



# Annual Report 2021

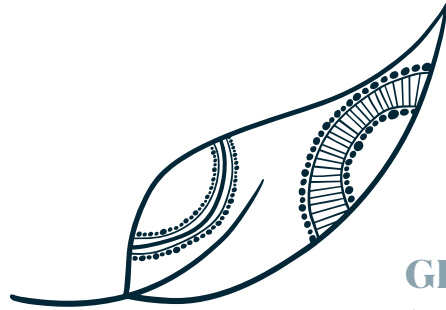
**Our purpose**

IS TO INSPIRE

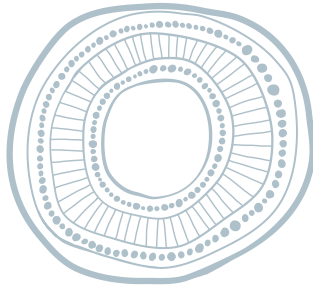
*Excellence and*

*Equity*

IN HEALTHCARE



**GPEX acknowledges the traditional lands of the first peoples and respects the spiritual relationship with their country.**



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

# Our Values

## **Excellence**

We aspire to excellence in all that we do.

## **Innovation**

We continually seek better ways to deliver our products and services.

## **Integrity**

We are responsible for our actions and we work with inclusivity, honesty, transparency and respect.

## **Collaboration**

We work together for the communities we serve.

# Contents

Chair report - 04

CEO report - 06

Our Strategic Goals - 08

Our Strategic Framework - 09

GP Training Impact Statistics - 10

GP Training and Education - 12

GP Training Impact - 20

Strengthening the Pipeline - 22

The Strategy in Action: Innovative Placement Models - 24

GPEX Community - 26

Professional Development for Health Professionals - 28

Business Excellence at GPEX - 30

Finance - 32

# Chair Report

Dr Tony Sherbon - GPEx Chair

I continue to believe that primary care is the most important part of our health system, and I believe that South Australian GPs will continue to provide excellent care to our community in the coming years.

GPEx plays an essential role in shaping the future of health in Australia by producing high-quality doctors through our training program and ensuring that the placement

of registrars makes primary care accessible for all South Australians, regardless of their location.

Driven by this core mission of inspiring excellence and equity in healthcare, the GPEx Board remained focused on improving GPEx's performance in primary care recruitment and training, especially in rural regions and in Aboriginal Health.

We are pleased to have achieved operational improvements across these areas in 2021 with increased recruitment numbers,

rural placements, and registrars undertaking Aboriginal Health placements – the latter of which I personally believe has been our most important achievement this year.

Our focus on Aboriginal Health in 2021 was significantly boosted by the appointment of Ms Kerryne Liddle to the GPEx Board. Kerryne is an Arrernte woman born in the Northern Territory, who is now living in Adelaide. GPEx CEO, Stephanie Clota, and the leadership team also established strong networks with Aboriginal Health stakeholders, which contributed to this success. Stakeholder relationships are more than just consultation and partnerships – it's about good communication and building trust, and Stephanie and her team have done a magnificent job doing just that.



I would like to thank the GPEx team, led by Stephanie Clota, for their comprehensive and professional delivery of all of our services this year.

W

We are pleased to have achieved operational improvements in 2021 with increased recruitment numbers, rural placements, and registrars undertaking Aboriginal Health placements – the latter of which I personally believe has been our most important achievement this year.



Unfortunately, 2021 remained a period of uncertainty in relation to the transition to College-led training.

As a training provider, it is incredibly challenging to help the Colleges during this transition process when we still have little clarity on the details. Nevertheless, we are committed to making sure the transition process is a successful one, and that registrars and supervisors are well-supported and looked after throughout.

As we continued to navigate this transition, the development of the 2021-2023 GPEx Strategic Plan this year was a significant

achievement, which will provide the basis of our transformation after AGPT in 2023 and beyond.

While the transition will affect our role as a training provider, I believe the future of general practice remains bright in South Australia – the South Australian GP community are arguably the best trained GPs in the world, who are highly regarded and sought after by our community.

I would like to thank the GPEx team, led by Stephanie Clota, for their comprehensive and professional delivery of all of our services this year. We are lucky to have such a

great team, who continued to work diligently and professionally in the face of ongoing disruptions and uncertainty.

Our registrars, supervisors and practices played a significant role in South Australia's COVID-19 vaccination roll-out, which occurred alongside their normal patient workload and their training and supervision requirements. I would like to thank them for the key role they have played in the fight against COVID-19, and acknowledge the resilience of our registrars, and the support our practices and supervisors have given registrars during the pandemic.

# CEO Report

Stephanie Clota - GPEx CEO



I am pleased to present the 2021 GPEx Annual Report. Set amidst the headwinds created by COVID-19, primary care workforce shortages and the changing GP training landscape, this year's report contains facts, insights and stories about the amazing work done by those who train and support doctors to work where they are needed most.

## General Practice Training in 2021

GPEx's general practice training program continues to build on its strong foundation of recruitment, placement, support, medical education, cultural education, and mentorship.

In 2021, GPEx had 437 registrars in GP training who delivered a total of 14,766 FTE weeks of service to the South Australian community.

In Aboriginal Health, we increased training capacity, training places and registrar interest, with the number of registrars working in Aboriginal Health in South Australia doubling from five to 11 over the last 12 months. Within our organisation, we are proud to have launched our Aboriginal Health Services Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which builds on existing initiatives to develop cultural awareness and create meaningful change, by outlining practical actions to build respectful relationships with, and create opportunities for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Recognising the continued impact of COVID-19, GPEx prioritised research into GP registrar and supervisor burnout,





GPEX currently has 115 rural registrars working in South Australia, comprising approximately 25% of the total rural GP workforce in the state.

80%

retention in rural

25%

of rural workforce

including strategies to inform the prevention of burnout and maintenance of wellbeing. Supporting our training practices to maintain wellbeing is pivotal in enabling them to sustainably place registrars, medical students, and prevocational doctors, and provide positive GP experiences. We look forward to implementing additional training and support measures in 2022 and continuing to build capacity in primary health care teaching and research.

