A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ACADEMIC REGISTRAR – RESEARCH IN AN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED HEALTH SERVICE

Dr Melanie Dorrington ¹, ²
¹ Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service, ² The Australian National University

Background:
In 2012-2013 I completed an academic registrar post with Coast City Country General Practice Training (CCCGPT), The Australian National University (ANU) and Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service, an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS).

Objective:
Research: work with the ACCHS to improve uptake of Pap smears using translational research and continuous quality improvement techniques.

Teaching: within the Australian National University (ANU) Medical School; for junior doctors in GP rotations (PGPPP); and assist with the Indigenous health training day for local CCCGPT registrars.

Approach:
There were many teaching and research opportunities with varying deadlines and demands. An interesting combination of short-term and long-term time management was required to ensure that work was completed on time.

Findings:
It was a busy, and at times challenging, year combining commitments to research and teaching, and other life demands. I will summarise the ways I spent my time within an example of one day.

Research normally has aspects which are out of the researcher’s control, but working with an ACCHS added even more control (or lack thereof) issues. I required very flexible working hours to be able to meet the requirements of my research within the ACCHS – working around them, not around me. I managed to complete my research, and meet my teaching commitments. Along the way I have learnt more about general practice and mechanisms to improve the quality of the services we provide, and the importance of this.

Discussion:
Working with an ACCHS can be very rewarding. It would be difficult to have successful research collaborations without previously working within an ACCHS or having established close links. This is also important as research ideas and direction should come from within the community and the service.

Translational research and continuous quality improvement are both techniques that work well in assessing and improving general practice service.