



Policy Options for Strengthening an Australian Generalist Primary Care Workforce

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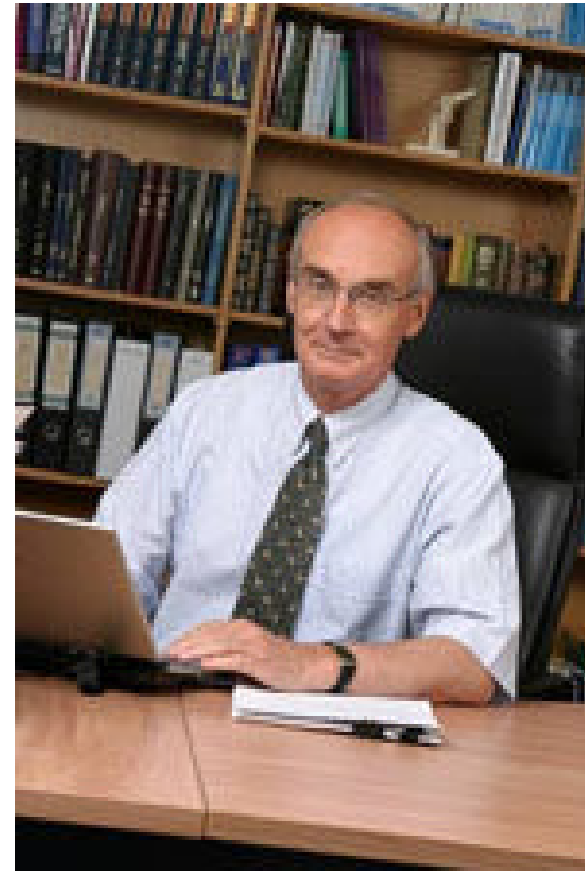


Outline

- Context
 - AHWI
 - Why Generalists?
- Research - review
- Key review findings
- Policy options
- Where to next....



- **AHWIs** vision is to deliver Australia health workforce sustainability by 2020 by:
 - Ensuring maintenance of health workforce data
 - Mapping future health systems;
 - Developing innovative education models; and
 - Working with jurisdictions to develop workforce policy.



Prof. Peter Brooks, Interim Director, AHWI

Scenario

- *Mary is a 60 year old woman with a long history of cancer.. She visits her GP due to increasing headaches 2 weeks after a fall. She has a history of diabetes (father), she is overweight and her health problems include chronic knee, back and neck pain, migraines, mild anxiety and depressive symptoms. Mary lives alone in an outer metropolitan area, with a poorly serviced public transport. She has several close female friends who she sees at her art group. She feels as if she is "falling apart" and has told her GP how she feels*

- A **specialist disease-led health care system** would focus on the most prevalent chronic disease (cancer) and direct Mary to a specialist clinic, in a large hospital, where she may need to see a specialist, and then have a series of visits to various allied health professionals.
- A **generalist approach** would consider the whole person, recognise Mary's complex conditions, acknowledge and show respect for her feelings, draw on their biotechnical expertise and Mary's biography to understand how Mary's life story and social context are impacting on her medical, physical and emotional health, to provide comprehensive accessible care, involving multiple providers, in a negotiated, coordinated and patient centred timely way that suits Mary

