GPEX

ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS 2018

AGPT

Australian Government
Department of Health

Welcome

VISION

GPEx will support a pipeline of educational excellence for General Practice education from undergraduate through to specialist registration as a General Practitioner.

We will maximise opportunities for alignment of rural and indigenous pathways through a focus on customised and personalised support of registrars.

Using evidenced-based decision making, we will develop practice and supervisor capacity to ensure the optimum number of quality training posts.

We will understand and be responsive to community workforce issues by working collaboratively with local agencies and stakeholders.

MISSION

GPEx will deliver high quality, responsive and forward-thinking education and training, that provides South Australia with a skilled and sustainable General Practice workforce which meets the needs of local communities

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

ONE

GPEx will provide innovative education and training for registrars, so they become culturally safe, competent, independent GP practitioners capable of providing services in urban, rural and remote locations.

TWO

GPEx will be a centre for excellence in graduating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors.

THREE

GPEx will develop medical educator and support staff who are recognised for their commitment and innovation and who collaborate with stakeholders and communities to meet local health workforce needs.

FOUR

GPEx will be a responsible corporate leader, committed to reconciliation, sound governance, stakeholder engagement and the development of staff and doctors in training to drive continuous quality improvement.

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Rural landscape near Port Lincoln, South Australia.

GLENELG
Moseley Square
KEEP
LEFT
Adelaide Metro
112
A
112

STRENGTHENING GP TRAINING FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

CHAIR REPORT

IN 2018, GPEX CEMENTED ITS POSITION PROVIDING AUSTRALIAN GENERAL PRACTICE TRAINING (AGPT) IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

We completed our first three-year contract with the Federal Government Department of Health and successfully negotiated a new three-year term to 2021. Thanks must go to our talented Executive team for this achievement.

These achievements uphold our conviction that a South Australian organisation focused on the needs of South Australia's GP sector is best placed to deliver GP training across the state.

In doing so, we have created a unified approach to AGPT in South Australia, representing a dedicated network of supervisors and practice managers who work with registrars to meet the needs of their local communities.

GPEx continues to support a pipeline of educational excellence for GP training and this was reflected in our registrars' 2018 results in the Royal Australian College of General Practitioner (RACGP) exams:

- Dr Maya Luks (2018.1) and Dr Grant Elson (2018.2) each received the David Game Prize for GP candidate in the SA&NT Faculty who achieved the highest pass score in each examination on their first attempt.
- Dr Dominique Baume (2018.1) and Dr Alicia Stevenson (2018.2) each received the Outstanding SA/NT KFP Achievement Award for highest KFP score.
- Dr Alicia Robertson (2018.1) and Dr Sophie Donald (2018.2) each received the Outstanding SA/NT OSCE Achievement Award for highest OSCE score.
- Dr Jacqueline Chen (2018.2) received the Outstanding SA/NT AKT Achievement Award for highest AKT score.

Meanwhile, GPEx supervisor and dual fellowship holder Dr Holly Deer was named RACGP Supervisor of the Year.

These are exceptional achievements and congratulations to all of our graduating GPs as you embark on the next stage in your careers.

I also acknowledge the work of GPEx Board Directors in 2018.

Particular thanks go to director Dr Richard Johns who held the role of Acting Chair prior to my appointment. Richard played an instrumental role in establishing GPEx as its founding Chair and longest serving director, as well as being one of the State's most experienced AGPT supervisors.

We welcomed three new Board Directors in 2018, Professor Kevin Forsyth, Ian Smith and Rosina Hislop.

The Board also farewelled director Professor Colin Stirling. We thank Colin for his contribution to GPEx and wish him future ongoing success.

GPEx would not be where it is today without the focus, enthusiasm and tireless dedication of CEO Christine Cook, who leads and inspires her team to deliver the highest standards of GP training. On behalf of the Board, thank you to Christine and her outstanding team.

In 2019, I step down from the Board and welcome incoming Chair Dr Alison Edwards. I have greatly enjoyed my time with GPEx and have every confidence that the future of GP training in South Australia remains in safe hands.

Catherine Cooper
Chair

Image
SAHMRI building (South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute) North Terrace, Adelaide.

