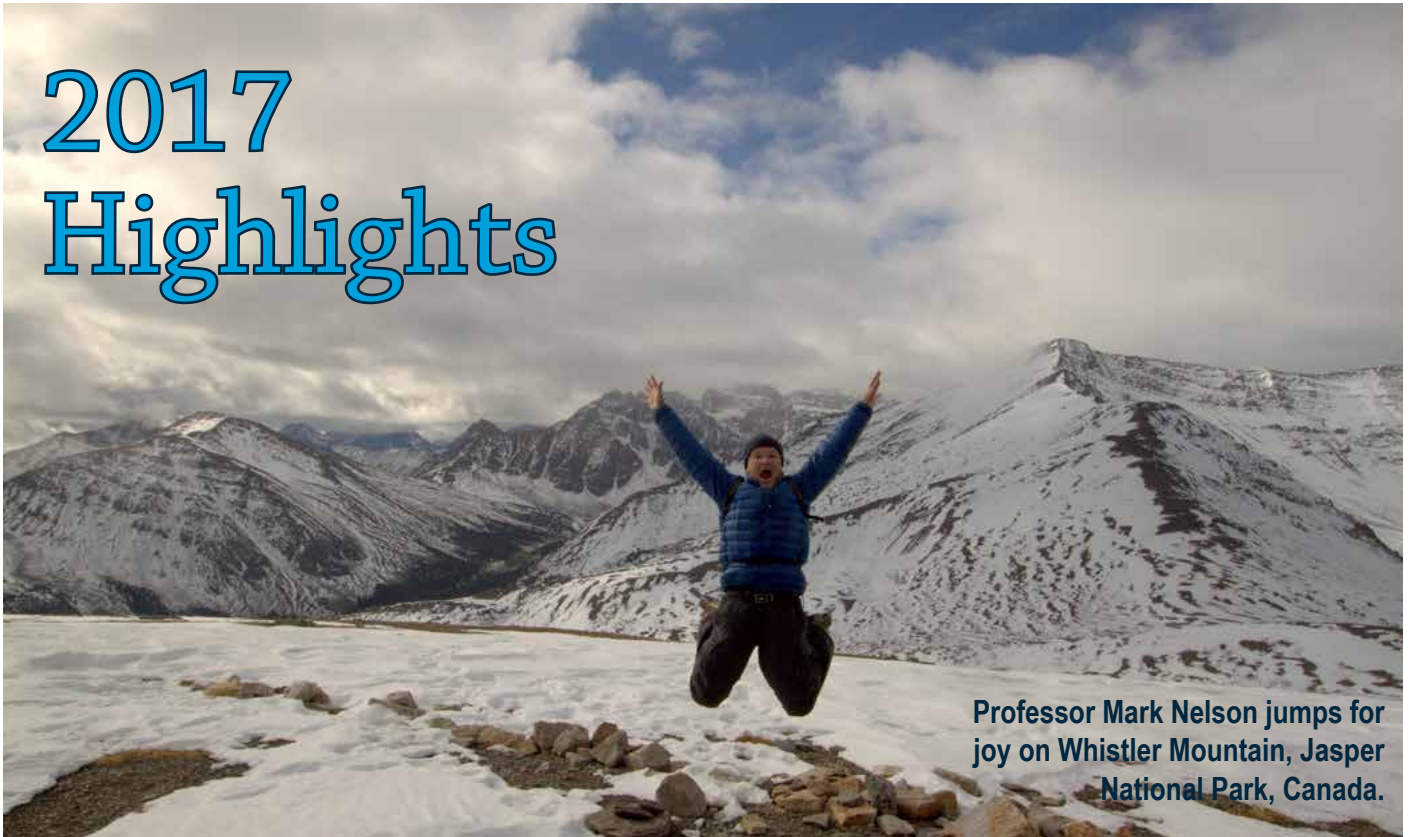


## 2017 Highlights



Professor Mark Nelson jumps for joy on Whistler Mountain, Jasper National Park, Canada.

### Teaching

#### Teaching Evidence Based Medicine to surgeons

Twelve years ago I started teaching Evidence Based Medicine (EBM), rebranded as evidence based surgery, for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS). If you assume surgeons are 'doing' people (I know what's best for my patient and that is they need an operation) rather than 'thinking' people (I wonder if this operation really has any benefit for my patient), then you are mistaken as this course proves. Critical Literature Evaluation And Research (CLEAR) was initiated by the RACS and is a compulsory component of many surgical training schemes. The course is offered to those who wish to join the RACS training scheme as a way of sprucing up their application, and by consultants as a way of 'getting up to speed'.

When I first started there were large numbers of uninterested registrars yawning in the audience – much like the school scene from Ferris Bueller's Day Off – a testament to both the compulsory nature of the course and perhaps a conviction that

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surgery would get them away from this sort of stuff. However, this has changed over the years for a few reasons including a cohort effect, with more recent graduates' prior exposure to EBM in medical school, and a recognition that surgical practice has changed and seeks to be evidence-based. So rest assured your surgical colleagues aren't hammering everything looks like a nail, but are well versed in the non-dark arts.

*Prof Mark Nelson University of Tasmania*

## Not Textbook Medicine

In teaching, the best moment was having a focus group with some students about what goes through their heads when they see a doctor do something that is not 'textbook medicine'. A student eloquently described how his GP was open to being questioned and this led to discussions on clinical decision making. This gave the student an opportunity to learn about the complexities of clinical medicine. I think his quote was "we're taught in Medical School that everything is black and white but the GP made me appreciate the grey". A few days later I played this audio back to a group of Canberra GPs and we discussed ways we can encourage these discussions when we deviate from the textbook.

