

Vertical Integration in general practice

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What is vertical integration in general practice?

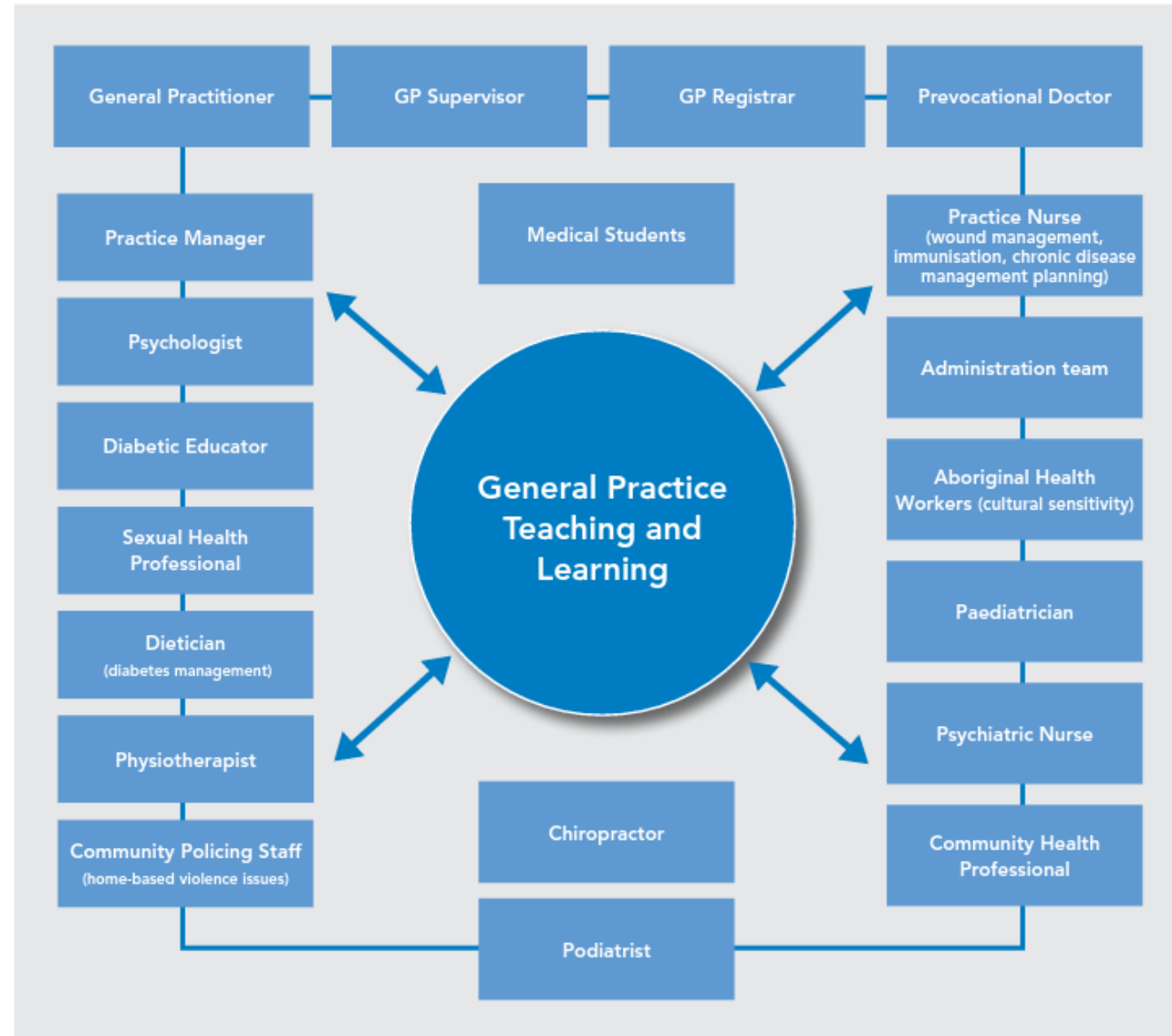
“Vertical integration of general practice education and training is the coordinated, purposeful, planned system of linkages and activities in the delivery of education and training throughout the continuum of the learner’s stages and medical education”

Thomson J. A framework for vertical integration in general practice education and training. Canberra: General Practice Education and Training Ltd, 2003.