### Strengthening the GP Training Pipeline

Across regional, rural and outer metropolitan South Australia longstanding issues surrounding access to GP services and GP workforce shortages are well understood. At GPEX, we have been working to address these issues and continue to prioritise strategies to improve the challenges of attraction and distribution. Our goal is to have sufficient GPs and Rural Generalists to meet the needs of all South Australians, particularly in rural, regional and Aboriginal communities.

Since 2020, GPEX has increased the number of GP registrars from 102 to 123 in 2022, and driven significant growth in the number of registrars undertaking rural pathway training by 33% (from 35 to 48). GPEX currently has 115 rural registrars working in South Australia, comprising approximately 25% of the total rural GP workforce in the state.

We are proud of our success and the strategies we have implemented to grow general practice training in South Australia to date.

### Looking to the future

2021 began with the amalgamation of ModMed with GPEX. COVID-19 has not only changed our world, but also presented us with an opportunity to reset, reimagine and reform our organisation to realise our ambitions.

As we look ahead, we are optimistic about the opportunities of expansion and of shaping the future of health in South Australia through training and education.

As we move through this phase our focus is on transition, transformation and continuity, and developing a strong plan for the future.

I am proud to lead GPEX through this time of change and believe that the team we have in place can move the organisation through to the next phase. Our strategy is only able to be implemented because of the strength of our culture, and the dedication, passion, and experience of our team.

We undertake this transformation with strong support and relationships with our partners and the GPEX community. It is these partnerships and pathways that will lead to improved education, quality programs and impact. We know that partnerships are key to our continued success, and we will keep looking for new ways of delivering value and impact.

2021 began with the amalgamation of ModMed with GPEX. Following this amalgamation, GPEX has a strong financial position from which to grow. We continue to adopt an effective and efficient approach to the stewardship of public and charitable funds.

I am proud of the work that we have done to date, and confident that this strong foundation, the value of our people, and our agile operating environment will set us up for success. I am excited about our future and look forward to contributing to the ongoing success of GPEX.

I would like to thank the GPEX team for their contribution to the many accomplishments you will read about in this Report, and to the Board for their continued support and trust in me to lead this amazing organisation. It is a privilege.

# Our 2023 Strategic Goals

Develop a sustainable business model, with a broader, diverse range of customers.

Develop new programs and services for the health sector.

Extend our area of operation through an expanded national footprint.

Continue delivering quality specialist general practice training and education.

Explore and design solutions to address health workforce challenges.

Extend our engagement of partners by increasing demand and value.

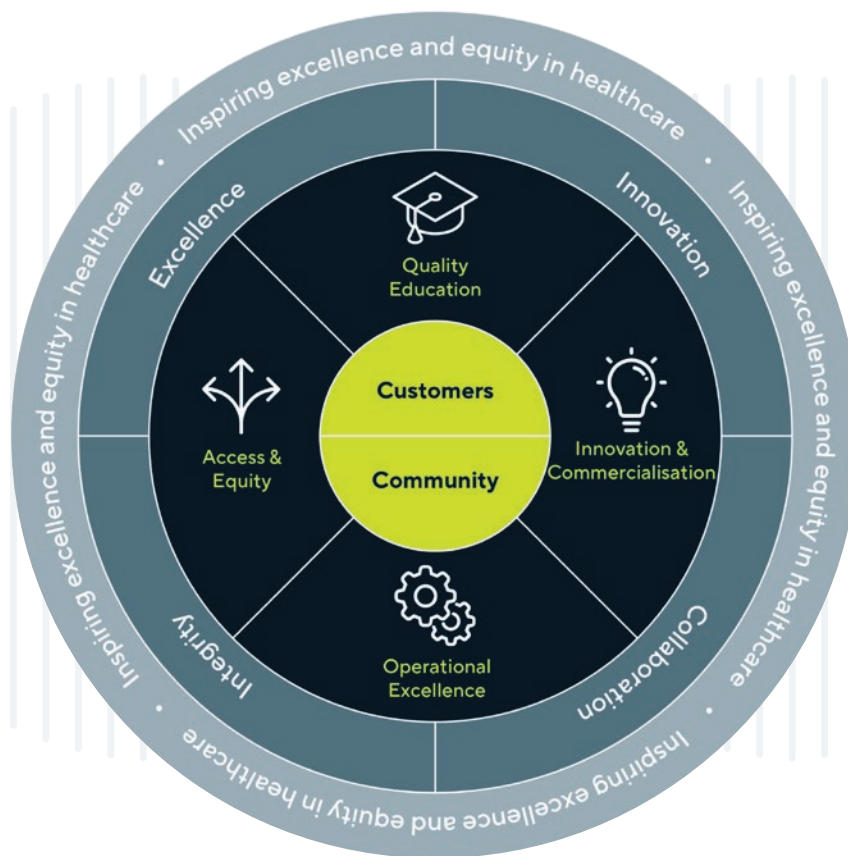
Continue to build a unified team with a collaborative culture.

Constructively contribute to the changing primary care and GP Training landscape, adopting a risk management approach to the transition to College-led training.

Eliminate customer pain points by assessing need, delivering value, and responding to feedback.

# Our Strategic Framework

- Our purpose
- Our values
- Our architecture for success
- Who we serve



# GP Training Impact Statistics

**437** Registrars  
in training

**191**  
Workshops delivered

**31** ACRRM  
**406** RACGP

**94**  
New registrars that  
commenced in  
community GP

**478**  
Accredited  
GP Supervisors

**146** Rural  
Pathway  
**291** General  
Pathway  
**48** Rural  
Generalists

**11** Rural Intern  
Program  
participants

**234**  
Accredited  
practices  
(including branches)



35%

of total FTE weeks of service delivered by registrars in rural and remote communities

51% Rural retention

4

First Nations registrars

310

FTE Weeks in Aboriginal Health Services

14,766

Total FTE weeks of service

17

Registrars in Advanced Skills Training Posts

111

Registrars achieved Fellowship

4xFACRRM  
103xFRACGP  
4xFARGP

5 Academic Post placements

18

Accredited Aboriginal Health Training Posts

## GP Training and Education

In 2021, GPEx had 437 registrars in GP training. Even though COVID-19 continued to present challenges to education and training, we were pleased that most sessions could still be delivered face-to-face. Where that was not possible, we adapted with Zoom workshops, hybrid activities and assessment flexibility. GPEx remained mindful and responsive to the challenges facing our training community by adjusting the training and education program where necessary, whilst maintaining its integrity and expected progress to Fellowship.