*Dr Jason Agostino, ANU Medical School*

## Research Success

### Inaugural professorial lecture at Otago

The big highlight for me in 2017 was giving my IPL (inaugural professorial lecture) at Otago. My tips for giving a big lecture such as this are: 1. Know your audience: watch lots of other IPLs 2. Tell your story: thank those who guided you, be authentic and be personal – the audience are more interested in you than any of your research projects! 3. Prepare, prepare, prepare: I wrote it out in full, paid attention to crafting a narrative and found a critical friend to test out the humour on!



I was really chuffed to be able to tell the story of Billy the Iguana and sad that my mum couldn't make it out from the UK to be there in person. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMfrDsfF8>

*Prof Tim Stokes, University of Otago*

### Research skills, patience and persistence

Some years ago a final year medical student requested involvement in a small project with me. She had an interest in geriatrics. We had a look at some data from a large dementia study, and decided to investigate the effect of socioeconomic status on a range of outcomes.

Preliminary results were interesting, but she struggled a bit with the statistics and then went into busy internship. At the end of that year we met again – she was still hooked on this data you see – and had another go at it. She decided she needed more training in statistics and decided to do an MPH which she completed over the following two years. We met several times and each time had a deeper and richer interpretation of our little data set but no actual paper!



She has just emailed me again, having passed her basic physicians training and been accepted into geriatrics training. She wants to finish this paper!!

I think its wonderful that a little student project triggered an interest enough to have this young doctor do an MPH and pursue her interest in the topic area of the paper.

*Prof Dimity Pond, University of Newcastle*

## GPs and registered nurses collaborate in General Practice

Despite the significant changes to the general practice team brought about by the increasing nurse workforce in this setting, little is understood about the way that GPs and registered nurses collaborate in general practice.

Susan McInnes recently completed her PhD at the School of Nursing, University of Wollongong. This Doctoral work explored the nature of collaboration between general practitioners and registered nurses working in general practice. Understanding these aspects of collaboration has the potential to improve the way that GPs and registered nurses work together in general practice and their capacity to meet the workforce demands brought about by the increased prevalence of chronic and complex conditions managed in general practice. Dr Susan McInnes, was supervised by Prof Liz Halcomb, Prof Andrew Bonney and A/Prof Kath Peters

*Prof Liz Halcomb, University of Wollongong*

## Award for New Zealand Researchers

Dean's Bequest Round Support for Research in the Dunedin School of Medicine, University of Otago (New Zealand)

Title: Delivering primary health care to refugees in New Zealand's Southern Health District: a literature synthesis and qualitative study

Associate investigators: Professor Tim Stokes and Associate Professor Chrystal Jaye, Department of General Practice and Rural Health, University of Otago.

*Dr Lauralie Richard, University of Otago*

## High Impact Article in British Journal of Surgery



*Prof Clare Heal, James Cook University*

## Reports on important work

Highlights for us this year are completion of two reports on health service innovations in Western Sydney – one on a qualitative evaluation of the Western Sydney Integrated Care Program and the other an evaluation of transitions to Patient Centred Medical Home Models in Western Sydney.

*Prof Jenny Reath, University of Western Sydney*

## Master of Primary Health from Glasgow University



Recently I graduated with an MPH from the University of Glasgow. The last 12 months have been rewarding and left me with a sense of achievement, both academically and personally. Now, I am looking forward to combining my enhanced research skills with my clinical work as a GP.

*Dr Heinz Tilenius*

## 2018 Diabetes Australia Research Program (DARP) general grant



Photograph courtesy of Artificial Studios

Jo-Anne Manski-Nankervis, John Furler and Jason Chiang together with colleagues from the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre were recently awarded a Diabetes Australia Research Program grant to explore microRNA signatures in people with type 2 diabetes and whether they are associated with HbA1c, glycaemic variability and vascular complications.

*Jo-Anne Manski-Nankervis, The University of Melbourne*

## Collaboration

### Jiangsu Trip

The Departments of General Practice at the University of Melbourne and Monash University have joined forces to provide GP training for doctors based in the community hospitals in the province of Jiangsu in China. The program was facilitated by a recent MOU signed between the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services and the Jiangsu Provincial Commission of Health and Family Planning.



In November 2017, Dr Phyllis Lau and Dr Caroline Johnson represented the collaboration and conducted the first GP training workshop in Nanjing. Twenty-seven trainees from 13 jurisdictions in Jiangsu and another 10 observers from community-based health services and the provincial government congregated in Nanjing for 5 days to attend the workshop. The program was

rated highly by participants and exceeded the expectations of the Jiangsu government.