Policy Context

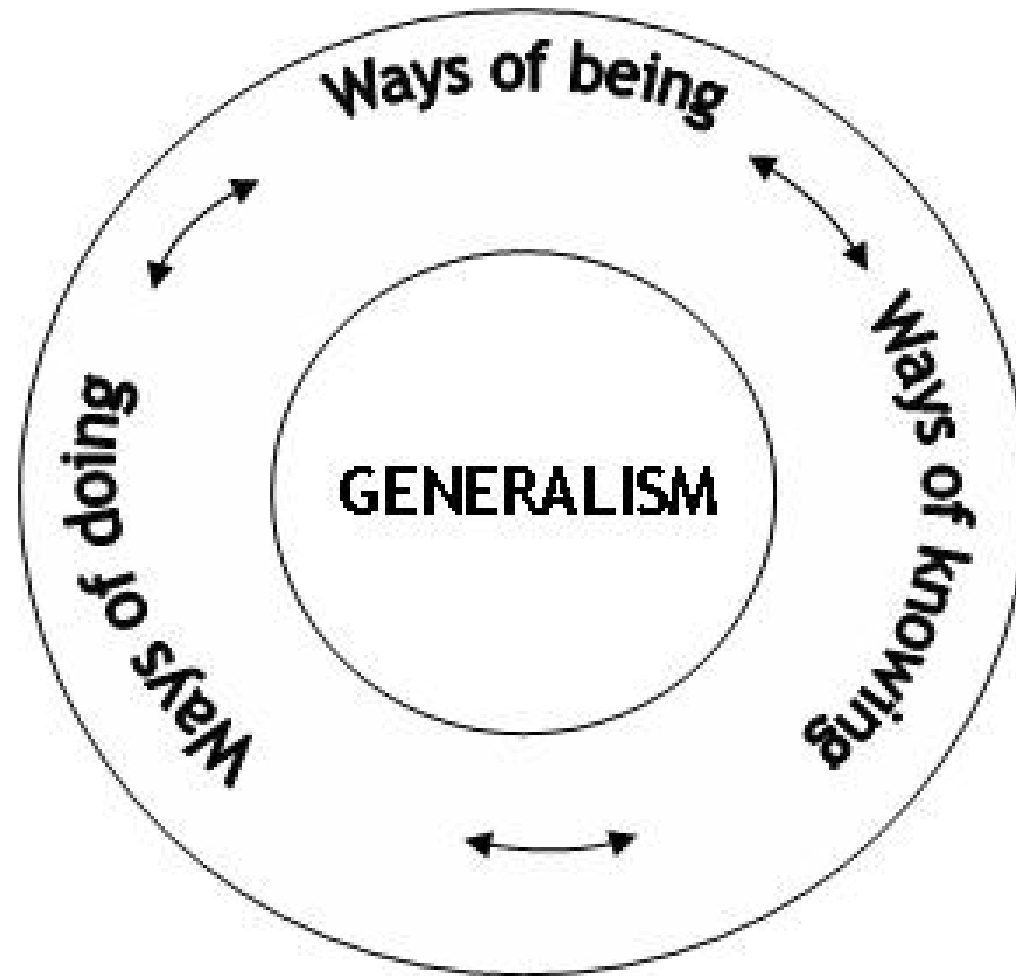
- Ongoing debates - Generalist Vs Specialists
- Crisis in general practice
- Multiple solutions
 - increasing GP supply by changing the workforce skill mix or reducing demand **or**
STRENGTHENING GENERALISM

Narrative Literature Review

- What are the essential dimensions of generalism?
- Narrative literature review & synthesis approach
- Multidisciplinary team
- Scoping study > conceptual model development > policy options

