



# Monash Rural Health East & South Gippsland

## NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2017

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Our 2017 cohort of Year 3B and 4C students have now settled into their placements. One of our Bairnsdale 4C students was able to complete all of his Obstetric log-book requirements for clinical encounters for the academic year in the first two weeks of the Semester!

All students are off to a good start, including this year's larger group of 3B students in Sale, with four students on rotation to Bairnsdale each week for medicine and surgery placements. Our 5D student numbers are reduced compared to previous years, but we have already had a handful of students undertaking their six-week placements in Sale, Bairnsdale and Wonthaggi.

At the national level, much of the policy environment is now focussing on the "maldistribution" of the medical workforce. With about 3,700 graduates from medical schools in Australia each year, it is felt that we are producing enough doctors to meet the health needs of our population. However, we still don't have our graduates choosing rural practice in sufficient numbers to correct the inequity of access to medical services in rural areas.

We are funded under the Federal Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training Program (RHMTF), which is one of several rural health workforce programs funded by the Australian government. The focus on maldistribution of the workforce is also linked to greater expectations of outcomes and "value for money" for the Australian taxpayer from these programs. For this to happen, all the steps in the continuum of medical education need to be addressed. The legislation to enable the appointment of a National Rural Health Commissioner is now before parliament, and the first task of the Commissioner is to establish a National Rural Generalist Pathway, building on the success of the Queensland program and the smaller programs in some other states.

In addition, the Federal Government has just released a call for Applications to the Rural Junior Doctors Training Innovation Fund. The RJDTIF is designed to enable rural-based interns to gain experience in primary care settings, such as general practice, as an additional elective placement to their mandatory core rotations. The Commonwealth will contribute to the cost of including primary care rotations within the larger rural training networks for junior doctors (interns), established within state and territory health systems.

Locally, this will build on the success of East Gippsland Community-based Intern program in Bairnsdale and Sale, and provides the opportunity for community-based placements to be re-incorporated into the Gippsland Regional Intern Training (GRIT) program in Traralgon, Warragul and Sale.

The various sections of the rural medical training "pipeline" are now being addressed. Regarding the maldistribution of the medical workforce, it is interesting to note that the AMA has recently announced policy statements that include lifting the targeted intake of medical students from a rural background from 25 per cent of all new enrolments to one third of all new enrolments, and lifting the proportion of medical students required to undertake at least one year of clinical training in a rural area from 25 per cent to one third.

The AMA acknowledges that "rolling out more training in rural and remote areas will also require increased Government funding for supervision, mentoring, infrastructure, and adequate and appropriate clinical experiences".

There is good evidence that year-long longitudinal integrated training programs such as the East/South Gippsland Year 4C program,

where students are placed in rural general practice and immersed in a rural community for the entire academic year, produce the ideal rural doctor. The evidence indicates that students undertaking such programs have greater clinical exposure as students (i.e. see more patients), are more patient-centred (vs physician-centred) when they graduate, and have a greater sense of the role of the doctor in the community, than students undertaking the traditional program of short rotations in a range of disciplines.

There was no better example of this than the sentiments expressed by last year's group of Bairnsdale 4C students at their "de-brief" breakfast at the end of the year. All of these students expressed their placement as a "transformational" experience, providing them with a deep understanding of the doctor-patient relationship, the role of the rural doctor in the community, and the importance of integrated team-based care as the essence of rural practice. In addition, they had the opportunity to observe and be part of the scope of practice of rural doctors involved in primary and secondary care.

**If the AMA's recommendations for rural training are enacted, the evidence suggests that an increase in student placements should be based on rural longitudinal integrated models of education, with adequate resourcing for practices, academics and supervisors to support this expansion. The addition of the Rural Junior Doctors Training Innovation Fund and a National Rural Generalist Pathway will strengthen the outcomes for health services to rural communities.**

As a traditional part of the East/South Gippsland 4C program, negotiations are already underway for this year's student exchange with

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# STUDENT NEWS

## YEAR 3B

On February 6 2017, Sale welcomed ten new Year 3B MBBS students. All students looked fresh and eager, possibly mixed with some nerves, to start the year. This year will be the first introduction to the clinical environment for many of the students and they are keen to get started. The year commenced with orientation to both Central Gippsland Health Service (CGHS) and Bairnsdale Regional Health Service (BRHS), along with clinical skills workshops, Problem Based Learning (PBL)'s and evidence based practice tutorials. So far the students have been making good use of the simulation facilities, practicing their clinical skills in preparation for opportunities that may present during their clinical time. During the year at Sale the students will take part in tutorials, ward rounds, workshops, simulation activities, days in the consulting suits, a GP practice day and social events, throughout their rotations at CGHS and BRHS. We are excited to have the students here for their 3B year and hope that they have an educational and fun year.