*Dr Phyllis Lau, University of Melbourne*

### Primary Healthcare Networks contribution to helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health

A highlight was going to Parliament House for the first time to meet with Minister Ken Wyatt. We met to discuss ways Primary Healthcare Networks can contribute to helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live healthy lives. Sitting in his waiting room was a portrait of Neville Bonner and I remember reflecting on the progress since his election 40 years ago and how important it was that for the first time in Australia's history, there was an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person leading policy decisions around their health care

*Dr Jason Agostino, ANU Medical School*

### Radboudumc Department of Primary and Community Care Visiting Fellow

I am very excited to be the 2018 AUGP/Radboudumc Department of Primary and Community Care Visiting Fellow. The title of my project is "Exploring formal and informal communication channels between primary health care



and public health in obesity management: A mixed-methods study". This project will allow me to combine two significant areas of interest – obesity management in primary care and informal communication in health – into one study. The aim is to identify formal and informal channels of communication between public health workers and primary health care clinicians and explore the influence each has on the field of obesity management. My supervisor while I am there will be Dr. Henk Schers.

I would like to thank everyone at the AUGP for supporting me in my application, in particular Emily Haelser for helping me with my application and Dagmar Ceramidas for her encouragement to apply

*Nicholas Elmitt, ANU Medical School*

## Conference Observations

### WONCA conference in Kathmandu

Research presentation on the Clinical Handover Assessment Tool, studied in Broken Hill to use with remote telephone



clinical handover from RNs and medical students to the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Last week I presented this work in Kathmandu. I also linked up with a Nepalese researcher from the university hospital in eastern Nepal where I used to work (BPKIHS). He had researched the introduction of structured handover into the hospital emergency room. It was

great having a collaborator to give local 'cred'. Handover is not widely understood or practised – and that was just from the Scandinavian GPs in attendance!

I have been reminded again of the importance of research in helping us understand what we are looking at. Particularly in such a complex area as clinical communication.

*Prof Malcolm Moore, ANU Medical School*

## General Practice Training and Education Conference 2017

I was probably most proud of my medical student researchers (Belinda Watson, and Abeer Khan) presenting their work at GPTEC 2017. Belinda had completed an excellent project looking at the transitions of care in older people between ED and general practice (<http://vitalis.com/?p=2047>). A GPs Down



Under team conducted the first study undertaken within the forum this year, on a pet, and very nerdy, interest of mine – p-values. Deliciously, it was a mostly qualitative study (we used mixed-methods) of a statistical concept – it makes me feel like a pirate!

Lastly, I've recently commenced a senior lecturer position at the University of Sydney in the Discipline of General Practice, and it has been exciting with many new opportunities in the past couple of months. This probably doesn't count as a "research" highlight, but I dressed in dapper clothes and participated in the Distinguished Gentleman's Ride this year, which was a huge amount of fun. The ride started from the Quadrangle at USyd.

*Dr Michael Tam, The University of Sydney*

## Meeting a colleague, NAPCRG, Montreal



It was a highlight to meet Dr David Blane (on the right of Liz Stugress and Doug Klein) in Montreal for the NAPCRG meeting. David and I have been in contact for about 2 years

after I "met" him on Twitter. I describe him as the Scottish, male

version of myself – a clinical GP working with marginalised people, doing a PhD on obesity in general practice, and parent of two. It was great to finally meet in person. We are both planning to submit our theses in February 2018 so will be cheering each other to the end.

*Dr Liz Sturgiss, ANU Medical School*

## Various Highlights

The PHCRIS team managing to resurrect the PHC conference from the ashes of the withdrawal of federal support. It shows that we can stand on our own two feet as a community

AAAPC members contributing to a new strategic plan for the organisation – one that should be able to help us build support for high quality community relevant PHC research in Australia and New Zealand

Increased collaboration between the PHC research communities in New Zealand and Australia.

A small but growing community of new primary care researchers in Australia and New Zealand is emerging. Inspirational people such as Liz Sturgiss, Lauren Ball and Lauralie Richard will lead our academic community to a position of increasing influence in the years ahead.

*Prof Grant Russell, Monash University*

## Another 2017 Outputs



Toby Ball was born on the 7th of May. My third PhD student graduated, looking at the nutrition advice provided by personal trainers. I also had 2 other PhD students join my team

I undertook a career mentoring program and reconsidered my career trajectory and how I "label" myself. I now call myself a primary care researcher rather than a dietitian.

I was on the NHMRC Panel for ECFs and PhDs, reviewing many primary care topics which were really encouraging to read.

I was featured by Athena SWAN for the 2017 International Women's Day March 2017

*Dr Lauren Ball, Griffith University*

## Editorial



This newsletter took on a bit of a life of its own when I asked members for their 2017 highlights. It is a “chunky” issue, with plenty of interesting events from Australian and NZ members – perfect for reading by the pool, at the beach, or while camping. It is great to see the fantastic achievements of our members. I hope that the new year will bring even more good news stories for primary healthcare research and teaching.

There have been a number of national and international conferences that are covered in this issue, and we point out conferences that are open for abstracts on the back page. If you have any conferences that you would like added to the list please let Kitty know.

The executive have been working hard to implement the strategic plan that was developed under Grant's leadership. In 2018 small working parties will work on getting the strategic plan in place. It will be a busy, and exciting year!

On behalf of Kitty and myself, we wish the AAAPC community a wonderful holiday season. We hope that you have plenty of time to relax with family and friends.

