



General Practice Clinical Unit GP Newsletter

August 2022

Thank you for your continued dedication to teaching and providing clinical placements for UQ medical students in your practice, and for supporting practice-based research projects. General practice is where most Australians receive most of their health care. General practice is well-placed to address the health care challenges facing us with an aging population and growth in complex conditions and polypharmacy, increasing health disparities, and increasing health care costs. Your contribution to teaching helps to inspire and prepare students to be part of the solution, and your contribution to practice-based research helps to develop the evidence base for what works in the real world, informing a high-quality primary health care.

I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Katharine Wallis

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

People

Staff profile

Hello, I am Katharine Wallis (MBChB, PhD, MBHL, Dip Obst, FRNZCGP, FACRRM) appointed Head of General Practice at the Medical School, University of Queensland from 2022.

I work part-time in general practice on the Gold Coast and am otherwise based at the Medical School, University of Queensland at Herston. I am originally from New Zealand. I worked in general practice in Dunedin and then Auckland, and at the University of Otago and then University of Auckland. My research focuses on patient safety in primary care, in particular supporting safer prescribing in general practice. My current research projects include '*RELEASE: REdressing Long-tErm Antidepressant uSE in general practice*' funded by the Medical Research Future Fund 2020 Clinician Researchers: Applied Research in Health grant; and the '*3-Domains toolkit for older driver medical assessment*' funded by the Motor Accident Insurance Commission / RACGP Foundation. I am part of the Oxford International Primary Care Research Leadership Programme at the University of Oxford.



I look forward to meeting you at one of our online engagement events or end of year face to face function and dinner at the beautifully renovated Mayne Medical building.

Guest Speaker at General Practice Students Network (GPSN) Conference: Dr David King

GPSN held a QLD State Event on Saturday the 23rd of July at the UQ Health Sciences Building in collaboration with GPSN Bond and Griffith. This was a day event that involved presentations, workshops and networking opportunities for medical students across the three universities. The GPSN UQ team were proud to introduce Dr David King and to have a representative from the GPCU presenting. Feedback from students was positive and the experiences he spoke about alongside the great discussion during Q&A was valuable to not only attendees but also the committee.



Teaching

Feedback from your students_

The overwhelming majority of our students rate their learning experiences at GP practices as very good to excellent with positive comments. For example, '*A fabulous placement, I learnt so much in this placement and I know it will shape how I practice in the future.*'

However, in the interests of quality improvement, we also ask students to tell us "The things I liked least about my practice", and some common themes emerge. Here are the three most commonly reported areas, with some of the comments. Every practice is different, and we know everyone is busy. Some of our GPs have found the following suggestions to be helpful in resolving these issues and assisting students to overcome these difficulties.

1. Lack of opportunities to take histories, do examinations and observe/do procedures.
 - *Would appreciate more opportunities to take histories, do physical examinations and discuss patient management plans*
 - *The practice is very busy so Dr does not often get me to see my own patients as it's just quicker for him to see his patients. Therefore, the placement can often feel like it's mostly observation without practice, which is a shame for learning purposes.*
 - *Limited practical experience: E.g. Suturing, procedural techniques*

Where possible, students gain from seeing patients on their own for part of the consultation, then presenting their findings to the GP – this can occur before or after the patient has seen the GP, the practice nurse or allied health professional. If there is no spare room, some GPs will swap seats with the student while others ask them to take bits of history (eg medication, prevention etc), do an

examination while the GP is doing other tasks or get them to type the notes. Encouraging students to spend some time in the treatment room often provides them with practical experiences. The [Year 3](#) and [Urban LInCC](#) GP handbooks and the [teaching resources section](#) of the GPCU website offer lots of ideas about providing learning opportunities for students.

2. Lack of learning during telehealth consultations

- *Perhaps finding a way to be interactive with Telehealth. Felt like a lot of pts had Telehealth and as student we couldn't contribute as much*
- *The high level of telehealth appointments made it difficult*

Providing the patient is agreeable, making sure the phone is on speaker, asking the student to take the history and asking the student what they think should be done management wise can help promote student learning. The [Year 3](#) and [Urban LInCC](#) GP handbooks contain a lot of suggestions for assisting students to learn during telehealth.

