



Stakeholder Update



CEO update

GP training arrangements

As you may be aware, the Commonwealth has stated that the two colleges, the Royal Australian College of General Practice (RACGP) and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), are to assume control of the AGPT program from 2022 forward.

From next year, we enter a transitional period (2019 to 2022) as program governance is progressively handed to the colleges. I am pleased that both colleges and the Department of Health (DoH) have reinforced that the Regional Training Organisations (RTOs) will be retained to deliver AGPT into the future. This provides confidence for the continued development and growth of general practice training, our organisation and its capabilities.

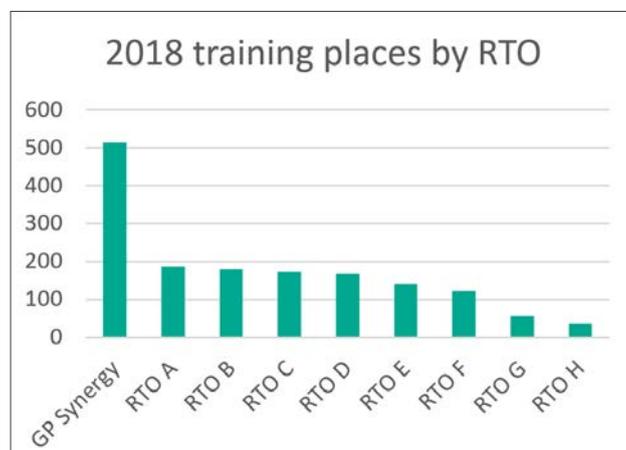
The DoH has since established a Transition Working Group consisting of key stakeholders, including RTO representatives. The group is focussing on communication strategy and key milestones. We will continue to deliver high quality general practice education and training and work closely with the colleges, DoH and our key stakeholders throughout the transition phase.

2019 AGPT recruitment and rural training pipeline preferencing

Applications have now opened for the 2019 Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program. More than one third of the 1500 training positions available nationally are allocated to GP Synergy's three training regions – Western NSW, North Eastern NSW and Lower Eastern NSW, making us the largest Regional Training Organisation (RTO) in Australia. At any one time we are training over 1,600 registrars, supported by more than 2000 GP supervisors and approximately 1500 accredited training facilities.

We were delighted to exceed our original rural pathway GP training intake quota in 2018, and we hope to repeat this success for the 2019 program.

We are also pleased to introduce a new subregion priority preferencing scheme to support rural pathway applicants who demonstrate significant commitment to a subregion. Whilst this initiative does not replace merit-based entry into the program, it does ensure the rural training pipeline is maintained for successful applicants within their shortlisted GP Synergy training region.



Supervision for GP registrars undertaking advanced rural skills posts

The issue of supervision for GP registrars who have undertaken procedural skills training as part of the AGPT program in disciplines such as obstetrics and anaesthesia is complicated and involves a number of stakeholders from across the clinical spectrum. To seek clarity around the issue, last month we held a meeting with a broad range of stakeholders from across the sector including local health districts, GP proceduralists and the colleges of general practice.

The meeting demonstrated a number of policy and process failures that affect procedural GP registrars when transitioning to community based general practice and exercising their advanced skills. The content of the meeting is being considered by a panel of relevant and experienced persons who will provide GP Synergy with some direction on the matter. We expect this work will provide recommendations for GP Synergy and other stakeholders to improve systems and clinical governance arrangements.

John Oldfield | Chief Executive Officer

Workshops to welcome registrars starting GP terms

More than 500 registrars entering their first or second GP term attended seven events held across our eight subregions during the first week of term in February.

Run by local medical education teams, the workshops featured a number of core topics such as dermatology, emergencies in general practice, professionalism and rational test ordering. They also featured regionalised elements specific to the local population healthcare needs for the subregion such as paediatric asthma, gastrointestinal disease, internal medicine cases and refugee health.

Below are some photos from some of these workshops held in Dubbo, Canberra and GP Synergy's new training space in Armidale. For more photos, head to our [image gallery](#).



Supervisor support and resources

The start of 2018 has brought with it a number of resources and positive improvement for GP Synergy's 2000+ supervisors.

