'.

Dr Suzanne McDonald and her team have been awarded an MS Australia Incubator Grant for the

project 'Making it Personal: Identifying personalised triggers of fatigue in Multiple Sclerosis', that will use digital N-of-1 studies and Bayesian statistics to determine symptom patterns and triggers at the individual level, and will assess feasibility and acceptability to conduct N-of-1 studies with patients who have MS. If so, future research could use N-of-1 trial designs to test individual patient response to pharmacological treatments for the management of MS symptoms.

<https://www.msaustralia.org.au/project/making-it-personal-identifying-personalised-triggers-of-fatigue-in-ms/>

Prof Katharine Wallis and A/Prof Maria Donald have been awarded an NHMRC Partnership grant together with our partners RACGP, ACRRM, Brisbane North PHN, CareMonitor and ASPM and Associate Investigators Nancy Sturman, David King, and Johanna Lynch from GPCU, and Riitta Partanen from the Rural Clinical School to investigate effectiveness of the RELEASE+ intervention that includes an App to support people on long-term antidepressants to safely stop these drugs.

Teaching

Feedback from your students

Many students report they liked 'everything' about their placements in General Practice. When asked if any aspects could be improved, there are some common themes, including more opportunities to take histories on their own (e.g. in a different room) and then to present their findings to their supervisors, and to perform focussed examinations with GP supervision. Many GP teachers are already providing these opportunities.

The majority of comments are positive. Some recent excerpts include:

- *'...kind, supportive environment made it safe to answer questions incorrectly and ask questions...'*
- *'...the absolute wealth of valuable knowledge ... about both general practice and medicine in general ... was fantastic.'*
- *'...an amazing experience... first time I have been able to truly practice my skills in history taking and examination in a natural environment.'*

Practice engagement update

Next year, more UQ MD students than ever before will be undertaking placements in General Practice. Year 3 students will be undertaking block placements (30 sessions over 6 weeks) as part of the old curriculum. All Year 2 students will be undertaking longitudinal placements (1 day per week over 14 weeks) as part of the new curriculum, and they will also do a 6-week block placement when they reach Year 4.

Thank you to all of our GP Teachers, including those who have recently agreed to take UQ medical students for placements. We appreciate your commitment to helping train our future colleagues.

If you have recently signed up, but have not yet been allocated any students, please look out for emails asking for your availability. We aim to ensure that all of our practices receive students throughout the year, but our numbers vary, and we try to achieve a fair spread across practices in the whole region. There may be times when you are available but are not allocated a student. If we aren't able to allocate a student in that block, your practice may be added to the reserve list, if any reallocations are needed.

Becoming an Academic Title Holder

Our GP Teachers and researchers are eligible to become a University of Queensland Academic Title Holder (ATH), at Senior Lecturer or Lecturer level. Benefits include free access to the vast UQ Library resources. If you are a GP Teacher or researcher and have not yet applied for ATH status, please see the video on our website, guiding you through the steps. Follow the link [here](#) and scroll down to UQ Academic Title Holders to get started.

UQ MD Design update

The new MD curriculum is rolling out, with the first cohort currently in Year 1. These students will be based within Learning Communities for most of their activities, encouraging connectedness and collegiality. These Learning Communities are based geographically around the greater Brisbane area (North, Central, West and South-East) and in rural and remote regions. For updates on the MD Design, please visit <https://medicine.uq.edu.au/md-design/the-latest>

Dates for GPCU General Practice Placements 2023

3 rd Year GP Block Placements (6 weeks)		2 nd Year Urban LinCC (1/2 day 14 weeks)	
Block 3:	17 April – 27 May	Semester 1:	February – May
Block 4:	26 June – 4 August	Semester 2:	July – October
Block 5:	7 August – 15 September		
Block 6:	25 September – 3 November		

Rural and Regional Perspectives

Spotlight on the Extended Placement Program (EPP)