*Dr Liz Sturgiss*



**We know  
some  
fantastic  
research**

**is being conducted across  
the AAAPC community  
and we'd like the world to  
know! Do you have a new  
publication? Send us the  
link and we'll share it online  
using the our hashtag  
#AAAPCAuthors! To  
exchange ideas, research  
and articles across a wider  
audience follow @AAAPC\_  
ANZ on twitter OR When  
sending material across  
the AAAPC mailing list  
include 'for social media' in  
the subject line and we will  
share this for you.**



## Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Expert Committee – Research

The RACGP established its first Research Committee in 1959 after the first AGM, and has maintained a research committee ever since. The role of the current committee, the RACGP Expert Committee – Research (REC-R), is to:

1. provide Council with information, advice and policy direction on research related issues in general practice
2. clarify and promote a strategic agenda for general practice/primary health care research in Australia (clinical and applied)
3. support the strengthening of a culture of research in general practice and assist in the development of general practice research capacity, including academic career opportunities
4. advocate for GP research and promote general practice research as an essential component of general practice in Australia
5. to work with other College committees to identify their research needs and facilitate their achievement
6. work with research and training organisations to increase engagement of registrars in research and critical thinking
7. support the work of the RACGP Foundation.

Current members are Prof Tania Winzenberg (Chair), Prof Parker Magin, A/Prof Jan Radford, Dr Fiona Millard, Prof Clare Heal, Prof Danforn Lim, Dr Elizabeth Sturgiss, Clinical A/Prof Sanjot Vaghokar, Prof Paul Glasziou, and Dr Bianca Brijnath.

An important recent project of the REC-R was Growing and retaining general practice research leaders in Australia: How can we do better? This project, led by previous committee member Prof Mieke van Driel, explored the barriers and enablers to a research leadership career for GPs in Australia, through the experiences of Australian general practitioners with a PhD. It has recently been published in AFP<sup>1</sup> and presented at GP17 and the Primary Health Care Research Conference. The study identified the challenges to a career in general practice research, and suggested some facilitators to research career progression. These included expanding academic registrar positions to include advanced research training, building professional networks, mentoring, and better marketing of general practice research.

The results of this study are now being used by the REC-R to inform work to address the barriers to research careers. Current work in this area already includes:

- Submission to the NHMRC Peer Review Consultation – advocating for track record to be assessed in the context of the discipline, taking into account differences in research output and impact of journals; and ensuring grant review panels are relevant and primary care is assessed by experts who understand the particular challenges of the primary care environment.
- Working with RACGP Council to advocate for general practice research at a Federal level. The RACGP Pre-budget submission 2018–2019<sup>2</sup> calls for support for general practice infrastructure as well as a national program for research training in general practice (similar to the Swedish model).
- Consideration of a dual training pathway and working to improve the ability of GP academic registrars to work part time. Working with the RACGP team managing the GP academic registrar program to provide support and advice, and attending a mentoring function for academic registrars at GP17.
- Promoting the quality and importance of general practice research. The REC-R successfully secured a plenary speaker at GP17 and were delighted to have Prof Jane Gunn accept our invitation to present this keynote, entitled Evidence in General Practice: are we kitchen hand, cook or Master Chef? In addition, the RACGP Foundation has been working on its Frontline campaign to increase the profile of general practice research. This will extend to the wider community as well as the GP community.

This is only a snapshot of the work of the REC-R. If you would like any further information, please contact Tania Lim, Research Program Manager.

1. Van Driel M, Deckx L, Cooke G, Pirota M, Gill GF, Winzenberg T. Growing and retaining general practice research leaders in Australia: How can we do better? AFP Vol 46 No 10 (2017): 757-762. Available at: <https://www.racgp.org.au/afp/2017/october/growing-and-retaining-general-practice-research-leaders-in-australia/>

2. <https://www.racgp.org.au/yourracgp/news/reports/20171115prebudget/>

RACGP Expert Committee – Research

Phone: (03) 8699 0572

Email: [tania.lim@racgp.org.au](mailto:tania.lim@racgp.org.au)

## PC4 Roundup

The Primary Care Collaborative Cancer Clinical Trials Group (PC4) continues to support the advancement of high quality cancer research in primary care.

We have had a busy year. Firstly, we welcomed our new Project Officer Kara-Lynne Cummings. Kara comes to us from the banking sector where she was a Graphic Designer and Communications Coordinator.

The management of cancer patients with multimorbidity is a priority area for PC4. To help engage in a multidisciplinary discussion about this area we brought together a range of experts to discuss the research challenges, opportunities and future possibilities in Cancer and Multimorbidity at our inaugural PC4 Think Tank. Professor Jon Emery, Professor Geoffrey Mitchell, Professor Danielle Mazza, Professor Bogda Koczwara, and Dr Laura Deckx facilitated discussions around managing cancer and multimorbidity in primary care, generating evidence to inform intervention design, and promoting advocacy and policy change. The Think Tank was a great opportunity for our members to dive deep into cancer and multimorbidity primary care issues and help drive the development of an intervention to improve the management of patients.

We also held our first Early Career Researcher Network workshop in Sydney. Members learnt about utilising the media as a channel to drive interest in their projects, grow their personal branding, and develop networking possibilities.

Nicola Webber, University of Melbourne's Media Manager, presented a fascinating insight into the researcher's role within media channels. Kara-Lynne Cummings discussed maximising research impact using social media. We hope to further build capacity in primary care in cancer research through this group of promising researchers.

### PC4 Training Awards 2017

Congratulations to our winners! Our Training Award promotes collaboration, skills development and exchange to build capacity in cancer research in primary care by offering up to \$10,000. We were very pleased to have a record number of applicants and could provide three awards this year.



John Emery at inaugural PC4 Think Tank.

