

# DISCIPLINE OF GENERAL PRACTICE TEACHING NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2013



## FEATURED PROFILE

Dr Riitta Partanen  
MBBS, FRACGP, DRANZCOG



Riitta started in the role as Discipline Academic Supervisor (DAS) for the GP Rotation in January 2005 at the newly created University of Queensland Rural Clinical School (UQRCS), Hervey Bay site.

In 2006 Riitta took on the position of Director of the UQRCS Hervey Bay and has seen the small clinical school progress from eight 3rd year students to now having the capacity of twenty 3rd and 4th year fulltime students and numerous visiting students. Riitta continues in both the Director and GP DAS role and has recently taken on the Co-Director of Learning, which is a UQRCS wide position.

Riitta is one of two GPs who provide most of the teaching within the GP rotation in Hervey Bay and also takes students at her practice in Maryborough. She enjoys teaching medical students, as it keeps her up-to-date and makes her feel she is contributing to the future medical workforce. She hopes that her students have a positive experience in Hervey Bay and hopes that some of them might return to work in the area and in particular in GP (and maybe even her practice!).

Riitta is a novice researcher who has just begun collecting data for her first research project on the Impact of the Medical Student on the GP Consultation.

Riitta's interests outside of work include golf, traveling, reading, playing Candy Crush and spending time with her family.

*WELCOME to this edition of the Discipline of General Practice Teaching Newsletter.*

*We came across this teaching vignette in Australian Doctor, June 2013, from Dr Jon Fogarty, a GP teacher in New South Wales. We hope that you haven't had many experiences like his!*

*"The medical student sitting with me seemed simultaneously bored and irritated. I am aware that observing rather than doing can be tedious. I had blended her visits, adding some sessions with the practice nurse and local pharmacist. We did observed and unobserved history-taking and examination. True, the morning was not one of unrelenting thrills and spills. No cardiothoracic surgery was performed. I told her that even if general practice was not her "thing", there were skills to be learnt that may one day be of some value. She told me, in a languid sort of way, that the day had been "kinda fun" but by close of play I was not convinced this was true for either of us."*

*Jon goes on to argue for a more formal relationship between Universities and teaching practices:*

*"In the desire of universities to place students in practices, there seem to be minimal criteria for practices to become teaching practices."*

*We are interested in your views about University of Queensland support for your teaching practice. We'd be happy to publish comments in our next newsletter, so please email them to [n.sturman1@uq.edu.au](mailto:n.sturman1@uq.edu.au).*

*Talking about formal relationships, you will notice new Student Placement Agreement forms which are being distributed with the current Student Assessment and Administration Booklets. These are a requirement of the University of Queensland, in response to directives from the new Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Assurance body. We apologise for the extra paperwork, but can reassure our teaching practices that these forms only need to be signed once!*

*Best wishes,*

*Prof Mieke van Driel and Dr Nancy Sturman*

## TIPS FOR FOCUSING LEARNING by Dr Margie Henderson

**ENCOURAGE** students to focus their learning at each session and give them specific instructions to enhance their learning.

**ASK** the student to nominate one learning goal each session to allow you to provide appropriate opportunities for learning to occur. For example, the student may want to practise physical examination or patient education skills.

**NOMINATE** a specific learning issue for the student which will be demonstrated by one or more of the patients on your list for the day.

**CHOOSE** achievable tasks and be specific in your instructions to the student. Examples include:

"Take a history of the patient's presenting complaint and return in 5 minutes";

"Examine the range of movement for this patient's elbow"; or

"Explain the RICE routine to this patient with a sprained ankle".

**DISCUSS** at the end of the session about whether the student achieved their goals and if so identify the next step in extending their learning.



## STUDENT FEEDBACK

The practice was amazing; I had the best time of the whole year. All the doctors who taught me were absolutely brilliant role models: wonderful teachers, doctors and all round great people!! I most liked getting to interview patients and practise physical examinations & and that everyone wanted to teach. Everyone was really friendly and happy to help. I was able to practise clinical skills in an encouraging environment. Thank you for having me. It was a privilege.

## TEACHING RESEARCH AT DGP

As we believe engaging in research is an important part of medical education, we provide a number of research opportunities for undergraduate students. In this year's summer scholarship program we have a number of projects on offer that will examine the gap in consumer knowledge regarding medicines.

During the year, we also encourage students to join one of our Cochrane Systematic Review teams and have medical students working on the following reviews:

Surgical versus non-surgical management for pleural empyema ; Oral antifungal medication for toenail onychomycosis; and Homeopathic remedies for preventing and treating acute respiratory tract infections in children.

For more details, contact Suzie Bedford [s.bedford@uq.edu.au](mailto:s.bedford@uq.edu.au)

## GP SUPERVISOR TEACHING TIPS

Give the student feedback during each teaching session and ask students for feedback after each session

When you have the time, put the student in the driver's seat at the GP's desk and observe them run the consult, use the software etc.

Ask the student to write down any needs, interests or objectives on a weekly basis to update the learning contract.

**OUR TIPS ARE GENEROUSLY OFFERED BY OUR GP SUPERVISORS DURING OUR TRAINING WORKSHOPS.**

## IMPORTANT DATES

Third Year GP Rotation Dates 2013

22nd July - 13th September

23rd September - 15th November

GPET Convention

11-12th September, 2013. Perth.

An annual national forum for those involved in education and training in general practice.

<http://www.onqconferences.com.au/gpet2013home.php>

Health Professional Health Conference

3rd - 5th October, 2013. Brisbane.

Early bird registration ends 26th July, 2013

[www.hphc2013.com.au](http://www.hphc2013.com.au)

## ACADEMIC TITLE HOLDERS FOR GENERAL PRACTITIONER TEACHERS

The Faculty of Health Sciences proudly acknowledges the dedicated work of its many externally-funded health professionals, including our general practitioner teachers.

To recognise the work of these health professionals the Faculty of Health Sciences awards individuals with academic titles.

Many of Queensland's best health professionals are UQ Academic Title Holders with the Faculty of Health Sciences.

It is their enthusiasm and dedication that keeps the Faculty at the forefront of worldwide health education and research trends and ensures the recognition the Academic Title gives is of the highest value.

Benefits of a University of Queensland Academic Title include: UQ library access; access to UQ's excellent research support network; discounted books at the University Bookshop; eligibility to join UQ's sports club and all Academic Title Holders receive a UQ email account, internet and staff web portal access.

To apply for an Academic Title please go to <http://www.uq.edu.au/health/academic-titles>



**THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND**  
AUSTRALIA

## VISIT US

[www.som.uq.edu.au/about/academic-disciplines/general-practice.aspx](http://www.som.uq.edu.au/about/academic-disciplines/general-practice.aspx)  
or contact Dr Nancy Sturman: [n.sturman1@uq.edu.au](mailto:n.sturman1@uq.edu.au)