BUILDING THE GP PIPELINE

CEO REPORT

A SUCCESSFUL 2018 - GPEX MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR MISSION OF A SKILLED AND SUSTAINABLE GENERAL PRACTITIONER (GP) WORKFORCE FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

It was a year of major achievement and under our new contract with the Department of Health (DoH), GPEx remains the sole provider of Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) in South Australia.

This could not have been achieved without the support of the Board and I thank outgoing Chair Catherine Cooper for her support during contract negotiations.

South Australia's GP recruitment challenge

Almost one-quarter (24%) of South Australia's rural medical workforce are GPEx registrars.

South Australia's regional communities depend on GPEx registrars. This is a huge responsibility and why we invest heavily in programs, support systems and people.

It's no secret that Australia is experiencing a downturn in applicants for GP training. In the 2018 cohort, 18% of GPEx's 141 allocated positions for South Australia remained unfilled.

This is a national issue that is felt acutely in South Australia and GPEx is adopting the following strategies to address this challenge:

Understanding the GP pipeline

We undertook Phase 2 of our Graduate Tracking Study to better understand the regional distribution of our graduates.

Our evidence shows that rural placements are important in influencing where and for how long a GP graduate will remain in a rural location. The AGPT program provides an important pipeline of future GP educators, and that being in an AGPT teaching practice increases the retention of AGPT graduates in rural areas.

Targeting pre-vocational and new pathways

A free GP Expo to encourage pre-vocational doctors to consider GP training was well attended by more than 70 medical students, interns and resident medical officers (RMOs).

Anaesthetic training placements were created via funding from Country Health SA, allocating three registrar positions in 2018. An additional position was funded by the Lyell McEwin Hospital.

GPEx worked with RACGP to deliver the Practice Experience Pathway (PEP) from 2019, commencing with seven participants.

Encouraging pathways in Aboriginal health

GPEx embarked on research to identify motivating factors for GP graduates to pursue careers in Aboriginal Health.

Results indicate that experience of an Aboriginal Health placement during training is critical. Recommendations were presented to stakeholders and will be embedded into program development.

Strengthening our training practices

Our graduates state that the most important factor impacting on their choice of where to work is the practice culture and team.

GPEx supports the growth and sustainability of General Practices to build their capacity to take registrars and create workplaces where registrars want to stay.

GPEx funded six places in our pilot Practice Review Project for Practice Managers (PRPMM). The program guides practice managers through a business review focusing on practice improvement and change.

Participants cited improved confidence and a greater understanding of staff engagement and practice planning.

GPEx secured additional funding from Country SA Primary Health Network (PHN) to grow our rural Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training program, GP Extend in country SA. This has tripled our GP Extend funding to host more than 100 educational events over three years.

We also launched GPEx Connect, a free online platform for South Australian General Practices to advertise job vacancies.

Quality through research

GPEx was awarded the largest Education Research Grant by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP). We are leading national research to design a Workplace Based Assessment (WBA) Framework for the future of General Practice training.

We finalised research on the educational alliance between registrars and supervisors, funded by the RACGP and DoH. This has resulted in a new tool to support the development of stronger supervisory relationships.

Research was undertaken to better understand factors associated with burn-out in medical trainees and GP registrars and resulted in the development of the GPEx Wellbeing Framework.

Reconciliation Action Plan

We were proud to launch the GPEx Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Reflect. This formalises our commitment to closing the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians, thereby making positive change.

Thank you

To the GP sector in South Australia – thank you for working with GPEx to support the future of your profession.

Particular thanks go to supervisor liaison officers Dr Frank Maldari and Dr Tom Lemon for representing South Australian supervisors nationally, and to registrar liaison officers Dr Emily Kirkpatrick and Dr Lachlan Mackinnon for supporting our registrars.

Christine Cook
CEO

Research was undertaken to better understand factors associated with burn-out in medical trainees and GP registrars and resulted in the development of the GPEx Wellbeing Framework.

Image
From left, Dr Paul Dilena, Angela Burden, Tim Piper, Rebecca Pit.

