

Academic Unit of General Practice

2019 Newsletter – Semester 2, Christmas edition



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Happy Festive Season to all!

I have recently returned from a glorious 8 week break which included snorkelling in the Galapagos Islands and hiking in Patagonia - I heartily recommend both destinations! It has been a timely reminder of just how important taking time off and properly away (i.e. no emails, meeting or correspondence and limited access to media) is for me. Like



so many of you my day to day life is incredibly busy, and the worlds challenges so various and prominent that it can get overwhelming. Spending some time exercising in remote beautiful locations is for me is an ideal way to remind myself of what is truly important and of just how blessed my life is.

In this newsletter I am delighted to highlight the recent promotion of Christine Phillips from Associate Professor to Professor. This is richly deserved and recognises Chris's achievements in education, research and service to the University and the community. Many of you know of Chris through her work at Companion House or Hobart Place General Practice where she does complex general practice care for vulnerable clients - she does that and so much more – she has an extraordinary agile brain and an huge capacity for work and does everything with good grace and a smile – it is fantastic that she has received this recognition from the ANU.

2019 has been a consolidating year for the ACT Health Directorate, and one of grand new plans and visions for the ANU College of Health and Medicine. Change in our operating environment is constant and we are a small unit belonging to two large organisations. It can be challenging to remain visible and to feel that our own goals and contributions matter in the wider setting. I therefore feel particularly privileged and proud that the AUGP has remained a strong, coordinated and mutually supportive team. Although we are small, I do believe that with our partners (you!) we are making a difference. We provide excellent educational experiences for our students and supervisors, we are conducting research that is relevant and valuable to our GP stakeholders and to the health system more broadly and we are providing policy advice that is important and needs to be heard. Thank you to all our staff and thank you to our partners.

I hope for you all that you manage to find a way to get at least a little “down’ time to spend with friends and family doing simple things you enjoy in a cool and safe environment.

Kind regards

Kirsty

Prof Kirsty Douglas MBBS Dip RACOG MD FRACGP

Professor of General Practice | [Australian National University Medical School](#)

Director Academic Unit of General Practice | [ACT Health Directorate](#)

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Dear Supervisors

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for another great academic year. We had such positive feedback overall about all our practices and how wonderful our GP teachers are. So many students told me personally about the GPs in their practice or about a specific supervisor and how incredible they were as a doctor.

Over the years I feel that students recognise now more and more how important the work we do in General Practice is. Sometimes it overwhelms them, and they think they could never be a GP as it is such hard work but for others, they realise how interesting the work is and often what they appreciate most is the special relationship the GP has with their patients. In September I attended the RACGP Fellowship event and there I saw so many of our ANU alumni now fully qualified as GPs and some of them I distinctly remember how they told me at the end of third year that their GP placement had inspired them to pursue General Practice as a career. So thank you again - without your generosity in welcoming and hosting these students we wouldn't be able to run our program.

I hope by now you have received an email from Annette our placements co-ordinator summarising your placement allocations for next year. In mid-January we will send out our new packs for 2020 before your first students arrives. Our first **Teach-the-Teacher evening in 2020** will be on **26 February**, so please save the date in your diaries.

Wishing you all Merry Christmas and a peaceful new year (and some rain would be nice!)

Regards Katrina

Katrina

A/Prof Katrina Anderson

Academic Unit of General Practice, ACT Health
Australian National University Medical School
Chair, Canberra Region Medical Education Council

RESEARCH

The Kindergarten Health Check – Karen Ciszek



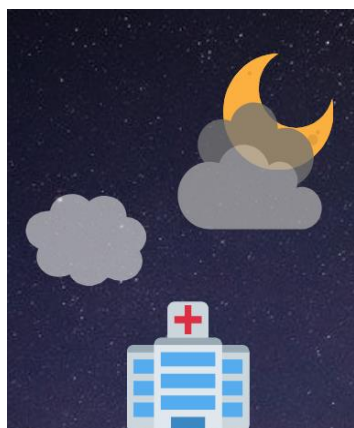
From 2020, parents/guardians in the ACT will be invited to answer questions in the school-entry *ACT Kindergarten Health Check (KHC)* about adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) that their child may have experienced. The KHC involves a physical health check as well as a health/behaviour related questionnaire. From these questions, parents/guardians are asked to report the number of ACEs that have applied to their child (their ACEs 'score'), but are asked not to identify which specific ones. Parents/guardians will still be asked to nominate their family doctor for all the KHC results to be sent to, so they can be discussed in confidence at their next GP appointment. Currently approx. 85% of participating families nominate a GP or medical practice, of about 5500 returns.