Our first recipient, Xiaoping Lin is an Early Career Researcher based at Monash University in Melbourne and works alongside Professor Danielle Mazza on the PC4 supported LEAD trial. Her project is focused on Managing cancer survivors with comorbidities: practice and views of GPs. Our second recipient, Jinfeng Ding is a PhD student based at the University of Western Australia. His project is on the Assessment of GP-

led palliative care in Western Australia: a pilot study of end-of-life care registry.

For the first time this year we have also offered the Training Award to support travel that helps establish new collaborations or provides opportunities for specialised skill development. Rebecca Bergin is an Early Career Researcher based at the University of Melbourne. The award will help Rebecca visit researchers and program managers based in Western Australia who are involved in developing, implementing, and advocating for policies in

relation to patient pathways as well as furthering her knowledge of analysis of linked health data.

### Save the date!

After the success of our 'Establishing Partnerships, Creating Opportunities' Scientific Symposium in 2017, we are pleased to announce our 2018 Scientific Symposium in Sydney on

**PC4 SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM**  
25<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2018 | DARLING HARBOUR, SYDNEY

Showcasing PC4 supported research and the best primary care in cancer research from around Australia. Key note speaker - Professor David Weller, James Mackenzie Professor of General Practice, The University of Edinburgh.

REGISTRATION OPENS DECEMBER

pc4tg.com.au/PC4symp2018

@pc4tg

PRIMARY CARE COLLABORATIVE  
CANCER CLINICAL TRIALS GROUP



Friday 25th May, 2018. The symposium is a multidisciplinary meeting with guest speakers and research that cover the cancer continuum. Our international key note speaker is Professor David Weller, James Mackenzie Professor of General Practice and Director of the Centre for Population Health at The University of Edinburgh. He will be discussing the International Cancer Benchmarking Partnership – a global initiative aiming to quantify differences in cancer survival. The Symposium is Australia's foremost conference promoting the expanding role of primary care in cancer research. Registration and abstract submission will open in December. Register for the event at [pc4tg.com.au/PC4symp2018](http://pc4tg.com.au/PC4symp2018) or contact us at [info@pc4tg.com.au](mailto:info@pc4tg.com.au)

### Become a member

Are you interested in joining PC4? PC4 membership is free and open to all researchers, health professionals as well as members of the public with an interest in cancer research in primary care.

Visit [www.pc4tg.com.au](http://www.pc4tg.com.au) for more information.

## The LIP Study

### Understanding the Start of Health Careers

Ben Darlow, Mely Brown, Peter Gallagher, Lesley Gray, Eileen McKinlay, Gordon Purdie, Christine Wilson, Sue Pullon. With acknowledgements to Research New Zealand (Katrina Magill and Pip Sutton) who are administering the graduate surveys.

The influence of interprofessional education on career trajectories and attitudes to collaborative team work are being explored in in New Zealand in a 5-year study run by the University of Otago, in collaboration with Otago Polytechnic and the Eastern Institute of Technology. The protocol for this study is to be published in *BMJ Open*.

Darlow, B., Brown, M., Gallagher, P., Gray, L., McKinlay, E., Purdie, G., Pullon, S. (in press). The longitudinal impact of interprofessional education on attitudes, skills and career trajectories: A protocol for a quasi-experimental study in New Zealand. *BMJ Open*.

The Longitudinal Interprofessional (LIP) Study involves 600 graduates from eight health professions (Dentistry, Dietetics, Medicine, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Oral Health, Pharmacy, and Physiotherapy). It first surveyed students before they started their final year of training in 2015 or 2016, and continues with yearly surveys until their third year of professional practice in 2018 or 2019. The study recruited whole year groups from each discipline, so is a good representation of those entering the health workforce.



Lesley Gray, Peter Gallagher, Christine Wilson, Sue Pullon (Co PI), Ben Darlow (PI), Mely Brown, Eileen McKinlay

Early findings provide an interesting snapshot of health graduates:

- The response rate last year was a healthy 81%. The higher the response rate the more meaningful results will be.
- The majority of graduate health professionals are female, with 71% of the study cohort being female.
- Each of the eight disciplines has an average age in the early 20s. However, there is a wide range of ages from late teens to early 50s.
- There are a variety of ethnicities in the study cohort, including NZ European (57%), Chinese (16%), Maori (9%), Indian (5%), Pacific (1%), and Other (20%).
- Just 44% of participants grew up in major urban cities, with good representation of people from regional cities (29%), towns (15%), and small towns (11%).

Future results from the study will help shape the training of future health professionals in New Zealand and around the world. For further information please contact:

Mely Brown <[melanie.brown@otago.ac.nz](mailto:melanie.brown@otago.ac.nz)>

Research Fellow

Longitudinal Interprofessional Study

Department of Primary Health Care and General Practice

University of Otago Wellington

*Eileen McKinlay, University of Otago*

## The Southern Academic Primary Care Research Unit

SAPCRU was established in 2010 in South East Melbourne, and now sits in the Department of General Practice at Monash University. It was celebrations all round as the Unit's first ever research grant finally came to fruition with the publication of three papers in an issue of Family Practice. It all stemmed from a \$100,000 grant in 2010



from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The grant helped us form the Sorrento Group under the leadership of SAPCRU's director, Prof Grant Russell.

The Sorrento Group's international team of researchers and policy makers then spent several years, hundreds of teleconferences, and a host of face to face meetings trying to uncover some of the hidden truths within 12 primary care reform initiatives in Canada, Australia, and the United States.

