

Department of General Practice and Primary Care – Cancer in Primary Care Research Group

2025 Honours projects

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
The phrase, 'Usual GP' care is often heard, but is there really such a thing? This project will conduct a systematic review of studies which define 'usual gp care' as a control group and determine if this phenomenon really exists or is too heterogeneous to be used as a control group in RCT's in primary care studies.	The phrase, 'Usual GP' care is often heard, but is there really such a thing? This project will conduct a systematic review of studies which define 'usual gp care' as a control group and determine if this phenomenon really exists or is too heterogeneous to be used as a control group in RCT's in primary care studies.	Dr Deborah de Guingand
Is Alternative Access Model feasible and acceptable by Healthcare providers and consumers? Push and pull factors for increasing uptake in bowel cancer screening	The research project aims to determine the acceptability and feasibility of the Alternative Access Model (AAM), recently rolled out by the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP), among the diverse communities in Victoria and primary healthcare providers who provide health services to people from Culturally And Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Through co-design with both groups, the project focuses on identifying barriers to, and facilitators of, the use of the AAM and appropriate strategies for implementation of the model that will optimize participation and sustainability. By gaining a deeper understanding of the challenges and perspectives unique to the diverse communities in Victoria, this research will contribute to targeted and tailored public health promotion that addresses the specific needs and unmet needs of special populations and can be scaled up to a national level.	A/Prof Jenny McIntosh & Dr Joyce Jiang

Department of General Practice and Primary Care – Children & Young People’s Health Research Group

2025 Honours projects

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
Financial stressors affecting university students before and during the Covid pandemic	This project will conduct secondary data analyses of the recent 'Towards a health promoting University' Study, which assessed student mental health and wellbeing and academic outcomes in a university-wide student survey. The student will examine longitudinally the range of financial stressors that students described before and during the Covid pandemic and the relationships between different financial stressors & i) any mental health condition or ii) academic performance (WAM, failures, drop-out); and identify group/s of high-risk students (homeless, self-harming, eating disorder) for closer examination of the relationship with mental health and academic outcomes.	Prof Lena Sanci & Dr Ian Williams
The impact of discrimination (gender and/or ethnic) on mental ill health and academic outcomes in university students.	This project area will involve secondary analyses of data from the 'Towards a Health Promoting University' study, which assessed mental health, wellbeing and academic outcomes in a university-wide student survey. This large dataset offers opportunity to examine data across a range of diverse topics but we are particularly interested in exploring the relationship between discrimination and depression and anxiety. The project will suit someone with an interest in quantitative methods; relevant training and support will be available.	Prof Lena Sanci & Dr Ann-Maree Duncan
The impact of social support/ resilience on mental health and academic outcomes in university students.	This project area will involve secondary analyses of data from the 'Towards a Health Promoting University' study, which assessed mental health, wellbeing and academic outcomes in a university-wide student survey. This large dataset offers opportunity to examine data across a range of diverse topics but we are particularly interested in exploring the relationship positive adjustment factors such as social support and resilience have with mental health and academic outcomes. Our research team will work with you to identify one of these areas to focus on as the basis of your research project. The project will suit someone with an interest in quantitative methods; relevant training and support will be available.	Prof Lena Sanci & Dr Ian Williams

Department of General Practice and Primary Care – Data Driven Quality Improvement Research Group

2025 Honours projects

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
Using technology to prioritise care: co-designing solutions using clinical decision support software	How do GPs decide what clinical concerns need to be addressed first? Clinical decision support software can review patient files and identify the concerns that may need additional attention; however, they are not yet able to determine which comes first. Various methods of prioritisation have been explored in the literature and in other jurisdictions, however Australian-context specific solutions are still to be identified and implemented. This project would explore the different options from the literature and undertake a co-design process with GPs and consumers to identify a possible model for prioritisation of clinical care recommendations to support the delivery of clinical decision support through Future Health Today.	Dr Barbara Hunter & Dr Andrew Donald
Comparing outcomes: statistical analysis of structured versus flexible implementation of chronic kidney disease recommendations for care (using clinical decision support software)	In 2021-2022 the Future Health Today platform was used both in a randomised control trial with a strict schedule of activities and expectations, and more generally in a 'business as usual' model. Analysis of patient outcomes in the highly structured and directed arm focused on the 'management of cardiovascular risk in patients with chronic kidney disease' arm of the trial indicated significant change in the introduction of statins. However, no analysis has yet been undertaken on outcomes in the unstructured, real-world implementation in the 'business as usual' model. The student would be asked to undertake a statistical analysis of patron data for program practices (N=10-12) focusing on the same outcome measures used with trial practices, and then contrast with findings from the trial. Outcomes will inform whether 'set and forget' approach to FHT has an impact on patient outcomes or if structured engagement is required to maximise FHT benefits.	Dr Barbara Hunter & Dr Andrew Donald