A SOLID FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

GPEx'S SOLID FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REFLECTS OUR CORE PURPOSE TO DELIVER AUSTRALIAN GENERAL PRACTICE TRAINING (AGPT) IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA, SUPPORTED BY ROBUST FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.

Image
Tim Piper, Director Support Services and Angela Burden, Director Education Operations.

This is in line with the ongoing expansion of AGPT in South Australia as well as the growth of other funding streams that support the development of the GP sector.

In 2018, GPEx concluded its first three-year Federal Government contract to deliver AGPT, with more registrars in total taking part in the program than in the previous year.

In recognition of our successful delivery of AGPT, we were awarded a second contract to the end of 2021.

This secures the future of GPEx for the next three years and provides a solid platform from which to navigate the transition to a College-led AGPT from 2022.

While GPEx's primary objective is to deliver AGPT, we have a vision and mission to support the GP sector in South Australia.

This reinforces our delivery of AGPT, as the development of stronger and healthier GP practices creates better training opportunities for our registrars.

In 2018, GPEx finished our existing contract with Country SA Primary Health Network (PHN) and secured additional funding to grow our rural Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training program, GP Extend. This follow-on three-year contract has tripled our funding from Country SA PHN.

Additional funding was also secured from the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) to grow our Education Research Grant (ERG) activities.

Each of these represents funding that is directed into supporting our registrars and the practices in which they work and train.

GPEx maintains a focus on prudent financial management and sustainability. We retain a healthy balance sheet with our focus on GP training and practice in South Australia.

DEVELOPING OUR FUTURE GPs

IN 2018, GPEX PROVIDED AUSTRALIAN GENERAL PRACTICE TRAINING (AGPT) TO 488 REGISTRARS AT VARIOUS STAGES OF THEIR GP DEVELOPMENT.

Our registrars delivered 13,983 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) weeks of service to the South Australian community supported by 454 accredited supervisors and their practice management staff, in 214 accredited practices across metropolitan, regional and remote South Australia.

AGPT delivery

GPEx provides accreditation towards Fellowship of both the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP).

In 2018, GPEx was allocated 141 new entry positions – 68 in the general pathway and 73 in the rural stream. Of these, 12 positions were with ACRRM and 129 with RACGP.

Of our total 141 allocated positions, 116 were filled. This was predominantly due to a reduced number of rural applicants.

Graduating outcomes

GPEx exam results continued to exceed the national average.

Our registrars and supervisors were represented in several RACGP examination awards and RACGP Supervisor of the Year.

Further training opportunities

Five registrars completed Advanced Skills posts in anaesthetics.

GPEx supported a registrar, Dr Emily Kirkpatrick, in an Academic Skills post on the topic of *Skin Cancer Education and Patient Awareness in General Practice*.

141

GPEx allocated new entry positions

116

Filled positions due to a reduced number of rural applicants.

Technology and innovation

GPEx is committed to continued training excellence and invested in the development of a new training app, GP Explore, which is the first of its kind in Australia.

GP Explore allows registrars to collect de-identified patient data for automated reporting and reflection. This information is important to identify the range of presentations a registrar is exposed to and identify curriculum gaps. It assists in exam preparation and helps GPEx monitor the registrar experience in a range of accredited practices.

GP Excel was introduced in 2018 to provide registrars who have completed 12 months of GP community training an opportunity for further professional development through workshops and webinars.

Support for supervisors and general practice

GPEx hosted the national General Practice Training and Education Conference (GPTEC) 2018 for medical educators, RTO staff, supervisors and practice managers.

The 2018 event was one of the most successful GPTECs to date, attracting more than 700 delegates to South Australia – around 200 more than the previous year.

We delivered a program of more than 100 presentations designed to challenge, stimulate and inspire with the theme of *'Switch On'*.

This complemented our ongoing program of supervisor workshops, which in 2018 was extended into the regional areas of the South East, Clare and Whyalla.

We continued to visit practices throughout South Australia to discuss registrar training, undertake accreditation of posts and share new training developments.

We also ran two practice manager workshops with a combined attendance of 169.

Image
Dr Paul Delina – Director Medical Education and Training.

INVESTING IN OUR

People and culture

GPEx has a strong foundation of experienced, engaged and caring employees.