3. Spending time with too many different doctors

- *Having so many different doctors to sit in with meant that I was less able to build the trust and relationships with them to allow me to do more with the patients. Some of them were less keen to include me in consultations because they didn't know my level of competence etc.*
- *Jumping around between many GPs sometimes meant that I wasn't able to see patients for their follow up appointments*

Students enjoy and value learning from more than one GP, however, they also benefit from having one or two main GP teachers. Year 3 GP students benefit from spending at least 2-3 sessions per week with the same GPs, while Year 2 Urban LInCC students are required to spend at least 10 of their sessions across the semester with the same GP.

Practice Liaison update

Practice Incentive Payments

Did you know that a practice can receive more than one PIP on the same day? We have heard from some of our colleagues that they were not sure about the rules for this.

The PIP is allocated per student and GP. So if there were 2 students being taught at a practice on a Monday afternoon, and each was working with a different GP, then this attracts 2 x PIP. If one GP is teaching 2 students, then this attracts only 1 x PIP. Per GP, 2 x PIP can be claimed per day, ie one each for the morning and afternoon sessions. Each teaching session is a minimum of 3 hours. More information on the PIP is [here](#).

Increased demand for GP Teachers July-Dec 2024

We will continue to communicate with you about changes to teaching due to the UQ MD program changes from 2023 (See UQ MD Design update below). Whenever the medical course changes, there are crossover periods during the 'teach-out' of the old course and the start of the shiny new course. Accordingly, there is a real pressure point for General Practice teaching in the second half of 2024 - when we anticipate >400 year 2 students will be placed for one day per week in GP and the year 3 students from the pre-MD2023 program will need to complete their 6 week placement in GP.

So, we will be asking our valued teaching practices to consider taking an extra student at that time - the second half of 2024 - to assist us during this pressure point. Your friendly Practice Engagement Team is also recruiting new high quality teaching practices as quickly as possible to help meet this demand. While 2024 seems a long way away, we want to be as prepared as possible so that our GP teachers can deliver sustainable high-quality teaching and mentoring, and, ultimately, help attract future GPs to our ranks!

Please contact us if you would like a visit and/or have any concerns about a student or any teaching issues - Dr Rory Melville (rory.melville@uq.edu.au), Dr Alison Green (a.green1@uq.edu.au), Dr Cherri Ryan (cherri.ryan@uq.edu.au) or med.gp@uq.edu.au.

Are you an Academic Title Holder?

If you teach UQ MD students, are you an Academic Title Holder (ATH)? We would like to encourage you to apply for ATH status.

Most GP teachers will be eligible for Senior Lecturer status with the University. This will give you access to the library, including all the essential online resources such as the Australian Medicines Handbook, electronic Therapeutic Guidelines, and all key medical journals and textbooks.

Having our GP teachers registered as ATHs is good for our unit too - it is tangible evidence of the importance of GP within the MD course. As we all know, most Australians receive most of their care in General Practice, so let's have the ATH records reflect the importance of our specialty.

All you need to apply is a screenshot/scanned copy of your AHPRA record, and a very basic CV. Allow 15-20 minutes, including [watching this video](#), which Dr Alison Green of the Practice Engagement Team has produced to talk you through the ATH application process.

UQ MD Design update

The new UQ MD curriculum is due to commence in January 2023. The course remains a 4 year post graduate course which plans to have a *simplified and cohesive program organisation with a much more integrated approach to learning. There will be earlier meaningful clinical experience, more learner choice and a stronger emphasis on the effective transition to internship for our graduates.* (MD Design Website)

It is exciting from the general practice perspective, because students will be spending more time in our GP teaching practices. Year 2 will provide students with a longitudinal placement when they spend 1 day per week in the same practice during semester 2 experiencing how most people receive most of their healthcare. The Year 3 GP block will be moved to Year 4 Semester 1 providing students with the opportunity to hone their clinical skills and providing practices with more experienced students.

For more detailed and regularly updated information go to [MD Design](#).

