



Volume 4 Issue 10 - July 2007

NT General Practice Education Ltd

PGPPP Darwin Style

*'The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. PGPPP Newsletter, June 2007.
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Northern Territory General Practice Education is the regional training provider in the Northern Territory. We pride ourselves on our success at verticle integration, with a variety of programs attracting medical students from various universities around Australia and our GP Training Program.

In the middle is our Prevocational General Practice Placements Program, which has been running in various forms for the past 6 years in the more rural and remote areas of the NT.

In 2005 we decided that general practice in the urban areas of Darwin were missing out on what was an extremely sought after placement by junior doctors from all over Australia. This was due to the high percentage of Indigenous patients seen in general practice and the diverse range of experiences they could gain from a placement in general practice in the NT. Currently around 8.6 % of the patients encounters seen in general practice in the Northern territory are Indigenous compared to 0.3-2.6% in other states and territories around Australia (BEACH data 1998-2003).

The program has taken a few years to get up and running for various reasons including

a shortage of junior doctors and general practitioners available to supervise.

This year we have been successful in placing our first two RMO's in practices at Humpty Doo and Darwin City, which was very exciting. NTGPE will also commence placing interns in July.

The road has been hard, but with perserverance and determination we have managed to get some dedicated supervisors and trainers on board and see the urban program being just as successful at the rural and remote placements.

Darwin is a multicultural city with a high population of Indigenous Australians, the experience gained throughout the junior doctors placement will be second to none, with ongoing support and training, extensive orientation prior to arriving in the clinic and an experiences team of trainers, supervisors, practice staff and program support staff to make sure that the time junior doctors spend with us will be one they remember for the rest of their medical careers.

For further information on placements in the NT contact Nicole Lamb on 08 8946 7079.



GPR program has the highest number of participants ever...

Dr Michael Wilson reflects on 2007 and the year ahead

NNTGPE has witnessed unprecedented growth in its programs during 2007. The GPR program has the highest number of participants in NTGPE history. A major contributing factor to this success is the number of junior doctors undertaking placements in the NT. 85% of the doctors who participated in the PVGPPP in 2006 have returned to the NT to undertake their GP training. A trend we hope to be able to repeat in 2008.

The GPR program has a new coordinator, Ms Suzanne Bergin. Suzanne heralds from Sydney but has spent several years working in Canada in various management and program coordination roles. On behalf of NTGPE I welcome Suzanne and wish her every success in her role as GPR program coordinator.

We are also working closely with RFDS, Anyinginyi Clinic, the Tenant Creek Town Council and Hospital with a view to encouraging advanced or subsequent registrars to undertake part of their training in the region in 2008. The Barkly region offers a broad range of medical practice and learning experiences, excellent GP supervision, and a supportive community. I encourage registrars to give serious consideration to this unique opportunity. Please direct enquiries to Ms Suzanne Bergin.

The PVGPPP rural and urban placement programs are continuing to grow in popularity with an unprecedented growth of 400% in the rural stream and 300% in the urban stream. Congratulations to Nicole Lamb and the team for their concerted effort in ensuring the ongoing success of the program.

The RUSC and John Flynn medical student placements programs have been well subscribed with 176 students being placed in 2007. NTGPE is currently collaborating with the NTCS, Flinders University to ensure that with the recent establishment of Rural Clinical School centres at Nhulunbuy, Katherine and Alice Springs that students placements are coordinated in a manner that places minimal impact on practices, hospitals, AMS's and GP supervisors whilst optimising available resources. Ongoing discussions continue with

the Department of Health and Community Services (NT) to develop a centrally coordinated approach to the placement of students in Government run clinics throughout the Territory. I am delighted to say that under the leadership of Dr Hung The Nguyen and with the support of Ms Nicole Lamb, NTGPE has conducted a program in the Top End for IMGs/OTDs to prepare them for AMC part two and/or Fellowship examinations. A second workshop is planned for Central Australia later in the year. The program has been popular with 12 overseas trained doctors participating in the first intake.