GPEx registrars have continued to demonstrate incredible resilience, with AKT, KFP and CCE exam pass rates all higher than the national average in 2021. These results not only reflect the quality of our training program, but also the individual exam support provided to registrars by GPEx.

During 2021, GPEx was re-accredited by the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) to continue delivering the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) Program to ACRRM registrars.

### Image

Dr Paul Dilena - Director of Medical Education and Training.  
Helen OMalley - Director AGPT Program.

## Wellbeing

With the ongoing uncertainty of COVID-19, the wellbeing of GPEx's training community continues to be of the utmost importance.

During 2021, GPEx conducted a review of the wellbeing support provided to registrars, developing a Wellbeing Policy and revised Wellbeing Program in response.

One of the program improvement activities was the development of a repository of wellbeing resources for registrars, supervisors and practice managers to help manage the challenges COVID-19 brought to working in general practice.

Results from Dr Isabella White's Academic Post research exploring registrar experiences during COVID-19 informed opportunities for program improvement during a pandemic or natural disaster.



## Supporting our Training Community

With changes to GP training policies, government legislation and directives, the GPEx team provided support, information and advice to accredited practices on:

- new healthcare worker vaccine mandates;
- COVID-safe workplaces for registrars; and
- telehealth processes and policies for training.

GPEx is proud to support its training community and invest in the development of its supervisors and practice managers, with over 200 participants attending GPEx professional development workshops throughout the year.

Registrar Liaison Officers (RLOs), Supervisor Liaison Officers (SLOs) and Practice Manager Liaison Officers (PMLOs) continued to play an important advocacy role as conduits between the GP training community and GPEx.

We would like to thank our outgoing RLOs, Dr Cicy Li, Dr Natasha Nottingham and Dr Wissam Ghamrawi, for all their work.

Dr Frank Maldari and Dr Bill Geyer continued in their roles as SLOs.

Deb Docking, Jill Combe and Jacky Genesin commenced the year as PMLOs, with

both Jacky and Jill stepping down during the year. We would like to thank Jill and Jacky for their contributions and wish Jill well for her retirement. In late 2021, Sandra Merx, Kirstie Pym and Sandy Merx joined the PMLO team representing rural practices.

## Registrar Training Feedback

Each semester GPEx invites registrars to provide feedback on their wellbeing, training and placement experiences. Aggregated data is reviewed by the GPEx Quality, Education, Research and Innovation (QERI) Committee to identify opportunities for program improvement.

Despite the difficulties experienced by the GP training community through another year of COVID-19, GPEx is pleased to report that practices continue to deliver exceptional training, and registrar satisfaction remains high.

From feedback provided by registrars in November 2021:

Results from the survey did reveal some



concerns about the assessment load during COVID-19. In response, GPEx reviewed the program and made significant changes to its assessment framework. The GPEx Education and Assessment Framework for 2022 reduces the assessment load for registrars and supervisors, but still aligns with GPEx research on workplace-based assessment and both College standards.

We would like to thank our supervisors and practice teams for continuing to deliver high-quality training during the COVID-19 pandemic, and thank registrars for adapting to the ever-changing COVID-19 environment in the training program and in general practice more broadly.

### Placing registrars in areas of workforce need

Amid well-documented medical workforce challenges, GPEx has focused on the placement and distribution of GP registrars to areas based on workforce and community need.

Stakeholder collaboration to develop innovative training models which resolve rural workforce challenges, improve training opportunities for registrars and meet community need, remains an ongoing priority for GPEx. Models such as roving

registrars and blended placements allow registrars to train in regions that previously would not have been able to sustain a permanent registrar arrangement.

In South Australia, Rural Generalism continues to grow in popularity. GPEx's Rural Generalist team works closely with key stakeholders, including SA Health and the Rural Support Service, to maximise the number of rural skills placements available to GPEx registrars.

One initiative saw GPEx expand the number of Advanced Skills posts across South Australia, with seven new positions created in collaboration with the Rural Generalist Coordination Unit, and in particular, the Riverland Academy of Clinical Excellence.

**From 2016-2021, more than 80% of GP registrars stayed in South Australia after graduating from the AGPT Program, despite only 57% of them completing their medical schooling in Adelaide.**

### Retention

The latest graduate tracking data analysis by GPEx's Research and Innovation Team explored outcomes from the AGPT Program in South Australia for graduates between 2016-2021, and demonstrates the success of GPEx's recruitment, training and placement strategies.

Results revealed that South Australia has observed an increase in retaining rural pathway registrars in rural practices post-graduation (51%) compared to the initial study in 2016-2021 (39%). The number of FTE rural training weeks continues to be statistically associated with choosing to work rurally post-graduation, which emphasises the importance of the GPEx placement process.

From 2016-2021, more than 80% of GP registrars stayed in South Australia after graduating from the AGPT Program, despite only 57% of them completing their medical schooling in Adelaide.

Over 70% of registrars with advanced skills choose to stay in rural practice post-graduation, which confirms the importance of the opportunities GPEx provides for registrars to develop advanced skills in a supportive training environment.



In 2021, there were four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander registrars in the AGPT Program. There were also seven registrars undertaking training in Aboriginal Health posts, who contributed approximately 148 working weeks to Aboriginal Health services in South Australia.

## Aboriginal Health

GPEX actively worked to increase the number of registrars undertaking Aboriginal Health placements, build training capacity, and increase Aboriginal direct and secondary employment.

In 2021, there were four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander registrars in the AGPT Program. There were also seven registrars undertaking training in Aboriginal Health posts, who contributed approximately 148 working weeks to Aboriginal Health Services in South Australia.

Recruitment and engagement strategies to generate registrar interest in Aboriginal Health were successful, with GPEX more than doubling the number of registrars working in Aboriginal Health Services from five to 11 in Semester 1 2022.

