

Monash Rural Health Latrobe Valley and West Gippsland

Newsletter, Winter 2016

Director's Message

Associate Professor Joseph Tam

Director, Monash Rural Health, Latrobe Valley and West Gippsland

When I sat down to write my first message as the Director of Monash Rural Health (Latrobe Valley and West Gippsland), I realised that almost two years have elapsed since I was appointed to this role. Reflecting on this period, what have we achieved, and what challenges have we confronted?

In 2014, Monash Rural Health was in the process of an internal review. The review recognised the excellence of our outcomes and recommended increased regionalisation of teaching to improve efficiency and sustainability. Restructuring of some roles and responsibilities, as well as retirements and resignations has seen the appointment of new staff. Dr Narelle MacKay was appointed as Regional Year 3B Coordinator, and Ms Lane Johnson as Clinical Skills Educator. In Warragul, Dr John Scarlett, Ms Larissa Attard and Dr Dan Stefanski are working together to coordinate and deliver the curriculum. Together the teams at Warragul and Traralgon collaborate to deliver a solid foundation in the core curriculum and create unique experiences for students placed at our sites.

We have worked hard over the last couple of years to encourage students to consider medicine as a career and to choose rural clinical placements. The very popular "Wildfire weekend" incorporates a range of procedural skills teaching stations, sight-seeing, social events, and an overview of local research to entice current medical students to consider undertaking their clinical placements in rural areas. In a similar vein we worked with the Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV) to showcase the benefits of learning and working in a regional area. We assisted the Gippsland Medical Student Network to provide information evenings for local secondary school students interested in studying medicine. We also continue to work with local committee members to honour the memory of a dedicated doctor



and educator, by awarding the Tim McArdle Bursary to an eligible student each year.

In addition to excellent medical education (2015 Year 4C student, Tiarni Templeton, ranked seventh overall in a cohort of 500+), our students also have opportunities to engage in research. Two of our medical students, Tiarni Templeton and Gerard Harrop, supervised by Dr Trung Quach, a Consultant Nephrologist at LRH, presented work at a scientific conference in Canberra. Other research achievements include presentations at national and international conferences and publications in peer-reviewed journals. This work will be advanced by the appointment this year of a full-time research academic, who will support efforts to implement the MD program at our site.

We could not have achieved these successes without the support of local stakeholders (Latrobe Regional Hospital, West Gippsland Healthcare Group, Maryvale Private Hospital,

fifteen general practices across Central and West Gippsland, and Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation) and their assistance in providing quality clinical learning experiences. These placements offer invaluable opportunities for our students to learn from other health professionals in the context of an authentic workplace.

It is a challenge for both me as a part-time director, and Tracey Minster as a part-time manager, to provide oversight to such a vibrant and expanding academic centre that is delivering quality teaching, implementing educational innovations and engaging with stakeholders in clinical and educational research. We would not have achieved our objectives without the collaborative and cooperative team spirit and effort of all the professional staff, academics, clinical deans, discipline leads and clinical teachers. I would like to make a special thank you to Dr Cathy Haigh, my deputy, for her tireless effort and dedication in assisting me to ensure our students have the best possible learning experience. Another big thank you goes to Tracey Minster, who has helped me to understand the financial intricacies of our budget as well as coordinating professional staff to assist academics in the delivery of our program in a seamless fashion.

I would also like to thank Professor Judi Walker, former Head of Monash Rural Health, for her support of me and of our site, and to warmly welcome her successor, Professor Robyn Langham. We look forward to working with Robyn to advance our teaching, research, and community engagement initiatives.

This year we will be contributing to an exciting initiative to boost the vertical integration of medical education, by linking undergraduate medical training to postgraduate general practice and specialist training initiatives. Dr David Simon has been appointed as our clinical academic to advance this objective for our region.

I look forward to providing updates on these as well as other outcomes in future newsletters.

June 2016



2016 students welcomed to Monash Rural Health, Traralgon and Warragul

The importance of medical students prioritising their own health and wellbeing as they embark on intense years of study and training was emphasised during the welcome dinner for the 2016 cohort of Monash Rural Health Traralgon/Warragul students.

Held at the Black Tie function centre in Warragul, guests included most of the 69 medical students who will spend this year on placement in West Gippsland and the Latrobe Valley, as well as clinical teachers and administrative support staff.



Year 4C students enjoying the Welcome Dinner.