NTGPE Executive Director - Dr Michael Wilson

NTGPE is currently in the process of applying for accreditation as a provider of the FACRRM rural generalist pathway. NTGPE aims to offer the program in 2008. I would like to thank ACRRM staff for their ongoing support and guidance during this process. I would also like to thank Drs Penny Ramsay, Hung The Nguyen and Ms Nicole Lamb for their concerted effort in developing the submission. NTGPE is in the process of recruiting Medical Advisors for the FACRRM stream. If you are interested in applying for these positions please direct enquiries to Dr Hung The Nguyen Tel. 08 89467079.

(continued on next page)

Prime Minister Howard has recently implemented his national emergency response to child sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. Northern Territory General Practice Education (NTGPE) supports the Federal Government's response and believes it is timely and should assist with addressing longstanding Aboriginal health issues. The Federal Government's plans, however, can only be successfully implemented if they are adequately funded and resourced. An integral component of the success of the program is to ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach to the implementation of the plan, that acknowledges and utilizes the services already provided in the NT. Essential to the success of the program is the active engagement of all key stakeholders, including Aboriginal Territorians. Consequently, this will provide an opportunity to demonstrate proactive leadership and coordinated management of Aboriginal health issues.

A possible outcome of the Federal Government's initiative is a coordinated approach to health related issues such as child and alcohol abuse, and illicit drug use in Aboriginal communities. This however, should not be done at the expense of other vital health initiatives such as promoting good nutrition, prevention of life style diseases and mental health to name but a few. The Federal and Territory



Dr Irene Tjhung GP Registrar with patient at Mulga Bore

Governments and NGO sector, including Aboriginal leaders have the opportunity to lead a level of collaboration never before witnessed in the provision of Aboriginal health care service delivery and training in Australia.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all staff, key stakeholders, GP trainers and other health personnel for their ongoing support and commitment to GP education in the Northern Territory.

Dr Michael Wilson Executive Director

Junior Doctor Program experiences rapid growth

The junior doctor program is currently going through a rapid growth period with more applications being received than placements available. When the program commenced in 2005 we only placed 8 junior doctors in a 12 month period, this expanded to 12 in 2006, and to date for 2007 we have already sent 14 juniors out in general practice with another two terms still to go.

With the growth we have been successful in obtaining site specific funding for Central Australian Aboriginal Congress in Alice Springs. This will enable them to have a junior doctor all year round as part of their

allied health team.

Many of our remote

locations are also keen to go down this path and we hope to apply to the National Advisory Committee in the next few months for another couple of sites. We will also look at the possibility of some current funding being transferred to specific sites.

The program is heading down to Adelaide to promote the program not only to the hospitals in South Australia but also to the final year students at the upcoming AMSA conference. We will also travel over to Melbourne to promote the program to several hospitals that have expressed an interest in sending their junior doctors to the NT for a GP term in Indigenous Health.

This month has also seen NTGPE being successful in their application to the Medical Board to place interns for a GP term in General practice in an urban

setting. This is almost finalized and should see us placing interns in the very near future.

To be eligible to take junior doctors, clinics and practices must be an accredited training site with either ACRRM or the RACGP. Supervisors must also be accredited with the same governing body. NTGPE is happy to assist with this process.

Junior doctors are placed for 13 weeks and come with many incentives including supervision and clinic incentive payments, Medicare income, and trainer support.

If you would like to become involved in training our future GP's or would like more information on the PGPPP call Nicole Lamb on 89467079 or email nicole.lamb@ntgpe.org

Nicole Lamb - PGPPP Coordinator



Introducing our GP Training Coordinator

As some of you may be aware I recently took up the position of Program Coordinator for the GPR Program.

I won't bore you with the details but suffice to say, for the past 5 years I have been coordinating continuing education programs for a number of professions and have a real passion for it. Having recently made the move from Sydney to Darwin for my partners work, I wasn't certain if I would be able to continue working in this field so I feel very fortunate to have been offered this role with NTGPE.

