

Evolution of a curriculum for junior doctor general practice placements in South Australia



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Introduction

Adelaide to Outback GP Training Program (A2O) is a regional training provider in South Australia. Over a 3-year period we have trained almost 100 junior doctors, on 8-13 week placements with the Prevocational General Practice Placements Program (PGPPP) (see box 1). Four feeder (tertiary teaching) hospitals in Adelaide and 9 general practices in rural and outer urban/high needs settings are involved with the program (see figure 2).

We introduce a model – the 7 'O's Framework, for the delivery of an integrated curriculum for General Practice placements. This approach supports training to meet minimum core competencies as described in the Australian Curriculum Framework¹. Our 7 'O's Framework incorporates Organisation, Orientation, Observation, Opportunistic learning, Official tutorials, Online learning and Outreach activities (Figure 1).

The 7 'O's Framework



FIGURE 1

Organisation

is central and operates at both an:

- **Organisational level** – for example coordination between the training collaborations allows timely adaptation to suit individual needs of junior doctors, as well as on-going training of supervisors; and
- **Individual level** - the junior doctor's self management is enhanced with the provision of learning tools including a clinical training portfolio.

Orientation

occurs in 3 stages through:

- **The feeder hospital** – introductory meetings and specific skills training;
- **A2O** – a 2-day workshop that includes simulated emergency skills training, clinical tutorials, consulting skills and IT systems training; and
- **The general practice** – on-site staff review rosters, resources, billing systems, nursing home arrangements and other practical issues.

Official tutorials

led by supervisors during quarantined teaching time incorporate:

- Clinical topics, professionalism and practice management; and
- Performance feedback, mentoring and planning sessions.

Observation

occurs at various levels:

- **Junior doctors** observe their supervisors with patients, informing development of their own consulting styles;
- **Supervisors** view (directly or via video) junior doctors consultations to monitor progress; and
- **Visits from external educators**, one from the feeder hospital and one from A2O each term, provide feedback on consulting and clinical skills and recommendations to enhance the learning experience.

Online learning

is available through the provision of internet access for all junior doctors.

- An online best practice resource *UpToDate* is provided to all staff on-site, allowing quick access to assist patient management and tutorials. (see A2O poster² at this conference).

Opportunistic learning

in the rich learning environment is encouraged and includes proactive:

- Case discussions "on the run" with supervisors;
- Time with visiting specialists, allied health workers and nursing staff;
- Assisting with teaching of medical students/nursing staff;
- Joining in continuing medical education activities; and
- Pursuit of particular interests such as performing minor procedures.

Outreach activities

extend and enrich the learning environment for junior doctors and include:

- On-call rosters, rural hospital work, home/nursing home visits; and
- Integration with general practice registrars at their off-site education sessions.

Discussion

General practice is a valuable training ground for junior doctors; they gain experience in the management of patients, obtain practical skills and develop an understanding of the primary health care sector.³ This is done with close supervision and one-to-one support. Terms in general practice also enhance understanding and communication between the community based health services and hospital settings. We offer a curriculum delivery model for General Practice placements which can be expanded to accommodate a range of placements, while offering an excellent educational experience that meets the requirements of junior doctor training.

References

1. Confederation of Postgraduate Medical Education Councils. (2006). Australian Curriculum Framework for Junior Doctors version 2.1 CPMEC www.cpmec.org.au/curriculum (accessed 1 Feb 2008).
2. Marrinan, A, Wait, B, Mullner, H & Donohoe P (2007) Evaluation of an online medical reference service to enhance junior doctor training in general practice terms. *Ozawa* 2008
3. Martin A, Laurence C, Black L, Mugford B. (2007) General practice placements for pre-registration junior doctors: adding value to intern education and training. *Med J Aust* 186: 346-9.



FIGURE 2

Further information

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About PGPPP

The Prevocational General Practice Placements Program offers professional, observed, educational GP placements for junior doctors in outer metropolitan, regional and rural areas, with high quality training in a wide range of clinical situations. The PGPPP is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, and managed nationally by the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

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