This includes:

- An **extensive professional development program** featuring 37 regional workshops, 18 webinars and a combined event with four educational streams.
- A new **GP supervisor portfolio module** on GPRime2, providing supervisors with a one-stop shop to access supervisor requirements, registrar portfolios, professional development activities attended and resources, accreditation details, and more!
- **Improvements to the competency assessment forms** including a reduction in the number of items required to be assessed, more open text fields, an expanded red/amber/green light red flag system.
- A robust team of **Medical Educators with Supervisor Portfolio (MESP)** whose role is to provide educational support to supervisors individually, as well as via the supervisor professional development program.



New website showcases research from thousands of GP registrar consultations

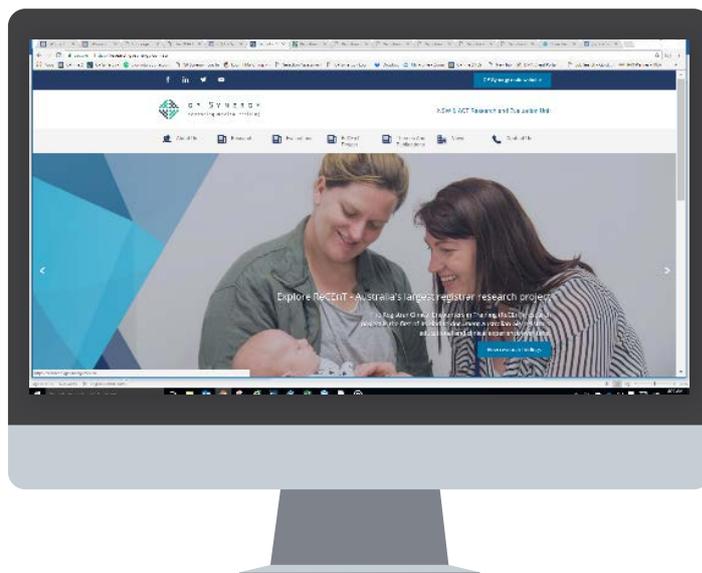
We are excited to launch a new website showcasing research from over 247,000 GP registrar clinical encounters across NSW and ACT collected as part of the Commonwealth funded Registrar Clinical Encounters in Training (ReCEnT) research study.

As the ReCEnT project documents Australian GP registrars' educational and clinical experience over time, the flagship ReCEnT project is a valuable contributor to the state, national and global general practice education and training research pool.

Located on the website are more than 50 published papers and 80 conference presentations covering topics from antibiotic prescribing to emergency department referral patterns to clinical encounters with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and more.

The website ensures these research outcomes are easily accessible and contribute even further to evidence-based practice and also includes additional GP training research projects being undertaken by GP Synergy's Research and Evaluation Unit.

As active contributors to this research, we encourage all supervisors and registrars to take a look at the website: <https://research.gpsynergy.com.au/>



New medical student scholarship recipients welcomed



Last month we were delighted to welcome the new cohort of GP Synergy medical student scholarship recipients at a fundamentals in research workshop.

As part of their scholarship, the students will be undertaking a research project and community GP placement in a rural or Aboriginal health setting. At the workshop they got some great tips and skills to use for the year ahead.

We're looking forward to hearing from them later in the year!

Do you know someone interested in becoming a GP?



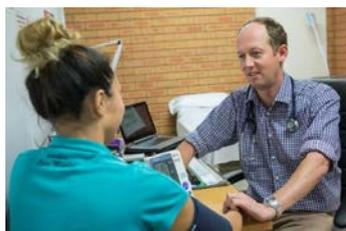
Applications for the 2019 Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program are now open and close at **10.00am AEST 30 April 2018**.

Applications can be made from the [RACGP](#) and/or [ACRRM](#) websites.

To spread the word we have been holding information sessions delivered by medical educators and registrars across NSW and ACT (including Tamworth pictured).

The benefits of undertaking an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health training post

This edition, we asked six GPs currently training and working in an ACCHS in New England/Northwest about their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experience.



Dr James White – GPT2

My introduction to training in Aboriginal health has been very interesting. There are challenges in the different cultural approach to health, but the most enjoyable aspect of working here is the larger team than you would normally have in a practice. The Aboriginal health workers make up a very supportive team in tracking down patients and getting involved in looking after people they know well, we're more tools for them instead of us organising everything.