Department of General Practice and Primary Care – Health Data Science for Medical Research Group

2025 Honours projects

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
The prescribing of medicinal cannabis to people with substance use disorders: An investigation into patient characteristics, types of substance use disorders, adverse events, and utilisation patterns based on medicinal cannabis prescription approval data from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) repository.	The treatment of substance use disorders (SUDs) with medicinal cannabis is a subject of ongoing debate and research. While some studies suggest potential benefits of medicinal cannabis in treating SUDs, including cannabis use disorder, opioid use disorder, cocaine use disorder, nicotine use disorder, alcohol use disorder the evidence is not universally conclusive. Reported effects of medicinal cannabis include anxiety reduction, mood elevation, and improvement in sleep. Whilst medicinal cannabis is considered by some as a safe and effective alternative to medications for SUDs, there are ongoing concerns related to medicinal use. These concerns include medicinal cannabis offering temporary relief rather than a treatment effect, the presence of side effects including gastrointestinal disturbances, dizziness, motor skill and memory impairment, dependency, risk of psychosis and concomitant medication interactions. If cannabis is recommended, careful dosing and ongoing monitoring under medical supervision is crucial.	Dr Christine Hallinan & A/Prof Yvonne Bonomo
The use of Digital Monitoring Approaches for Pharmacovigilance: The pharmacoepidemiology of medicinal cannabis using large national data repositories.	We face many challenges in healthcare today, with rising numbers of difficult to treat problems including mental ill-health, chronic pain, addiction, insomnia, and treatment resistant conditions. Consumers are increasingly driving demand for new therapeutics such as medicinal cannabis. Currently there is no robust comprehensive national monitoring system in place, to ascertain medicinal cannabis effects, and detect ‘signals’ that indicate the presence of side effects and adverse events. The integration of available real-world evidence including digital monitoring data, clinical trial results, social media discourse, and provider and patient experience will contribute to the evidence base for new and emerging therapeutics.	Dr Christine Hallinan & A/Prof Yvonne Bonomo

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
Traditional and complementary therapies in the Australian health care and education system	In 1978 the World Health Organization voiced support for the integration of traditional medicine providers into health teams as part of the Declaration of Alma Ata, and it still advocates this as a means for communities to access the care they want and need. A 2024 survey led by Dr Canaway canvassed the views of Australians on their use of traditional and complementary medicine (T&CM) and perspectives around integration of T&CM practitioners with the healthcare system. Many themes arose including cultural appropriateness of care, optimisation and diversification of the healthcare workforce, holistic approaches to treatment and disease prevention, legal and regulatory issues, cost-benefit considerations, and the dangers of access to certain types of care providers. More than 260 respondents (including medical, complementary, integrative healthcare providers, and consumers) expressed interest in being involved in future initiatives building on that study. Your study will leverage the insights and enthusiasm of the survey respondents and enable you to gather new data for a follow-up study tailored to your interests. Guidance will be provided on appropriate framing and scope for your research.	Dr Rachel Canaway & A/Prof Phyllis Chan

Department of General Practice and Primary Care – Infectious Disease Surveillance and Stewardship in Primary Care Research Group

2025 Honours projects

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
Dental presentation in general practice - patients' perspectives	Dental conditions are common among patients presenting to general practice, even though definitive dental treatment is needed to solve the underlying dental issues. In addition, antibiotics are often prescribed when they may not be needed. In 2022, an Honours student from the Melbourne Dental School conducted semi-structured interviews with general practitioners (GPs) and found there were many reasons why patients would attend general practice rather than seeking dental care for their dental problems. Some cited barriers included cost of dental care and difficulty to access dental services. In addition, patient expectations and requests for antibiotics were some of the factors influencing antibiotic prescribing by GPs for dental presentations. Thus, the aim of the study is to explore the reasoning and expectations patients have behind attending general practice for dental problems. Outcomes from this study will inform better health care access for patient care, as well as improving prescribing and use of antibiotics in the community.	Dr Ruby Biezen & Dr Leanne Teoh
Pencillin allergy - GPs' perspectives around 'delabelling' using validated penicillin allergy assessment tool.	Penicillin allergy is a public health crisis as the presence of these allergies prevents patients receiving the optimal antibiotic therapies for life-threatening infections in the community. However, this is a correctable public health crisis as penicillin allergy 'labels' can be removed via the use of validated penicillin allergy assessment, testing and prescribing tools. Therefore, the aim of this project is to understand GPs' perspectives around penicillin 'delabelling' and the use of validated penicillin allergy assessment tool to accurately identify patients with low-risk penicillin allergies in the community.	Dr Ruby Biezen & Prof Jason Trubiano