Our focus was, eventually, on how teamwork in reforming general practices was developed, how it evolved, and how it was influenced.

So while we learnt a great deal about teamwork, we learnt even more about collaborating at a distance, choosing inexpensive rural retreat locations, and about the frustrations of getting something published that was well and truly out of left field. And, yes, we tested and trialled a new scoring system for *creme brûlée*.

But that's another story.

Here are the papers with links to the Journal:

Crabtree BF, Miller WL, Gunn JM, Hogg WE, Scott CM, Levesque J-F, et al. Uncovering the wisdom hidden between the lines: the Collaborative Reflexive Deliberative Approach. Family Practice. 2017;cmx091-cmx. <https://academic.oup.com/fampra/article/4562368>

Levesque J-F, Harris MF, Scott C, Crabtree B, Miller W, Halma LM, et al. Dimensions and intensity of inter-professional teamwork in primary care: evidence from five international jurisdictions. Family Practice. 2017. <https://academic.oup.com/fampra/article/4562370>

Russell GM, Miller WL, Gunn JM, Levesque J-F, Harris MF, Hogg WE, et al. Contextual levers for team-based primary care: lessons from reform interventions in five jurisdictions in three countries. Family Practice. 2017 <https://academic.oup.com/fampra/article/4562369>

and an earlier one led by Mark Harris

Harris MF, Advocat J, Crabtree BF, Levesque JF, Miller WL, Gunn JM, et al. Interprofessional teamwork innovations for primary health care practices and practitioners: evidence from a comparison of reform in three countries. J Multidiscip Healthc. 2016;9:35-46. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4743635/>

Grant Russell, Monash University

## Mission & Goals

Formed in 1983, AAAPC aims to promote & develop the discipline of primary health care through:

- Encouraging originality, questioning & exploration of ideas within teaching & research environment;
- Providing a forum for exchange of information & ideas;
- Encouraging shared academic activities;
- Fostering & supporting career development in academic primary care;
- Supporting the continuing development of academic primary care.

## The AAAPC newsletter

Published in April, August and December each year, the newsletter welcomes letters to the editor and also reviews and articles about issues of general interest to the membership.

For membership information: Kitty Novy [k.novy@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:k.novy@unimelb.edu.au)

Visit our website: [www.aaapc.org.au](http://www.aaapc.org.au)

## Dr Jason Agostino

I'm a general practitioner and an epidemiologist. I'm based at the Australian National University where I'm a lecturer in the Academic Unit of General Practice and also a Research Fellow in the National Centre for Epidemiology & Population Health. I do my clinical work at Gurriny Yealamucka, an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service in the community of Yarrabah in far north Queensland where I've worked on and off as a GP since 2010.



I came to academic general practice through research questions that arose from clinical work. One of my first jobs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

health was in the Cape York paediatric outreach clinic. A common presentation was children referred for concerns they were underweight. My bosses had two interesting observations – that the number of underweight children had improved markedly and that most underweight children were born small. This led to a series of research questions that I investigated through a GP academic registrar post and eventually led to me doing a Master's of Philosophy in Applied Epidemiology. Through the GP academic registrar post I also got my first taste of teaching and of working with policy makers. I soon realised that work outside the clinic room could be equally rewarding, challenging, and meaningful.

My main tip for anyone is to take your emails off your phone, particularly on

the weekend. I think many of us are very passionate about our work and can fail to give the proper attention and space to the rest of our life. I had the balance wrong for a long time, but I've made my phone pretty useless for anything aside from calling people and when I'm bored, I no longer flick through emails, Facebook or Twitter. It opens up a whole range of possibilities. [editor – thanks for the tip Jason, perhaps I need a New Year's resolution?]

## Dr Chris Freeman

I am excited to join the AAAPC and connect with other members who share a passion for primary care research. I graduated with a Bachelor of Pharmacy from James Cook University and went onto complete a Graduate Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy and a PhD both from the University of Queensland. In 2012 I became the first Australian pharmacist to obtain specialisation in ambulatory care



pharmacy under the Board of Pharmacy Specialties (USA) and in 2015 was a part of the initial cohort credentialed as Advanced Practice Pharmacists.

In 2009, after working as a clinical pharmacist in a regional public hospital and as a pharmacist in charge of a community pharmacy, I commenced working as a pharmacist integrated into a general practice medical centre (in a non-dispensing role). My role in the medical centre is a mix between patient facing services (such as comprehensive medication review for patients with polypharmacy and multi-morbidity), clinician facing roles (such

as the provision of drug information and education in therapeutics), and practice level services (such as quality improvement activities to enhance the quality use of medicines for the practice population). If you are interested, you can read more about this emerging role here: <https://www.nps.org.au/australian-prescriber/articles/the-practice-pharmacist-a-natural-fit-in-the-general-practice-team>

I also spend part of my week working as a Clinical Senior Lecturer at the University of Queensland. Here I coordinate a final year Pharmacy course as well as undertaking primary care research focused on health services and pharmacy practice research. Specific areas of research interest are the integration of pharmacists into the primary care medical team, de-prescribing, antimicrobial stewardship in primary care, the clinical application of pharmacogenomics, medicine related hospital (re)admissions, telehealth, and the role of the pharmacist in oral healthcare.

I am also the National Vice President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia the peak body representing all pharmacists. In this role I am fortunate to contribute to health policy and governance in which I promote an evidence based approach.