GPEX's Accreditation and Aboriginal Health teams also worked closely with several Aboriginal Health Services to increase supervision levels for accreditation and allow GPEX to build Aboriginal Health training capacity. The Moorundi Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service in Murray Bridge was accredited in 2021, and site visits were made to Ceduna to commence the accreditation process.



## Strategic Partnerships

2021 saw developments in strategic partnerships to deliver improved education, quality programs and impact, with a particular focus on closing the gap for First Nations communities and boosting our primary care workforce.

A new partnership between GPEx and the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) is driving Aboriginal Health research and initiatives in South Australia. A GPEx scholarship for First Nations health researchers at SAHMRI was also established to provide opportunities for junior researchers and contribute to improved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health initiatives.

GPEx was invited to partner in government-funded research run by the Centre for Male Health and Wellbeing based at SAHMRI, which will inform policy and practice towards the advancement of primary healthcare and community health and wellbeing.

Continued efforts to close the gap in health and employment outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal South Australians are being shaped through the Tauondi Aboriginal

College and GPEx partnership agreement. An internship has also been created with the University of Adelaide's Wirritu Yarlur Centre to support the placement of undergraduate students from the university at GPEx, including medical students and students from other faculties and disciplines. A partnership around research projects was also initiated with Wirritu Yarlur to analyse attrition rates and causes amongst Aboriginal students within the Medical and Health Science student cohort at the university.

## Medical Education

GPEx's Medical Education team focused on delivering quality education and training to registrars through the AGPT Program, and improving the quality of the health workforce through policy settings, stakeholder management, partnership models, and support for national regulatory arrangements.

Dr Cristina Valero joined the Medical Education team to replace Dr Dragica Sosa, with Dr Alex Main appointed to the Medical Education Fellow role. A new Fellow Medical Educator Group was also established. Dr Michael Notley returned to GPEx to provide

additional Senior Medical Educator capacity, and casual Medical Educators were appointed to assist with Direct Observation Visits.

GPEx would like to congratulate the following Medical Educators who completed their own education courses this year:

- Director of Medical Education and Training, Dr Paul Dilella - Master of Clinical Education;
- Deputy Director of Medical Education and Training, Dr Simon Hay - Graduate Diploma of Medical Education; and
- Medical Educators, Dr Helen Mullner and Dr James Walker - Certificate of Clinical Education.

GPEx continued to Chair the Lead Medical Educator Committee (LMEC), which provides Medical Educator training advice to the Regional Training Organisation Network, including in relation to the college-led transition.

## Practice Experience Program

This year, GPEx welcomed an increased number of non-vocationally registered doctors on the RACGP's Practice Experience Program (PEP) pathway.

During 2021, 47 participants were involved in the PEP program with eight obtaining Fellowship. Thank you to Medical Educators Dr Moniruzzaman and Dr Anand for supporting PEP participants.

GPEx's Medical Education team focused on delivering quality education and training to registrars through the AGPT Program, and improving the quality of the health workforce through policy settings, stakeholder management, partnership models, and support for national regulatory arrangements.

### Image

Dr Penny Need, Senior Medical Educator, and Dr Grace Morcom, GP registrar.











## Building a better, stronger future for General Practice

The GPEx Research and Innovation Team was successful in securing funding for three new research projects in 2021:

- *Finding meaning through diversity – exploring the role of career and job diversity in GPs' wellbeing* – funded through an RACGP Foundation Harry Nespolon Research Grant.
- *Understanding how to promote and sustain Australian General Practice supervisors' wellbeing* – 2022 Education Research Grant with research to be undertaken in collaboration with GPTQ and the University of Queensland.
- *Understanding the financial implications of entering GP training for junior doctors in South Australia* – co-funded by RDWA and supported by GPRA.

*The Financial implications of entering GP training* research was finalised this year, with recommendations including:

- Helping registrars better understand earning potential and pay calculations before entering GP community placements;
- Promoting financial benefits and entitlements available to registrars; and
- Providing more support for registrars around Medicare billing.

GPEx's Early Safety Assessment research – funded through an RACGP Education Research Grant and completed in collaboration with GPTQ, GP Synergy and GPTT – was also finalised. This research recommended conducting an Early Safety Assessment in the first term of GP training, advised on the essential elements for inclusion in the assessment, and included specific protocols for close supervision in the initial four weeks of training. GPEx has shared project updates with the RACGP to inform its workplace-based assessment planning, and is planning a national webinar to promote these findings to key stakeholders, including supervisors.

Preliminary results from *The financial costs and revenue associated with teaching and supervision in general practice* research project were released and shared in national discussions regarding payment models for the future of GP training. In partnership with the University of Adelaide and GPSA, this project aimed to better understand the sustainability of GP supervision by determining the financial costs and revenue associated with teaching and supervision in general practice. This project will continue until April 2022.

This research recommended conducting an Early Safety Assessment in the first term of GP training, advised on the essential elements for inclusion in the assessment, and included specific protocols for close supervision in the initial four weeks of training.



Image

Dr Taryn Elliott – Research & Innovation Manager.



GPEX was also a project partner with GPTQ and the University of Queensland in *The Teaching and Learning of Doctors' Health in Australian General Practice Training* research.

As part of building a better, stronger future for general practice, GPEX communicated the findings of its research to key stakeholders. This occurred through the delivery of a webinar series, four publications, and presentations at The Australasian Association for Academic Primary Care (AAAPC), The Association for Medical Education in Europe (AMEE) and The Australian and New Zealand Association for Health Professional Educators (ANZAPHE) conferences. Another

three publications were submitted and are currently under review.

### Building GP Research Capacity

GPEX successfully continues to support the development of GPs with research skills.

Five registrars completed an Academic Post this year, with their final reports submitted in early 2022. There were many successful outcomes resulting from these posts, including three journal articles drafted for submission. GPEX would like to thank Professor Nigel Stocks and Professor Lucie Walters from the University of Adelaide, A/Prof Jill Benson AM from GPEX, and Assoc A/Prof Emma Kennedy and Ms Vanessa Ryan

from Flinders University for supervising this year's Academic Post registrars.