Key Findings

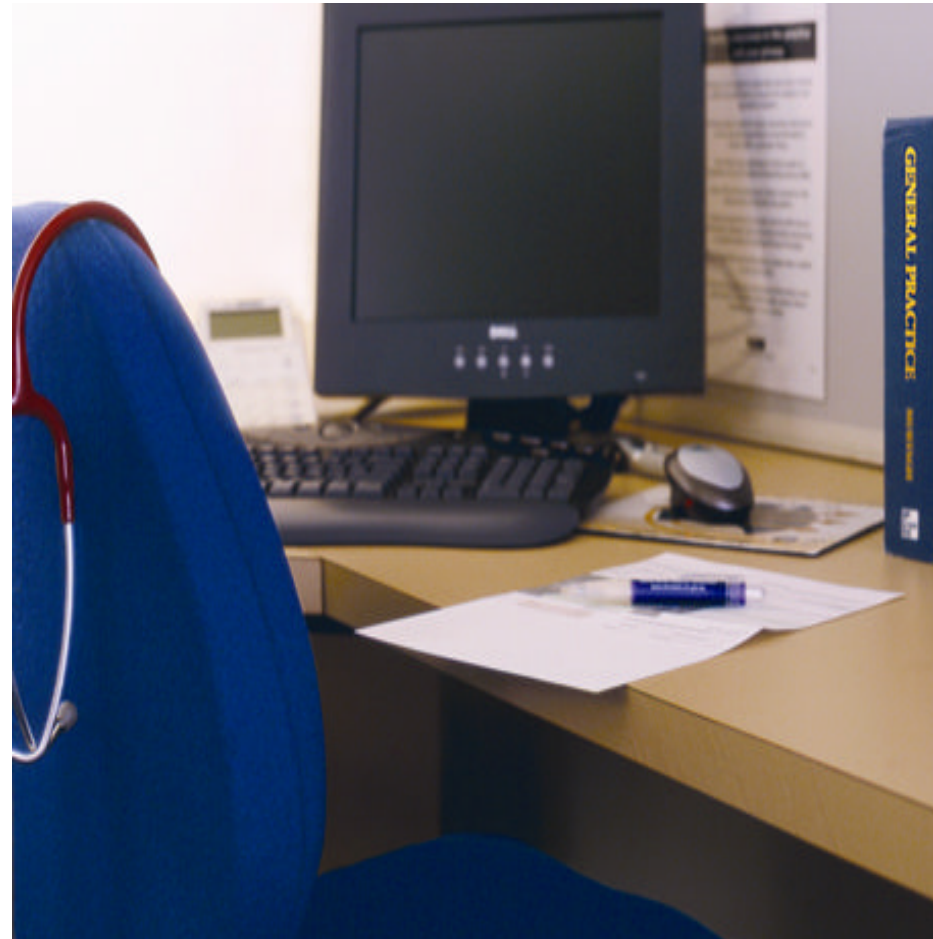
- No definition of generalism
- Cost-effective and equitable health care
- Downfall of generalism
- Generalism as a 'way of doing'
- But also -> 'way of being' and 'way of knowing'
- Key stakeholders support – multi-dimensions
 - 'A continuum of generalism as a
 - philosophy of practice'



Dimensions of Generalists	Key features
Ways of Being	Virtuous
	Reflexive
	Interpretive
Ways of Knowing	Biotechnical
	Biographical
Ways of Doing (Practice)	Access
	Approach
	Time
	Context

Mary...