Deepika Gunda with Associate Professor Tam and Professor Robyn Langham.



Tiarni Templeton receiving her award from Associate Professor Tam and Janneke Hall.

Guest speaker at the dinner was new Monash Rural Health, Head of School Professor Robyn Langham. Robyn was joined by MC Dr Paul Brougham and Indigenous Elder Linda Mullett who conducted the 'Welcome to Country'. MRH Traralgon/Warragul Director, Associate Professor Joseph Tam said the synergy between the university and the local community was evident at the event, as was the support for



Associate Professor Tam and Michelle Ryan.

Contact us: Monash Rural Health Latrobe Valley & West Gippsland.



Warragul

Cottage 3, Sargeant St, Warragul
(behind West Gippsland Hospital)
Telephone: +61 3 5122 7113

Postal Address

Monash Rural Health Warragul
PO Box 723, Warragul VIC 3820

Website: www.med.monash.edu/srh/latrobe-valley



Traralgon

Latrobe Regional Hospital, Traralgon
Telephone: +61 3 5122 7231

Postal Address

Monash Rural Health Traralgon
PO Box 424, Traralgon VIC 3844

students. West Gippsland Councillor Debbie Brown, Latrobe City Councillor Kellie O'Callaghan and Federal Member for McMillan Russell Broadbent all welcomed new students on behalf of the community while Latrobe Regional Hospital Chief Medical Officer Dr Simon Fraser extended a welcome on behalf of the two local public hospitals.

The event also saw the inaugural presentation of the Dr Robert Hall Memorial Academic Award for the highest achieving Year 4C student. Dr Hall, who passed away in 2014, was well known and respected for his contribution to rural medicine and medical education. The 2015 Dr Robert Hall Memorial Academic Award was presented to Tiarni Templeton. The Year 3B Academic Achievement Award was presented to Deepika Gunda.

Students from Hiroshima University, Japan get a taste for life as a medical student in Gippsland

On Thursday 31 March six undergraduate medical students from Hiroshima University in Japan visited Monash Rural Health, Traralgon. The students were on their spring break and were spending a week in Australia to help them understand the health challenges and health care systems of other countries.

The visit commenced with a morning tea and a “get-to-know-you” session where the Japanese students used a Powerpoint presentation to introduce themselves and to tell us about their university and the medical education system in Japan.

We provided an overview of the Australian healthcare system and how healthcare is delivered in rural and regional settings. Dr David Birks, Senior Lecturer, gave a tutorial on skin cancer as a particularly Australian problem. The students were then “buddied” with Year 3B students and participated in a clinical skills session on basic life support practising cardiac compressions, bagging and masking, and defibrillation.

In the afternoon, the students had an opportunity to attempt laparoscopic surgery in the simulated learning suite followed by a tour of Latrobe Regional Hospital that included the paediatric facilities and special care nursery and the telemedicine area.



Practising CPR: Yoshi does chest compressions assisted by Sora (bag and mask), Miki (jaw lift and thrust)

The Japanese students joined Year 3B students for a lecture on chronic renal failure delivered to by Professor Robyn Langham, Head of Monash Rural Health. Students were also given an overview of the Monash medical degree by Year 5D students, Sam Fraser and Sam Alexander.

The day finished with a visit to Sam Alexander’s riding school in Morwell, where the students made the most of the opportunity to be outside,

appreciate Gippsland’s spectacular rural scenery and all enthusiastically rode a horse under Sam’s expert instruction!

The day was very enjoyable. There were challenges in communication, but both groups worked hard to connect, and had some laughs doing so.

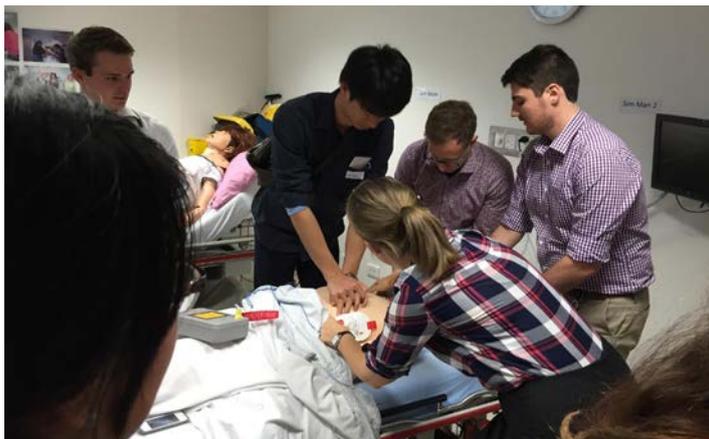
Dr Cathy Haigh



Nao and Taka try out the laparoscopic simulator.