Two new events were held in 2021 to further build South Australia's GP research capacity:

- The *Fostering a Research Culture* event provided an opportunity for the academic supervisor community and current and past academic registrars to celebrate research in general practice, foster networks, and support the next generation of GP researchers.
- The *Teaching and Leadership Advocacy* Workshop for academic registrars and RLOs focused on developing skills and knowledge to positively represent and promote general practice, and was initiated as a result of the Medical Specialty Decision-Making research study. Academic registrars used these skills in their posts to train and inspire medical students and advocate for general practice.





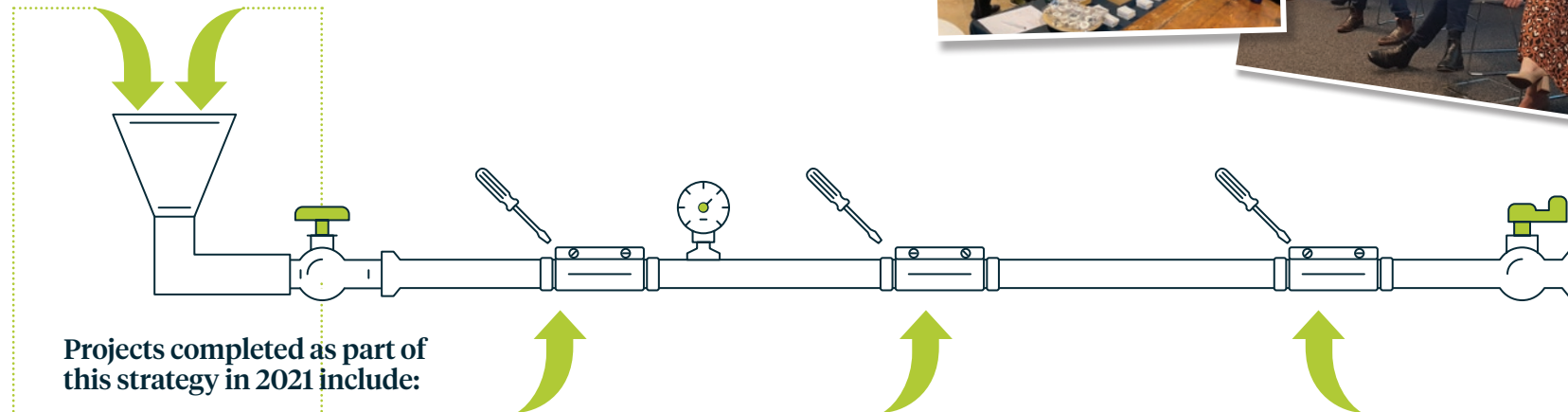
• Image  
Recruitment marketing campaign  
featuring GP Registrar, Dr Juliette  
Roex, at the Pioneer Medical  
Centre, Tea Tree Gully.

# Strengthening the Pipeline

GPEX's Strengthening the Pipeline strategy is based on findings from the 2020 Medical Specialty Decision-Making (MSDM) Research, and involves a number of projects aimed at increasing the number of AGPT applicants in SA and the proportion of applicants who complete some, or all, of their training in a rural location.



The success of these Strengthening the Pipeline strategies will be measured across several KPIs, including an observed increase in awareness of general practice in junior doctors, an increase in the number of applications for the South Australian AGPT Program, and an increase in the number of registrars in training who are considering a rural placement or rural GP career.



Projects completed as part of this strategy in 2021 include:

#### High School

- The completion of the *Pathways from High School to General Practice* Report.

#### University

- Appointing a Future Workforce Coordinator at GPEx, who is solely focused on attracting doctors to the general practice specialty through direct engagement with junior doctors and medical students in collaboration with key stakeholder groups, including Local Health Networks (LHNs), universities, Primary Health Networks (PHNs) and the Colleges.
- Digital marketing recruitment and engagement campaigns actively focussed on dispelling myths and misconceptions revealed by GPEx's MSDM research, and promoting positive and realistic messages about a career in general practice.

#### Hospital

- Funding and coordinating an increased GP Medical Educator presence within the hospital environment, resulting in increased delivery of GP-led education and positive exposure to general practice for pre-vocational doctors.
- Increased collaboration, information-sharing and projects with stakeholders, including universities, the Rural Doctors Workforce Agency, SA Health and LHNs, to explore opportunities to increase exposure and positive experiences of general practice.
- *The Financial implications of entering GP training* research.
- Developing a career-based mentoring program.

#### GP Training

- Innovative placement models, such as the roving registrar position and blended/composite pathways.
- Focusing on accreditation to build training capacity in the areas of greatest need.
- Maintaining and supporting strategies to increase supervision and support for registrars.
- Establishing a rural incentive policy to encourage registrars to work in the areas of greatest need.

# The Strategy in Action: Innovative Placement Models

Dr Barbara Butler –  
Blended Placement



**G**PEx has developed blended placement positions which enable registrars to live and work in a rural community, whilst also obtaining specialist skills through high-quality, intensive training in metropolitan hospitals. This program enables greater flexibility in training, whilst maintaining a commitment to positive rural exposure during training and intent for rural

practice after training.

GPEx registrar, Dr Barbara Butler, commenced an Advanced Specialised Training post in Obstetrics through a blended placement position in 2021. This saw her spend 50% of her training time at the Lyell McEwin Hospital undertaking an Advanced Diploma RANZCOG, and the other 50% at a GP clinic in Kadina on the Yorke Peninsula.

**“**

I’ve delivered babies at the Lyell McEwin whose parents are Kadina locals and see me in the town for their follow-up visits. New mums find the continuity of care reassuring.”

## Dr Laura Sharley – Roving Registrar



A partnership with the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (ACHSA) continues to support GPEx's roving registrar initiative, with two registrars in action in 2021.

Unique to South Australia, GPEx offers roving registrar placements to GP registrars training in Aboriginal Health. This program enables registrars

to be located in Adelaide, but travel to rural and remote locations of workforce need across South Australia on a fly-in, fly-out basis to provide outreach services to Aboriginal communities.

In 2021, GPEx registrar, Dr Laura Sharley, undertook a roving registrar placement through Nunkuwarrin Yunti in Adelaide.

