Department of General Practice and Primary Care

Advancing General Practice through Research and Education

Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

The University of Melbourne
The University of Melbourne acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the unceded land on which we work, learn and live: the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples (Burnley, Fishermans Bend, Parkville, Southbank and Werribee campuses), the Yorta Yorta Nation (Dookie and Shepparton campuses), and the Dja Dja Wurrung people (Creswick campus).

The University also acknowledges and is grateful to the Traditional Owners, Elders and Knowledge Holders of all Indigenous nations and clans who have been instrumental in our reconciliation journey.

We recognise the unique place held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original owners and custodians of the lands and waterways across the Australian continent, with histories of continuous connection dating back more than 60,000 years. We also acknowledge their enduring cultural practices of caring for Country.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and future, and acknowledge the importance of Indigenous knowledge in the Academy. As a community of researchers, teachers, professional staff and students we are privileged to work and learn every day with Indigenous colleagues and partners.
Our Values

Integrity
Excellence
Innovation
Respect
Our Vision

Through research, partnerships and education, we work with communities and practitioners to enhance the healthcare system, placing the person at the heart of healthcare and improving health outcomes.
# DGPPC in numbers

## Annual Snapshot

### Research Impacts:

We are the leaders in academic primary care research in Australia. In 2023, our research provided valuable information for:

- Guidelines for cancer testing
- GP training for domestic and family violence
- RACGP Preventive Guidelines on screening for abuse and violence
- Health promotion materials for miscarriage awareness
- Clinical decision support for GPs through the Future Health Today Program

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<tr>
<th>$16 M</th>
<th>Research Funding</th>
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<tr>
<th>57</th>
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<th>Honours Students</th>
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<tr>
<th>681</th>
<th>GP student placements</th>
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<th>334</th>
<th>Teaching Clinics</th>
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<th>PhD Completions</th>
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<th>Honours Completions</th>
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<th>85</th>
<th>Student Satisfaction</th>
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<th>785</th>
<th>Patron Projects</th>
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<th>Patron Patient Records</th>
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<th>117</th>
<th>Refereed Journals</th>
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<tr>
<th>292</th>
<th>Other Publications</th>
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<tr>
<th>409</th>
<th>Total Publications</th>
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Strategic Focus

- Integration and collaboration across health, education, social and legal sectors
- Informing teaching and learning, research practice and consumer policies
- Improving health outcomes for all Australians
Program Areas

Maximising Research Impact
- Eight dedicated teams connecting research with communities
- Leading multiple collaborative research initiatives

DGPPC

Inspiring Future Primary Care Leaders
- Student GP placement program
- Postgraduate training, including nursing
- Research training
- Academic Registrar Program
- Honours program

Strengthening the Primary Care Community
Areas of Focus
Our teams of multidisciplinary researchers have specialised expertise in a range of subject areas and research methodologies and are supported by a network of researchers within Faculties across the University.

Each of our research teams are led by world-renowned primary care and interdisciplinary academics who are passionate about their work. This breadth of expertise translates to our ability to conduct large scale, innovative and world-class primary care research focusing on a wide variety of topics.
DGPPC Research Teams

- Sexual And Family Violence (SAFE)
- Children and Young People’s Health
- Primary Care Mental Health
- Cancer in Primary Care
- HaBIC R²
- Primary Care Trials Unit
- Data for Decisions
- Data Driven Quality Improvement
Working in collaboration with people with lived experience of family, domestic and sexual violence, and practitioners, this program aims to change policy and practice around responding to violence against women and their children. Main areas are:

- Understanding dynamics of abuse and violence to inform tailoring of health responses and
- Online tools for healthy relationships
- Health system change for all members of the family

Our team leads the Safer Families Centre, which is the first dedicated centre to research the health sector responses needed to improve the safety, health and wellbeing of women, children and young people.
This program aims to advance the health and wellbeing of children and young people through primary care and its integration with other health, social, workforce, and education systems.

Our multidisciplinary team works across the areas of health risk behaviour (including a specific focus on sexual and reproductive health), mental health, adverse childhood experiences, physical wellbeing, preventive health and early intervention.
Focused on optimising person-centred mental health to enhance physical and mental wellbeing, this program has four streams of research:

- Experiences of care
- Participatory systems re-design using co-design
- Innovations in models of care and management
- Risk stratification for triaging mental health needs

The team also leads national and international flagship projects in lived-experience co-design, heart health, stepped care and mental health systems reform.
Primary care plays a critical role across the cancer continuum, including prevention, screening, diagnosis, and long-term care. Our team is one of the largest in the world with this focus.

We excel in randomised controlled trials of complex interventions in primary care; analysis of linked electronic medical record data; translation of risk prediction models and genomic tests for tailored screening and treatment; development of decision support tools and decision aids; and systematic review and evidence synthesis.
HaBIC R²

HaBIC R2 brings technology expertise to research and health projects. We aim to support research objectives and enable the effective translation of health research into impact.