Dr Camilla King – GPT3

I wanted to get exposure to all facets of medicine so I deliberately sought out training at an ACCHS. There were deficits in my learning in respect to dermatology and my supervisor, Dr Julia Fomiatti, is an expert and that's her passion, so I thought if I can couple learning from her plus learning and getting exposure to Aboriginal health that is going to be a big win.



Dr Xuchu (James) Tong – GPT3

The thing I enjoy about training here is the longer appointments, so you really do get to explore the various medical issues; there is less of a focus on costs so there is a very different expectation. I also appreciate the extensive support available - there is access to Aboriginal health workers, dental care, psychologists and nurses that are all here to help.



Dr Yun Lam (Kenneth) Cheung – Extension Awaiting Fellowship

Although I think Aboriginal health has its challenges, in general working here is great because of the concept of being a community-owned health service. The Aboriginal health workers and receptionists are from the community, and it makes a difference. One of the challenges is getting clients to return and having those community connections helps.



Dr Julia Fomiatti – GP supervisor

I enjoy helping my registrars become competent, confident professionals who love what they do and who will develop the passion I have about early detection of disease and keeping people alive for longer. The complexity of cases seen is just amazing. From a medical perspective it's both challenging and exciting to work at improving the health of our Indigenous population.



Dr Suha Tazami – GP

I trained here for a year, I'm now a fully qualified GP and I was offered an extension to stay on. I've already started some outreach community programs – we are working on school screening for kids, screening at PCYC programs like boxing, and other community sporting events. We take the opportunity to be there and offer health screening and other health promotions. It's all very exciting!

How can you find out more?

To find out more about Aboriginal health, training posts, culturally significant dates and resources, head to the GP Synergy Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander website: <https://aboriginalhealth.gpsynergy.com.au/>



OAM winner, Dr Marjorie Cross congratulated



Congratulations to our Murrumbidgee & ACT Supervisor Medical Educator, Dr Marjorie Cross on receiving an OAM earlier this year, for service to medicine, particularly to doctors in rural areas! Dr Cross is also a long-term GP supervisor in Bungendore and has been inspiring rural GP registrars for many years.

Stay up to date – join us on Facebook

Stay up to date with all the latest GP Synergy happenings by liking our facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/gpsynergy/>



Commonwealth Games baton holders congratulated



Congratulations to Dr Anna Windsor (GP Synergy Regional Head of Education Western NSW and former Olympic swimmer) and Dr David Howe OAM (GP supervisor and Orange GP) for being baton holders for the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton on its journey to the Gold Coast.

Enjoying the sun and the surf: Meet GP Registrar, Dr Paul Barnett and his GP Supervisor, Dr Gudrun (Gundi) Muller-Grotjan



Dr Paul Barnett is training on the Far South Coast of NSW and relishes being able to go for a surf before and after work, his supervisor Dr Gudrun (Gundi) Muller-Grotjan has lived all over the world but has fallen in love with the small town of Narooma.

Training in general practices in Narooma and Bermagui, Dr Paul Barnett is enjoying the beach and surf, as well as his work as a GP.

Now in his third term of training his long-term aim is to be a country GP.

"I had thought about working in a hospital setting but general practice provides continuity of care to patients, a wide range of presentations as well as flexibility.

"Working as a GP registrar enables me to live in a beautiful place like Narooma.

"Narooma is not too isolated but is far enough away to be out of the rat-race, I can walk to work, and I never have to wait at traffic lights.

"I'm thoroughly enjoying my training, the community is friendly and welcoming, it's a beautiful part of NSW and there are also plenty of fun things to do," he said.

Lifestyle was also a factor in Dr Muller-Grotjan choosing to be a rural GP, and as a GP supervisor she appreciates the importance to small communities of training registrars.

"Registrars bring new life and up-to-date knowledge – all our registrars are funny, intelligent, interesting people and have become valued members of our community.

"Supervising forces me to stay on top of evidence-based medicine and I constantly learn new perspectives from my registrars.

"In addition to factual knowledge I try to teach my registrars the essence of rural general practice which is making a difference in people's lives.

"When one of my complex patients recently asked which surgery to go to when he moved away from the area I suggested he look for a surgery that teaches registrars and students – I think that is the best guarantee of getting best quality care!" she said.