I had an opportunity to meet some of you at the recent GPR workshop in June and have had a chance to speak to a few more of you over the phone. It has been great for me to hear about your experiences, both good and bad, so I can understand how your training takes place on a daily basis. Hopefully I will get a chance to catch up with all of you over the next couple of months and I certainly welcome any of you to call me anytime.



Suzanne Bergin - GP Training Coordinator

I would be hugely remiss if I didn't give a huge thank you to Loraine Dalwood-Mason who has been filling in as Program Coordinator while the position was vacant. Lots of you have told me what a wonderful job she did and I for one agree that she is an absolute God-send.

Thank you all for making me feel so welcome. I am really hoping that I can help support you through your training in the NT so it is a fulfilling, positive experience for Registrars and Trainers alike.

Lundbeck GP finishing school

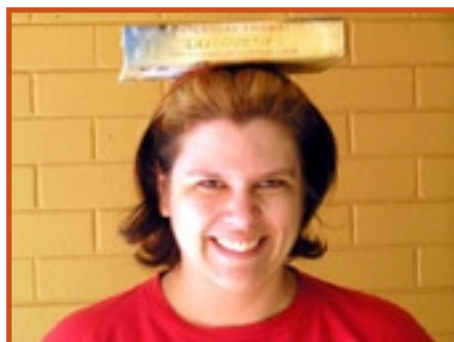
by Dr Jenny Presser (NTGPE Registrar currently doing a Palliative Care placement)

I admit the description "finishing school" made me think I might be balancing a book on my head while entertaining the company with my piano playing, and then a spot of watercolour painting and French conversation after lunch. Or was it about how to start running your own business and practice management skills, being involved in community leadership or becoming a teacher of medical students?

Late last year I attended the Lundbeck GP Finishing School in Wollongong. (Lundbeck are a pharmaceutical company with an educational institute – and no, we didn't get any plugs for drugs to prescribe during the weekend.) Those of you who attended Dr Hilton Koppe's sessions at the recent TEDGP conference will have some idea of what it WAS all about, which was: how to keep going and enjoying your work for the next 25 years.

There was a major focus on doctor's wellbeing, as well as on developing short term, intermediate and long term goals for your medical practice and life in general. How to treat doctors as patients, and the difficulties of cross-cultural communication and treating disadvantaged groups in society were also addressed in workshops.

We had the chance to do some writing and some play acting, and to mix with a pretty diverse and interesting crowd of other registrars and



Dr Jenny Presser does a balancing act

GPs (no book-balancing though). As the weekend progressed, people spoke up about personal revelations and aspirations in the supportive, creative atmosphere that had developed.

I remember the remarkable "sound" of the silence of 30 GP Registrars writing a postcard to thank someone for their helpfulness, or to ask someone for help. It wasn't the silence of 30 bored people, or 30 people thinking about what was for lunch, but the intense crystalline silence of 30 people really concentrating on an interesting challenge.

What did I take away from the weekend?

Know Yourself, Value Yourself and Enjoy Yourself!

It was a rare opportunity to get off the daily treadmill and to really have a think about what sort of doctor you would like to be, about things it might be time to let go of, about the risks of acting and the risks of doing nothing, and about how to identify people and resources that can support you.

Interns in general practice

Prof Ruffin from PGMCSA a Junior Dr from RDH together with Dr. Hung The Nguyen attended to four Darwin based general practice clinics wanting to gain accreditation as sites for intern rotations into general practice. The visit went well with valuable suggestions and positive comments from site visitors of the four suitable practices. The accreditors will make recommendations to the NT medical board so that these practices will be able to choose to accept interns who will experience first class teaching in general practice in Darwin.