“

The roving registrar job has provided me with so many opportunities. Being able to go out onto the community lands is such a unique experience. You get to go and work in the school or at the footy grounds and really take the opportunity to engage with people's health anywhere, which is very different from medicine in the city.”



# GPEX Community

Dr Natasha  
Nottingham –  
Registrar Liaison  
Officer



**D**r Natasha Nottingham applied for the AGPT Program during her hospital intern years when she became inspired by the diversity of general practice.

“I thoroughly enjoyed all of my internship rotations. I loved the complexity of general medicine, the fast-paced nature of the emergency department, the challenges of haematology, and the joy of paediatrics. I realised that only general practice would allow me to utilise the skills I had learnt in each of these fields on a daily basis.”

Natasha began her GP training with GPEX in 2018 and completed Extended Skills Training in paediatrics and

W

It’s vital that we look after these doctors, because very soon they’re the ones who will look after people in urban and regional communities. They are the future of our workforce.”

emergency medicine.

“As a registrar I was given the opportunities I needed to learn and grow as a doctor and develop my special skills and interests. I feel my training experience with GPEX has prepared me well for the challenges I face as a GP.”

In 2020, Natasha became a RLO at GPEX. As a RLO, she played an important advocacy, support and advisory role for registrars within GPEX regarding their training, wellbeing and general practice working environment.

“It’s vital that we look after these doctors, because very soon they’re the ones who will look after people in urban and regional communities. They are the future of our workforce.”

Her passion and dedication to supporting future GPs is also evident in her role as the South Australian Future GP Advisor for General Practice Registrars Australia (GPRA) - a position she has held for the past 16 months.

“I was in a really fortunate position as an intern because I had someone I could talk to about general practice, but I wish I had even more people to talk to as that’s where you build your passion for the profession.”

In 2021, Natasha obtained her Fellowship of the RACGP. She now works in general practice in metropolitan Adelaide and part-time as GPEX’s Medical Education Fellow, where she teaches and promotes general practice to medical students and prevocational doctors.

“As a GP, you have the opportunity to make a profound difference in your patients’ lives, to slow the progression of disease, to tackle preventable illness, and to keep patients in their home with their loved ones. It is a career that is both challenging and rewarding, and I fervently look forward to supporting the next generation of doctors on their path towards general practice training.”



The uptake of rural training places has been poor for several years, but it has been good to see Rural Generalist training taking root in South Australia in 2021.”



## Dr Bill Geyer – Supervisor Liaison Officer

The COVID-19 vaccination rollout placed incredible demands on registrars and supervisors. Whilst the swift vaccination of our community was a necessary and critical part of our pandemic response, time spent vaccinating is time spent away from learning about the breadth of general practice.

Nevertheless, according to Dr Bill Geyer, this year saw some significant wins within GP training and the general practice landscape more broadly.

“GPEx continued to punch well above its weight in terms of GP research, with five academic registrars. This is due in no small

part to the leadership provided by A/Prof Jill Benson AM and the rest of the GPEx team.

“GPEx’s research also continues to contribute to building a better, stronger future for general practice, with the Cost of Teaching project hopefully leading to more appropriate remuneration for supervisors. It was a shame that the cancellation of the GP Training and Education Conference due to COVID-19 deprived us of the opportunity to show off GPEx’s research achievements and learn what other educators are doing around Australia.”

While there continues to be ongoing uncertainty around the

transition to College-led training across the broader general practice landscape, Bill said that it was encouraging to have a refreshed Board with a new Chair and several new members to steer GPEx through this transition.

“The uptake of rural training places has been poor for several years, but it has been good to see Rural Generalist training taking root in South Australia in 2021. GPEx’s Strengthening the Pipeline projects are also gaining ground, with increasing numbers of registrars being placed in rural general practices in SA.

“As a member of GPEx’s Rural Primary Care Advisory Committee (RAC), it has been rewarding to help shape GPEx’s strategy to attract, train and retain the state’s rural GP and Rural Generalist workforce. The importance of this Committee in taking in the views of those involved in rural GP training, and ensuring that all of these issues are foremost in the minds of Board members, cannot be understated.”

According to Bill, the future of general practice in South Australia looks brighter than it did 12 months ago; applications to GP training in SA have increased, rural contracts have

been finalised which will make GP training in rural SA more appealing, and with most of the population vaccinated, GP consulting and training can more closely approximate ‘normal’.

“It is also very encouraging to hear talk of mandated GP placements for interns, which will give all medical graduates (not just those who go into general practice) exposure to the GP specialty, and a clearer understanding of why general practice is one of the most important parts of our health system.”



# Professional Development for Health Professionals

With our purpose of excellence and equity in healthcare firmly in mind, GPEx's goal is to shape the future of health in Australia by delivering education and training to primary care workers that meets the health and workforce needs of our communities.

With over 1,460 enrolments across 14 courses in 2021, GPEx prides itself on delivering clinically up-to-date and relevant professional development education for primary care workers, which results in better health outcomes for our communities.

Whilst continuing to grow its professional development offerings, GPEx is also partnering with like-minded healthcare organisations around Australia in the development of their own professional education courses to maximise their impact through education.

In 2021, GPEx developed a new partnership with the Australian Centre for the Prevention of Cervical Cancer (ACPCC) to develop and deliver three

national education courses on cancer screening.

GPEx was also proud to be part of re-developing and re-launching the Permanent Impairment Accreditation Training Program with ReturnToWorkSA in line with national policy changes. We are pleased to be able to continue working with ReturnToWorkSA on other programs which educate health professionals in supporting patients to return to work post injury and illness.

In 2021, GPEx continued to support physicians from the Academy of Family Physicians in Malaysia with exam preparation programs, the Australian Medical Association (AMA) with Doctors' Health Programs, and Country SA PHN as an education service provider.



1,806

enrolments in exam preparation programs;

### Exam Preparation

As a charitable GP training organisation, our goal is to help doctors realise their Fellowship ambitions. We are proud to have helped more doctors achieve their Fellowship goals than any other provider.

Under the ModMed brand, 14 different exam preparation products are offered across all three RACGP and ACRRM exams for those working towards Fellowship.