Year 3B students with Dr David Campbell and Casey Stubbs. L/R: Dr David Campbell (Director MRH East & South Gippsland), Casey Stubbs (Academic Coordinator), Pietra Dekker, Shakira Snell, Monique Bihari, Ellen Lavender, Georgia Carter, Joshua McAdams, Sashi Senarath, Casey O'Connor, Quinlan Vasey, Ari Mushin.



Susan Lee

## STUDENT PROFILE

My name is Susan, and I'm a fifth year student doing my surgical rotation at Leongatha Hospital. I was really nervous about starting this rotation – I'd taken two years off from medicine after fourth year, so I knew I'd be quite rusty. Fortunately, Leongatha has been such a wonderful place for me to get back into the swing of things. Everyone has been so welcoming and encouraging - staff are willing to teach, and patients are happy to give me a chance to learn. The amount of hands-on experience I've had in the three weeks I've been here has been phenomenal, from assisting in surgeries, or cannulating and suturing, to seeing patients in the GP clinic. To top it all off, there's the gorgeous Gippsland beaches and scenery to soak in at the end of the day. The only downside of this rotation has been my cooking – but I'm working on it!

## SOUTH GIPPSLAND'S PRIZE WINNING STUDENT



Jo Huang

2016 South Gippsland medical student Joanna (Jo) Huang topped the year in paediatrics winning the faculty paediatrics prize.

In the MBBS program students study four disciplines of General Practice, Women's Health, Medicine of the Mind and Paediatrics, and each faculty awards a prize to the top student of the year. Jo received the Paediatrics Faculty Prize having top marks in paediatrics across the whole Monash Year 4C cohort for 2016.

This year Jo is studying BMedSci in the haematology department at the Royal Children's Hospital, and has applied to be a volunteer with the Starlight Foundation supporting seriously ill children.

Congratulations Jo on receiving the 2016 Paediatrics Faculty Prize for 2016!

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT – CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE...

the University of Otago Rural Medical Immersion Program (RMIP), where two of our students are selected to spend a fortnight in two of the New Zealand rural practices involved in the RMIP, whilst two of the New Zealand students are placed in East/South Gippsland practices and local hospitals.

In closing, I would remind everybody about the three consecutive "World of Rural Health" events occurring after Anzac Day in Cairns, commencing with the 14<sup>th</sup> Australian National Rural Health Conference, followed by the World Summit of Rural Generalist Medicine on April 28<sup>th</sup>, and the 14<sup>th</sup> WONCA World Rural Health

Conference from April 29<sup>th</sup> to May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Monash Rural Health East/South Gippsland will feature prominently at these events, with four Abstracts accepted for Paper presentations. Registrations for these events are filling fast, so get in early!

**David Campbell**  
Director, Monash Rural Health East & South Gippsland

## YEAR 4C SOUTH GIPPSLAND

After a terrific farewell dinner for our 2016 Year 4C students, with lots of laughter (and a few tears) I'm glad to report that all the students did very well in their end of year exams and have now commenced final year.

We have welcomed nine Year 4C students in 2017, and kicked off the year with a lovely dinner at the Leongatha education site.

Tutors, GP's and clinic staff from across the region joined the students for an evening of food, fun and an inspirational talk from Professor Marlene Drysdale. As a Wiradjuri woman who has worked tirelessly in Indigenous education, recruitment and retention, Marlene's career has been devoted to working for her people. She took the audience on her journey from growing up on the river bank in Echuca, to her roles with both Government and Universities. She also talked



Year 4C South Gippsland students L/R: Nathan Hanegbi, Muirin Healy, Gaby Bolton, Stephanie McKelvie, Matilda Maynard, Vikram Rao, Dan Archer, Katharine Huang, Hayden Jones.

passionately about current issues facing Indigenous Australians.

A bonus for this year's students has been the establishment of the new simulation training facility, adjacent to the teaching site at Leongatha, a joint project with Gippsland Southern Health Service (GSHS). Not only do the medical students use the facility but also, hospital medical staff, nurses, and local General Practice staff. This has



Wonderful entertainment at the farewell dinner was provided by Year 4C students Max Ubels on saxophone and Megan Tepper on keyboard.

been an exciting development for the whole area, and has led to new relationships being forged throughout the healthcare sector in the region.

Monash Rural Health South Gippsland are fortunate to have another group of excellent students, and we are all looking forward to both the challenges and learning experiences they will encounter as part of rural practice this year.

## YEAR 4C SALE

Welcome to the Year 4C students in Sale!

Sale has seven students this year who have quickly settled into Sale and surrounding communities which has also been made easier with three students returning to the program from Year 3B last year. Running a longitudinal program, the students are busy finding their feet and appear to be already relishing in the diverse clinical rotations involved as apart of the Year 4C program. The students are posted to Heyfield Medical Centre, Maffra Medical Group, Clocktower Medical Centre and Sale Medical Centre over the entire year.