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
Pencillin allergy - Investigating the prevalence of pencillin allergy in Victoria	Penicillin allergy is a public health crisis, however, little is known around the prevalence of pencillin allergy in the community. This project will analyse data collected from over 100 general practices to investigate the prevalence of penicillin allergy with links with antibiotic prescribing in Victoria.	Dr Ruby Biezen & Prof Jason Trubiano

Department of General Practice and Primary Care – Primary Care Mental Health Research Group

2025 Honours projects

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
Addressing the physical health crisis in people living with severe mental illness, the Assertive Cardiac Care Trial	It is well established that people living with severe mental illnesses have higher risk factors for cardiovascular and cardiometabolic disease. The evidence shows life expectancy is reduced by up to 20-25 years for some people compared to the general population. The student may use data from within the PATRON repository (a set of routine data collected from Victorian general practices) to identify the numbers of individuals in primary care with severe mental illnesses who have markers of increased cardiovascular risk and the cardio related treatments, plans and referrals that may have been delivered. Or the student will conduct interviews with participants engaged in a cardiovascular risk reduction intervention a part of the NHMRC funded Assertive Cardiac Care Trial (ACCT).	Dr Matthew Lewis & Dr Jennifer Bibb
Development and implementation of consumer and carer guidance to identify and select high quality mobile phone health apps in stepped care models for mental health.	This project will take existing guidance developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare for the selection of mental health apps and undertake co-design with people with lived-experience for the operationalisation of these guides.	Dr Matthew Lewis & Dr Jennifer Bibb
Self-monitoring for physical-mental health: evaluating patient use of the CovidCare mobile health app and the identification of mental health needs of people in self-isolation.	The student will analyse telephone interview data collected with participants who used the CovidCare mobile health app to self-monitor their physical and mental health symptoms. This will be considered in relation to development and implementation of virtual models of care.	Dr Matthew Lewis & Dr Cath Kaylor-Hughes

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
What's happening? Do parents and young people know what to do and how to access mental health support early	This will be a web-based qualitative exploration of children and parents perceptions of early mental health support. The survey and qualitative interviews will focus on help seeking and early information and education for children, parents and carers.	Dr Cath Kaylor-Hughes
Assessing the usability and acceptability of a clinical decision tool and care navigation for GPs to triage children and young people presenting with mental ill health.	A qualitative study to explore barriers and drivers of a clinical prediction tool for mental health in children and adolescents and subsequent care navigation. This study will use surveys and/or interviews to elicit GP perception on a mental health prediction tool to help triage patients and refine treatment pathways through care navigation in a local and national context.	Dr Cath Kaylor-Hughes & Dr Caroline Johnson
Understanding the nature of multi-disciplinary working across care for the treatment of mental ill-health.	Qualitative study exploring current practice for multi-disciplinary working in the treatment of mental ill health. This study will use surveys and/or interviews to elicit GPs experiences and preferences for multi-disciplinary working in the treatment of mental ill health.	Dr Caroline Johnson & Dr Cath Kaylor-Hughes
Guidance for physical health monitoring and care in patient and clinician information sheets for antipsychotic and antidepressant medications.	It is known that antipsychotic and antidepressant medications are associated with cardiometabolic illnesses including cardiovascular disease and Diabetes. Pharmaceutical companies provide patient and clinicians with information about the impacts and side effects of medications. In this project the student will review existing information and align this with best practice and professional guidance for physical health care and monitoring for people with mental ill-health.	Dr Matthew Lewis
Mapping components of best-practice peer-delivered interventions to support physical health in people with mental ill-health	There is a substantial opportunity for people with lived experience of mental ill health working as peer workers to support the physical health of people with complex mental health conditions. Through reviewing existing peer models in the literature, the key elements of successful programs will be mapped to inform the future development of peer-run physical health support programs	Dr Matthew Lewis

