



HONOURS 2017 PROJECTS

Department of General Practice

Project Name	Department	Project Site	Supervisor	Description
Using a colorectal cancer risk prediction tool in general practice to determine the prevalence of average, moderate and increased risk of CRC in general practice patients.	Department of General Practice	DGP, VCCC and fieldwork	Prof Jon Emery, Dr Jennifer Walker	This project aims to determine the prevalence of GP patients at increased risk of developing colorectal cancer using a risk prediction tool (CRISP) in a GP waiting room. This project will be part of the development and implementation of a colorectal cancer risk prediction tool for use in general practice. The Honours student would have added experience in being part of a large multi-disciplinary research group.
What do GPs think about prescribing risk reducing medication to prevent cancer eg aspirin to prevent bowel cancer and/or tamoxifen to prevent breast cancer?	Department of General Practice	DGP, VCCC and fieldwork	Prof Jon Emery, Dr Jennifer Walker	This involves interviewing general practitioners about their knowledge, attitudes and practices of prescribing risk reducing medication for colorectal cancer and breast cancer.
Exploring cancer beliefs and traditional medicine use in Vietnamese speaking communities in Victoria	Department of General Practice	DGP and VCCC	Prof Jon Emery, Dr Sharon Licqurish	Interviews, focus groups and surveys will be conducted to determine Vietnamese speaking peoples' cancer beliefs and barriers to help seeking for a cancer diagnosis. We will also be exploring their health belief model and usage of complementary and alternative medicine or traditional healing practices to determine if they contribute to delays in presentation to general practice. We may also interview traditional medicine practitioners and general practitioners about referral pathways and collaboration with general practice. The findings will inform the development of a campaign to raise cancer awareness and address barriers to help seeking for the Vietnamese speaking community in Australia.
Problem gambling and depression: Is it an issue in primary care and what do GPs need to know?	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This project is nested within a longitudinal cohort study of patients with depressive symptoms - the diamond study. The student will use literature review, existing survey data and patient interviews to examine associations between people with depressive symptoms and gambling.
The use of antidepressants in primary care: who takes them, who gives up and why?	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This project is nested within a longitudinal cohort study of patients with depressive symptoms - the diamond study. The student will use literature review, existing survey data and patient interviews to examine antidepressant use in primary care.

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The use of self-help techniques (e.g. Massage, Aromatherapy, Yoga, Relaxation/Meditation) by people with depressive symptoms	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This project is nested within a longitudinal cohort study of patients with depressive symptoms - the diamond study. The student will use literature review, existing survey data and patient interviews to examine the range of self-help techniques used by patients with depression and compare them against the evidence for the effectiveness of these techniques.
The use of reading groups as a treatment for depression	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This student will conduct a literature review on the use of reading groups as a treatment for depression and will be assisted to design, implement and evaluate a reading group program within the primary care setting.
Can household pets help you to recover from depression?	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This project is nested within a longitudinal cohort study of patients with depressive symptoms - the diamond study. The student will use literature review, existing survey data and patient interviews to examine whether having a household pet is associated with better outcomes for people experiencing depression.
Does attending the cinema or theatre help people recover from depression?	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This project is nested within a longitudinal cohort study of patients with depressive symptoms - the diamond study. The student will use literature review, existing survey data and patient interviews to examine whether attending the cinema or theatre is associated with better health and wellbeing for patients with depression.
Use of the creative arts (singing, acting, playing music) by people with depressive symptoms	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This project is nested within a longitudinal cohort study of patients with depressive symptoms - the diamond study. The student will use literature review, existing survey data and patient interviews to examine the use of singing, acting or playing music by patients with depression and compare them against the evidence for the effectiveness of these techniques.
Can volunteering help with depression, stress and worries?	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This project is nested within a longitudinal cohort study of patients with depressive symptoms - the diamond study. The student will use literature review, existing survey data and patient interviews to examine whether volunteering is associated with better health and wellbeing for patients with depression.
Barriers and facilitators to using clinical prediction tools in primary care	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	The student will use literature reviews and interview/focus groups to explore the attitudes and behaviour of GPs regarding the use of clinical prediction tools to estimate the risk of condition specific poor outcomes in their patients.
The good,the bad and the ugly: How different life events effect the course of depression	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This project is nested within a longitudinal cohort study of patients with depressive symptoms - the diamond study. The student will use literature review, existing survey data and patient interviews to examine how different types of life events impact on an individuals' depressive symptoms.