The purpose of adding the ACEs questions is to give families the opportunity to be aware of the risks of early exposure to these events, and the chance to get information and support, ideally **before** any problems occur for their child. We also know from research that the sooner we are aware of potential health concerns, the more likely we are to be able to put supports in place to prevent them.

To support ACT GPs (and parents) in this new process, the KHC team at the AUGP are working with the Australian Child & Adolescent Trauma, Grief & Loss Network (ACATALGN) and other relevant stakeholders to develop training sessions, resources and supports for GPs and practice nurses. The ANU partner of Emerging Minds are developing a collection of resources (an "ACEs Toolkit") to (a) provide the evidence regarding the clinical importance of ACEs ; (b) clinical guidance on interpreting ACEs scores and (c) capacity-building for GPs in sensitively discussing ACEs issues with families.

More information regarding training sessions being offered through Capital Health Network will be announced early 2020.

Afterhours Project – Dr Katelyn Barnes



Thank you to everyone involved in the Afterhours Study during May/June this year! The study was a resounding success and we ended up with a total of 1992 patients, and 934 consultation records (filled out by 85 GPs and Nurses). Each site received a personalised data summary comparing their results to the average results of other site types.

Most common reported reason for attending an afterhours service was "the problem occurred afterhours". Interestingly, for General Practice the most common reason was "I cannot afford to take time off work/life to be seen in usual working hours". We are exploring demographic differences in access to services afterhours

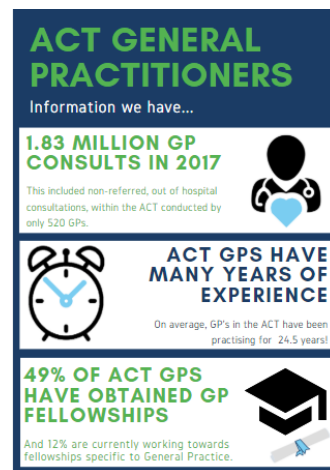
With so much data to explore, we are still analysing results, and writing a full report for ACT Health. Once the report is complete, we can share results with you all! If you are interested in any specific questions, please contact Kirsty Douglas via email, or join us at a PracNet meeting to discuss further.

General Practice Workforce Survey

This year we also conducted a survey of the general practice workforce, in an attempt to better describe the current ACT GP workforce, represent the wants and needs of GPs, and to understand the intentions of GPs in the ACT over the next 5 years.

We had ambitious targets of getting 30-50% of all GPs to complete the survey, but unfortunately, only achieved 20%. With such a small proportion of GPs responding, we cannot accurately report data to ACT Health. However, we will be putting the results into an infographic and summary to share with ACT practices in 2020.

A big thank-you to all GPs and practice managers who completed the surveys! Your engagement and effort is truly appreciated!!



PracNet

PracNet, the ACT practice based research network, has been invigorated in 2019! The network will meet again five times in 2020 to discuss new research happening in general practice, and results of projects in the ACT and surrounding NSW areas. A networking dinner is available prior to every meeting, and online attendance is offered through Zoom for anyone unable to make it in person. A website is being developed to provide monthly updates on research projects, research resources and guidance; as well as networking events to keep everyone connected and up-to-date ☺

Ehealth and disadvantage – Dr Melinda Choy

We are so grateful to the many practices in Cooma, Jindabyne, Braidwood, Merimbula, Bega, Bateman's Bay, Narooma, Moruya, Canberra and Queanbeyan who are kindly helping us out with the Ehealth and Digital Divide survey over November-January.

Katelyn and I had a great road trip and we met so many generous, kind and friendly people. We were encouraged that so many others also want to make sure that as health goes digital, marginalised patients can still access the care they need.

We are really keen to do research that helps digital health implementation improve health equity rather than exacerbate gaps. We want to represent the true state of affairs when it comes to how people feel about technology in health.



Melinda Choy (L) and **Katelyn Barnes (R)** on their 2-day November road trip to general practices in Cooma, Jindabyne, Braidwood, Merimbula, Bega, Bateman's Bay, Narooma and Moruya.

If you have helped us or are still helping us, thank you so much! If you are interested in getting involved, it is not too late.

Please contact Dr Katelyn Barnes at Katelyn.Barnes@anu.edu.au and she can arrange to get you some surveys if you think your patients are interested in being part of this. We will be providing individual practice results also.