For well over 10 years the Mayne Academy of Rural and Remote Medicine has been offering medical students the opportunity to undertake the General Practice and Rural & Remote Medicine placements back-to-back in the same rural location for a total of 12 weeks. Students participate in the weekly GP tutorials over Zoom and we would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank Dr Loretto Wainwright for her wonderful support for the students who take up this opportunity. In 2023, 17 students (9 Rural Clinical School & 7 Brisbane based) will undertake 12-week placements in Yeppoon, Theodore, Roma, Goondiwindi, Kingaroy & Dalby. Students who have participated in the Extended Placement Program say the experience strengthens their desire to practice in a rural area. It allows them to build confidence in their clinical skills through hands-on learning and it enhances their knowledge of rural medicine through providing continuity of care. They speak particularly highly of the one-on-one teaching they receive from the rural Preceptors who enjoy teaching and are good at it. They also consistently mention how much they appreciate being valued members of the community.

Experiencing rural primary care as an undergraduate medical student has proven again and again to have a positive influence on later career choices and it was wonderful to see the impact of the Extended Placement Program published in the BMJ:
<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/13/1/e068704>

The research team at UQ's Rural Clinical School (UQRCS) and Mayne Academy of Rural and Remote Medicine examined data on the career outcomes of 2,806 UQ medical students who graduated between 2012 and 2021. The findings show students who participated in the EPP 12-week placement in a small rural town (compared with a 6-week rural placement) were around three times more likely to work in a similar-sized community after graduating. Those who combined a 12-week placement with two years at the Rural Clinical School were around seven times more likely to work in a small rural or remote location. Using actual workforce outcomes that have been measured up to 10 years post-graduation gives certainty that working in a rural or remote area is a career choice, not just an intention. The finding helps support placements as an integral part of future planning for medical workforces in rural and remote communities.

Culture, Community and Inclusivity

We would love to hear from you!

If you would like to share your experience of culture, community or inclusivity, and how this enhances your life or your work in general practice, please email a brief paragraph, poem, or image (up to 200 words +/- photo) to med.mdgp@uq.edu.au, for inclusion in a future newsletter.

Inclusivity

May 17th is IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia) - the International Day against LGBTQIA+ Discrimination. The University of Queensland will commemorate this day in several ways, across its campuses. If you wish to know more about the significance of May 17th and how you can support LGBTQIA+ people in your community, please visit IDAHOBIT AUSTRALIA at <https://www.idahobit.org.au/about-may-17/>

Research

UQGP Research Network

This practice-based research network enables GPs, practices and university researchers to work together to develop practice-based solutions to practice-based problems. While most health care is delivered in primary care, most research happens elsewhere. Together we can work to build the evidence-base for a high-quality primary health care system.

Practice-based research projects that are currently recruiting practices include the RELEASE trial that is testing an intervention developed to support safe cessation of long-term antidepressants when there is no clinical indication for continued use. As with all UQGP Research projects, the intervention is designed to improve health outcomes while making GPs working lives less burdensome and more rewarding. Please contact release.study@uq.edu.au if you would like to be part of this project.

There is also the PARTNER project to establish a national network of 'research ready' practices in rural and remote Australia, funded through the Queensland Health Teletrials initiative to enable people living in rural Australia to participate in clinical trials. Prof Katharine Wallis is the QLD clinical lead for this project and Natalii Paczkowski is the QLD state coordinator. *Please contact k.wallis@uq.edu.au if your practice is MM3-7 and would like to be part of this developing network.*

Research article focus

Practitioner characteristics, diagnostic accuracy metrics and discovering-individual with respect to 637 melanomas documented by 27 general practitioners on the Skin Cancer Audit Research Database

So much data on Melanoma is produced by tertiary centres, so it is exciting to have some data about what happens in General Practice.

The 3rd publication in the current Skin Cancer Audit Research Database (SCARD) trilogy has just been published with open-access thanks to the UQ affiliation. 27 doctors who recorded all of their data into the SCARD database back in 2013 were asked to review the outcome of the patients who were diagnosed with Melanoma that year.