Sam Alexander provides the visitors with a real rural experience.



Lane Johnson facilitates near peer teaching with Year 3B students and the Japanese visitors.



Yu and Sora practice tying knots.

Introducing new staff at Monash Rural Health in 2016

Anton Isaacs

**Senior Lecturer
Monash Rural Health
Latrobe Valley & West Gippsland**

Anton is a public health physician with an interest in the mental health of rural and medically underserved communities. In India, Anton set up a rural mental health service outside Bangalore which has been successfully integrated into general medical services. His PhD from Monash University focussed on help seeking of Aboriginal men with mental health problems and the response of mental health services to their needs. With the help of local Aboriginal Elders and mental health professionals, Anton developed an innovative primary health service model for early detection of mental illness among rural Aboriginal men called the Koorie Men's Health Day which is run regularly in Gippsland. Anton is the guest editor for a special issue on mental health services and suicide prevention models for Aboriginal people in the journal, *Advances in Mental Health*. Prior to taking up the new role, Anton was involved in mental health program evaluations such as the Aboriginal Youth Suicide prevention program of the Victorian Government and the Partners in Recovery program of Gippsland Medicare Local. In his new role with MRH LV and WG, Anton will focus on developing interest and expertise of health professionals and students undertaking research as well as exploring ways to develop inter-professional learning for students of medicine, nursing and allied health sciences.

John Scarlett

**Academic Coordinator
Monash Rural Health, Warragul**

John graduated from Melbourne University in 1977 and undertook postgraduate RACP/RCPA training in Haematology before taking a consultant position at Geelong Hospital in 1986. John moved to Gippsland in 1993 and had a very busy practice in Haematology and Medical Oncology at Traralgon, Bairnsdale, Leongatha and Warragul until his retirement from clinical practice in 2015. John was easily persuaded to work part time as a medical educator as he has always enjoyed clinical teaching and feels that it is a way in which older clinicians can put something back into the profession. John is looking forward to working with the dedicated group of medical educators at Monash Rural Health, Warragul to deliver excellent outcomes for the students in terms of academic results and clinical learning experience.

Lane Johnson

**Clinical Skills Education Lecturer
Monash Rural Health, Traralgon**

Lane relocated from the Northern Territory to Gippsland to take on the role of Clinical Skills Education Lecturer at Monash Rural Health. In the NT, Lane worked in aeromedical rescue on fixed wing and rotary wing as a registered nurse and midwife. Prior to leaving the Territory, Lane co-authored several articles on remote area nursing, births in flight and post-traumatic

stress disorder. She is currently completing her Masters of Midwifery and features in the Paula Heelan novel "Australian Midwives". This year, Lane is hoping to utilise her experience and skills to create an enthusiastic, exciting and informative practical learning environment for students, capitalising on the amazing simulation laboratories available at Monash Rural Health & Latrobe Regional Hospital.

Larissa Attard

**Clinical Site Administrator
Monash Rural Health, Warragul**

Larissa joined Monash Rural Health, Warragul in February this year after 3 years working for the former Head of School. Larissa fell into medical administration 20 years ago after landing a job with the Rural Faculty of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP). This ignited an interest in rural health and training the next generation of rural doctors. Before joining Monash University, Larissa also spent time working in the public health sector at Monash Medical Centre and West Gippsland Hospital. Larissa is enjoying the new challenges that come with working with medical students and clinical academics, and facilitating an interesting and engaging program.

Living and learning in Gippsland after graduation

The Gippsland Rural Intern Training (GRIT) Program employs 15 interns per year through the Intern Match system coordinated by the Post Graduate Medical Council of Victoria. Interns rotate through five well-supported rotations to gain full medical registration while developing essential skills and knowledge. Rotations are available at West Gippsland Hospital, Latrobe Regional Hospital and Central Gippsland Health Service.

Former Trafalgar High School student Julia Buras has started her professional life as a GRIT Program Intern at Latrobe Regional Hospital after a series of clinical placements in Latrobe Valley & West Gippsland convinced her of the benefits of working rurally.

