



East Gippsland Regional Clinical School

Newsletter – Summer 2010

Director's Report

At the time of printing of this Newsletter, many of you will be in the middle of your Christmas break, catching up with family and friends and deciding which wrapping paper is worth saving for next year.

This is also an opportune time for reflection on the past year, and by all measures, 2010 was a very successful year for the East Gippsland Regional Clinical School.

This was the sixth year of the community – based Year 4/C program in Bairnsdale, the first year of the program's expansion into the Sale cluster, and the sixth year of the Year 3/B in Sale. The building program involving the extension of our campus in Sale has now been completed, with re-siting of the library, extra tutorial space and a purpose-built clinical skills/simulation laboratory.

I would like to thank all those involved in establishing the Year 4/C program in Sale, Maffra and Heyfield this year. The level of commitment from doctors, practice nurses, practice managers and reception staff from each practice has been mightily impressive, and the 'cluster' has quickly developed a strong collegiate culture which is self-supporting and forms a sound basis for the continuation of the program.

We welcome the Yarram practice to this cluster for 2011. Unfortunately Dr Iain Nicolson and his practice have withdrawn from the program, which is a huge loss in expertise. Thankfully Iain has agreed to remain available to teach into the program, and the availability of his immense experience and unique and entertaining approach to clinical teaching will continue.

In the Bairnsdale cluster, we are pleased to include the practice at Omeo in our program,

as well as a formal student placement with GEGAC, the Aboriginal Medical Service in Bairnsdale. We welcome doctors and staff from both these sites to the program.

Plans are well underway for the extensions to the School building in Bairnsdale, and the final design has been approved by the Board of the hospital. This will include extra tutorial rooms, meeting rooms, academic offices, as well as space for the East Gippsland School for Aboriginal Health Professionals. This is a local community-driven project to improve information and preparation for Aboriginal secondary-school students to apply for tertiary health-related courses. We are hoping to have funding for a project officer to commence this work in 2011.

The extensions to the Bairnsdale School building will also provide capacity for local delivery of the School of Nursing program, under the auspices of Monash Gippsland. A small number of second-year students will undertake the program at EGRCS in Bairnsdale in 2011, as a pilot in anticipation of significant expansion in numbers and into other years of nursing training in subsequent years. This is aimed to enable local residents to undertake nursing training without having to move to Churchill to complete the program.

I would also like to extend a welcome from EGRCS to Professor Judi Walker, who has taken up the appointment as Head of School of the School of Rural Health, as of November 2010. Judi comes with extensive experience in rural health education and research, having been Head of School of the University of Tasmania Rural Clinical School since its inception. We look forward to working

closely with Judi to consolidate our existing programs and build on the strong foundations established across the School in recent years. Judi comes to the School at a time of considerable opportunity with the expansion of undergraduate, pre-vocational and post-graduate training in medicine, nursing and other disciplines; this is also a time for meeting and responding to the challenges and expectations associated with this growth, to ensure that the increased numbers of graduates are directed to areas of greatest workforce need in rural Australia. It is pleasing to see increasing numbers of our past graduates now coming back to hospitals and practices in the region to further their medical training.

I would like to close by extending thanks to all those involved in the programs conducted by the EGRCS; academic staff, tutors, clinical supervisors, administration staff, practice staff, hospital educators and supervisors, hospital managers, individual clinicians; community advisory group members, shire councillors, local parliamentarians, service clubs etc, who have all contributed to the success of our programs and support for our students throughout the year. Congratulations to you all and thanks for your continued support.

David Campbell
Director
EGRCS



Year 4/C Farewell in Bairnsdale.

Manager's Report

On reflection 2010 was another busy and successful year thanks to the hard work and dedication of all the staff at EGRCS. A snapshot of the year's achievements is as follows:

Student Placements

Year 1 and 2

110 students in the Sale and Bairnsdale region for short term rural placements

Year 3/B

Eight full time students based at the Sale campus and the Central Gippsland Health Service.