This part of the project is focussed on two interesting metrics.

1. The ratio of in-situ melanoma to invasive melanoma in the general practice setting (65%) was high compared to tertiary based studies.
2. Unique to SCARD the number data about intent of treatment (exclude melanoma, exclude non-melanoma or not applicable (no suspicion of malignancy) were prospectively recorded and in this study the number of needed to treat was 5.7, significantly lower than for the same GPs in a previous study 3-5 years earlier (10.78).

Findings from the previous 2 papers included:

- Melanomas less than or equal to 3mm diameter were more likely to be invasive than larger melanomas
- Not previously known, older patients were more likely to have large diameter melanomas
- For patients younger than 40-years the majority of melanomas were invasive
- Australian Guidelines were adhered to for most diagnostic biopsies
- GPs definitively managed 74.9% of melanomas
- Of 205 patients with invasive melanoma there were 15 adverse outcomes
- Melanoma-specific 5-year survival was 95.2%

Particularly satisfying, the current SCARD trilogy is truly a work of the UQ Medical School in general and the UQ Skin Cancer Program in particular. Six of the authors are current skin cancer program staff, 14 hold a MMed (Skin Cancer) degree and the statistician is a current MD student. Quality outcomes from one of the world's top universities!

Coetzer-Botha M, Jimenez Balcells C, Hay J, Keir J, Rosendahl N, Wilson T, et al. *Practitioner characteristics, diagnostic accuracy metrics and discovering-individual with respect to 637 melanomas documented by 27 general practitioners on the Skin Cancer Audit Research Database*. Australas J Dermatol. 2023;00:1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajd.14061>

Recent articles

Thomas HR, Best M, Chua D, King D, Lynch J. Whole person assessment for family medicine: a systematic review. BMJ Open 2023;13:e065961. (doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2022-065961)

Job J, Nicholson C, Donald M, Jackson C, Byrnes J. An eConsultant versus a hospital-based outpatient consultation for general (internal) medicine: a costing analysis. 08 March 2023, PREPRINT (Version 1) available at Research Square (<https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-2610239/v1>)

Petre J, Donald M, Jackson C. Supporting complex care in General Practice via an eConsultant model of care: the Australian specialist perspective. Australian Journal of Primary Care. Accepted April 2023.

Goodman A, Lawler S, Spurling G, Mahoney R. Influencing factors to mHealth uptake with Indigenous populations: a qualitative systematic review. JMIR mHealth and uHealth 2023

Sturman NJ, Mitchell B, Jennings W, Kelly M, O'Reilly JM, King D. Work-based feedback conversations with GP teachers. Clin Teach. 2023 Apr 7:e13576. doi: 10.1111/tct.13576. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 37029535.

Lyll V, Egert S, Reid N, Moritz K, Askew D. "Our Mothers Have Handed That to Us. Her Mother Has Handed That to Her": Urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Yarning about Community Wellbeing, Healthy Pregnancies, and the Prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Int J Environ Res Public Health 2023;20:5614.

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

Upcoming events and education

GPCU Research seminars

GPCU research seminars, covering a range of topics, are held fortnightly on Wednesdays from 12pm to 1pm, and can be accessed by Zoom. If you would like to be on the mailing list for these seminars, please contact med.mdgp@uq.edu.au

Currently planned seminars:

24 May	Prof. Katharine Wallis & A/Prof. Maria Donald	<i>Think aloud study with patients to optimise the RELEASE resources</i>
7 June	Prof Alison Mudge	TBC

GPs subscribing to this newsletter

Many GPs have told us they would like to receive this newsletter directly into their own inboxes, to stay up to date with the latest GPCU news on teaching, research and upcoming events.

If you, or other GPs in your practice, would like to directly subscribe to this newsletter:

Click [subscribe](#) or send the preferred email address/es to med.mdgp@uq.edu.au with '*Please subscribe me to GPCU newsletter*' in the subject line.

Contact us

Apply to be an ATH
(Academic Title Holder)

Teaching tips
and resources

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