The year in review

It has been nearly 12 months since GP Synergy commenced as the regional training organisation for the Australian General Practice Training program in ACT and NSW.

As I reflect on the year, the first thing that comes to mind is the dedication and commitment displayed by our supervisors, practice staff, registrars and GP Synergy staff. I have been constantly impressed by the resilience, ongoing support and genuine enthusiasm shown during a year of change, achievement and challenge.

A very heartfelt congratulations go to the over 280 registrars who have successfully fellowed during 2016, and I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge everyone for your contribution to these registrars’ fellowship success.

Regional offices and who to contact for support/advice

As we move forward into 2017, we do so with strong regional teams located throughout our ten regional offices in Armidale, Ballina, Canberra, Chippendale, Dubbo, Liverpool, Moree, Newcastle, Wagga Wagga, and Wollongong. The number of staff has grown considerably over the last 12 months, from 40 in December 2015 to over 200 staff at the time of writing.

Within each of our seven subregions (eight including the split Hunter, Manning and Central Coast / New England Northwest regions) we have dedicated support staff for registrars. Please contact your local education coordinator, medical educator or Registrar Liaison Officer (RLO) at any time if you require assistance. Direct phone numbers for each of our offices are available from the GP Synergy website - https://gpsynergy.com.au/contact-us/

Regionalised registrar education

The 2017 formal registrar education program is now available from the GP Synergy website: https://gpsynergy.com.au/calendar/ and also via GPRime2 under ‘Forms, Documents and Links’.

Developed by regional medical education teams, the program will largely continue to be delivered locally. The program is aligned to both colleges’ curriculums, and includes national priority health areas, in addition to tailored content addressing local population health needs.

For further information, please contact your local Event Coordinator.

SupportGPT – an online in-practice teaching resource for registrars in their first or second GP term

In January 2017, registrars entering their first or second will be sent information about SupportGPT.

SupportGPT is an online program and tool designed to provide suggested teaching activities for supervisors to use with registrars in their first and second GP terms. The program includes online modules for registrars to work through and structured suggested activities for supervisors to do with registrars as part of formal teaching time in practice. Further details about how to access SupportGPT and how it works will be sent to relevant registrars in mid-January.
Mandatory assessment for registrars in mandatory elective and extension terms

From 2017 registrars in mandatory elective and extension terms (except Extension Awaiting Fellowship) will be required to have one competency assessment completed by their supervisor per term.

The competency assessment requirements in GPT1/2/3/ES/PRRT equivalent terms remain unchanged.

College membership reminder

New registrars are reminded that they must be a member of their respective fellowship college (i.e. RACGP and/or ACRRM) by the start of the training year (6 Feb 2017).

The RACGP has recently advised us of several registrars whose training undertaken during the associated non-compliant membership period will not be recognised towards the requirements for Fellowship of the RACGP.

Please ensure you meet the ongoing membership requirement for your chosen fellowship college/s throughout training. For further information please visit:

- RACGP Vocational Training Pathway – Requirements for Fellowship Policy and the RACGP Registrar Membership Policy
- ACRRM: College membership and the Fellowship Training Handbook

Pre-term requirements

All registrars are reminded to check pre-term requirements are met prior to the start of the 2017.1 semester. Regardless of whether you are entering a hospital term, your first GP term, or last GP term, it is your responsibility to make sure you have met the requisite training requirements to date to ensure your training time counts. Please ensure you are up to date with the latest GP Synergy, AGPT, RACGP and/or ACRRM policies, and don't hesitate to contact your local education coordinator or medical educator to clarify any questions.

I would like to extend my personal thanks to all registrars training with us this year. We appreciate it has been a year of significant change for many of you, and we look forward to an exciting year ahead.

On 31 December 2016 I will be officially stepping down from the Director of Education and Training - ACT and NSW position to pursue study in theology. I will be remaining with GP Synergy in a part-time capacity in a shared Deputy Director of Training position with Dr Anne Eastwood.

I am delighted that Dr Vanessa Moran will be taking up the reigns as Director of Education and Training - ACT and NSW from 1 January 2017.

