# 2017 Summer Vacation Scholarship Program (Final Report)

In the second year of my Bachelor of Public Health Science degree, I was very privileged to have been a student scholar in the 2017 Summer Vacation Scholarship Program. I applied for the SPHPM Summer Vacation Program, as an opportunity to be able to utilise the skills that I have currently gained in my undergraduate degree in the field of clinical research, as well as develop more research skills and experience which I hope to then apply for further studies, particularly, honours. I was also curious to know what it is like to do research in applied clinical and public health issues, because it is the career pathway that I would like to pursue in the future.

During the four weeks of the program, I was very fortunate to work with and under the supervision of A/Professor Sue Evans and the research team in Prostate Cancer Registry. Although it was quite daunting, I was able to improve my communication and networking skills by engaging with other researchers, students and staff. Thanks to the amazingly supportive Prostate Cancer Registry team. In terms of the research project, I had been working on a systematic review, examining what evidence is there comparing between the diagnostic accuracy of transperineal (TP) prostate biopsy and transrectal ultrasound guided (TRUS) biopsy, in the diagnosis of clinically significant prostate cancer. From the beginning, A/Professor Sue Evans was very welcoming and always helped me to strive upwards with the project.

I really appreciate the learning opportunity that I had been given throughout the program. Now, I feel that I have a gained a really good understanding of prostate cancer and the overall techniques used to diagnose men based on booklets, journal articles and pamphlets given by my supervisor and the team. Furthermore, it has been a pleasure talking to the team members in Prostate Cancer Registry about their other projects. More importantly, I really value speaking to Honours and PhD students since they gave more sound insight and advice for post graduate research studies and career opportunities.

Beyond my research project, I thoroughly enjoyed the variety of activities offered, for example, seminars and excursions as a means of meeting prominent researchers/professors working in a range of research areas. I think a memorable highlight I have of the program was being able to visit the William Buckland Radiotherapy Centre at the Alfred and discuss the use of radiation therapy as a treatment using radiation for cancer, as well as, being able to see and learn the technological advanced equipment used in the process. I also liked attending the SPHPM weekly seminars because they provided valuable and interesting information on research areas, specifically through the way in which studies were conducted and the results found. Nonetheless, I cannot forget the many memories and friendships I have made with my fellow summer vacation scholars.

I am extremely grateful for the experience and opportunity I had in expanding my understanding of research in public health. As a result of participating the summer vacation program, I have acquired a range of skills which are essential in research, particularly undertaking a comprehensive search strategy, learning how to use Endnote and writing a protocol for study registration. Overall, I benefitted from the program by working with a highly committed research team through which I was able to develop strong connections with my supervisor, colleagues and other researchers. Finally, the scholarship program helped to inspire and solidify my goal of pursuing a career in public health research.

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