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Where you go, I go: The relationship between substance use and depressive symptoms in primary care patients	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This project is nested within a longitudinal cohort study of patients with depressive symptoms - the diamond study. The student will use literature review, existing survey data and patient interviews to examine the relationship between substance use and depressive symptoms in a cohort of primary care patients with depressive symptoms.
Treating depression through psychological therapy	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Jane Gunn	This project is nested within a longitudinal cohort study of patients with depressive symptoms - the diamond study. The student will use literature review, existing survey data and patient interviews to examine the different psychological treatments used by a group of people experiencing depressive symptoms.
Ready, set, stop: What do patients and GPs need to know about antidepressant cessation?	Department of General Practice	DGP	Prof Jane Gunn, Dr Susie Fletcher	The rate of antidepressant prescribing continues to increase in Australia, and evidence suggests that much of this is due to inappropriate or unnecessary long term use. In this project the student will interview GPs and patients about the barriers to reducing inappropriate use of antidepressants, and identify how to communicate information about ceasing medication in a way that ensures good health outcomes for the patient.
Participatory health care in the future networked society - what are the limits and ethical issues?	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Dr Victoria Palmer	Students will review published literature on current developments in participatory health and the networked society (e.g. digital technologies, data, and mobile apps) to examine the impact of this on future primary medical care. The project may include participating in a small focus group with medical practitioners or patients to identify their views on the impact and implications of the networked society. The student will complete an overview of the ethical issues and the considerations that need to be made in participatory health.
The social networks of people living with severe mental illness	Department of General Practice	DGP	Dr Victoria Palmer	Students will undertake secondary data analysis of data collected from a sub-sample of people engaged in a cluster randomised controlled trial currently underway in the community mental health setting. The trial is testing whether an experience based co-design quality improvement method results in individual psychosocial recovery outcomes. Students will collate and analyse a sub-sample of individuals' self-reported information about their social networks and consider this in conjunction with the published literature on social networks and people with severe mental illness.

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Engaging consumers, carers and service providers as active partners: a case study	Department of General Practice	DGP	Dr Victoria Palmer	Current mental health policy sees consumer and carer engagement in service planning and development as essential for building recovery-oriented systems. This project will involve interviewing a small number of consumers with mental illnesses and their carers about their experiences of engagement and working with mental health services as active partners.
What are the views of ideal care in mental health services of people living with severe mental illness in Victoria?	Department of General Practice	DGP	Dr Victoria Palmer	This project will explore what the ideal care and services are for people living with severe mental illness. Following completion of a literature review to examine existing studies of ideal care provision, the student will have the opportunity to analyse a sub-sample of open ended telephone interview responses from people with severe mental illness about their views on ideal care. Data includes information on people's views on how decisions are made about support services, how people are provided with feedback or information, whether time is spent with people with similar experiences and if the people who are important to them are involved in their care.
What do carers of people living with severe mental illness see as ideal care in mental health services?	Department of General Practice	DGP	Dr Victoria Palmer	This project will explore how carers of people with severe mental illness view ideal care provision for the person that they care for. Following completion of a review of the published literature on carer views on ideal care provision and mental health services, the student will have the opportunity to analyse a sub-sample of open ended telephone interview responses from carers about their views on ideal care. Data includes involvement in decision making, how information is provided and overall inclusion in care.
The needs of carers of people with severe mental illness	Department of General Practice	DGP	Dr Victoria Palmer	The student will conduct a literature review of the mental health and well-being needs of carers of people living with severe mental illness. Studies highlight that carers have poor quality of life and poorer physical health with greater unmet needs. This project involves analysing open ended interview responses from up to 50 carers about their experiences of providing care and the support needs they have. The student may only work with a sub-sample of the interview data depending on skills and capabilities.