Year 4/C

17 full time students based in Heyfield, Maffra, Sale, Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance and Orbost

Year 5/D

(six week rotations) nine students in Bairnsdale, 14 students in Sale.

Infrastructure

Sale campus – In collaboration with the Central Gippsland Health Service, the \$1.4 million expansion to the Clinical School, CGHS Medical Library and Learning Services, was completed in April 2010.

Bairnsdale campus – In collaboration with the Bairnsdale Regional Health Service, a \$1.5 million expansion to the Clinical School will commence in 2011.

Grants

Rural Education Infrastructure Development Grants – four Medical Practices in the Sale cluster received \$75,000 for infrastructure development to support medical student training.

Scholarships

The East Gippsland Education Trust in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Sale, the East Gippsland Shire and the Wellington Shire, will offer start up scholarships (\$1000) for local students who will commence the Monash University Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery in 2011.

New Programs/Placements

Sale

The Year 4/C program commenced in Sale with eight students placed at the Clocktower Medical Centre, Maffra Medical Group, Desailly Medical Centre and the Heyfield Medical Centre.

Nursing

In collaboration with the Monash University School of Nursing, the nursing degree will be delivered at the clinical school next year. 2011 will be the 'pilot' year, with six students undertaking course work and tutorials locally, this number increasing steadily over subsequent years. One of the prime objectives of this collaboration is to facilitate seamless transition from the East Gippsland TAFE Division 11 Nursing program to the Monash University Nursing Degree. The opportunity for local students to advance to tertiary education via this process will maximise local student enrolments.

Year 5 Aged Care Rotations

In 2011, Dr Peter Stevens, (Heyfield Medical Centre) will deliver Year 5 Aged Care rotations for eight students.

New Practices join the Year 4/C program in 2011

In 2011, the Omeo Medical Practice and the East Gippsland and Gippsland Aboriginal Medical Service (GEGAC) will join the Year 4/C program.

Jenny Donnelly

Year 1 and 2 Rural Health Placements

This year Bairnsdale campus accommodated 56 Year 1 and 2 students from Clayton in their one and two week rural health placements.

The students gained an insight into the diversity of people's lives and work in Bairnsdale and surrounding areas, which will help to develop a greater awareness of rural health, practice and communities.

As in past years the students were exposed to a wide variety of clinical and non clinical experiences. These experiences included hospital, district nurse and GP placements, farm and industry visits, first aid training and guest speakers who covered a variety of topics from disability services, indigenous health, zoonotic diseases, complementary therapies and clinical skill development.

Student evaluations indicate that the Year 1 and 2 programs are successful and enjoyable and feedback includes comments such as;

'Overall, I feel like I have learnt so much, some things I could not have learnt any other way. I definitely found the interaction amazing...' and 'Completely changed my idea of rural medicine – would love to work in a rural area one day'.

Research suggests that students who have a 'positive rural experience during their training are more likely to choose a career in rural medicine' and these student comments indicate such an experience.

We look forward to an equally successful program in 2011.

Deborah Hewetson

Year 3B Education Report – Sale

Second semester has flown by with the students having just completed final exams.

A highlight of the semester was when the Yr 3/B students joined up with medical students from Queenstown University in New Zealand via a video link to participate in a session run from the mobile surgical bus that travels through rural New Zealand.

The students have also assisted on several occasions at the Sale Secondary College. They participated in a Year 10 health day where they gave presentations to the students on diet, smoking, and alcohol. Another morning was also spent discussing the UMAT exam for entry into undergraduate medicine with year 12 students from Sale Secondary College, Sale Catholic College and Maffra Secondary College. Another student assisted with a discussion on the interview process for Monash University.

Several students also gave a talk to the local U3A group in Sale. This was enthusiastically received and both the community members and the students found it a very enjoyable occasion.

Sale has also hosted another group of second year medical students and a group of twenty one first year medical students participating in their first rural placement.

We have also placed fourteen final year students throughout the year, doing rotations in surgery, medicine, emergency medicine and radiology.