Julia's decision to apply for a local internship after graduating from medicine followed a number of fourth and fifth year rotations undertaken at LRH and facilitated by Monash Rural Health.

"I very much enjoyed my rotations through fourth and fifth year at LRH," Julia said. "There were so many varied opportunities and diverse patient cases to see and there was support from junior and more senior staff. As a student, if you get involved, it is a very supportive environment."



Julia Buras

Julia's enthusiasm for local learning led her to participate in the fifth year Mentor Program, where she was able to teach small groups of third year Monash medical students.

"Being closer in age to these students, I found that they readily talked to me about their experiences. Some told me that before they came to LRH for third year, Traralgon had not been on their preference list for placements,

but having enjoyed their time so much there, they wanted to return for their fourth year rotations," she said.

"The students were saying 'I want to come back here, I don't want to go to Melbourne now' and I think that is a real testament to the rural sites and the support they offer."

Having now completed rotations in areas as diverse as psychiatry, obstetrics, paediatrics, General Practice, medicine, surgery and emergency medicine, Julia is looking forward to an intern year learning more about orthopaedics, anaesthetics and broadening her knowledge of medicine and emergency. She will be spending time at Latrobe Regional Hospital and West Gippsland Hospital in Warragul.

Julia is thrilled to be part of the GRIT Program. "This program provides a great learning environment, it's supportive and offers broad clinical experiences".

Julia encouraged any other students considering rural placements to seize the opportunity, saying "it can really provide you with a bigger picture of patient care and offers a better-rounded and holistic approach to what might be experienced elsewhere."

Another Monash Rural Health success story

WHILE it may have been love that first attracted Matthew Howard to West Gippsland, the experience of living in the local community won over the talented former Monash medical student, who hopes to return as a specialist in the future.

Matthew grew up in Geelong then moved to Bendigo to undertake a Bachelor of Pharmacy after completing secondary school. Midway through the degree the high achieving student undertook GP placements and found a particular affinity for the diagnostic component of his studies.

"I felt that this was a step in the right direction for me and a challenge and I really enjoyed getting to be involved in all facets of patient care and communication," he said.

What came next was a decision to move to Gippsland, where Matthew's wife was born and had returned to work, and commence the graduate entry medical degree at Monash Rural Health's Churchill site.

For five years, until the end of 2015, Matthew made Gippsland his home. His time spent with Monash Rural Health was marked by significant academic achievements. He took out the prize for Highest Academic Achievement for Monash Rural Health Traralgon & Warragul's fourth year students and followed that up last year with the Monash Rural Health (Churchill) Graduation Prize awarded to the graduate entry program final year student with the highest aggregate mark.



Matthew Howard receiving his award from Associate Professor Shane Bullock

Matthew said studying locally offered multiple benefits for budding doctors. "I think you become part of the community," he said. "As a student I felt everyone at West Gippsland Hospital and Latrobe Regional Hospital took me under their wing and I was never seen as a peripheral member of the team as all medical students are so welcomed and supported."

"I felt really invested and I think I had far more practical opportunities as a rural student; I was assisting in surgeries by third year, I was able to really develop my practical skills in suturing and putting in IV (intravenous) lines, I was delivering babies in Warragul and seeing patients alone when I did my GP placement in Neerim South – all of those are opportunities a text book can't provide you with," he said.

Matthew credits his time with Monash Rural

Health, where he built relationships with numerous local medical professionals who he described as "passionate, friendly and enthusiastic teachers", with providing the foundations for his current medical internship at Melbourne's Alfred Hospital.

"Now, as an intern, I am finding the various roles of a junior doctor not so foreign to me due to the great hands on experiences I have had during my time at Monash," he said.

Matthew's internship program consists of intensive blocks of work in various units, including general medicine, colorectal surgery, urology, the emergency department and aged care. Though for now he and his wife, who has taken up a place in a speciality orthodontics training program, are committed to building their expertise in Melbourne, their longer term vision is to return to Gippsland.

"We definitely want to come back," he said. "After spending time there and seeing the population growth around Gippsland we think that this is where we can best serve the community in health care and we think it'll be a great region to one day raise a family."

The humble young doctor said being awarded last year's graduation prize was a surprise. "I didn't know there was prize for rural students so I felt very honoured that my efforts and studies had all come to fruition – it was fantastic! I thank Monash University for a great medical course" he said.