Ehealth summary:

Ehealth is a growing area, and examples include mobile phone health apps, looking up health information online, appointment booking online and My Health Record. We want to understand how patients with chronic disease in general practice experience ehealth. In particular, we want to understand whether people with socioeconomic disadvantage find it easier or harder to use ehealth and why. The project will be used to help improve ehealth policy and projects, so that everyone can benefit from them.

STAFF RECOGNITION



Congratulations to **Nicola Palfrey**, Director, Australian Child & Adolescent Trauma, Loss & Grief (ACATLGN), ANUMS who was awarded a 2019 Churchill Fellowship. Nicola's project is entitled: *To understand how to make exposure to trauma and adversity in childhood a public health issue - USA, UK*

The project summary as submitted:

Exposure to adversity and trauma in childhood is common and has significant & ongoing impacts on children's physical and mental health. The implementation of trauma sensitive practices; training in the prevalence and impacts of trauma on the developing brain and a child's whole world, is firmly established as best practice in health and education sectors internationally with several decades of research demonstrating it's positive impacts. In Australia, the implementation and uptake of these practices is fragmented and disparate, making meaningful change difficult. This project will investigate how other jurisdictions have adopted a public health approach to these issues and managed to convert whole education and health systems.

<https://www.churchilltrust.com.au/our-fellows/2019-churchill-fellowship-award-recipients/>

The work also aligns closely with the work AUGP is doing with ACT Health incorporating the ACEs (Adverse Childhood Events) questionnaire which will be included in the 2020 ACT Kindergarten Health Check. ACATLGN was developed by Prof Beverley Raphael AM (1934-2018) – Beverley would be very proud and pleased with the manner in which her legacy is being built upon.

Recognition for **Nicola** and her team didn't stop there. The Community Trauma Toolkit designed to support children and adults before, during and after disasters or traumatic events has been recognised as part of the 20th anniversary of the Resilient Australia Awards. The toolkit, a collaborative project between [Emerging Minds](#), [Australian National University](#) and the [University of Queensland](#), recognises the drastic impact of events such as bushfires, floods, droughts and cyclones on infant and child mental health, providing resources to support before, during and after such events.

The Awards celebrate initiatives that build whole of community resilience to disasters and emergencies around Australia, as well as images capturing resilience in action.



Congratulations to.....

A/Prof Christine Phillips on her promotion from Associate Professor to Professor. Chris leads the Social Foundations of Medicine group at the ANUMS, is the Medical Director of Companion House Medical Service and one of the founders of the Refugee Health Network of Australia. Her professional background spans general practice, public health and anthropology. Her research area is quality in health service delivery, and has studied and published on refugee health services.



<https://bit.ly/35HDIJU>

Dr Niral Shal, former ANU Academic Registrar who was elected onto the Capital Health Network – ACT Board. Niral will also be a representative on the ACT Clinical Council and General Practice Advisory Committees at CHN.



NEWS IN BRIEF

2019 General Practitioner Forum

The ACT Minister for Health, Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith, along with Mr Michael De'Ath, Director General ACT Health and Ms Liz Chatham, A/g CEO Canberra Health Services attended the 2019 General Practitioner Forum, held at University House. The forum was hosted by **Dr Michelle Barrett**, Senior Lecturer and GP Policy Advisor at ACT Health's Directorate. It was impressive to see at least 100 General Practitioners from around ACT at the function, many of whom teach into our medical program. As well as a fabulous networking evening, it was useful to hear some of the new and improved services being delivered by the Canberra Hospital and the community.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES: 2019

Bagheri, N. K., P; Wangdi, K; Parkinson, A; Mazumdar, S; Sturgiss, E; Lal, A; Douglas, K; Glasgow, N (2019). "Identifying hotspots of type 2 diabetes risk using general practice data and geospatial analysis: an approach to inform policy and practice." Australian Journal of Primary Health.

Ball, L. S., L; Martin, S; Douglas, K. (2019). "The hidden curriculum within nutrition education in medical schools." BMJ Nutrition, Prevention & Health.

Choy, M. B., K; Sturgiss, E; Rieger, E; Douglas, K. (2019). Poster: Digital health and Disadvantage: a qualitative study exploring how patients with chronic disease experience ehealth. Toronto International Conference on Quality in Primary Care Improving Health Equity. Westin Harbour Castle Hotel, Toronto, Canada.

Choy, M. S., Elizabeth; Goodyear-Smith, Felicity; Smith, Gavin Digital health tools and the therapeutic relationship: can eCHAT help a vulnerable population in general practice? AAAPC Annual Research Conference Adelaide July 12-13, 2019. Oral Presentation.

Choy, M. S., E; Goodyear-Smith, F; Smith, G. 'Digital health tools and vulnerable populations: how do patients with substance dependence experience eCHAT?'