Revamp orientation for Junior Doctors

With the advent of the growth of the PGPPP program, the introduction of interns rotation in general practice and recent national launch of the junior doctor curriculum, NTGPE has responded to tailor the orientation program enjoyed by JD of PGPPP in the past. The orientation will have increased involvement of relevant organisations servicing GPs including the divisions and Medicare Australia. The PBS, Medicare session will be expanded and the introductory session on patient management systems will start soon. Also a formative assessment using OSCE type scenarios will assess and feedback to JD their learning needs and strengths before and after GP placement. This valuable information will be forwarded to their GP supervisor at the time of placement.

Other initiatives will allow JD to monitor their

progress and inform the program the usefulness of the placement to the JD as well as whether the placement is meeting curriculum standards.

IMG Bridging Course completion and planning

The IMG bridging course has been a resounding success from the direct feedback and anonymous feedback evaluations. NTGPE wish to thank Judith Mirralles for contributing to the success of

practice and hospital context.

Selection 2008

GPR program is gearing up for a very busy period from July to September. One of the events is the annual selection process to gain our new quota of GPR. This year we will try to gain 20 GPRs. The coordinator and the DMCE have attended the train the trainer course on the east coast. Interviewers who have volunteered will be having



International Medical Graduates Workshop RDH

the first course. Dr. Hung The Nguyen co-facilitated the "Cultural Competence in the Australian Health System" day workshop with Judith. Plans are underway for a second course. It is possible that it will be held in Alice Springs later in 2007. Thank you to Nicole Lamb for assisting from the administrative side of things. As one IMG said "I can't believe you ran such a great course with only 2 people when normally I experienced 8 people running a course like this!" This course would not have been possible without assistance from Royal Darwin Hospital. The IMGs who participated (12 in total) were a great bunch and we wish them all the best in their career. Of this group half will apply for the FRACGP and half for the AMC part 2 exams in the near future. It is interesting to note that candidates rated the course highly in preparing them for their respective exams but also in guiding them in their current clinical practice in general

a briefing teleconference and receive a self-training package. The first round of interviews will occur in Alice Springs and Darwin in early August.

Conferences

The GPR conference was held at the Darwin Airport Resort in June and was well attended. Positive feedback was gained from all the sessions including Indigenous health training module 2; grief workshop, sexual health sessions, introducing RRMEO and taste of the RACGP exam. The GPR private session ended the conference where GPR had their say collectively to NTGPE. It was a candid discussion amongst colleagues.

The GPT conference was held in Alice Springs Oasis Resort. Again it was well attended by GPT particularly from rural and remote clinics. *(continued on next page)*



Debbie Kalgaldie and Geoff White prepare for their workshop in Alice Springs

Conferences (cont...)

A one day workshop delivered by Monash University Centre for Medical and Health Science Education (CMHSE) was "HOT" according to the evaluation. Thanks to Debbie Kalgaldie and Geoff White for taking the effort to understand the territory the week beforehand and the context in which we work. Their knowledge and understanding showed in their presentations. We look forward to other professional development with the CMHSE

team. These workshops were coordinated by Ameeta Patel and Nigel Gray with administrative support from Loraine Dalwood-Mason and Suzanne Bergin. Well done and keep going. The next half of the year will see a GPT conference in Darwin in August/September and a GPR conference in October/November. A GPR orientation workshop is planned for the 23rd and 24th of July.

Graduate Certificate Health Professional Education

As previously mentioned to attendees to the information sessions held in Darwin,

Alice Springs and opportunistically in rural and remote clinics, we are planning to survey the level of interest and plan to run the course in 2008. Therefore we will probably be taking applications from September/October given the level of interest already. For further information please contact the DMCE.

GPET convention, Gold Coast 15-16 August

There will be a number of cultural educators and medical educators attending the GPET convention. Congratulations to Ada

Parry who will present a session on "professional Development for Cultural Educators" at the Cultural Educator meeting and Hung The Nguyen who will be presenting with Judith Miralles a workshop titled "How to Teach Cultural Competence." There will be a number of interesting meetings and presentations this year and hope to see you there.