General practice placement remaining 2022 dates / early 2023 dates

3rd Year GP Block 2022 Block 5: 8 August – 16 September Block 6: 26 September – 4 November	2nd Year Urban LInCC 2022 Semester 2: 11 July – 21 October
3rd year GP block 2023 Block 1: 16 January – 25 February Block 2: 27 February – 7 April	2nd Year Urban LInCC 2023 Semester 1 13 February – 19 May

Research

UQGP Research

We will be recruiting for the RELEASE (REdressing Long-tErM Antidepressant uSE in general practice) trial later this year. RELEASE seeks to improve patient care by decreasing unnecessary and potentially harmful long-term (>12 months) antidepressants. Participation is not onerous for GPs, and practices and GPs are remunerated. Increasing antidepressant use (now 1 in 7 Australian adults) and associated adverse drug effects were identified in the 2020 Productivity Commission Mental Health Inquiry report as an issue for “*priority reform*”. Clinical guidelines recommend 6-12 months antidepressant therapy for a single episode of major depression, yet in Australia the average duration of antidepressant therapy is about 4 years. Most antidepressants are prescribed in general practice (86%). Be part of the solution. Contact me if you or your practice are interested in finding out more or participating. k.wallis@uq.edu.au.

Research article focus

Doctor! Did you Google my symptoms? A qualitative study of patient perceptions of doctors' point-of-care information seeking.

GPs increasingly need to access the information that they need during the consultation due to the mounting pace of new medical information and the fact that most care is provided with the patient, doctor, and information source in the same space. Despite this being a common practice, no study has previously explored what patients think about this.

To explore this question, we conducted a qualitative study of semi-structured interviews with 16 general practice patients recruited from six general practices around Brisbane.

Unsurprisingly, our key findings revolved around how a doctor's need to look up information during the consultation impacted patient impressions of competence and trust. Strong communication skills are key to building this trust. Understanding the patient's agenda, listening, assessing thoroughly and being honest and transparent about the need to seek information all contribute to a positive experience. Other factors that contributed to patient impressions of trust included doctor-patient rapport prior to the consultation, whether the doctor was expected to know the answer to a question without searching and has the doctor added value to the consultation by searching.

Doctor! Did you Google my symptoms? A qualitative study of patient perceptions of doctors' point-of-care information seeking. Tranter I, van Driel ML, Mitchell B. *BMJ Open* 2022;12:e061090. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2022-061090

Recent articles

A crisis is also an opportunity: GP teachers' views on continuing clinical placements in general practice during the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. Wallis KA, Smith J et al *Aust J Gen Pract.* 2022 Mar;51(3):167-170. doi: 10.31128/AJGP-10-21-6203. PMID: 35224589.

'Things we are expected to just do and deal with': Using the medical humanities to encourage reflection on vulnerability and nurture clinical skills, collegiality, compassion, and self-care. Kelly, M., Lynch, J., Mainstone, P. et al. *Perspect Med Educ* (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-022-00724-w>

Characteristics, treatment and outcomes of 589 melanoma patients documented by 27 general practitioners on the Skin Cancer Audit Research Database. Hay J, Keir J, Rosendahl C et al. *Australas J Dermatol.* 2022 May;63(2):204-212. doi: 10.1111/ajd.13843. Epub 2022 Apr 19. PMID: 35437755

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

Events

GPCU Annual GP Evening Date Claimer: 30 November 2022

Save the date Wednesday 30 November 2022 to join your teaching colleagues for an evening of awards, fun and food at the Mayne Medical School, Herston. Further details to follow.

GPCU Research seminars

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

Currently planned seminars:

31 Aug	Deborah Askew	Co-creating an FASD-Informed Indigenous Primary Health Care Service
14 Sept	Hayley Thomas	Whole Person Care in General Practice: Exploring Whole Person Assessment and the GP-Patient Relationship

28 Sept

Johanna Lynch

The Sense of Safety Project: a transdisciplinary co-design project

GP teacher peer learning

The GP Teacher Discussion Group, for registrars, recently fellowed GPs and GPs new to teaching, meets monthly via zoom to discuss all aspects of teaching in General Practice. For further information please contact Dr Margaret Henderson m.henderson5@uq.edu.au or Dr Rory Melville rory.melville@uq.edu.au.

Contact us

Apply to be an ATH
(Academic Title Holder)

Teaching tips
and resources

 Receive our 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.

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