We have a workforce of 67, including 21 medical educators and 46 program management and support staff.

GPEx develops our workforce via a culture of professional development that supports excellence in organisational performance and develops future leaders.

We embrace diversity, support reconciliation and encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing across our organisation.

Creating an environment where people want to work to support the retention of staff remained a key priority during the final year of our current funding cycle and will continue over the next three years as we transition to College-led Australian General Practice Training (AGPT).

Our approach is working, with a staff survey undertaken during the year demonstrating an engagement rate of 90%.

A review of our AGPT team encouraged employees to assess their job roles and re-allocate tasks to create new challenges and responsibilities across the team.

Our professional development program included the provision of financial support and time for three of our medical educators to undertake post-graduate qualifications.

We held a regular "Lunch and Learn" program for all staff involving speakers on a range of topics including how to manage difficult conversations and delegation skills.

Employee health and wellbeing was supported with a presentation to staff by the Jodi Lee Foundation and the opportunity for all staff to undertake screening for bowel cancer.

Executive development was linked to indigenous health programs, with our executive team attending a cultural retreat at Iga Warta in the Flinders Ranges.

We recruited for positions across the organisation with a focus on skills and attitude. This included pathways for GPs who are new to medical educator roles, to ensure a smooth transition as some of our existing medical educators approach the end of their careers.

Our approach is working, with a staff survey undertaken during the year demonstrating an engagement rate of 90%.

MARKETING ACTIVITIES

A focus on recruiting GP registrars to rural locations included presentations to medical students and hospital visits to meet with interns.

Two videos were produced showcasing GP training opportunities in Port Lincoln and Port Augusta.

We launched an Alumni program to provide a support network for graduating GPs. Activities included social events, professional development opportunities and online networking.

Thanks to Dr Kristen Tee and Dr Teegan Muller for their involvement and voluntary contributions to the Alumni committee. We intend to further enhance the program in 2019.

Image
From left, Marisa Packer, Jane Longmire, Emma McLeay, Virginia Leake, Sumanta Ghosh, Rebecca Pit (Manager People and Culture), Devinia Binell.

Closing the gap

IN ABORIGINAL HEALTH

At GPEx we believe that the opportunity to train in Aboriginal health services and communities can create better and more culturally aware GPs.

In 2018 we continued to build relationships with community and stakeholders to achieve the following:

Image
From left, Dr Kali Hayward, Associate Professor Dr Jill Benson, Devinia Binell.

INCREASE REGISTRAR INTEREST IN ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH

GPEx provided leadership training and support to four Aboriginal registrars. Leadership development forms a core part of training for Aboriginal registrars so they can return to their communities as leaders and advocates for Aboriginal health.

We ran cultural awareness sessions for more than 400 registrars, medical educators and support staff, as well as to practising GPs in regional areas via our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training program, GP Extend.

Sessions are held during registrar orientation followed by a two-day intensive workshop, focusing on culture, history and an understanding of Aboriginal health.

Recognising that early exposure is essential to developing interest in this area of health, we also presented to medical students and worked closely with Aboriginal student associations.

SUPPORT ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICES TO PROVIDE A POSITIVE TRAINING EXPERIENCE

GPEx placed 7.7 (FTE) registrars in Aboriginal health services, delivering 401.30 FTE weeks of health services to Aboriginal communities.

We collaborated with the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia to fund a remote supervisor position which supported five registrars across rural and remote South Australia to deliver medical services to Aboriginal communities.

The Roving Registrar position was in high demand in 2018 and we were able to create a second roving registrar position. This placement involves travelling to rural and remote locations across South Australia to provide outreach services to Aboriginal communities.

GPEx held its first dedicated workshop for practice managers in Aboriginal health services, in Port Lincoln, including networking and sharing of ideas.

INSPIRE REGISTRARS TO CONTINUE WORKING IN ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICES AND COMMUNITIES AFTER GRADUATING

GPEx continued to fund Aboriginal Health Services to provide registrars with cultural mentoring support. Cultural mentors connect our registrars with local communities and make their experience in an Aboriginal post more positive and rewarding.