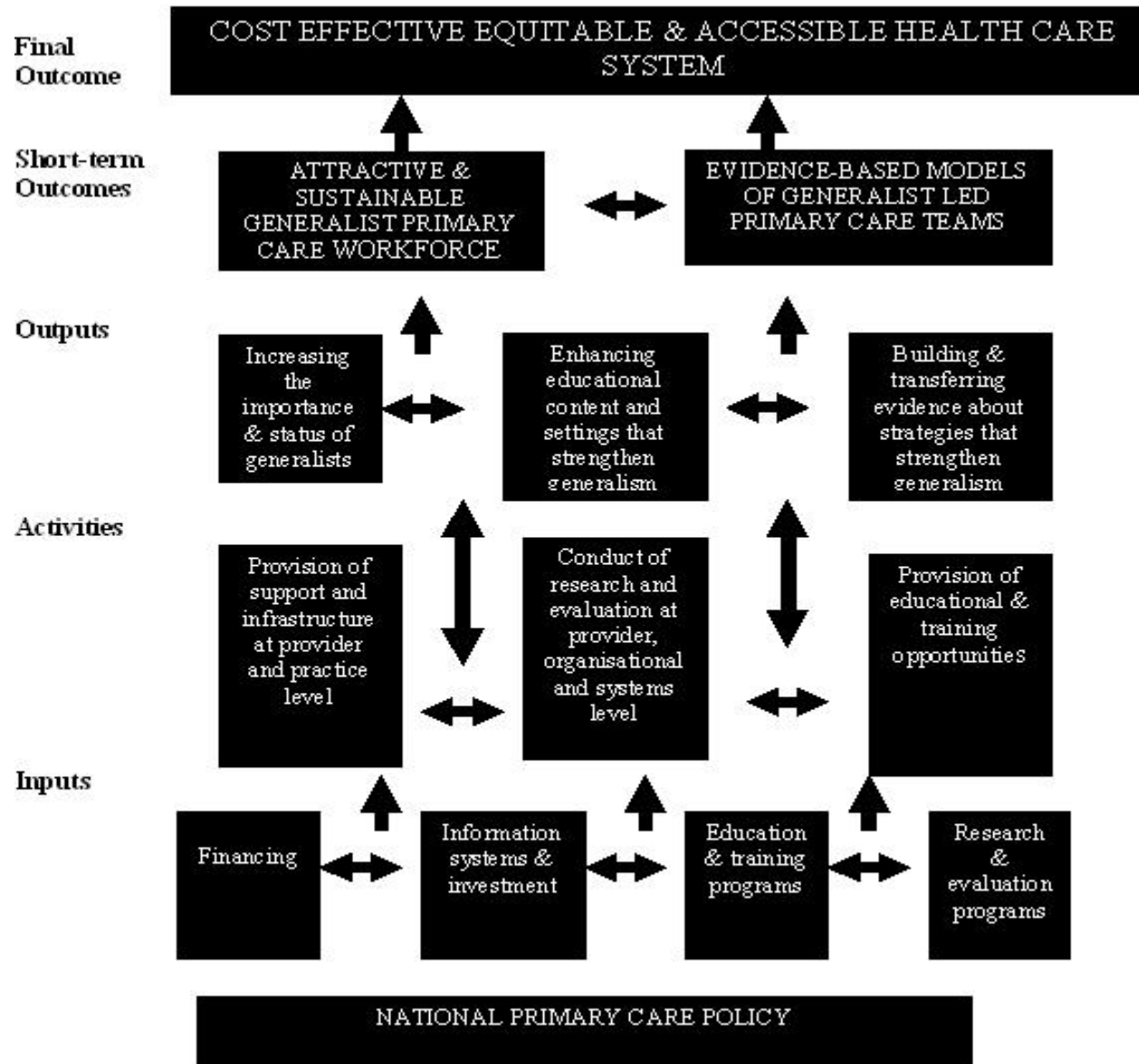
- A **generalist approach** would consider the whole person, recognise Mary's complex conditions, acknowledge and show respect for her feelings (**ways of being**), draw on their biotechnical expertise and Mary's biography to understand how Mary's life story and social context are impacting on her medical, physical and emotional health (**ways of knowing**), to provide comprehensive accessible care, involving multiple providers, in a negotiated, coordinated and patient centred timely way that suits Mary (**ways of doing**).



Policy Options

- Increasing the importance and status of generalists;
- Enhancing the educational content and settings that strengthen a generalist primary care workforce; and
- Building and transferring evidence about strategies that strengthen generalism in the 2020 primary care team.

Fig. 1: Strategic Framework to Strengthen Generalist Primary Care Workforce



GenPCW
GENERALIST PRIMARY
CARE WORKFORCE

- **GenPCW** - designed to develop an agreed upon National Operational Action Plan to strengthen a generalist primary care workforce, using the strategic framework and policy options from the generalism review

GenPCW Consultation Process

- Over 40 key stakeholders contacted
- 23 consultations (3 policy advisors; 7 primary care organisations; 6 academic GPs; 6 practitioners; and 1 consumer representative).
 - current and future primary care policy workforce reforms relevant to **GenPCW**
 - research questions for strengthening a generalist primary care workforce.

Where to next...Research Agenda

- **SUPPORTING TEAM-BASED CARE**
 - HOW TO SUPPORT GENERALISTS IN TEAM BASED PRIMARY CARE?
- **BALANCING HEALTH SYSTEMS**
 - HOW DO WE BALANCE GENERALIST AND SPECIALIST HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS?
- **PATIENT PERSPECTIVES**
 - WHAT DO PATIENTS PERCEIVE, UNDERSTAND AND EXPECT FROM GENERALISTS?



Thank You

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