I look forward to continuing to work with you in 2017, and wish you and your family a very happy and safe Christmas.

Dr Graham Lee | Director of Education and Training - ACT and NSW

Reminder: National AGPT satisfaction survey now open

The 2016 AGPT registrar satisfaction survey is now open and closes 23 December 2016. Please monitor your email for an invitation to complete the survey and we strongly encourage you to participate. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete and the results enable the Department of Health to monitor the performance of the program and help bring emerging issues to the attention of the Department and other GP training stakeholders.

Office closure

Our offices will be closed from 5pm Fri 23 December and will reopen at 9am Tues 3 January. In the event of an emergency please contact Chief Operations Officer, Georgina Van de Water on 0419 149 490.
NSW/ACT GP Synergy awards 2016

Each year GP Synergy presents awards which recognise outstanding achievement and commitment to quality general practice education and training.

This year’s recipients were awarded at the recent seasonal celebration and award nights held across our subregions.

We warmly congratulate all recipients on their achievements.

Dr Jeremy Bunker Outstanding Achievement Award | Dr Anne Eastwood

Dr Anne Eastwood began her career as a medical educator with the former southwestern Sydney training provider, the Institute of General Practice Education (IGPE) in 2004, before joining GP Synergy in 2010. Anne has acquired a well-deserved reputation for hard work, commitment and reliability, and is a highly respected senior member of the GP Synergy team. In her role as Deputy Director of Training, she is sought out by staff across the organisation for her judgment, leadership and dedication to general practice training. Anne has a genuine commitment to bettering the lives of others, demonstrated through her GP career in refugee health, and plays an instrumental role in successful progression of Australian Defence Force (ADF) registrars through their training.

NSW/ACT Dr Charlotte Hespe Research Award | Dr Su-Yin Yeong

Dr Su-Yin Yeong is currently in her GPT2 term at Hunts Avenue Medical Practice in Eastwood and MyHealth Medical Centre in Meadowbank. Su has a keen interest in women’s health, children’s health and chronic disease. She also has an interest in academia and research. Recently Su wrote a research project titled ‘Rubella immunity and screening in women of childbearing age in Sydney general practice’ during her GP term with Dr Fiona Millard. They also gave a presentation together on ‘Registrar research for supervisors – Embracing registrar ideas/research’ at General Practice Training and Education Conference (GPTEC) at the Gold Coast this year. Su won the RACGP PWH Grieve Memorial Award which is designed to support a plan of study in medical education for a general practitioner or for research in general practice.

NSW/ACT ACRRM Registrar of the Year Award | Dr Maya Eamus

Dr Maya Eamus began GP training in 2013 and fellowed from the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine in August this year. Maya undertook all her GP training in Western NSW, first at Wagga Wagga Base Hospital and then at Gundagai Medical Centre where she also undertook her Advanced Specialised Training term. Maya has been an outstanding registrar and is an excellent doctor. She is thoroughly rurally committed having bought a home in Gundagai and plans to live and work there long term.

NSW/ACT RACGP Registrar of the Year Award | Dr Sam Baker

Dr Sam Baker is a rural pathway registrar who completed her training in March 2016. She undertook her GP training across a variety of training positions within the New England/Northwest region including an academic post with the University of New England/Northwest. Sam was a longstanding Registrar Liaison Officer (RLO) during her training, providing an important advocacy role for rural registrars in the region, and working collaboratively with GP Synergy to benefit rural registrars. She has contributed enormously to the promotion of rural general practice, through her ongoing participation in GP promotional activities.
Regional awards 2016
South Eastern NSW

Congratulations to the winners of the annual GP Synergy subregional awards, recognised for their dedication and commitment to excellence in GP training.