We educate registrars about Medicare funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adult and Health Checks. These checks are a useful tool to build relationships by identifying health issues and developing ongoing healthcare plans.

GPEx ACHIEVEMENTS IN NUMBERS

214
WORKSHOPS DELIVERED

121
NEW REGISTRARS COMMENCED IN COMMUNITY TRAINING –
115 GPT1,
4 PRRT1,
1 GPT1/PRRT1

454
ACCREDITED SUPERVISORS

488
REGISTRARS IN TRAINING
297 – FEMALE
191 MALE
273 GENERAL
211 RURAL

103
FELLOWED REGISTRARS
2018 – ALL RACGP

13,983
FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) WEEKS OF SERVICE TO THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

Image
Farming lands outside Tumby Bay, South Australia.

“
Country medicine gives me the opportunity to build relationships with my patients and get to know their stories.
We've never looked back.

Investing in regional communities

In 2013 I left the city with my husband Matt to start my GP training in Tumby Bay. We've never looked back.

Matt and I are now permanent residents of the town, we've started a family and own the Tumby Bay Medical Clinic where I trained.

I became a GP in 2015 and a supervisor with GPEx soon after.

My experience supervising my first registrar, Dr Emmy Hennell, was such a success we are now colleagues and business partners.

Like me, Emmy accepted a GP associate position at the clinic on completion of her training.

When our senior colleagues announced their desire to reduce their practice responsibilities, Emmy and I, together with our partners, purchased the medical clinic.

Practising as a rural GP provides a bit of everything, from consulting at the clinic to minor procedures and emergency work at the local hospital.

Country medicine gives me the opportunity to build relationships with my patients and get to know their stories.

I've counselled couples experiencing fertility issues, supported them through pregnancy and now treat their miracle babies.

There's a level of continuity practising in regional areas that you don't get in the city. I feel really invested in our community and our town.

Being a GPEx supervisor is a rewarding experience and we've been blessed with exceptional registrars.

I really enjoy teaching and it's great having other young doctors around. They bring their own experiences, aren't afraid to ask questions and I learn as much from them as they do from me.

GPEx has always made me feel valued as a supervisor. They provide fantastic support and high quality training to our registrars.

GPEx is training the future generation of GPs in South Australia and that's a very important role.

Image
Dr Sara Georg, GPEx Supervisor, GP and Co-Owner of Tumby Bay Medical Clinic.

GP career ticks all the boxes

I CHOSE A CAREER IN GENERAL PRACTICE BECAUSE IT TICKS SO MANY BOXES FOR ME.

Working in hospitals as a resident medical officer (RMO) there were many loose ends wondering what happened after each patient was discharged.

Building patient relationships is much more rewarding, especially when a patient comes back to see you because they choose to and not just because you were the team on call for that day.

I'm currently in my third year of GP training while working as a Registrar Liaison Officer for GPEx.

Training with GPEx has reaffirmed my choice of career and I've never been happier or more satisfied with the work that I've been doing.

The opportunity to practice simple and effective preventative medicine also appeals to me. Rather than spending thousands of dollars on an operation to fix a singular problem for an individual, I can use education and good primary prevention to help spare patients from this pain and suffering.

Training with GPEx has been a positive experience.

Their high standard of training is reflected in their exam results being above the national average.

The people of GPEx are enthusiastic and passionate about education and training, and I've had fantastic support from my program training advisor and medical educator.

Compared to other states where there is a mad sprint to apply for jobs in a hyper-competitive environment, the placement system here is much less stressful. Having since met with registrars from interstate, I'm very glad to be well supported by GPEx.

I encourage aspiring GPs to seriously consider training with GPEx in South Australia. It is such a wonderful place to live and work and GPEx training offers a positive learning environment supported by people who are passionate about the work they do.

Image
Dr Sean Black-Tiong,
GP Registrar.