CHARM Canberra Health Annual Research Meeting

M. Choy. Canberra July 30-August 2 2019 Oral Presentation.

Choy, M. S., E. (2019). Digital health tools in populations with socioeconomic disadvantage: a narrative review of the patient experience. (Healthcare informatics). NAPCRG - Annual Meeting. Toronto, Canada.

Eveleigh R, S. A., Weel C van, Oude Voshaar R, Lucassen P. (2019). "Patients' attitudes to discontinuing not-indicated long-term antidepressant use: barriers and facilitators.." Ther Adv Psychopharmacol **9**: 1–9

Flegg K M, Bou Sleiman C. (2015). A practical approach to Teaching Medical Students about Community Services. Chapter in The World Book of Family Medicine – European Edition. . 2015 WONCA Europe, Slovenia.

Goodyear-Smith, F., Bazemore, A., Coffman, M., Fortier, R. D. W., Howe, A., Kidd, M., Phillips, R., Rouleau, K., van Weel, C. (2019). "Research gaps in the organisation of primary healthcare in low-income and middle-income countries and ways to address them: a mixed-methods approach. ." BMJ Glob Health 2019; 4: p. e001482-e001482.

Goodyear-Smith F, B. A., Coffman M, Fortier R, Howe A, Kidd M, Phillips RL, Rouleau K, Weel C van. "Primary Care Research Priorities in Low- and Middle-Income Countries " Ann Fam Med 2019; 17: 31-35.

Goodyear-Smith F, B. A., Coffman M, Fortier R, Howe A, Kidd M, Phillips R, Rouleau K, van Weel, C. (2019). "Primary care financing: a systematic assessment of research priorities in low- and middle-income countries. " BMJ Glob Health 4: p. e001483-e001483.

Hall S, M. H., Douglas K. (2019). Retention of rural doctors and quality of patient care: An analysis of GP workforce stability and clinical outcomes. . RMAR Conference. The Star Gold Coast. .

Muijsenbergh M, W. C. v. (2019). "The essential role of primary care professionals in achieving health for all. " Ann Fam Med 2019;17: 293 – 295.

Nagwa Nashat, R. H., Abdul Munem Al Dabbagh, Mohammed Rasoul Tarawneh, Huda Alduwaisan, Fatima Zohra, Eiad Abdelmohsen AlFaris, Harumi Quezada-Yamamoto, Chris van Weel, Salman Rawaf (2019). "Primary care healthcare policy implementation in the Eastern Mediterranean region; experiences of six countries: ." Part II. Eur J Gen Pract **25**:

P J Dossetor, K. T., J Oscar, M Carter, J Fitzpatrick, C Bower, J Boulton, E Fitzpatrick, J Latimer, E J Elliott , A LC Martiniuk (2019). "Review of Aboriginal child health services in remote Western Australia identifies challenges and informs solutions." BMC Health Services Research **19, Article number: 758 (2019)**

Paige, E. O. D. J., L; Agostino, J; Pennings, S; Lovett, R; Daluwatta, A; Banks, E; Wade, V; McLoughlin, K. (2019). "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander absolute cardiovascular risk assessment and management: systematic review of evidence to inform national guidelines [IN PRESS]." Public Health Research & Practice **Online**.

Stone, L. D., K; Phillips, C. (2019). "With the best will in the world: how benevolent sexism shapes medical careers." Medical Education.

Sturgiss E, P. W., Russell G, Hartman TO, Orkin A, Reeve J, Glasziou P, van Weel C. (2019). "Reporting guidelines for primary care research - what are the needs?." Australian Journal of Primary Health Care 2019; **25: XLIX-XLIX**.

Thoonsen B, G. S., Vissers, KCP, Verhagen S, van Weel C, Groot M, Engels Y. "Training general practitioners contributes to the identification of palliative patients and to multidimensional care provision: secondary outcomes of an RCT. ." BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care 2019; **9**:

Thoonsen B, G. S., Vissers, KCP, Verhagen S, van Weel C, Groot M, Engels Y. (2019). "Training general practitioners contributes to the identification of palliative patients and to multidimensional care provision: secondary outcomes of an RCT." BMJ Supportive & Palliative Care **9**.

Weel C van. (2019). "Growing Primary Care Research Worldwide: an undeniable fact. ." Ann Fam Med.

Weel C van, M. M. v. d. (2019). "Populatiegerichte eerstelijnszorg in internationaal Perspectief." Van Alma Ata en Ottawa naar Astana, Tijdschr Gezondheidswet **97:32–35**