For further information please see the Convention website: <http://www.abcon.biz/gpet07.html>

*Dr Hung The Nguyen
Dir Medical & Cultural Education*

Womb to Tomb - GPR Conference June

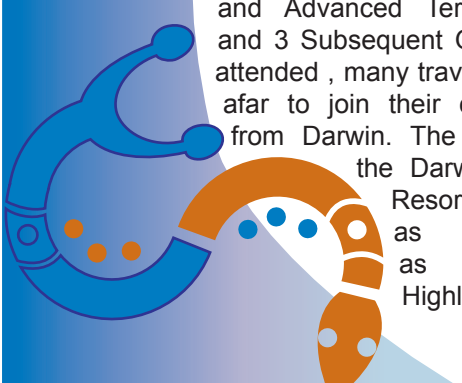
The 2007.1 conference *Womb to Tomb* held in Darwin in June was a very enjoyable and educative experience for all involved. There were 13 Basic and Advanced Term GPRs, and 3 Subsequent GPRs who attended, many travelling from afar to join their colleagues from Darwin. The venue at the Darwin Airport Resort proved as salubrious as ever. Highlights were

an afternoon in the company of 3 local, highly skilled GPs talking about gender health and sexual health - and the trade display organised by Loraine; the challenges of a mock viva exam and giving feedback (what hard markers you are); and a hands-on computer session with Bill Searle learning about the RRMEO learning platform. Christine Lesnikowski's workshop on Grief and Loss provided many valuable skills and insights for

life and for general practice (though we all worked very hard that morning!).

The conference dinner at the Trailer Boat Club was another fine opportunity to relax in a collegial manner. Special thanks to Loraine and Suzanne for their organisational skills; and stay tuned for the sequel "Moans and Bones" in November!

*Ameeta Patel
Medical Educator*



Kevin goes bush with medical students

As a General Practice training provider for Registrars training in the Northern Territory, NTGPE has a program which provides Cultural awareness/Culturally safety training. This program was set up in the mid 90's by the then Director Dr Sam Heard and Cultural Educator Ada Parry; they found that the Cultural awareness training in Aboriginal health played an important role

University started the Northern Territory Clinical School which NTGPE soon became involved with, and until today, still provide the Cultural awareness/



The 4wd convoy to Daly River



Students cast a line at the Daly River

in educating medical staff to think differently when consulting with Aboriginal patients. As part of the Cultural training exposure to a community was introduced, this was to cater for those Registrars who applied to do training in an urban and rural setting, and not remote. Soon the Northern Territory became a student paradise and students from many different Universities in Australia applied for placements, Flinders

cultural safety training.

With their training comes a camp to the Daly river over the two weekends in June. For many of the students it was their first life experience/exposure to the bush, with many of them coming from the big cities, they have never experienced the real bush life before, let alone sleep in a tent in the wilderness. It is an experience on it's own, but being from the south, their was some concern and the main concern was for hygiene (toilets and showers) this became first priority. We camped not too far away from the Tavern in a designated area marked out by the Traditional Owners, (camping on the River bed is not allowed anymore) they were happy with

that. The dinner at the Tavern took some time coming but when it finally came it was excellent, it was a choice of Barramundi which ran out, T bone steak and scotch fillet. After tea, some of the students decided to go fishing and spotlighting for crocodiles, while others stayed around the camp site unsure what to expect out there. On Saturday, we all went to Elizabeth downs station which is about 50 klm's from the camp site on the Port Keats road, for many of the students who have never been in a four wheel drive before on a dirt road, I can tell you it was an experience all right. We visited the old station that held a lot of old memories for old man Jimmy no2 and Agnes his partner for many years; they grew up and worked as stock hand and cleaners for the station. We then visited a large billabong not too far away from the old station; this is where they hunted for the long neck turtle, and collected magpie goose eggs. Old man Jimmy and Agnes have their own outstations a few hundred klm away from Elizabeth Downs station which they frequently visit when they are not busy dealing with the council at Daly River; they have both been strong supporters of this student program for many years and they enjoy sharing their stories, he has been a man of all trades from hunting and gathering to stockman, police tracker, peanut grower. (continued next page)