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The health and well-being effects of a reading for writing program for people with and without mental health conditions	Department of General Practice	DGP	Dr Victoria Palmer	This project will be embedded within a current pilot study exploring the health and well-being effects of creative reading and writing. The student will complete a literature review about reading and writing programs and their use in the public setting for improving social connection and well-being. There is an opportunity to analyse interview data with people who have completed a reading for writing well-being program and their experiences of this. This may be analysed in conjunction with survey question response about well-being, psychosocial and neurocognitive benefits.
Sexual health in young people	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Meredith Temple-Smith	The student will complete a literature review, and then conduct interviews with young women and men to explore how they view sexual health.
Primary care research: student's choice	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Meredith Temple-Smith	By use of literature reviews, surveys and/or interviews with patients and practitioners will explore an issue of interest to the student, in an area related to the work conducted within the Department.
Managing patient expectations of stem cell treatments	Department of General Practice	DGP, Stem Cells Australia and fieldwork	Prof Meredith Temple-Smith, A/Prof Megan Munsie, Dr Claire Tanner	The student will undertake a literature review to determine what is known about clinical encounters which have the potential to challenge the GPs' boundaries of confidence in emerging technologies. Interviews will be conducted with GPs to determine their attitudes to, and practices around advising patients who are seeking referral or clinical advice for stem cell treatments, about which the GP knows little, or cannot in good conscience endorse.
How do GPs source information on new and emerging technologies?	Department of General Practice	DGP, Stem Cells Australia and fieldwork	Prof Meredith Temple-Smith, A/Prof Megan Munsie, Dr Claire Tanner	The student will undertake a literature review to determine what is known about where GPs seek advice on emerging stem cell treatments. Interviews will be conducted with GPs to determine methods of seeking new information, what is or would be required for them to recommend new stem cell treatments to patients, and how such information is delivered.
Incentives for youth participation in research: do they make a difference?	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	A/Prof Lena Sanci	This project will involve field work and secondary data analysis to determine whether young people are more likely to take part in research with an individual incentive versus a raffle with a chance to win a prize.
Culture, class and research participation by youth	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	A/Prof Lena Sanci	This project will study the response rates to a large research project across Melbourne and determine the sociodemographic factors that might be associated with research participation.

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Parents of adolescents and young people attending general practice: attitudes toward youth friendly care and perceived parenting support needs	Department of General Practice	DGP	A/Prof Lena Sanci	This project will involve an analysis of data from parents of young people aged 14-24 years attending general practice clinicians in 34 Victorian general practices to understand their attitudes toward best youth friendly practice for young people (eg confidentiality, Medicare cards, health risk screening) and their perceived need to parenting support from general practice.
Young people attending general practice and their perceived social supports for health and wellbeing issues	Department of General Practice	DGP	A/Prof Lena Sanci	This project will be a descriptive analysis of data collected from around 1000 young people aged 14-24 years attending Victorian general practices as part of a randomised trial of an intervention for practices to become more youth friendly. The questions asked about who young people lived with and how well they got along in addition to who they would seek for assistance with a problem. This dataset is unique in Australia and one of the few worldwide to collect comprehensive information about young people attending primary care. Ethics approval has already been obtained for this project.
Mental health issues in young people attending general practice	Department of General Practice	DGP	A/Prof Lena Sanci	This project will be a descriptive analysis of data collected from around 1000 young people aged 14-24 years attending Victorian general practices as part of a randomised trial of an intervention for practices to become more youth friendly. The questions asked about perception of mental health and measures of emotional distress including self-harm. This dataset is unique in Australia and one of the few worldwide to collect comprehensive information about young people attending primary care. Ethics approval has already been obtained for this project.
Bullying and fearful relationships in young people attending general practice	Department of General Practice	DGP	A/Prof Lena Sanci	This project will be a descriptive analysis of data collected from around 1000 young people aged 14-24 years attending Victorian general practices as part of a randomised trial of an intervention for practices to become more youth friendly. The questions asked about exposure to various forms of bullying and being afraid of a family member or partner and whether these had been discussed with the clinician. This dataset is unique in Australia and one of the few worldwide to collect comprehensive information about young people attending primary care. Ethics approval has already been obtained for this project.
Prevalence of unwanted sexual contact in Australian college students	Department of General Practice	DGP and residential colleges	Dr Laura Tarzia, Prof Kelsey Hegarty	This project will use a recently-developed online survey on unwanted sexual contact (PROSPER) to measure the prevalence in Australian college students and the associated health effects.
Exploring health professionals understanding/perceptions of legal-health alliances in responding to family violence	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Ms Kirsty Forsdike-Young, Prof Kelsey Hegarty	Following a literature review of the integration of legal and health services in responding to family violence, the student will undertake qualitative interviews with health professionals to explore their perceptions of and potential role in legal-health alliances.

