Australia (Victoria)

Over 20 million resident population in Australia

Almost 5 million resident population in Victoria
Where we live..
Why a primary care research unit?

• Health care costs >$66bn
  • $4,319 per Australian

• 102 million GP services/year

• GP role as ‘gatekeeper’
  • Prescribing
  • Referral to allied health care
  • Referral to specialist medical care
Australian health care: A strife of interests

- Organisation
  - Two levels of Government
  - National: General Practice (inc Divisions of GP), some other primary care, some public health
  - State: Hospitals, some primary care (community health) some public health
- Financing:
  - A$66.5 billion, 9.3% of GDP (2001-2)
  - General Practice as fee-for service, small business model
    - Chronic illness and teamwork initiatives
    - Some capitation and incentive payments, Divisions program
- Workforce
    - No increase in the last 10 years
      - Fall in city, rise in remote
    - 60% full time, 35% female, 25% >55yrs
- Outcomes
  - Mortality cf internationally, inc indigenous
Australian health care: Challenges in primary care

- The usual issues...
  - Chronic disease, ageing population, movement of care into the community
- Challenges arise from the fragmented organisation of care
- Equity
  - Rural, Outer metro, SES, Indigenous
  - Difficulty managing workforce and funding distribution
- Quality
  - Practitioner vocational recognition voluntary
  - Practice accreditation voluntary
  - Inability to enforce or mandate quality frameworks
- Efficiency
  - Fee-For-Service
  - Levers to encourage teamwork, integration. Quality care
- Research support and culture
  - Little infrastructure or financial support
History of Primary Care Research at Melbourne

1975 – Dept of Community Health
1991 – First research grant
1993 – Dept of Public Health and Community Medicine
1997 – First general practice PhD
1998 – Dept of General Practice and Public Health
2001 – Dept of General Practice
2004 – First NHMRC CIA Grant
2006 – PCRU established
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
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</table>
Why bother?

Importance of community based practitioners
- Problems vs diseases
- Rise of chronic disease

Can we provide quality care without research in practice?

- Work in Practice
- Lab based research
- Effective in Humans?
Research in practice

Clinical research in crisis?

Clinical research in Australia
(NHMRC “Chalmers Report” 2001)

Strengthening clinical research
(Academy of Medical Sciences Report, 2003)

Reforming clinical research (McNally BMJ 2003)

Clinical research in the US at a crossroads. (Crowley JAMA 2004)
How are we doing?

Small but growing numbers of RHDs

1 paper per 1000 EFT GP, less for AHPs

Entering NHMRC other Competitive Grants

Research Quality Framework – opportunity and threat
Career Pathway – PHCRED led

Mid-Career Researcher

Research Leader

Early-Career Researcher

GPs
PHCPs
Consumers
Divisions
Organisations
Policy Makers
PHCRIS

NHMRC Post-Doc

NHMRC Scholarship

PhD/MD Masters

RDP

NHMRC Program Grant

APHCRI

NHMRC Project Grant

Short-Course

PGCert
Beyond the university……

- Research users, translators
- Program Focus
- Rigorous methods
- Quality training
- Research collaborators
- Teachers
- Prac-researcher PhD/MD/Masters
- Teachers
- Research Led Practices
- Academic Units
- Service Practices
- Research Practices
The challenge

To build a sustainable research workforce

To undertake purposeful research that is used in practice and underpins policy

To make a difference
PROGRAM AREAS

• Mental Health
• Chronic Disease
• Young People’s Health
CURRENT PROJECTS

• Australian Primary Care Research Institute (APHCRI)
• National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
• The *beyondblue* Victorian Centre of Excellence (bbVCoE)
• Diabetes Australia- Victoria
• Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)
• Australian Health Ministers’ Council of Australia
• Australian Primary Care Research Institute (APHCRI)
• National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
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