I really look forward to connecting with other AAAPC members so please feel free to connect with me directly at [c.freeman4@uq.edu.au](mailto:c.freeman4@uq.edu.au), on Twitter @topherfreeman or via UQ at <http://researchers.uq.edu.au/researcher/2331>

## Vicki Wade

I am delighted to introduce myself as a new member of the AAAPC broader community. I am a proud Aboriginal woman my traditional lands are South West of Western Australia. I completed my nursing training in 1980 at Fairfield

# MEMBERS ON THE MOVE



Hospital, Sydney. Since 1980 I have held many positions in health and over the last 20 years within

Aboriginal health.

I became interested in research in primary health care as the Director of Aboriginal Health, South West Sydney Area Health Service (SWSAHS). At this time I became acutely aware that the Aboriginal community were falling through the gaps in their health care journey. In particular, I was concerned that transitions from hospitals into primary health care were impacting on the provision of good quality care, and many of our community were lost to the system. I encouraged SWSAHS to become involved in an Aboriginal Chronic Care project, which looked at discharge planning and 48hour follow up. The outcomes from this project highlighted that the Aboriginal community were not accessing mainstream primary health care and health services were working in silos.

This led me to become involved in a multi-centre RCT rigorously testing the effectiveness of a whole of practice clinical re-design program to embed cultural respect in general practice. The project, Ways of Thinking and Ways of Doing (WoTWoD) includes establishing a Aboriginal Local Care Partnership with the local PHN, recruiting and training a team of Aboriginal health cultural mentors, a cultural respect workshop with participating general practices, cultural mentorship visits to the practices, and a Toolkit to guide and support the implementation of cultural respect activities in the practice.

I am now the Senior Cultural Advisor for Rheumatic Heart Disease Australia,

housed at Menzies School of Health Research, where I hope I can make a difference to my people who continue to suffer from a disease eradicated in all other developed countries.

## Professor Jane Gunn

Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

Jane Gunn is Professor and Foundation Chair of Primary Care Research. She



is currently Head of the Department of General Practice and Deputy Head of the Melbourne Medical School (MMS), The University of Melbourne. In January 2018, Jane will take up the role of Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (MDHS), The University of Melbourne. Jane will have oversight of the Faculty's Strategic Plan, specifically the areas of people and culture; engagement and international relations.

Jane has been Head of Department (HoD) for nine years and said that it is good to have a change of leadership to bring in new ideas. She will relinquish her roles as HoD and Deputy Head of the MMS but will retain her role as Chair of Primary Care Research.

Jane has established a successful primary care mental health research group and is involved in leading primary care reform. She serves on a number of National advisory committees and as an expert Advisor to the Australian government. Jane serves as a Board Director of the Eastern Melbourne

PHN and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Hospital. She served on the NHMRC Research Committee from 2009 – 2015 and chaired a wide variety of related review panels. Jane has made major contributions to mental health research including documenting the natural history of depression in general practice as well as developing and testing interventions. She has a long history of serving the community. She established one of the first practice-based research networks in Australia (VicReN) that supports the conduct of grassroots and multi-centre trial research testing complex interventions in the real-world setting. Jane also holds an honorary Professorial appointment at the University of Glasgow and in 2016 was elected a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences in recognition of her outstanding leadership in health and medical research.

Professor Shitij Kapur, Dean of MDHS said that he is delighted to have Jane in this role as she will bring a wealth of experience of Faculty and University operations to the position, as well as excellent relationships and networks across the Melbourne Biomedical Precinct and the wider health sector.

*Lisa Morgan*

## Liz Fitzmaurice

As the acting Head of General Practice at Griffith University School of Medicine (GUSOM), I am combining my passion for supporting the next generation of doctors to stand on our shoulders with my belief in General Practice as the cornerstone of an effective sustainable health care system. I have recently transitioned from the role of Senior Lecturer Clinical Skills and Assessment at GUSOM to this interim role. Like all medical schools, our students are bombarded with a "hidden curriculum" that teaches them that hospital based



medicine is the centre of health care with other providers primarily triaging into these specialties. The crucial rotation in General Practice turns this concept on its head and is profoundly valuable, particularly for students who know their future lies in Hospital specialties.

I am also embarking on a research journey, investigating and celebrating the impact of doctors with disabilities on the health system, having been inspired by a GUSOM graduate who lives and practices as a doctor with the challenges of quadriplegia. I am

delighted to discover and join AAAPC, a community who will help guide me as I integrate my previous leadership in health care experience in NZ with my new academic career focus.

## Farwell

It is with great sadness that we farewell Dr Sandra Davidson from the Department of General Practice University of Melbourne. Sandra has been an important member of the University of Melbourne's DGP mental health team for 11 years and a loyal and active member of the AAAPC for over 7 years. She will retain an Honorary appointment at the University of Melbourne which will ensure her continued involvement with the department and in mental health research. Other plans include travel, learning how to bake bread and (even) more time cheering on her kids from the sidelines.

*Jennifer Walker and Sandra Davidson*



# WE NEED YOU

Friends and members of the AAAPC: your support is needed to help us prosper and flourish in these challenging times. Recruit a new member today!

We are a vibrant organisation, actively promoting research and training throughout Australia in primary care and general practice. We foster the career development of members, and provide a lively email forum for the exchange of ideas and a stimulating quarterly newsletter. We fund a yearly travel fellowship and promote participation in local and international conferences. We are also a lobby group of increasing importance in the primary care field.