It's not just the learning opportunities that keep students coming back to Gippsland...

When Monash medical student Ben Amberg was allocated a rural placement in Gippsland as part of his studies last year he assumed a mistake had been made. A city boy, Ben spent the first two years of his course at Monash University's Clayton campus and was planning on completing all his training in Melbourne. Just one year down the track and Ben is back in the Latrobe Valley, this time of his own accord, after discovering the benefits of living and studying in a rural area.

It's not only patients at Latrobe Regional Hospital and local GP clinics who will benefit from having the keen student return. The talented footballer also made his mark in the local sporting community during 2015, playing in the grand-final winning Traralgon senior football side. Ben had been playing football for Monash in Melbourne and was quickly embraced by the Traralgon Football Club after moving to the Valley. "I know it sounds cliché but I really did quickly become part of the community then," the young student said. "Suddenly I had 25 mates who were helping me



Traralgon Football Club Seniors celebrating winning the 2015 Grand Final.

out, a whole network of friends and a different social circle."

Describing his initial reluctance to move to a rural area, Ben said "I probably didn't know too much about it; I had talked to lots of students above me who told me about the great teaching at the Alfred, for example, so I requested a metropolitan placement. Later, when I opened my email to find I'd been allocated a rural placement I thought maybe there had been a mistake."

For Ben, a key benefit of undertaking his clinical training in Traralgon has been the diverse and

valuable learning opportunities offered through being part of a smaller team in a non-metropolitan based hospital. "Being able to do longer rotations with the same team meant we developed good relationships with clinicians, who also gave us tutorials throughout the year... they get to know you and vice versa, then if there is anything they know you are interested in they will offer you opportunities."

This year Ben is appreciating the familiarity of his adopted home town. "It is good to be back at the club, seeing all the familiar faces, and it is good to be back at LRH, with a big year coming up and different ward experiences to look forward to as well as a GP rotation in Moe."

"As third and fourth year students, I think our job is to become really familiar with the fundamental type cases such as heart disease, asthma and diabetes – the most common cases we need to become really competent at managing – and I feel the more exposure we can get to those cases the better our skills are going to be and, from my experience, being in a rural placement is the best way to increase that exposure."

So what's it like being part of the Gippsland Rural Cohort?

At the end of Year 2A, students have the opportunity to elect to join the Gippsland Rural Cohort (GRC) & undertake 2 clinical years in the Gippsland region. Students who elect to join the GRC are supported to undertake their clinical training in Gippsland and can select the same site for 3B & 4C via the Online Placement System. GRC students speak highly of the clinical skills learning opportunities, peer support and mentoring provided by local GP & Specialist tutors, as well as involvement in Peer-Assisted Learning, clinical research and engagement with the community.

Year 4C students Kyle Lindfield and Owen Bowey, and Year 5D student Will Mioch are part of the GRC. Kyle and Owen both completed Year A at Monash Rural Health, Churchill before selecting the Warragul site for Years 3B & 4C. Will Mioch is one of a special group of students who have chosen to undertake almost all of their clinical training in Gippsland. Will completed Year A at Churchill in 2013, and has completed Years 3B & 4C in Warragul. Will has undertaken Year 5D rotations in Medicine & Surgery at West Gippsland Hospital and is heading to Heyfield for an elective GP / Aged Care placement for his next rotation before returning to West Gippsland for Aged Care. Will hopes to be accepted into the Gippsland Rural Intern Training program next year.

Why did you decide to be part of the Gippsland Rural Cohort and undertake 2 years clinical training in Gippsland?

"The opportunities for clinical learning are better in Gippsland, there are less medical students to compete with, and the placements allow you to see a bit of everything. The cases you see, is the stuff you need to know. Metro placements may contain more subspecialties, but that's not what's needed at this point in the journey". Owen Bowey

"On top of the clinical learning opportunities and friendly hospital environment, it's the lifestyle, hobbies, lack of traffic, cheaper living costs. You have an opportunity be involved and become part of the community. In the hospital you are a valuable member of the team. Friends in the city tell us that the short term rotations don't allow you to form lasting relationships". Kyle Lindfield.