We then went to the old crossing and fished for barramundi and long neck turtle for dinner, one of the student caught his first ever barramundi. With the help from the stations manager, we were able to sample wallaby, barramundi, wild duck, dugong and salt water turtle meat with damper and billy tea for dinner, then we headed back for camp and got ready for the Merrepen Arts concert which featured Shelly Morris, the Roper river band and UB2 from the Tiwi Island

On Sunday we attended the Merrepen Arts Festival at Daly River, and although there were not many art work exhibited as before, the art work as usual was fantastic. The feedback from the students was positive; some were even keen to return there to do some more camping,

Kevin Parriman
Cultural Educator

Medical students are making a difference

In 2006 179 medical students were placed in 32 locations throughout the Northern Territory. The majority of students were located in rural and remote aboriginal communities attached to Department of Health and Community Services clinics, regional hospitals and Aboriginal Medical Services. While preference is given to students from Australian universities, last year we received 36 applications from students studying overseas.

The greatest representation of students come from Sydney University followed by Monash and Melbourne University

We are also responsible for the management and coordination of medical students that have been awarded a NT John Flynn Scholarship along with Flinders University's NT Clinical School Students.

NT General Practice Education has a long-term relationship with NT Clinical School and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM). We provide Medical and Cultural orientation services to their students and manage all aspects surrounding a student placement including logistics, travel and accommodation and all negotiations with the community. NT Clinical School students enjoy a special cultural experience in addition to their normal orientation through their participation in Cultural camps at Daly River accompanied by our Cultural Educator Kevin Parriman.

(See article above and on previous page)

NTGPE is the regional training provider for postgraduate education programs in the Northern Territory and operates the Junior Doctor Program and GP Registrar program offering short term and long-term training placements in communities and centres throughout the NT. It can now be effectively demonstrated that an experience as an undergraduate medical student in the Northern Territory translates into the students returning following graduation. 30 percent of all GP Registrars training in the Northern Territory have had a prior experience as a medical student in the NT.

This work is a key contributor to the NT medical workforce and NTGPE will continue to work collaboratively and strategically with ACRRM and the NT Clinical School to increase the numbers of students that return to the NT as Junior Doctors and GP Registrars.

Margaret Vigants
Medical Student Coordinator

Introducing our new logo

NT General Practice Education is proud to present our new logo and corporate image, designed by Darwin based design house Sprout Creative. The colours of the Northern Territory are captured and represented in this redesign and our new logo reflects innovation and vision to enhance our image and incorporate elements of General Medical Education and Indigenous Culture.

branding all corporate images with our new logo. We are currently updating our website to reflect the changes we have made to our logo and corporate image and will soon be announcing the anticipated launch date of our new website.

As part of our revamped website NTGPE is proud to announce that we will be using Rural Remote Education Online (RRMEO) developed by the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) as our new online learning portal for medical education.

From July 2nd NT General Practice Education will be re-

**NORTHERN
TERRITORY**

General Practice Education



Trainers

GP Training Liasion Office Update

tracks

So how good was the last GP Trainers' Conference ?
Be honest !
You weren't there ?
Why not !!

Far be it for me to provide an evaluation of course, but from what I hear it was pretty good !

So, we need suggestions for the next one. Burning issues, vibrant new sessions, "please don't ever do that again", whatever – all will be gratefully received and considered. Dates are August 31 & September 1, to coincide with the

11th Annual Chronic Diseases Network Conference 2007

"LEARNING FOR LIVING"
Chronic Disease Education for
COMMUNITIES
CLIENTS, CONSUMERS AND
FAMILIES
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

30 – 31st August 2007
Holiday Inn Esplanade Darwin

Possible options are for delegates to our Conference to attend all or part of day 2 of the CDN Conference or for NTGPE to run a day of concurrent sessions that day before we all convene on September 1
Any thoughts ?