Regional awards 2016
South Eastern NSW

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Supervisor of the Year | Dr Ann Ellacott

Dr Ann Ellacott is a GP at Thirroul Medical Practice. She is a long-standing GP supervisor and tutors medical students from the University of Wollongong. Ann has been commended for her approach to teaching, providing registrars and students with encouragement, support, knowledge and as much time as they need. Her door is always open to her registrars and students, and she takes every possible opportunity to teach. In addition to being a fantastic GP, Ann is also an inspiration outside of medicine. She is currently training for a marathon to be completed later this year and is involved in community work such as the NSW girl guides.

Practice Manager of the Year | Jodie Edwards

Jodie is a longstanding practice manager at Worrige Street Medical Centre in Nowra which has supported GP training for many years. Jodie carries out the registrar orientation with precision, right from the orientation pack of paperwork including local allied health providers and useful referral advice, to the checking her list so that she ensures everything is completed for each and every orientation. She makes sure that all new registrars and staff feel welcome and always ensures registrar study time is scheduled and given the priority it requires.

Registrar of the Year | Dr Kelly Mitchell

Dr Kelly Mitchell is a GPT2 registrar currently practising at Grand Pacific Health in Nowra. Kelly has developed a strong following of patients who are very grateful for her care. She has been seen to involve the patient in the appropriate management plan and provide good follow up and safety netting advice. Her enthusiasm for helping others has been demonstrated with her interaction with other registrars both in the practice and locally, in addition to helping teach medical students in the practice.

GP Synergy Employee of the Year | Dr Allison Miller

Dr Allison Miller has been involved in the training of GP registrars for many years. She was a former medical educator and then Director of Training for Coast City Country GP Training, and she is now Regional Head of Education South Eastern NSW for GP Synergy. In this year of change Allison has gone above and beyond to keep everything in the South Eastern region running smoothly, including settling staff into their new roles. She has travelled far and wide for clinical teaching visits, overseen all of the educational workshops and mock exam workshops, helped countless registrars navigate their way through training, and is always happy to answer questions and assist wherever she can.
Seasonal celebration and awards night
South Eastern NSW

For more images of the seasonal celebrations visit https://gpsynergy.com.au/image-gallery/
Medicare provider number reminder

This information is important for any GP registrar entering a GP term in 2017.1 (Feb-July).

All registrars entering GP terms must check the letter they have received from Medicare advising them of their provider number approval. Registrars should confirm that they been issued with a provider number with full billing rights before they commence billing patients. Registrars with refer and request rights will only be able to refer patients and request investigations for them, until a provider number with full billing rights is received.

Key dates

16 Dec: Deadline to submit Medicare Provider Number Paperwork to GP Synergy
23 Dec (5pm): GP Synergy Christmas office closure
3 Jan: GP Synergy offices re-open
6 Feb: Start date term 1 2017
6 Aug: End date term 1 2017
Check your Medicare provider number before you start seeing patients

Reminder: Fellowship assessment enrolment

ACRRM fellowship assessments:
• 2017.1: Assessment enrolment opens 8 Dec 2016 – 28 Jan 2017
For more information visit the ACRRM website.

RACGP fellowship assessments:
• 2017.1 AKT/KFP: Enrolments now closed
• 2017.1 OSCE: Enrolments open 19 Sept 2016 – 31 Mar 2017
For further information visit the RACGP website.

ACRRM Case Based Discussion (CBD) assessment changes

New rules around submission of case notes for the Case Based Discussion (CBD) assessment will be implemented from 2017. Candidates are required to submit all twelve (12) case notes up front prior to the CBD sessions being scheduled. Candidates enrolling in 2017 need to ensure they submit their twelve case notes by:
• First semester 2017.1 - by the 17th March
• Second semester 2017.2 – by the 21st July

It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure adherence with these dates. If cases are not received by the due date ACRRM cannot guarantee completion of the required three sessions by the end of the semester and this may result in withdrawal from the assessment.

ACRRM advises as a general rule you should aim for case notes to be no more than twelve weeks old on the day of the assessment. Further information on the ‘rules and regulations’ around the submission of case notes and the process of the CBD can be found in the Assessment Handbook available at the Assessment Resources page, it is essential that you familiarise yourself with these before you enrol. ACRRM advises if you are unable to meet these requirements or have limited availability in the semester you should not enrol until you can meet these requirements.