“The ‘vertical’ component of integration relates to the shared learning and teaching within the four stages of GP training and learning: medical student, prevocational doctor, GP registrar, and GPs participating in continued professional development”

General Practice Supervisors Australia. Vertical and horizontal learning integration in general practice 2021 [cited 2023 Jan 10]. Available from: <https://gpsupervisorsaustralia.org.au/product/vertical-and-horizontal-learning-integration-in-general-practice/>.

DIAGRAM 1: POTENTIAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TO BE INVOLVED IN GP VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL LEARNING INTEGRATION



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Why is it important?

- Near-peer teaching
 - Cognitive and social congruence¹
- Increasing teaching capacity in general practice
 - Increasing number of medical students' year-on-year²
 - Decreasing number of GP registrar applications and significant GP shortfall projected³
- Increasing interest in, and recruitment to, GP training

What are the benefits?

Registrars:

- Reduced feelings of isolation⁴
- Ensuring management is evidence-based⁴
- Increases reflection on practice⁴
- Greater job satisfaction⁵
- Better knowledge acquisition⁵

Medical students/prevocational doctors:

- Enjoy 'near-peer status'^{6,7}
- Career guidance⁸
- 'Part of the team'/hands-on teaching

Supervisors/teaching practices:

- Reduced time pressures on GP Supervisors^{9,10}
- Can be financially beneficial^{9,10}
- Succession planning⁹

What are the challenges?

- Costs and need for increased teaching subsidies^{4,11,12}
- Time pressures^{4,11,12}
- Fewer numbers of in-practice teaching GPs¹³
- Not enough consultation rooms¹³
- GP registrars have competing clinical needs for training¹⁴
- Not all GPs and GP registrars will be interested in teaching¹⁰

Registrars as teachers

- Evidence suggests GP registrars are interested in teaching
- One WA study: 52% of GPs vs. 77% of registrars agreed registrars can take on teaching roles¹¹
 - 39% of GPs reported concerns about the individual capabilities of registrars to teach¹¹
- One UK study found that 92% of GP registrars wanted more training in how to teach¹⁵

Example: parallel consulting/‘wave’ method

TABLE 5: SINGLE WAVE (GP BILLS FOUR PATIENTS PER HOUR)

Time	Consulting room A	Consulting Room B
00.00	Student sees Patient 1 for 15 mins alone	GP sees Patient 2 alone
00.30	GP sees Patient 1 with Student	
00.45	Student sees Patient 3 for 15 minutes alone	GP sees Patient 4 alone
01.00	GP sees Patient 3 with Student	

TABLE 6: DOUBLE WAVE (GP BILLS FOUR PATIENTS PER HOUR)

Time	Consulting room A	Consulting Room B
00.00	Student A sees Patient 1 for 15 mins alone	Student B sees Patient 2 for 15 mins alone
00.30	GP sees Patient 1 with Student A	GP sees Patient 2 with Student B
00.45	Student A sees Patient 3 alone for 15 minutes	Student B sees Patient 4 for 15 mins alone
01.00	GP sees Patient 3 with Student A	GP sees Patient 4 with Student B

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Example: Shared teaching sessions

- Formal clinical teaching with all levels of GP learning
- Case presentation/grand rounds
- Journal club
- Practice education meetings

Example: One-to-one sessions

- Registrars -> prevocational doctors/medical students
- Practice nurses -> registrar/prevocational doctor/student
- Prevocational doctors/medical students presenting to senior GPs

Tips for increasing registrar teaching capacity

- Asking registrars if they want to teach
- Providing teacher training
- Discussing remuneration for teaching upfront
- Encouraging peer-to-peer teaching between registrars
- Parallel consulting with medical students

Research Project

- “Registrars as Teachers” Education Research Grant 2023
- Interviewing 15 GP registrars and 10 GP supervisors
- Focus groups with medical educators and medical students
- Exploring experiences of GP registrars as teachers from multiple stakeholder perspectives
- Project Research Assistant: dave.runciman@racgp.org.au

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Questions?

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