"I wanted to live and study in the country, and the Gippsland Rural Cohort provides the lifestyle I



Hannah, Brad, Owen & Kyle.

wanted for my family. I've seen a great variety of medicine at West Gippsland Hospital. I've been able to get to know people and feel like part of the team. There's so much opportunity for hands on practicing of clinical skills and I really like the non-hierarchical system in the hospital - you get to work alongside consultants who still see patients on the ward. Well respected Melbourne surgeons take an hour out of their day to provide tutorials for 3B students". Will Mioch

What have been some highlights of your time with Monash Rural Health, Traralgon and West Gippsland and Latrobe Valley?

"Theatre time, the opportunities to participate, be hands on, maximise learning opportunities and do as much as you want to. If you're prepared to put in the time, the hospital affords you every opportunity from seeing patients in ED to helping deliver babies". Kyle Lindfield.

"The continuity of care. Getting to know patients. Seeing the same patients in General Practice, then in the hospital. I saw a female patient in general practice, then in the hospital during my Women's Health rotation and then with her child during my Children's Health rotation". Will Mioch

"Being accepted by the patient community who are so supportive of their hospital and willing to help train their future workforce. Being able to follow a patient's journey from their presentation in ED through to discharge." Owen Bowey



Will Mioch.

Do you think you've had opportunities in Gippsland that you may not have had in a metro placement?

"It's definitely been more hands on. We've had plenty of opportunities to practice sutures, cannulas catheters, as well as scrub in and assist in Theatre". Owen Bowey

"The medical knowledge that's been shared with us is incredible. Most of the Surgeons and Specialists visit West Gippsland Hospital from Melbourne; the city comes to you and you get to live in the country". Kyle Lindfield.

"Seeing the acute initial presentation before the patient is transferred is something some metro placements might miss out on. The longitudinal GP program in 4C is also a highlight of the GRC. You get to consult on your own and experience the continuity of care". Owen Bowey

Anything else you would like to add about being a Gippsland Rural Cohort student?

"Consultants and Registrars aren't as rushed as they might be in a big metro hospital. They have more time to teach". Owen Bowey

"You can create your own learning opportunities". Kyle Lindfield

"Being part of a cohort with like-minded students has been great. There are quite a few of us who have chosen to do the bulk of our clinical training in Gippsland. There are plenty of opportunities to teach and mentor other students and I really enjoy that". Will Mioch

Learning about Developmental Disabilities

On Friday 22 April, fourth year medical students from all Monash Rural Health sites in Gippsland had an opportunity to consolidate their understanding of developmental disabilities by participating in a "mega day" at the Traralgon site. Developmental Disabilities is a core component of the MBBS curriculum. The workshop, facilitated by Monash Rural Health Traralgon; Cooinda Hill - Disability Services and Support (Traralgon), and the Centre for Developmental Disability Health Victoria (CDDHV) Dandenong, enabled students to improve their communication skills and hear first-hand of the challenges

adults with developmental disabilities face.

A developmental disability is a permanent mental and/or physical impairment that can occur any time before the age of 18 years. Children diagnosed with developmental disabilities are referred to paediatric services, but sourcing support for adults living with developmental disabilities is more complex. In addition to any health challenges associated with the disability itself, individuals living with developmental disabilities typically experience more illness and have poorer quality of life and a shorter life expectancy than the rest of the population.

These vulnerabilities create a definitive need for appropriately targeted and focused healthcare.

Dr. Jane Tracy, Director of the CDDHV, and herself the mother of an adult son with a developmental disability, facilitated the day. The morning was devoted to teaching about developmental disabilities, illustrating the challenges typically experienced by people diagnosed with a developmental disability presenting to a healthcare provider and for the healthcare provider in such a consultation. Strategies to facilitate effective communication between patients and, when necessary, carers, and doctors

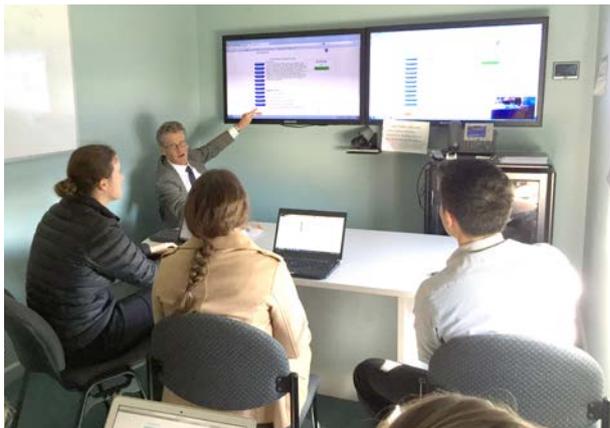
Continued on page 7...