In 2021 there were:

268

1:1 Medical Educator and performance coaching exam support sessions; and

30

exam prep webinars and small group mock exams delivered.

 Image  
Inge Parodi -  
Director Professional  
Development Programs.



# Business Excellence at GPEx



## Technology

The appointment of a Chief Technology Officer provided GPEx with an opportunity to implement quality improvements to its IT systems and infrastructure that align with best practice frameworks.

Whilst continuing to train and support registrars, supervisors and practice managers with GPEx's Learning Management System, the Technology team also undertook several projects to increase GPEx's cybersecurity resilience and protect against emerging global risks, introduce new operating systems, migrate ModMed systems into the GPEx environment, and rationalise infrastructure.

Recruitment campaigns for the 2022 AGPT program occurred through digital marketing, direct email campaigns, and GP exposure events, and resulted in an increased number of registrars for the 2022 AGPT Program.

## Marketing

The recruitment of junior doctors to general practice, and supporting placement, retention and Strengthening the Pipeline projects, remained the focus of the Marketing and Communications team.

In 2021, the appointment of a Communications Officer consolidated both internal and external communications to staff, registrars, supervisors, practice managers, and stakeholders, all of which were delivered in a clearer and more consistent manner.

A refreshed GPEx Connect website was delivered to enable registrars to explore GPEx's training regions, accredited practices and AST/ARST/Extended Skills opportunities.

Recruitment campaigns for the 2022 AGPT program occurred through digital marketing, direct email campaigns and GP exposure events, and resulted in an increased number of registrars for the 2022 AGPT Program.

• Image

Leah van Hemert - Chief Technology Officer.



**In 2021, GPEx continued to invest in the development of its team, with a renewed focus on providing staff with professional development opportunities.**

## People and Culture

GPEx's most valuable asset continues to be its people, who are committed and motivated to advancing our purpose.

In 2021, GPEx continued to invest in the development of its team, with a renewed focus on providing staff with professional development opportunities.

Due to the ongoing uncertainty around the transition to College-led training, and the challenges associated with COVID-19, staff wellbeing was a key focus.

COVID-19 continued to be a key workforce challenge, with SA Health guidelines followed closely throughout the year for the safety and wellbeing of all staff. The uptake of COVID-19 vaccinations amongst staff was high, but even so, GPEx ensured that attendance at in-house registrar, supervisor and practice manager workshops was restricted to vaccinated GPEx staff only.

### Image

Karen Stanton Brown - Marketing and Communications Manager (top right), Sarah Hills - People and Culture Manager.

## Advancing Reconciliation and Closing the Gap

GPEx launched its Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in early 2021 with participants from GPEx, Government health agencies and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Centres.

RAP activities in 2021 included:

- a policy review to support RAP objectives and increase employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- renaming GPEx meeting rooms in Kurna language;
- staff participation at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community events; and
- running a staff education and awareness program focussing on nationally significant dates through internal communication channels, guest speakers at Lunch and Learn events, and shared resources.

Cultural Awareness Workshops were held for GPEx staff at the Living Kurna Cultural Centre throughout the year.





# Finance

---

The principal activity of GPEx Ltd during the financial period was to develop and deliver quality education and training services to general practice registrars and the general practice sector. No significant changes in the nature of the company's activity occurred during the financial period. On 1 January 2021 the company amalgamated with ModMed Ltd, acquiring its employees and net assets and assuming its activities from that date.

ModMed's business and investment assets were integrated into GPEx's financial systems, with accounting treatments and policies aligned where necessary. GPEx also assumed ModMed's investment portfolio, which grew to \$2.4 million during the year.

2021 was the final year of a further three-year contract to deliver the AGPT Program in South Australia. In November 2021, a thirteen-month extension grant was awarded to continue delivering the program until 31 January 2023.

GPEX also assumed ModMed's investment portfolio, which grew to \$2.4 million during the year.

The Board and Executive Team expect that other education and training services delivered to the GP sector within South Australia will enhance the financial sustainability of the organisation.

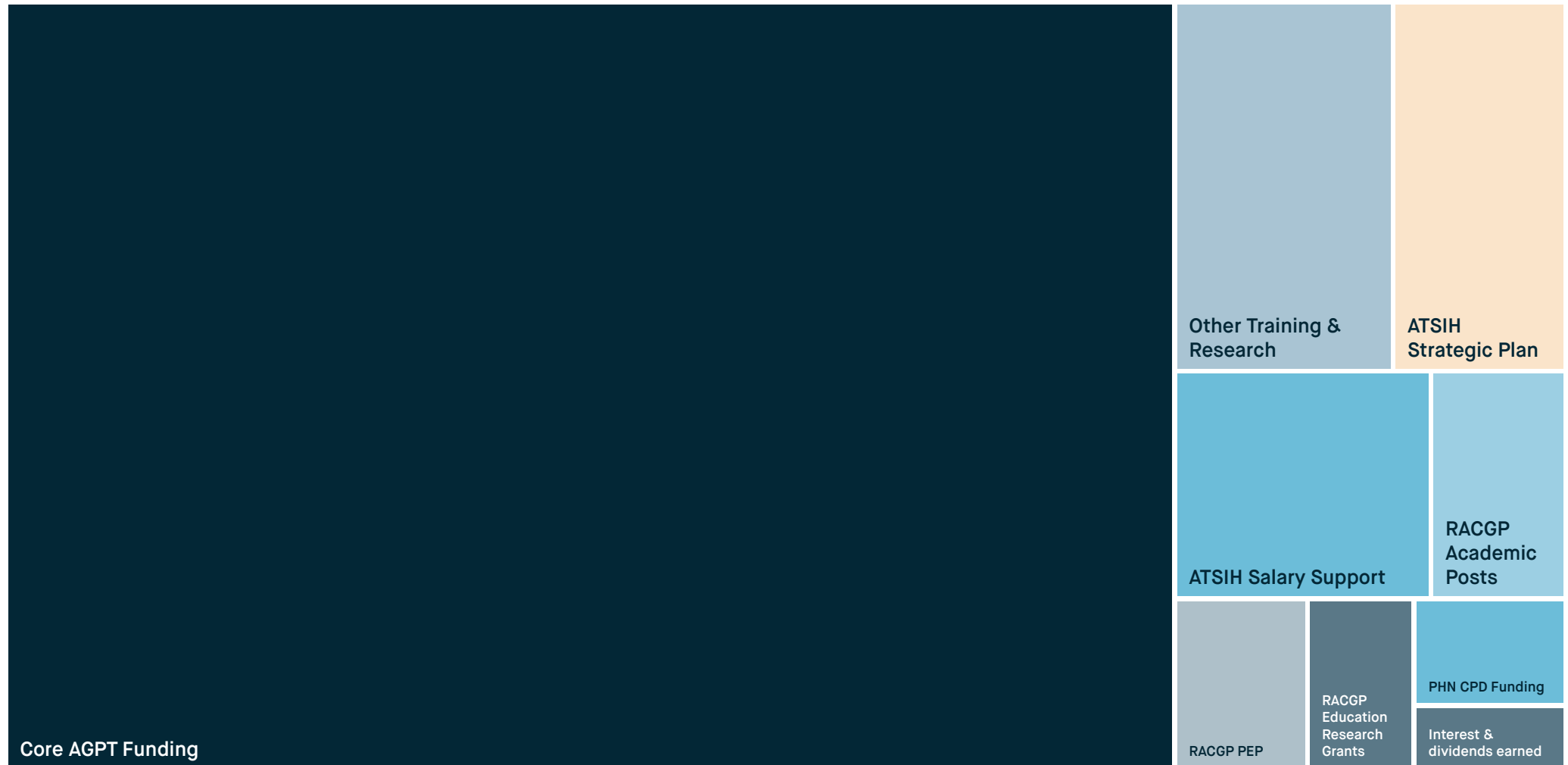
Risk management was a key focus for the year, with the development of a Risk Management program aligned with the new Risk Appetite Statement adopted by the Board.