FINDING CAREER SATISFACTION IN RURAL TOWNS

RURAL GP TRAINING OFFERS A FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITY TO PURSUE PATHWAYS IN ANAESTHETICS, OBSTETRICS AND EMERGENCY MEDICINE

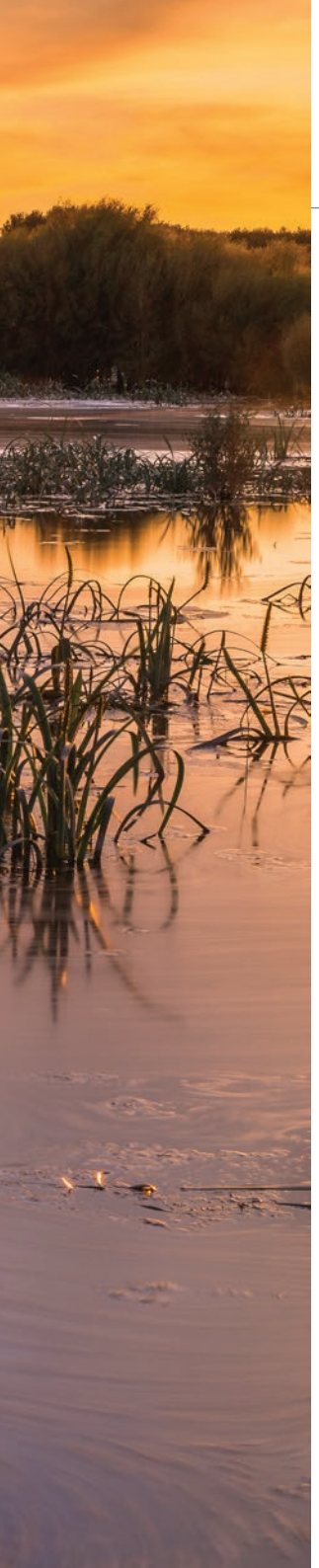

Image
Kincraig Medical Centre Practice Manager, Kate Foster (above). Bool Lagoon, Naracoorte (left).

Naracoorte is a social town and we support our registrars to feel at home here – so much so that some of our registrars have fallen in love with farmers from our region and are now permanent residents of our community.

Kincraig Medical Centre services a population of 9,000 people in the town of Naracoorte in the South East and the surrounding farming region.

We train GP registrars seeking to broaden their skills across a range of specialist areas including anaesthetics, obstetrics, minor surgery, skin cancer, aged and palliative care and emergency medicine.

When rolling out the welcome mat for new registrars we include their partners and families.

If they have babies and toddlers we'll introduce them to 'bounce and bop', if they have school-aged children we'll take them to after-school activities, and if their partners are professionals we try to assist them to find work locally.

Naracoorte is a social town and we support our registrars to feel at home here – so much so that some of our registrars have fallen in love with farmers from our region and are now permanent residents of our community.

We hope to retain our registrars once they see the broad range of medical skills they can use here.

Our chief aim is to support Naracoorte, but if our training gives registrars and opportunity to learn how to live and practise rurally outside of our region, then we can all be winners.

GPEx has been fantastic to work with. The learning system GP365 is an excellent program for rural registrars that includes GP business skills.

GPEx works hard to support their registrars and training clinics. We attend regular workshops to help us meet the needs of our rural registrars and learn more about training expectations. My involvement in the Practice Review Project for Practice Managers in 2018 was invaluable.

GPEx checks in on the Practice Manager, Supervisors and Registrars regularly, even if just to ask how we're all going.

SUPPORTING THE
HEALTH & WELLBEING OF

GP trainees

A rural GP for 38 years and a registrar supervisor for the past 15 years. – Dr David Adams.

It's encouraging to see the fantastic young doctors coming through GPEx. It gives me confidence that the General Practitioners of today and tomorrow are going to be among the best GPs in Australia.

Being involved in the training of the GPs of tomorrow is such a rewarding experience and has certainly improved the medical care we provide to the community.

I gain real enjoyment and satisfaction from taking on a new registrar and seeing them grow and develop their skills and confidence in their role. It's pleasing to have registrars who leave our practice enjoying what they do and being good at it.

For our registrars, a 'day in the life' involves patient consults with experienced doctors close by, lots of informal corridor teaching and dedicated formal teaching time each week. We support the local hospital with a 24-hour on-call roster and our registrars take part in that too.