The AAAPC is a self funding body which relies on members' subscriptions, currently \$150 per year (\$60 for students), to finance its many activities. Help us to double our membership in 2018–19. Get your colleagues to join up now. Application forms can be found at [www.aaapc.org.au](http://www.aaapc.org.au)

# CONFERENCES

## NAPCRG 2017

The 45<sup>th</sup> annual North American Primary Care Research Group meeting was held in the beautiful city of Montreal from 17–21 November. Despite the low temperatures (-6°C one morning) the city was stunning with Christmas decorations fitting in perfectly with the icy streets and snowy days.

NAPCRG is the leading organisation for primary care research and methods in North America, but the conference



draws a strong contingent from Europe, especially the Netherlands, and Australasia. A number of AAAPC members attended in a representative capacity, presenting their own research, and receiving awards.

Prof Mark Harris received a prestigious President's Award in recognition of his outstanding primary care research. Prof Grant Russell did the Antipodes proud presenting his AAAPC winning work on the accessibility of mental health care services across international boundaries. There are a number of AAAPC members who also sit on the international NAPCRG committee (see Box 1).

An highlight was the final plenary



Left: Mark Harris receiving his award. Above Dr David Blane (Scotland), Prof Mieke van Driel, Prof Kirsty Douglas, A/Prof Doug Klein (Canada) in the icy streets of Montreal searching for the famous Schwartz' sandwich

delivered by New Zealander Prof Dee Mangin who is now a long-time Canadian resident. Her speech on polypharmacy, primary care research methods, and the new era of medicine was impressive. In true Australian tradition, I think we can continue to claim Prof Mangin as one of our own.

The conference was a great opportunity to learn about primary care research happening around the world. Although there are big differences between our primary healthcare systems, often the research is grappling with similar questions. The welcoming atmosphere of the conference, and support for emerging researchers, is a particularly impressive part of the organisation.

## The 12th National Allied Health Conference

Held at the Sydney Convention Centre, 26–29 August, The National Allied Health Conference's theme was "stronger together" and attracted 700 delegates including practitioners,

researchers, leaders in Aboriginal health and policy makers from Australian and internationally. As a result the conference had an interesting and in-depth policy focus.

There was a strong focus on opportunities for allied health professionals to make a difference in primary care, particularly for people with long term conditions in the patient centred medical home model, and for people with a disability via the National Disability Insurance Scheme. There were discussions about the challenges of the public and private health system in relation to the provision of and access to allied health. The policy makers were guarded about any potential changes to funding arrangements to facilitate greater access to allied health, but there was a sense of optimism.

A thought provoking panel discussion was held on the future of allied health in primary care with Jim Gillespie, Lucio Naccarella, and Saravana Kumar. The discussion focused on how allied health



professionals can make the most of the changing health environment and how we need to think about how we work together to provide multidisciplinary team care for priority populations. Is there a framework to guide this process and what about the monitoring of quality and safety?

I chaired an interesting session on eHealth which highlighted the challenges of using eMR and shared notes in the public health system. One presentation described an allied health project to facilitate the use of shared clinical notes in Queensland. They described the frustration of one step forward and two steps backwards. This was in sharp contrast to examples from private practice where clinicians were able to innovate in the way that they provided care and information to their patients. We clearly still have some way to go to achieve secure shared access to patient records but there are promising examples of effective innovative models of technology supported allied health interventions.

Overall, it was a useful and interesting conference and for me the themes followed on nicely from the PHCRIS conference earlier in the month. The 13th National Allied Health Conference will be in 2019 in Brisbane.

*Dr Sarah Dennis*

## 2018 Primary Health Care Research Conference in Melbourne!

We hope you can join us in Melbourne for #phcr18, to be held at Pullman Melbourne on the Park from 1–3 August 2018.

The Primary Health Care (PHC) Research Conference, sponsored by PHCRIS and supported by Flinders University, is a valuable opportunity for people working in all areas of PHC to present and discuss the latest quality peer-reviewed research, network and build professional collaborations. Visit the Conference website to find out more: <http://www.phcris.org.au/conference/2018/>.

There are a number of Sponsorship and Exhibition opportunities on offer in 2018 – check out the prospectus now available online (<http://www.phcris.org.au/conference/2018/sponsorship.php>) and see how your organisation could get involved! The Conference is a highly regarded event for people working across PHC practice, policy and research to come together. It is the ideal place to promote your organisation and your work, develop key relationships and engage with the broader community. We are happy to work with you to tailor the benefits for your organisation.

The Call for Abstracts will be released in early January 2018. To stay informed about important dates and other news relating to the Conference please subscribe to PHCRIS News: <http://www.phcris.org.au/subscribe/>.

We look forward to seeing you in Melbourne!

*Prof Richard Reed and Dr Lynsey Brown. PHCRIS Director / Conference Co-Convenor*

## Upcoming Conferences

4th International Health Care Reform Conference, Sydney, March 2018 <https://yrd.currinda.com/register/event/1114>

Information about all WONCA conferences here <http://www.globalfamilydoctor.com/Conferences.aspx>

The Canadian Conference on Medical Education, Halifax Canada, April 2018 <https://www.mededconference.ca/>

Annual Conference of the European Health Psychological Society <https://ehps.net/2018/conference-info/important-dates/> Galway Ireland August 2018.