

National Multidisciplinary Primary Care Research, Policy and Advocacy Consortium Newsletter

March 2026

Dear Consortium members,

The year has commenced with a strong focus on ensuring that our Consortium is planning to deliver research outcomes that will be relevant to government policy and decision making.

I am pleased to advise that our Consortium has been invited to host a workshop on new models of multidisciplinary team-based primary care at the upcoming Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing Primary Care Conference being held in Canberra this month. This will provide us with an opportunity to talk about our Consortium and our planned research activities with policy makers, primary care leaders, and representatives from all of our nation's Primary Health Networks (PHNs). Our five MRFF-funded postdoctoral research fellows have also been invited to attend the conference which will be a wonderful opportunity to learn about national primary care policy and programs, and to meet with colleagues from around Australia.



Following the conference, our postdoctoral research fellows will be meeting with members of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, to hear about national primary care policy challenges, and the role that research can play to support national health policy decision making. I look forward to reporting back on the conference and these meetings in our next newsletter.

I am pleased to advise that Rebecca Sedgman, from the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners (ACNP), and Heather Keighley, from the Council of Remote Nurses of Australia (CRANA), have been elected as the Chair and Deputy Chair of our Consortium's Primary Care Peaks Group. This group includes all the national peak organisations which are members of our Consortium. Representatives of the peak organisations have been sharing their hopes for the Consortium and advice on how they can each make important contributions to the work of our postdoctoral research fellows.

We have also been working to finalise the Research Framework for the activities of our Consortium over the coming five years, as well as our risk register, and our guidelines on authorship contributions to the publications arising from the research being conducted by members of our Consortium.

Finally, plans are already underway for our Strategic Think Tank meeting in Wollongong on Wednesday, 22 July 2026. I hope you will be able to join us.

Professor Michael Kidd AO

Save the Date! 2026 Strategic Think Tank Wednesday 22 July

The Australian Association for Academic Primary Care (AAAPC) Research Conference will be held at the University of Wollongong Innovation Campus on 20-21 July 2026. We encourage consortium members to submit an abstract which closes on 20 March 2026.



The 2026 Consortium Strategic Think Tank will take place immediately following on Wednesday 22 July 2026. We hope that all Chief Investigators and Associate Investigators, and representatives of peak professional and consumer organisations, can join us at the University of Wollongong on the day.

Submissions now open to present at the Strategic Think Tank

We invite Consortium members to submit abstracts for short presentations and posters at the Consortium Strategic Think Tank, to be held on 22 July 2026 at the University of Wollongong Innovation Campus **by 30 April 2026**. We welcome submissions that highlight innovative research, impactful advocacy initiatives, and evidence-informed policy solutions that address current challenges and shape the future of equitable, patient-centred multidisciplinary primary care. To make a submission please see [here](#).

Research Theme Groups

Each Research Theme is being led by the following research Centres with the relevant contact point set out below. The postdoctoral fellow listed will be in touch to set up the first meeting of the Research Theme Group.

Theme	Centre	Contact
Theme 1: What MDT-based primary care models optimise health outcomes, workforce satisfaction and experience of care?	CRESTRA	Ashmita Karki - ashmita.karki@menzies.edu.au
Theme 2: What are the key components of high quality comprehensive, accessible and equitable MDT-based primary care?	PROACT	Dr Catherine Stephen - cstephen@uow.edu.au
Theme 3: What outcome measures can be used to compare the effectiveness of different models?	ARIIA	Dr Jodie Hillen - jodie.hillen@flinders.edu.au
Theme 4: What is the cost effectiveness, feasibility, scalability, acceptability and sustainability of different models of MDT-based care across primary care settings?	MAMP	Dr Sandra Davidson - sdav@unimelb.edu.au
Theme 5: What is the best approach to implementing the key components of models of care in different settings?	SPHERE	Dr Sharon James - sharon.james@monash.edu.au

Consortium Knowledge Bank

The Consortium Operations Team is establishing a Knowledge Bank to be a central suppository of research on multidisciplinary team based primary care. This Knowledge Bank will be searchable via AI tools and will cover the five research teams. We encourage every Chief Investigator and Associate Investigator to showcase your preeminent or most relevant examples of research on models of multidisciplinary team-based primary care. Send a link or a pdf version to elizabeth.byrne@unsw.edu.au

New AI tool for literature reviews

Bond University has launched a new AI tool to enable literature reviews to be completed in an accelerated timeframe called the Evidence Review Accelerator (TERA): <https://tera-tools.com/>. For more details on how this may help future Consortium research please contact Justin Clark, the Research Fellow in Evidence Review Acceleration: jclark@bond.edu.au

National OCEAN study collecting workforce data

To strengthen their understanding of the roles of the professions supported through the WIP-PS, the Department of Health, Disability and Aging has funded work examining multidisciplinary team-based care in general practice. The Occasions of Care Explained and Analysed (OCEAN) project is being conducted as a collaboration between the University of Sydney, the University of Wollongong and the National Association of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners (NAATSIHWP).

The OCEAN study builds on the Bettering the Evaluation and Care of Health (BEACH) project. BEACH, run by the University of Sydney from 1998 to 2016, took a close look at what general practitioners do in their daily work. Now, OCEAN is taking things a step further—not only by using an online platform to gather data, but also by focusing on multidisciplinary primary care clinicians across Australia. The OCEAN study will provide insights into the day-to-day work of general practice nurses, nurse practitioners, physiotherapists, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners. Each of these professional groups will form a stream of the project. This information will provide a clear picture of how these professionals' roles are evolving to meet the complex healthcare needs of our communities. This new knowledge will help shape workforce planning, guide education and training, inform health policy, and ultimately improve the way healthcare is delivered around the country.

Data collection will occur in three waves. In Wave 1, Practices categorised as 'general practices' in the Healthmap dataset will be asked to complete the Practice Profile. Eligible practices include accredited and unaccredited general practices, Aboriginal Medical Services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services. The Practice Profile collects information about the practice characteristics and workforce, as well as contact information for target health professional groups. In Wave 2, GPNs, NPs, physiotherapists, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners working at practices who completed the Practice Profile will be emailed using the contact information provided and invited to participate. They will be asked to complete a Professional Profile, outlining their characteristics, skills, experience and scope of practice. In Wave 3, a random sample of health professionals who completed the Professional Profile (Wave 2) will be asked to record their clinical activity during patient encounters, describing the care they provide.

This research project will provide key evidence on the impact of nursing and allied health professionals in general practice teams and help guide future government policies and programs. It may also identify how health professionals can be better supported within a multidisciplinary team in primary care. To keep up to date with the progress of the OCEAN study please visit our [website](#) or follow us on [LinkedIn](#).

Applications are now open for the Oxford International Primary Care Research Leadership Programme

Applications are open for the [Oxford International Primary Care Research Leadership Programme](#), hosted by the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences at the University of Oxford. The programme is designed to foster and develop future leaders in primary care research. Taking place over three years, the programme consists of three residential meetings in Oxford and blends seminars and workshops with action learning sets and coaching, bringing together primary care research leaders from across the world working with experts in strategic leadership as well as skills-based trainers. The programme caters specifically for primary care researchers with post-doctoral experience who have demonstrated a desire to engage and stretch their leadership potential. Many of Australia's leading primary care researchers are graduates of this programme. **The closing date for applications is 27 March 2026.**