Don't forget:

GP Synergy provides up to $2,500 for rural registrars to complete ALS/EMST courses. See the Registrar Support Guidelines for more information and eligibility criteria.
Upcoming GP Synergy events

**GPT1/PRRT1 and GPT2/ PRRT2 registrar workshops regional workshops:**

- Western NSW Node 1: 6-8 Feb, Dubbo
- Western NSW Node 2: 8-10 Feb, Canberra
- Western NSW Node 3: 8-10 Feb, Canberra
- Lower Eastern NSW Node 1: GPT1/PRRT1 – 6-7 Feb, Sydney | GPT2/PRRT2 – 7-8 Feb, Sydney
- Lower Eastern NSW Node 3: 8-10 Feb, Wollongong
- North Eastern NSW Node 1: 8-10 Feb, Coffs Harbour
- North Eastern NSW Node 2: 6-9 Feb, Tamworth
- North Eastern NSW Node 3: 6-8 Feb, Newcastle
- North Eastern NSW Node 4: GPT1/PRRT1 – 6-7 Feb, Sydney | GPT2/PRRT2 – 7-8 Feb, Sydney

**Exam preparation**

- GP Synergy preparation for RACGP written exam workshops has now commenced for registrars sitting the exam in 2017.1 only. Please email Shirleen Chand for further information: shirleen.chand@gpsynergy.com.au
- GP Synergy provides financial assistance for ACRRM registrars to participate in ACRRM fellowship assessment preparation. Please contact your medical educator for further information.

**2017.1 calendar for registrars entering their first or second GP term is now available**

The formal GP Synergy education calendar for registrars entering their first or second GP term (GPT1/2 or PRRT1/2) is now available.

**To access:**

2. Login to GPRime and go to ‘Forms, Documents and Links’ (top toolbar) and search ‘calendar’.

Event details will also be available on the registrar’s trainee portfolio, under the ‘events’ tab in late January.

Please contact your local event coordinator if you have any queries.

GP registrar mentor program

GP Synergy will be launching the popular mentorship program again for 2017.1. This is an informal voluntary program where we match up a registrar in their first GP term (i.e. GPT1/PRRT1) with a registrar in the later stages of training.

More information will be emailed out soon!

Need some help?

**Education Coordinators**

- **Central, Eastern and South Western Sydney:** Sara Tijani - 8321 4055 sara_tijani@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Hunter, Manning and Central Coast:** Heidi Heinz - 02 8321 4238 heidi_heinz@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Nepean, Western and Northern Sydney:** Sonia Cattley - 02 8321 4028 sonia_cattley@gpsynergy.com.au
- **New England/Northwest:** Natasha Junge - 02 8321 4015 natasha.junge@gpsynergy.com.au
- **North Coast:** Joanne Sayer - 02 8321 4128 joanne_sayer@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Western NSW:** Grace Murray - 02 8321 4214 grace_murray@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Murrumbidgee and ACT:** Catherine Daly - 02 8321 4149 catherine_daly@gpsynergy.com.au
- **South Eastern NSW:** Renee Jamieson - 02 8321 4164 renee_jamieson@gpsynergy.com.au

**Registrar Liaison Officers (RLO)**

- **Western NSW:** Hugh Le Lievre - RLO_western@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Nepean, Western and North Western Sydney:** Sama Balasubramanian – RLO_NESydney@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Hunter New England Central Coast:** Bob Vickers - RLO_HNECC@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Central, Eastern and South Western Sydney:** Sara Chohan - RLO_LESydney@gpsynergy.com.au

Whilst we continue to recruit to regions, please contact one of the RLO team listed above who will be able to assist in the interim.

**Positions Vacant:**

Are you interested in becoming an RLO? Find out more by visiting our website under employment opportunities or contact Nicky Doneva on nicky_doneva@gpsynergy.com.au

Expressions of interest are currently being sought for the following RLO positions:

- **South Eastern NSW**
- **North Coast**
- **Murrumbidgee and ACT**