Building the research capacity of GP Supervisors –
the western Sydney approach

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Needs analysis – GP Supervisor research capacity

- Undertaken as a part of an innovative model of cooperation in supporting GP teaching and research capacity between
  - University of Western Sydney
  - University of Sydney
  - WentWest Regional Training Provider
Why up-skill GP Supervisors in research?

• Enable GP supervisors to
  – provide high quality teaching for GP registrars and medical students
  – confidently use appropriate evidence to guide clinical practice
  – contribute to the research agenda and collection of research evidence relevant to primary care

• Provide PD opportunities to a motivated and influential group of GPs
Background

- Research training is a
  - core part of the GPET curriculum
  - GP Supervisors are unlikely to have had much research training themselves nor to model research participation or leadership to their registrars (1, 2).

- Previous research indicates
  - many GP supervisors have positive attitudes to research
  - lack confidence in supervising GPRs undertaking research projects(3).

"GP training and research: what are the interests, needs and opportunities for GP trainers?"

- Optional 90 minute session
- 2 Professional Development Workshops, Aug 2010 & Feb 2011

- Attendance:
  - 22 at the first workshop
  - 9 at the second

(97 WW GP supervisors)
Learning objectives of workshops

• To reflect on the relevance of GP research to GP supervisors
• To identify research training needs for GP supervisors
• To consider how to increase the capacity of GP supervisors to participate in research
• To discuss how to advance primary care research in western Sydney
Session Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Large group presentation on the relevance of research in GP training</th>
<th>30 min</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small group session</td>
<td>30 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>Large group session</td>
<td>30 min</td>
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Questions posed:

1. What do you see as important priorities in GP research?
2. What are your training needs/interests?
3. What are some research questions you may like to pose and how could they be answered?
4. What support do GPs need to ring the vision to reality?
Glasziou’s triangle; model of different levels of research engagement
1. GP research users

- Increased confidence and time efficiency in accessing evidence to guide clinical management
- Increased awareness of the resources GP registrar and students were being taught to access
- Increased understanding of basics of research methodologies for their own education
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivations</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‣ Promotion of research which is important to primary care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦ Interested in contributing to research questions</td>
<td>‣ Time commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‣ More effective teachers</td>
<td>◦ Would need support and infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‣ Collaborations with other practices</td>
<td>◦ Practice nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦ E.g. practice data sharing</td>
<td>◦ Visiting research support</td>
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<tr>
<td>◦ Supported networking</td>
<td>◦ University or RTP level support –”paperwork”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‣ Lack of skills for searching available literature</td>
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<td></td>
<td>◦ low awareness of what had already been done on topics of interest</td>
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2. GP research participants / leaders – needs

• Different backgrounds / pathways
  – Experienced GP supervisors
  – GP leaders in other areas of GP
  – Former academic registrar
  – Previous specialist training and particular areas of interest

• Wanted increased research experience
  ✓ often with a view to becoming research leaders in the future

• Were interested in the concept of a practice based research network
  ✓ As long as it made it easier to be a research participant
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Driving the research agenda</td>
<td>Time constraints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional devt</td>
<td>◦ Support/infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saw affiliation with a university as attractive</td>
<td>Access to literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing for publication</td>
<td>◦ Literature searching skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working towards leading research in own interest area</td>
<td>◦ Access – conjoints needed training re library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ Need more research skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◦ Understanding of HRECs / ethics requirements</td>
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<td></td>
<td>◦ Qualitative methods</td>
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Follow on from workshops

1. 6 part research training course

2. GP supervisor academic fellowship, funded by UWS

3. EBM Journal Club 2012
1. Research training course – development

- Target: GP supervisors of GPRs and med students in W & SW Sydney
- Collaboration with UNSW and U of Wollongong
- 6 weeks, 2 ½ hr sessions
- Focus on
  - accessing evidence
  - critical appraisal
  - research methodologies of relevance to primary care
Research course – program

1. “Finding the answer” – accessing evidence & EBM for clinical practice and teaching
2. “Can I trust this?” – Critical appraisal of research and other evidence sources
3. Developing answerable questions and choosing the right methodology
4. Research methodologies in primary care
5. Disseminating research & writing for publication
6. “Into action” – Developing your own research
2. GP Research Fellowship

- 1 day a week for 48 weeks
- Supervised by Dept of GP UWS
- Based on similar fellowship offered by WW & USyd, undertaken by 3 GP supervisors

Eligibility
- GP in SW or W Sydney
  - Preference GP supervisors of GPRs / medical students
- Attended GP Research course
- No previous higher research degree
3. EBM Journal club 2012

- Accessing the literature
- Developing research questions
- QA & CPD points
Conclusion

- Building the research capacity of GP supervisors should be a priority for RTPs

Recommendations
- University – RTP partnerships
- Assessment of GP supervisors needs / interests
- Provide opportunities
  - Training
  - Accessing research evidence and the literature
  - Participation in research
  - Contributing to the research agenda
  - Undertaking their own research