Planning is now reaching its sharp end so this will be discussed and a decision reached at the GP Trainers' teleconference on August 1

GPT Teleconference

Ah yes, the **teleconference** – it's been a while ! We have been busy ! As I say, looking forward to speaking with many of you on :

Wednesday August 1st 2007
12.30 – 13.15pm (CST)
Dial in 1800 333 803

Fax back forms are also on their way I understand. As well as the Conference we shall talk about the difficulties we sometimes have in accommodating the variety of Learner groups (GPRs, Junior Doctors, Medical Students, IMGs) into both our busy schedules and our overcrowded buildings !
Any solutions ?

Not unrelated of course is the size of our group, the number of GP Trainers of all denominations out there
You don't need me to tell any of you,

WE NEED MORE OF US !

Any suggestions, any contacts, any interest ? And I'm not just thinking of new Locations; additional Trainers at existing practices and clinics will be equally valuable – you know, those colleagues who sit back and admire your input and skills without recognising their own potential !
Go for it – hit 'em up, bring out the best in them. It's not an exclusive or secular group this Trainer Network – the more of us the better ! The students are coming, a helluva lot of 'em !!

"But we can't teach" I hear you tell me they'll say...

Well – let's encourage them to join us by dabbling in a little postgraduate education study; I'm serious.

NTGPE has been proactive of late in attracting interest from both Monash and Flinders Universities in delivering modules from their individual Graduate Certificate courses to us. The preferred model of delivery – as a free standing entity, within Trainer Conferences, at regional locations, other - remains up for grabs. The Unis are certainly keen and I would recommend any involvement, however small, as a great way to boost

your confidence, and of course that of future colleagues, in teaching and education.

Everyone is aware of the NT's pressing workforce shortages - encouraging our successors here and providing them with **THE** best possible experience has to be **THE** best way of solving it !

Adminstration matters

Paperwork to finish with – we always leave it to last don't we ? And so we should !!

A big thanks to all those who've returned GP Trainers' surveys. The response has been fantastic, and I **WILL** get round to collating and calling. Promise !

End of term feedback forms should be landing soon – how good has your GPR been? NTGPE needs to know of any in difficulty or if any of you may have concerns. And PBT records ?
"PBT records ?" you say.
(continued next page)



Drs Ammeta Patel and Hugh Heggie

(Trainers Tracks cont...)
 Your GPRs should be sliding these under your door or preferably your nose for completion – just a signature on these, that's all. To confirm Practice based Teaching sessions have occurred and the topic covered. To accompany your invoices for Teaching Allowance. Particularly important for all sorts of reasons – not the least of which is that NTGPE is currently holding a significant amount of unused Allowance which the ATO is becoming increasingly interested in ! Please claim, please teach – has to be in everyone's interest ! Happy holidays for those lucky enough, including yours truly ! Speak in August



Dr Nigel Gray TLO and Trainers at the Alice Springs Workshop - take a break

Nigel Gray
 GP Trainer Liaison Officer

A Humpty Doo Experience

by Dr Deborah Heng 2nd year Junior Doctor

Quite some time has passed since my brief Pre-vocational GP placement, and I am still amazed at the contrast between life as a (temporary) GP-in-training in a mid-sized rural/outer suburban GP clinic, and life as a resident in a large metropolitan hospital. I had it good for the two months of my placement at Fred's Pass Medical Centre in Humpty Doo!

There were of course difficulties, such as Medicare and scheduled fees – which I never quite cottoned on to – and discovering how to use Medical Director.

Then there was the initial shock of realising that when patients ask you a question they are expecting you to know the answer because you are 'the doctor'. This small problem was sometimes

able to be circumnavigated by a little re-education of the patient; admitting that despite being fully qualified on paper, I didn't know the answer to their question.

However, while these difficulties caused me some stress in the first few weeks, they also forced



me to realise that I was now (and had been for just over a year) 'a doctor'. And whilst it certainly wasn't comprehensive, I did have a small amount of knowledge and also some skills thanks to my 6 years of study, and these were for the first time in my career in demand!