[Image](#)  
Tim Piper - Director Support Services.

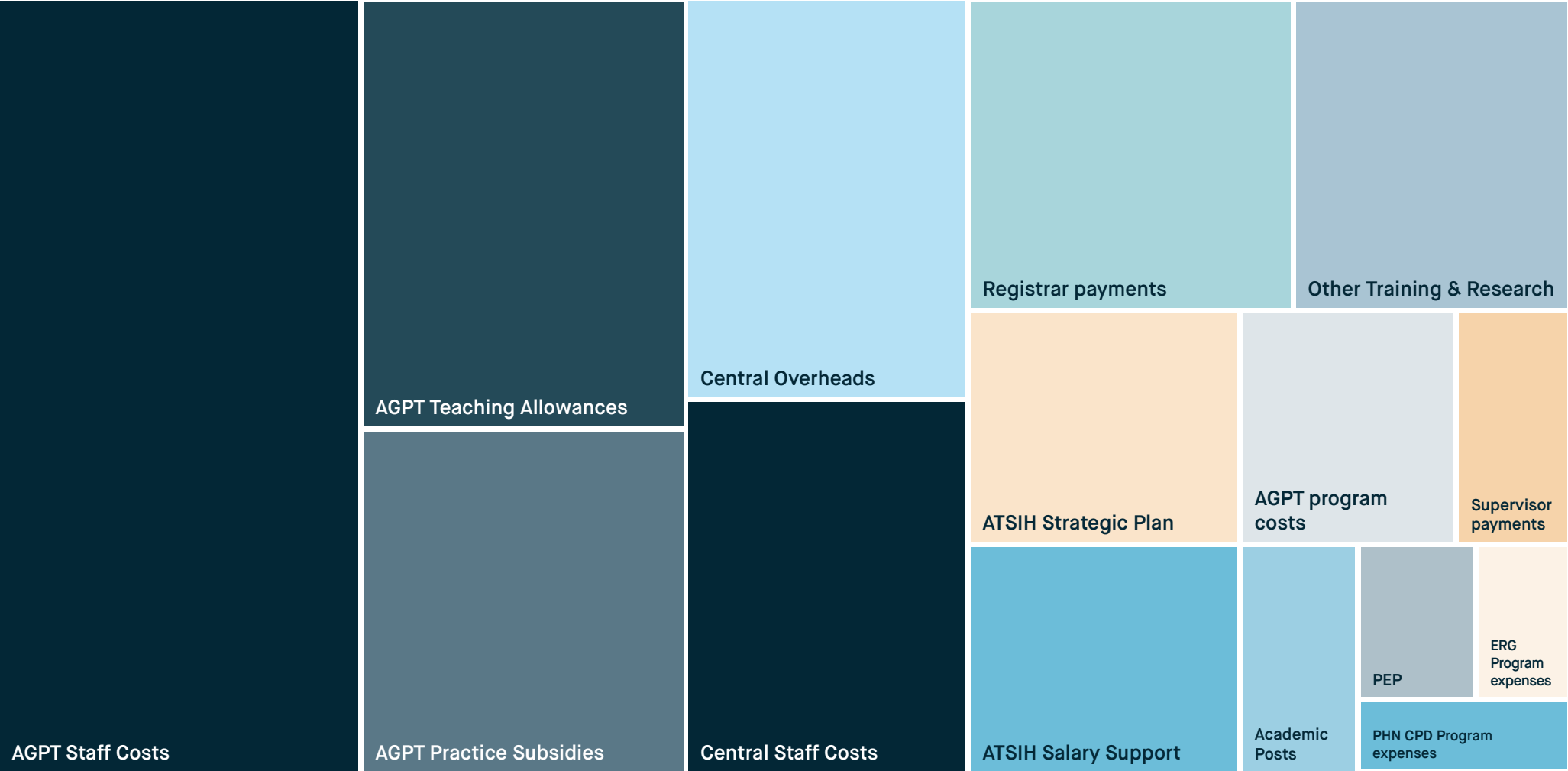
# GPEX 2021 Income

\$18,282,119



# GPEX 2021 Expenditure

\$18,242,825 - 2020









**GPEx Limited**

132 Greenhill Road, Unley SA 5061  
PO Box 579, Unley SA 5061

[gpex.com.au](http://gpex.com.au)