Jennie Casey

Year 4C Education Report

This year 17 students have completed Year 4C in the Sale and Bairnsdale campuses and have had a very busy semester leading up to their exams. During semester 2, the students had one university day a week allowing them more time in the clinical environment and concentrate on preparation for exams and OSCE's.

Year 4C is a demanding year with students having to fulfil curriculum requirements and all students have pulled through in good spirits.

Both the Sale and Bairnsdale cohorts have enjoyed a year of activities together and have managed to utilise the new Simulation Suite in Sale as an additional learning environment.

The Year 4C curriculum has been delivered in Sale for the first time in 2010 and the students in Sale have taken the opportunity to establish professional relationships with all the nursing and medical teams in and around Sale, becoming valuable members of both the medical and Sale community.

We hope to see our 2010 students return to the area during their further studies and look forward to welcoming the 2011 student cohort to both Bairnsdale and Sale.

Loy Perryman and Marnie Connolly



Year 4/C farewell in Sale.

Important Dates for 2011

Placement Dates

Year 1	8 August – 12 August
Year 2	2 May – 13 May
	5 September –
	16 September

Semester Dates

Year B	Semester 1
	31 January – 3 June
	Semester 2
	27 June – 28 October
Year C	Semester 1
	7 February – 10 June
	Semester 2
	4 July – 4 November

Examination Period

7 – 24 November TBC

Student Corner

The following is an update of our east Timorese adventures so far!

Tim and I arrived early September to do our elective placement at Bairo Pite Clinic in Dili, in East Timor. The clinic has about 20-30 inpatient beds, (including maternity and a brilliant TB program) and in addition to assisting in the Bairo Pite Clinic, we were involved in running mobile clinics in rural villages.

Mobile clinics involved piling into an 'ambulance', mostly donated from Portugal and Kuwait, with a translator, perhaps a nurse and a box of meds/wound management equipment/sputum cups and rapid malaria tests, then driving 1-3 hours along Timorese roads to a village to see whoever turns up for the day.....then if anyone is critically ill we had to convince them to come back with us to Dili. These clinics are a lot of fun as the translators are young Timorese people wanting to learn more about medicine and improve their English, and the drivers have a great sense of humour.

Patients have the full range of problems to deal with, from malaria and TB, through to lots of psychosomatic illnesses/ headaches. I have

also had the privilege of treating women and children when they see a female 'doctor' has turned up in the village.

A highlight of the placement included getting to know all the long term patients including a seven year old boy with an infected heart valve and a 30 year old woman with congenital rubella who is deaf and intellectually disabled, and, following a successful cataract operation is no longer blind.

Our 'guest house' in Dili was another highlight. We medical students lived with an eccentric elderly east Timorese couple who didn't speak any English and loved fussing over us. 'Signo' and 'Signora' had a wonderful sense of humour and as we learnt more Tetun we were able to share lots of laughs with them.

We also really enjoyed the company of the other students who have been through the clinic. All were easy to get along with and quite like minded. We had fun on Sunday afternoons (our weekend) going to the beach, playing basketball with Dr Dan and some of the clinic staff.

Some of the more challenging things for us were Dr Dan's approach to management which was quite utilitarian and paternalistic. Antibiotics are given out haphazardly/frugally (especially the expensive ones) and patients who presented with vague symptoms were often put on the TB program without being told.

Palliative care was also a challenging aspect of our placement with the approach of the doctor quite different to what we have previously experienced, management of patients focused on cure rather than accepting that a patient may have an incurable condition and require supportive care.

Our final highlight before leaving Dili, was a trip to Oecussi with one of the staff from the clinic who lives there. Oecussi is a part of east Timor located within Indonesian west Timor. Everyone gets there by overnight ferry which goes twice a week and we ended up staying for four days with Ameu (our friend) and his family. We spent lots of time sitting outside talking with his friends, swam at the beach, walked through the very small town and hired a minivan and had a picnic at the Indonesian border.

Our placement was a wonderful experience.

Tim Wittick and Penny Brussen



Penny Brussen in East Timor

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