Luckily at Fred's Pass there was always support available from more senior colleagues and supervisors, to supplement my lack of experience. Besides, the initial stress was more than compensated by the development of relationships which I found I had formed by the end of my stay, both with a few patients who I saw several times during my stay, as well as with the wonderful medical and non-medical staff at the clinic. This, together with the knowledge that I was leaving a newly-purchased espresso machine to return to International Roast, made my last day at Fred's Pass Medical Centre even more difficult than my first.

What I entered into as a rotation to pass the time, I now look back on as an invaluable addition to my training as a junior doctor and a really rewarding two months.

What's on July - Sept

When	What	Where
July 23-24th	NTGPE GPR Orientation 2007.2	Darwin
August 12th	RACGP Pre-exam workshop	TEDGP - Darwin
August 13th	GPET Academic Posts Round 2 applications open	National
	GPET Aboriginal CE/CM Workshop	Gold Coast
	GPET Aboriginal Educator Workshop	Gold Coast
August 15-16th	GPET Convention	Gold Coast
August 17th	GPET RLO and SLO Workshop	Gold Coast
August 30 - 31st	11th Annual Chronic Disease network Conference	Holiday Inn Darwin
August 31 - Sept 1st	NTGPE GP Trainers Workshop	Darwin
Sept 3rd	GPET RSRF Grant Round 2 applications open	National
Sept 14th	GPET Academic Post Round 2 applications close	National
Sept 15th	RACGP Fellowship Exam 2007 2- written component	SA/NT

For QA and CPD events please check the RACGP website

For more information please contact ntgpe, email admin@ntgpe.org or phone 08 8946 7077

News and Updates

Introducing new staff and news

Dear Colleagues,

on behalf of Kakadu Health Service I would like to pay public tribute to 2 GP Registrars; Dr Jessica Kneebone and Dr Sara Renwick-Lau. Jessica finished a year of service to Gunbalanya community in March 2007 and Sara soon leaves Jabiru/Kakaduregion this week. Jessica and Sara have been exemplary registrars providing both clinical and non clinical services to the Indigenous and Non-indigenous peoples of our region, often in difficult and trying circumstances including floods, cyclones and the tragedies that are too commonplace in indigenous communities. Their passion and commitment particularly to improving indigenous health has been inspiring .

I would also like to acknowledge the excellent work and support of Dr Tom

Clements , Jessicas partner, for the Gunbalanya community. Also a tribute to Marcus and Matilda, Saras' family who have shown great support and flexibility to allow Sara to work successfully for KHS.

*Dr Dana Fitzsimonns
Kakadu Health Service*

Here at NTGPE we have seen several staff changes over the last few months. The Finance team saw Hamdi Balci and Natalie Maher leave and welcomed Terry Erickson and Sandra Wortlehock. We would like to thank Hamdi and Natalie for their contributions to NTGPE and welcome Terry and Sandra to NTGPE. Terry is employed as our part-time Accountant and Sandra takes on the role of Financial Assistant.

As mentioned throughout this issue we recently hosted our first GPR conference. Loraine Dalwood-Mason braved the cold and jumped on her Harley Super Glyde to travel to Darwin for the workshop. She tells us it was freezing on the ride but a fantastic trip all the same.

As we go to print a team of NTGPE staff are in Adelaide at the Australian Medical Student Association National Convention. The convention is the largest medical student conference in the Southern Hemisphere, and brings together 1000 students from each of Australia's 17 medical schools to network and participate in a rousing week of activities. NTGPE is a major partner in this years event and aims to attract medical students to our program.

As mentioned we are currently in the process of updating our website. We aim to present a new website that is informative, modern, useful and one that reflects the unique training that NTGPE offers. The launch date is yet to be announced, but 'watch this space' for a launch date soon.

If you require any assistance with your training or just want a chat then do not hesitate in contacting our friendly and helpful staff.

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