Our team delivers tailored solutions to drive change and innovations that keep people and privacy at the centre. We collaborate with stakeholders across health, research and government sectors.
The Primary Care Trials Unit focusses on health services research and implementation science using primary care innovation; clinical data analytics and linkage; and co-design with consumers and practitioners.

We have biostatistical expertise in trial design and analysis and lead the sector in research, co-design and implementation in the complex, multidisciplinary primary care environment.

Since 2005, we have led over 25 randomised, controlled trials with more than 24,000 participants in 370 general practices. More than half of these were funded in the last five years.
In partnership with general practices across Victoria, we collate data from de-identified medical records and use the information for research to:

- Increase knowledge
- Quality improvement
- Improve healthcare practices

The Data is stored in a University of Melbourne managed primary-care data repository called Patron. Underpinned by a robust governance framework, researchers can request to access this data for research purposes. There are currently 22 programs that have been approved to use Patron data.
This program aims to facilitate quality and system improvement in general practice using de-identified data obtained through the Patron database and integrated knowledge translation using a Learning Health systems approach.

Our multidisciplinary team works closely with health informaticians, analyst programmers and other key technical staff to develop technology, study factors critical to implementation and evaluate effectiveness.
Inspiring Future Primary Care Leaders

The Department of General Practice and Primary Care conducts a range of medical education programs. We run one of the largest general practice placements with the some of the most extensive exposure to general practice teaching in Australia for The University of Melbourne’s Doctor of Medicine students.

We also deliver postgraduate training for primary care nurses, and research training for medical, honours, masters and PhD students in addition to an academic registrar program for doctors who are training to be GPs.
GP Student Placement Program

We are committed to enhancing general practice by providing our future doctors with an excellent education that engages with the community and the wider health care system.

Students are guided and supported in their learning experience by skilled general practitioners and exposed to a wide variety of patient situations. Many general practices that participate in our placement program are also involved in research.
In 2023, we placed:

- 681 MD students
- with 337 GP supervisors
- in 334 general practices
- for 9430 placement days.

26% of these placements were in rural locations.
Honours Program

The Honours program is a specialised year of study following completion of the Bachelor of Biomedicine or Bachelor of Science.

The Honours year involves advanced coursework in primary care research coupled with a supervised research project. It is designed to advance students’ aptitude for independent research and help develop communication skills critical for transition to future employment.
Graduate and Research Training

The Department teaches into the following courses:

Graduate Certificate in Primary Care Nursing; Master of Primary Health Care; Master of Medicine; Master of Philosophy; and Doctor of Philosophy.

Each year, academic staff from the Department supervise an average of 25 higher degree students from a diverse range of backgrounds. Some have clinical experience in nursing, medicine or psychology, while others are from non-clinical backgrounds but have developed an interest in general practice research.
The Department of General Practice and Primary Care’s Academic Registrar Program has been running for over 20 years. The program supports general practice registrars to learn academic skills through individualised learning plans, supervised by senior primary care academic leaders.

Many of our university-based GP academics undertake research to improve and enhance the practice of primary care.

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<tr>
<th>Past Research Projects</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project ECHO® Application of the ECHO model as a learning tool for primary care education in rural Victoria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preferences for a polygenic test to estimate cancer risk</td>
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<td>Identifying and responding to patients who have used domestic and family violence</td>
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<td>How are Victorian general practitioners managing chlamydia infection in young people?</td>
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<td>An educational intervention on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer health: Impact on knowledge, attitudes and perceptions in Australian medical students</td>
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Strengthening the Primary Care Community

We are passionate about the role of primary care research in improving the health of our nation and work to promote primary care related research through the distribution and promotion in regular e-bulletins and notices to GPs, practice managers, practice nurses and broader primary care organisations.

Our practice-based research and education network provides us with a direct connection to 750 general practice clinics around Victoria who contribute to teaching and research at the Department through student placement programs and participating in research studies.
VicREN promotes research and education that has been designed and undertaken in the primary care environment, thus ensuring feasibility and appropriateness for primary care. Through this network, we can connect with thousands of primary care staff and patients to facilitate recruitment for large-scale primary care research programs.

In addition to our Victorian network of general practice clinics, we also maintain strong connections with other national practice-based research networks to enable larger and nationally inclusive collaborative trials.
Publications

In 2023, our academics contributed to 447 published articles.

This figure includes refereed journal articles, books and book chapters.
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<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GRHANITE®</strong></td>
<td>A tool enabling de-identified data transfer and linkage</td>
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<td><strong>Future Health Today</strong></td>
<td>A proactive digital health intervention that analyses patient information to assess chronic disease risk</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Care Trials Unit</strong></td>
<td>Increasing access to trials in primary care</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PARTNER</strong></td>
<td>Increasing clinical trial participation opportunities for rural Australians</td>
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Thank you

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