Year 4C Sale students: L/R Front row: Sarah Yao, Amanda Yong, Jenny Wang. Back row: Hoong Yong, James Davey, Mia Cooper, Max Whitchurch.

The students have the opportunity to mix with the Year 4C students in Bairnsdale as they are having several study days together throughout the year. In March the students came together with other Year 4C students of the region for a Disability Forum held in Traralgon. We are very fortunate to have such a well-supported clinical program from Central Gippsland Health Service as well as Latrobe Community Mental Health (based in Sale) and Flynn ward based at Latrobe Regional Hospital in order to fill the student's curricula requirements.

We are very happy to have this wonderful group of students in Sale this year and we are excited for all of the opportunities that await them!

## YEAR 4C BAIRNSDALE

Armed with their "tool box" of introductory tutorials and learned procedural skills undertaken during orientation week, the nine Year 4C medical students were ready to charge into the clinical arena. Now into their 4th week of semester one, the nine Year 4C medical students have integrated into their local General Practices and Health Services and are enjoying consulting



Year 4C Bairnsdale students practicing suturing in the Bairnsdale Skill Laboratory.

patients and getting to know their colleagues and community. This year the Bairnsdale students are attached to the General Practices (GPs) in Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance and Orbost, in addition to undertaking speciality clinical



L/R: Marnie Connolly (Senior Lecturer), Holly Fox, Nicholas Ensor, Amy Martin, Sebastian Wrobel, Zoe Vaughan, Ryan Taylor, Claudia Duke, Timothy Yeung, Cathy Jiang, Dr David Campbell (Director MRH East & South Gippsland)

experience at Bairnsdale Regional Health Service and Orbost Regional Health Service.

Reports from the students thus far have indicated that they have put their consulting and clinical skills to use, with lots of opportunity for "hands on" experience in both their GP clinics and local Health Services under the eye of supportive supervisors.

One highlight during the orientation period was sailing around the Gippsland Lakes on one of their clinical supervisor's boats, relaxing and enjoying the local waterways. The students are

engaging with the local community joining the local soccer, football and netball clubs in the region. Others have been busy on weekends going to the local markets, fishing and exploring the region in general.

Some of our students undertook a clinical placement in Bairnsdale during Year 2 and have returned to complete Year 4. All students are looking forward to the academic year ahead and we thank all the academic, clinical, professional staff and community members for their support with our Year 4C medical students.

# SIMULATION TRAINING



ACO's L/R: Ruby, Liz, Stephen McGovern (Paramedic Community Coordinator), Cindy, Brooke

In November 2016 Ambulance Community Officers (ACO's) from Omeo & Lochsport attended simulation training sessions at the Bairnsdale education centre with Paramedic Community Coordinator Mr Stephen McGovern.

The training involved immersive simulation scenarios for management of patients in the prehospital setting with cardiac, respiratory, neurological and trauma conditions. The collaborative training sessions has been an annual event for the Ambulance Community Officers in the rural sector, since 2013.

**Laurea Atkinson**

# NEW PARENTS ROOM

A parenting room is now available at the Bairnsdale site for parents wishing to feed or change young children. The room which is always unlocked is located opposite the Simulation Laboratory control room.

The room is equipped with lounge, change table, fridge, play mat and toys and is available to staff, students and visitors.



Our new comfortable Parents Room.

# NURSING AND ALLIED HEALTH RESEARCH PROJECT

The Scope of practice of Nursing and Allied Health (NAH) practitioners in the East Gippsland research project, investigated the perceptions and experience of established nursing and allied health practitioners in East Gippsland. This was a pilot study designed to gather data from experienced nurses and allied health practitioners on the expanded scope of practice, identification of learning needs, and experiences in gaining expanded knowledge and skills in meeting the health needs of their community. Nurses and allied health professionals from the East Gippsland area were invited to complete an anonymous online questionnaire. There were 44 responses to the survey, of which 33 were considered to be complete. Data was analysed using content analysis and a variety of statistical analysis tests. Results showed the majority of respondents had experienced barriers to continued professional development, and most reported that additional (post-graduate) education and training had increased their confidence in dealing with difficult situations. Furthermore respondents outlined a range of strategies they employed to deal with difficult clinical situations. The results of this study have built on our understanding of the scope of practice of rural generalist nursing and allied health practitioners, and provide further evidence regarding the importance of supporting their professional development and training needs. A number of recommendations were made from the results of this study which will assist in the planning of rural nursing and allied health education programs, and on-going professional development support for established rural practitioners.

**Kate Mallia**  
NAH Project Officer

# IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2017

SEMESTER DATES		
<b>Year 2</b>	Semester 1	April 24 – May 5
	Semester 2	September 4 – 15
<b>Year 3B</b>	Semester 1	February 6 – June 9
	Semester 2	July 3 – November 3
<b>Year 4C</b>	Semester 1	January 30 – June 2
	Semester 2	June 26 – October 27
<b>Year 5D</b>	January 30 – November 3	

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