Spotlight on Research at Monash Rural Health, Traralgon & Warragul

17th Ottawa Conference and ANZAHPE 2016, Perth, WA March 19-23.

Healthcare education and assessment was the focus of this years' Ottawa / ANZAHPE conference held in Perth, WA in March. Dr David Birks, Senior Lecturer, Monash Rural Health, Traralgon presented a paper co-authored with Dr Cathy Haigh (Deputy Director and Year 4C Academic Coordinator) and Mr Bill Haigh (Simulation Coordinator) on the "Testing Effect". Here's a brief summary of the paper...

Retaining information beyond the immediate educational exercise is a challenge for both students and teachers. Revision using various study techniques is often inefficient and unproductive. The Team at Monash Rural Health, Traralgon reviewed cognitive psychology research that showed tests may promote better retention of information. This is known as test-enhanced learning (TEL). To improve memory, tests should be used often but should be administered over time. Completing a test sometime between one week and one month after the initial educational event produces superior results up to one year later. Tests that require effortful recall (e.g. short-answer or essay tests) produce greater gains than do multiple-choice tests. Published studies indicate that 20-30 minutes of testing is



Dr John Scarlett facilitating the online PBL quiz with Warragul 3B students.

more effective than 20-30 minutes of study.

Monash Rural Health, Traralgon & Warragul has introduced test enhanced learning to our Year 3B students. Each week the students cover an important part of the curriculum using Problem Based Learning (PBL) and each week we run a quiz which covers aspects of the previous week's PBL. This is presented live on the screen at one interactive session for all the students. They respond using their digital devices so that an immediate, but anonymous, collective result is seen. Each question is followed by feedback from the PBL tutors and discussion and comments are encouraged.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that Monash Rural Health, Traralgon & Warragul are one of few clinical sites using TEL. These tests have been used at Traralgon for over a year and are enthusiastically endorsed by our students and Tutors.

Dr David Birks

Learning about Developmental Disabilities continued...

were outlined, and resources for further support were identified.

Nine tutors and four carers from Cooyinda Hill joined students and staff for lunch. Then it was down to work, with tutors and students interacting in small groups to practice their communication skills. The first task was to learn something about each other, and the second was to construct a medical history or for students to provide information to the tutor about a medical condition.

The focused teaching and learning experiences were very useful and students reported feeling better equipped to attempt to meet the needs of patients presenting with developmental disabilities. The tutors' feedback was that they too enjoyed the session and meeting and working with the students. They look forward to contributing to this aspect of the program again next year.

Dr Cathy Haigh



Margaret explains the patient's perspective in a clinical encounter to Year 4C students from across Gippsland



Shaun demonstrates his communication aid to Year 4C students.

Publications

Birks D & Campbell G (2015) Preparing surgeons for rural Australia: the RACS Rural Surgical Training Program, *ANZ Journal of Surgery*, 85 (7-8): 590-595

Risteovski E, Regan M, **Birks D**, Steers N, Byrne A, (2015) A qualitative study of rural women's views for the treatment of early breast cancer, *Health Expectations*, 18(6): 2928-2940

Birks D, Campbell, G., (2015). Preparing surgeons for rural Australia: the RACS rural surgical training program, *ANZ Journal of Surgery*, 85 (7-8): 590-595.

Khalil H, Leversha A, Walker J (2015) Evaluation of pharmacy students' rural placement program: preparation for interprofessional practice, *Australian Health Review*, 39(1): 85-88

Presentations

Birks D, Fankhauser J, **Haigh B**, Rajasingham K, **Haigh C** (2016) Testing the Effect in a PBL Curriculum, ANZAHPE-OTTAWA Joint Conference, Perth WA

Rasmussen B, Currey J, **Haigh B**, Story I, Dunning T, Crawford K, Hines C, Zoffmann V (2016) Developing an online guided self-determination program for young adults with diabetes: Methodological considerations, ANZAHPE-OTTAWA Joint Conference, Perth WA

Walker J & Tam J (2015) Growing and supporting senior clinical leaders for rural and regional academic medicine, AMEE Conference, Glasgow Scotland

Haigh C, Haigh B, Machado M (2015) How do students access their Anatomy knowledge during assessment? ANZAHPE/AMEA Conference, Newcastle NSW

Haigh C, Tam J, Haigh B (2015). Reflecting on patient encounters across hospital and community placements in paediatrics to direct progress towards competence. ANZAHPE/AMEA Conference, Newcastle NSW.