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
Antidepressant Deprescribing in the CALD community	Antidepressant deprescribing is shown to be a complex and difficult process. Currently support is being trialled in the general adult population but may not be accessible to the CALD communities where language and cultural nuances may need to be accounted for. This project would explore the barriers and facilitators to improving accessibility for deprescribing in this community.	Ms Amy Coe & Dr Cath Kaylor-Hughes
Patients vs GP perceptions of antidepressants	Anecdotally there is conflicting reports from patients vs GP s about how GPs conduct antidepressant prescribing and deprescribing. This project would explore the differences either through a literature review, survey or interviews.	Ms Amy Coe & Dr Cath Kaylor-Hughes
GP patient perceptions of GPs participating in mental health research	In the Target-D study for GP patients who have mild, moderate or severe symptoms of depression, GP patient perceptions of their GP participating in mental health research were collected. This project would be a thematic analysis of patient perceptions.	Ms Amy Coe & Mr Adrian Laughlin
Patient beliefs and characteristics to support antidepressant deprescribing	Antidepressant deprescribing is shown to be a complex and difficult process. Currently support is being trialled in the general adult population but may not be suitable for all patients. It is not currently clear how people feel about their antidepressant medication and what patient characteristics may assist in successful initiation and successful deprescribing. This project will be an online survey of patient characteristics and their beliefs about antidepressants, trust in physician, personality. It will involve designing the survey and quantitative analysis.	Ms Amy Coe & Dr Cath Kaylor-Hughes
GP nurse experiences and perceptions of antidepressant deprescribing	Currently, most of the literature focuses on barriers and facilitators that GPs face when helping patients to stop their potentially unnecessary antidepressants. Nurses are also well placed to conduct mental health checks and could play a key role in assisting patients in practice, however there is little information on how they might do this and if they feel confident and comfortable to do so. This project will explore GP practice nurse perceptions on conducting antidepressant deprescribing in practice (via interviews).	Ms Amy Coe & Dr Cath Kaylor-Hughes

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
The Role of Practice Managers in the Teaching and Research pathway. Are there resources that can be shared to help address knowledge gaps	Currently Practice managers work independently of other PMs in the field, yet they hold significant responsibilities for the practice business, patients and staff. This study will scope the resources available for PM in General Practice and determine if there is a gap in knowledge awareness and if there are resources that might be shared by PMs in the region of Eastern Melbourne PHN and Eastern Health.	Dr Cath Kaylor-Hughes
diamond: inside the consult room. Provision of focused psychological strategies by Australian general practitioners from 2007-2016	The Diagnosis, Management and Outcomes of Depression in Primary Care (diamond) study followed 789 primary care patients with depressive symptoms over 10 years and captured their experiences of mental health care. This included asking which form of focused psychological strategies FPS they had received during their visits to a GP. Using data from January 2007 until March 2016, this project would explore the extent to which diamond participants reported receiving FPS from their GP, and how helpful they found them.	Dr Alison Flehr
diamond: mortality characteristics of a depressed primary care cohort from 2006 to 2019	This project would describe the mortality outcomes of the participants in the 10-year (2005-2016) diamond cohort study, who died between 2006 and 2019. Data from the Australian National Death Index would be linked to the diamond data to identify those participants' who died along with their year and cause of death. Summary data and standardised mortality ratios (SMR) would be explored.	Dr Alison Flehr

Department of General Practice and Primary Care – Sexual and Family Violence (SAFE) Research Group

2025 Honours projects

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
Technology-facilitated abuse among international students in Australia	Analysis of survey data from international students collected for INVEST project.	A/Prof Laura Tarzia & Dr Elizabeth McLindon
Reproductive coercion and abuse experiences among international students in Australia	Analysis of survey data from international students collected for INVEST project.	A/Prof Laura Tarzia & Dr Elizabeth McLindon
Secondary analysis of interview data from victim/survivors of family violence - helpseeking	This project will explore victim/survivors' helpseeking after experiencing family violence, through a secondary analysis of interview data (with the specific focus of study to be chosen with the student).	Dr Mandy McKenzie & Dr Elizabeth McLindon
Evaluation of the University's student education modules on preventing sexual misconduct	This project will help to evaluate the university's sexual misconduct student education modules, by interviewing and analysing data from uni students who have completed the module and expressed interest in participating to share their feedback. Interviews will explore students' perceptions of the modules, what was helpful, what they learned about consent, and other feedback.	A/Prof Laura Tarzia & Dr Mandy McKenzie

Project Title	Project Description	Supervisor/s
Early intervention for men who use intimate partner violence	Qualitative study (involving interviews of up to 20 GPs) examining the experiences of GPs in delivering the BETTER MAN tool (a digital tool) as an early intervention for identifying and responding to men who use intimate partner violence.	Dr Minerva Kyei-Onanjiri & Prof Kelsey Hegarty
Evaluation of Pathways to Safety Primary Care training program - analysis of open-ended survey responses	Data were collected from participants prior to and after completing the Pathways to Safety training. Several open-ended questions were included (e.g., what do you hope to gain, what did you gain, challenges, planned changes to practice) that require thematic analysis to evaluate the program.	Dr Fiona Giles & Dr Elizabeth McLindon
Qualitative metasynthesis of women's experiences of psychological violence	This review aims to understand women's lived experience of psychological violence by reviewing and synthesising the qualitative literature on this topic. A systematic search was completed in 2022 and needs to be updated.	Dr Fiona Giles & Dr Mandy McKenzie
How are pre-service health science students prepared to identify and respond to patients experiencing abuse violence and other trauma?	This review aims to explore how lived experience has been embedded in the development and delivery of material about domestic, family and sexual violence for health science students.	Dr Katie Lamb & Prof Kelsey Hegarty