

# Staying Connected to General Practice in Dark Hospital Times!

## Mentoring Students to Stay Inspired & Connected to Primary Care Practitioners During Their Prevocational Years

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### Introduction

Capital Health Network (CHN), in conjunction with the Academic Unit of General Practice at the Australian National University Medical School (ANUMS) are excited to have started a new GP scholarship program for medical students. This scholarship is designed to support ANU medical students in staying connected to GP mentors in the final year of medical school and subsequent junior doctor years.

The scholarship facilitates two formal mentoring events during fourth year and the ability to attend a GP conference with all expenses paid up to \$2000. The program is designed to support the local emerging workforce and bolster general practitioners in the ACT to create a more sustainable workforce into the future.

### Mentor Feedback

*“After lockdowns and feeling very isolated in the GP clinic room, I didn’t realise how much I had missed the connection that comes with a dinner and conversation. The mentoring dinners made me once again feel part of the general practice community.”*

*“An unexpected benefit was that it made me feel more hopeful about the future of GP - both from the [students’ perspectives], and then also from the experiences shared by other GP mentors.”*

*“I felt inspired about the next generation and could see we are making a difference as supervisors.”*

*“Putting students and mentors together to share a collegiate conversation about their own passions and interests was a great way to establish deeper connections.”*

### Mentee Feedback

*“The dinners enabled us to talk about medicine and life outside medicine in a relaxed atmosphere. It was a good chance to hear informal advice about a career in general practice from doctors who have “made it”.”*

*“The program was wonderful, and it broadened my understanding of what GP life could look like. I loved the support and the intimate discussions we had over the dinners.”*

*“This program allowed me to connect with senior doctors on a much deeper level than I thought was possible. It was incredibly powerful to hear the successes and vulnerabilities of primary care providers.”*

*“Fun, inspiring, enlightening, supportive.”*

### Conclusion

CHN and ANUMS are thrilled with the early responses to the program. We believe that fostering the next generation of brilliant general practitioners starts with developing and maintaining personal connections with the current generation of primary care providers. Small groups of students and mentors can learn much from each other and contribute to the ever-growing importance of exceptional primary care.



*The second mentoring event of 2022 in which students and mentors discussed the complexities of life for our patients and ourselves. The evening involved rich wide-ranging conversations around living ethically and meaningfully as well as exploring concepts around emotions, sleep, neurodiversity, loneliness, and compassion. Another group of mentors and mentees has started meetings in 2023 as the scholarship program is proudly in its second year!*