Harrop G, **Templeton T**, Quach T (2015) Travel Burden of Satellite Haemodialysis Patients in a Regional Centre, Australian and New Zealand of Nephrology, Canberra

Leversha A & Stewart K (2015). Factors influencing Monash University (Australia) pharmacy student's internship site. 8th Pharmacy Education Symposium, Italy, pp. 90-91

Rasmussen B, Currey J, **Haigh B**, Story I, Dunning T, Crawford K, Hines C, Zoffmann V. (2015). Developing an online guided self-determination program for young adults with diabetes: Methodological Considerations, *Australian Diabetes Society & Australian Diabetes Educators Association Annual Scientific Meeting Adelaide*.

Year 2 Rural Placement Program at Warragul and Traralgon

Twenty-three 2nd year medical students enrolled in the MBBS at Clayton recently had the opportunity to experience first-hand all the wonderful things that a rural clinical placement in Traralgon and Warragul can offer.

Students spent a fortnight in the region and participated in a variety of learning experiences that showcased our sites and the benefits of living and learning in a rural setting. Assessment tasks were designed to improve their understanding of rural health.

Highlights of the program included visits to the Hazelwood mine, Ellinbank Farm and Helimed facility at LRH, as well as clinical skills practice and time in local allied health clinics and general practices.

At Hazelwood mine, the students were able to see the process of open cut mining from the depths as their bus descended to the lowest point possible. This allowed students to appreciate the rigours of working in heavy industry typical of a rural setting. The visit was complemented by a talk from the OH&S officer and the security and first aid team who captivated the students by describing real scenarios involving confined space rescues, and health issues encountered by workers.

Ellinbank Farm staff generously spent time describing to the students not only the hardships of farming, particularly dairy farming in the current economic downturn, but also outlined research initiatives in this area to reduce the carbon footprint of this industry. Zoonotic diseases, their signs, symptoms, and management were also a focus of this visit.

Dr Doris Paton, an Aboriginal Elder of the local Gunai Kurnai people, provided insights into the connection between indigenous people and the land, and explained some cultural traditions and sensitivities that could impact on the health



Year 2 students at Ellinbank Farm.

professional – patient encounter. Doris also described strategies to facilitate best health outcomes for indigenous patients.

Tim Clark, pharmacist, from Amcal Traralgon, talked to the students about working as a health professional in a rural area, and how a multidisciplinary team operates both within and across hospital and community contexts to optimise patient care.

Helimed staff allowed students to inspect the helicopter and demonstrated the state-of-the-art equipment they use and management of patients in need of critical care. The circumstances under which they transport patients to and from Latrobe Regional Hospital and to tertiary hospitals was explained. The vital teamwork skills between the pilot, the paramedic and the crewperson were clearly evident.

Different learning opportunities were available at each site. Students at Traralgon were able to visit Centenary House and to appreciate how providing a home-base and allowing families to stay together while one member is attending the Cancer Care Centre can alleviate some of the burden of adhering to treatment protocols. Some students in Warragul were able to visit Men's Shed and to spend time with Troy Jennings, Aboriginal Liaison Officer, as part of their allied/complementary medicine placements.

The clinical skills day allowed the Year 2s to interact with third year students and practice hands on clinical skills such as plastering, wound management, laparoscopic skills and Basic Life Support.

Students spent time on the wards at Warragul Hospital and were also placed in local general practices. Besides observing their supervising GP, students had the opportunity to gather data from a consenting patient and present this information to their peers and two local GPs, Dr. Tony Richards and Dr. Anna Baldassa. The General Practitioners supported the students to develop their clinical reasoning regarding signs and symptoms of illness and disease, and the requirements for effective communication.

During the fortnight students were accommodated in cabins in caravan parks in Traralgon and Warragul. The latter is also a retirement village which gave the students the opportunity to compete against local senior citizens in a trivia night. (The students were trounced!)

Overall the students enjoyed their first taste of rural medicine and we hope some will chose to undertake their clinical placements at Monash Rural Health Traralgon & Warragul next year.

Cathy Haigh, Deborah Hewetson & Lane Johnson



Practicing Clinical Skills.



Experiencing the Helimed facility.