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How can we identify patients with domestic violence in clinical practice?	Department of General Practice	DGP	Prof Kelsey Hegarty	The student will undertake a literature review of screening tools for domestic violence and then undertake secondary analyses of existing data screening from the WEAVE study.
How can we reliably screen for and measure domestic violence and safety?	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Kelsey Hegarty	The student will interview women who have experienced domestic violence and ask them what they think about various screening tools for domestic violence.
Exploring GPs knowledge and attitudes of existing guidelines and training resources regarding abuse and violence.	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Kelsey Hegarty, Ms Kirsty Forsdike-Young	The student will map existing training resources and guidelines for general practice and conduct qualitative interviews with GPs to explore knowledge and attitudes towards such resources to develop an understanding of information sources used and perceived as needed by GPs in this area.
What does Australian general practice know and think about their current reporting requirements in relation to child abuse?	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Prof Kelsey Hegarty, Ms Kirsty Forsdike-Young	Mandatory reporting requirements vary widely across Australian states and are often controversial amongst policy makers and health professionals. Given general practice can employ varying health professionals, the student will explore both the current status of regulatory requirements across Australia for general practice and then undertake qualitative interviews with a range of general practice staff to ascertain knowledge and perceptions of their reporting requirements.
Exploring GPs' knowledge and attitudes towards intimate partner sexual violence	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Dr Laura Tarzia, Ms Kirsty Forsdike-Young	Intimate partner sexual violence (IPSV) is a common problem with serious and lasting impacts. Despite this, widespread understanding of IPSV lags behind other forms of abuse and violence, including amongst medical, legal, and support services. General practitioners are potentially a first point of call for women experiencing IPSV, yet it is unclear how much GPs know about IPSV, and what their attitudes are. This study will investigate GP knowledge and attitudes through qualitative interviews.
Exploring management of type 2 diabetes in General Practice	Department of General Practice	DGP	A/Prof John Furler, Dr Jo-Anne Manski-Nankervis, Dr Irene Blackberry	The student(s) undertaking this project will undertake a secondary analysis of data from a large randomised controlled trial of insulin initiation in type 2 diabetes in General Practice (the Stepping Up study). This could involve, for example, an analysis of medication adherence, health service use and/or costs, individualisation of clinical targets or glucose monitoring data.
Glycaemic variability in T2D	Department of General Practice	DGP	A/Prof John Furler, Dr Jo-Anne Manski-Nankervis, Dr Irene Blackberry	The student(s) undertaking this project will undertake a secondary analysis of baseline data from a large randomised controlled trial of continuous glucose monitoring in type 2 diabetes in General Practice (the OSMOTIC study). This will have a specific focus on glycaemic variability and hypoglycaemia.

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Clinical decision support in managing diabetes in General Practice	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	A/Prof John Furler, Dr Jo-Anne Manski Nankervis, Dr Irene Blackberry, Dr Mark Kennedy	The student will use a combination of selective literature review and/or interviews/focus groups to explore current knowledge and GP and/or patient views of clinical decision support tools to support personalising treatment for people with T2D in general practice.
Managing common chronic conditions in General Practice: Practice based studies.	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	A/Prof John Furler, Dr Jo-Anne Manski-Nankervis, Dr Malcolm Clarke, Dr Mark Kennedy, Dr Ralph Audehm, Dr Irene Blackberry	This project is offered as a generic topic to be negotiated between the student and the supervisor(s). This will form part of the overall work of the Diabetets and Cardio-Metabolic research team in the Department of General Pacfice and will involve a practice based study exploring aspects of chronic condition management in General Practice including dementia, CVD and T2D.
Clinical care and multimorbidity in socially disadvantaged contexts	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	A/Prof John Furler, Dr Mark Kennedy	The student will use a combination of selective literature review and/or interviews/focus groups to explore an aspect of clinical care in socially disadvantaged settings with a focus on multimorbidity.
Respect, human rights and health equity in primary care	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	A/Prof John Furler, Dr Mark Kennedy	The student will undertake a literature review and/or interviews/focus groups exploring the linked concepts of respect and human rights as a basis for "equity-sensitive care" in General Practice. This may be undertaken with input from colleagues in the Melb Law School.
What do GPs think about refering to each other?	Department of General Practice	DGP	A/Prof John Furler, Dr Phyllis Lau, Dr Jo-Anne Manski-Nankervis, Dr Malcolm Clark	With the increasing number of GPs with a special interest, what do GPs think about referring a patient to a GPSI colleague? The student in this study will conduct interviews with GPs and explore their prespectives around referral practices, barriers to referral to other GPs, and their opinions of GPSIs as an alternative to specialist doctors.
Assessing oral health in diabetes care: a practical GP tool	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	A/Prof John Furler, Dr Phyllis Lau, Prof Ivan Darby, Dr Jo-Anne Manski Nankervis, Dr Malcolm Clark	Diabetes is a common problem managed in general practice. Oral health is an issue in these patients but is commonly overlooked. Periodontal disease is more common in people with diabetes and leads to loss of teeth prematurely and this can impact on diet. Recognizing and treating early may reverse periodontal disease. eventually be lost. The student will pilot and evaluate an oral care intervention developed by the team in recruited general practices.
Managing pharmacotherapy in geriatric patients	Department of General Practice	DGP and fieldwork	Dr Phyllis Lau, Dr Jane Crowe	The student will undertake a literature review to determine what is known about pharmacotherapy needs for geriatric patients. Interviews will be conducted with GPs and geriatricians to determine their practices around prescribing for geriatric patients with multimorbidities.