It's not only important for our doctors to feel they have a role in training, but also our nurses and administration staff. This is embedded into and positively reflected in our centres' culture.

By training young doctors we hope some will stay on and we have been fortunate that a number have done so.

GP health and wellbeing is an area I'm passionate about. It's important our registrars feel well supported and I encourage them to have downtime and find time to relax and switch off.

GPEx has a positive culture and high ideals. They strive to provide the best possible training and make sure their registrars are appropriately skilled to become the best GPs they can be in the future.

The quality of GPEx training is excellent and they provide a lot of personal and digital technology support to registrars and supervisors.

It's encouraging to see the fantastic young doctors coming through GPEx. It gives me confidence that the General Practitioners of today and tomorrow are going to be among the best GPs in Australia.

Image
Dr David Adams – GPEx Supervisor, GP and Partner at Angaston Medical Centre.

More than just a number in SA

I've been a fellowed GP for less than two months with fantastic opportunities before me.

I'm practising flexible hours at a city-based medical centre, working in a skin cancer clinic and undertaking a research role as a junior medical educator at GPEx.

Some aspiring doctors underestimate General Practice as a career. My message to them is: Give it a go, I think you'll be pleasantly surprised.

There are so many pathways that GPs can pursue, and the continuity of care we provide to our patients is rewarding.

My GP training started in another state and I'm pleased I returned home to complete it in South Australia.

When I was interstate there were so many registrars that I felt like a number. I didn't have the same connection with the training organisation that I have with GPEx.

GPEx has a fantastic training culture. They are focused on their registrars, their people are approachable and they always gave me the support that I needed.

GPEx has established strong relationships with GP clinics across South Australia, which allows them to be selective in which clinics enter their training program. This is fantastic for registrars and gave me the opportunity to train at several clinics in metropolitan and regional areas.

The quality of GPEx training is of a high standard. Their medical educators take an interest in registrars from the very beginning and provide teaching and mentoring all the way through.

Training with GPEx has reaffirmed my decision to become a GP.

Image
Dr Emily Kirkpatrick – Recently Fellowed GP.

> **When I was interstate there were so many registrars that I felt like a number. I didn't have the same connection with the training organisation that I have with GPEx.**

SECURING THE FUTURE of GP services in country towns

A wise decision to provide GP training opportunities has secured the future of Tumby Bay Medical Clinic.

Established in the early 1900s, we're one of the oldest medical clinics in South Australia, servicing a population of around 3000 local residents.

We've been supporting GP registrars with their training for the past seven years.

Two of our fellowed registrars, Dr Sara Georg and Dr Emmy Hennell took ownership of the Clinic last year following the retirement of their senior colleagues.

A succession plan is almost unheard of in rural practice and, as the only medical clinic in Tumby Bay, this has secured the future of GP services in our town.

I've been employed at the clinic for 26 years, and held the role of Practice Manager for the past three.

We've had an amazing experience working with GPEx. From the front desk to the CEO, their people are genuine, caring and helpful.

GPEx understands the training needs of rural practice and cares for the wellbeing of our registrars, supporting their individual interests and needs.

GPEx has provided outstanding support for our practice and we are in awe of the commitment they give us.

As Practice Manager I receive strong support including local training opportunities and assistance to travel to Adelaide to meet with my counterparts across South Australia.

The opportunity to be involved in the Practice Review Project for Practice Managers in 2018 has given me greater confidence in myself and for the benefit of my team.

Our GP practice has grown so much from what our registrars bring to our practice and to our town. They learn from us, and we learn from them too.

Seeing our GPEx registrars consulting with our clients gives me confidence that rural medicine is in safe hands.

Image
Michelle Fiegert, Practice Manager, Tumby Bay Medical Clinic.

As Practice Manager I receive strong support including local training opportunities and assistance to travel to Adelaide to meet with my counterparts across South Australia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GPEx is a contracted Regional Training Organisation (RTO) of the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) Program that is administered and funded by the Department of Health.

GPEx acknowledges and pays respect to the Elders past and present and recognise Australia's first peoples cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land.

Image
Silo Art; Tumby Bay, South Australia.
Painted by Argentinean artist Martin Ron over five weeks using 430 litres of paint.