

## Funded Positions

Initiation into the  
secret rites &  
rituals of research



## Background

- ❑ Gap in early career research funding
- ❑ Some limited opportunities for new academic staff BUT very little for PHC professionals
- ❑ Feedback indicated need for funding to support time out to do research
- ❑ Bursaries, scholarships, fellowships
  - Both internally funded and national
- ❑ Researcher Development Program

## NSW PHC Bursary Scheme

- ❑ Program commenced in 2002, funded from State under-spend
- ❑ Intended for “novice” researchers
- ❑ Link potential researchers with academic expertise to build organisational capacity
- ❑ Up-skilling & career building
  - On the job training / apprenticeship
  - Embrace research career path
  - New pool of researchers
- ❑ Protected time

## Results

- ❑ 24 applicants - 12 awarded
- ❑ Range of applicants & experience
- ❑ Varied projects and purposes
- ❑ Multiple methods
- ❑ Range of skills developed
- ❑ Varied use of money
  - Time out, software, conference attendance, staffing
- ❑ Most positive & would continue with research



## GP Feedback

GP Type	Skills Impact	Personal Impact	Research Impact
GP Registrar	Thinking time. Qualitative methods. Think differently. On the job learning.	Quite threatening. GP expectation that you can perform but felt ill prepared. Opportunity for originality.	Reaffirmed interest. <u>Will continue</u> with research.
Full-time GP	Grant and ethics writing. Logistics. Project management. Data collection.	A burden. Not scared off.	Realized no time. <u>Unlikely</u> to do further research unless 'right scholarship'.
Part-time GP / part-time GP academic	Grant and ethics writing. Interviewing. Thematic analysis. Conference presentations. Report writing.	Positive experience. Great environment. Felt unskilled.	Realized time is an issue. <u>Will continue</u> with research. Support required.
Part-time GP / academic / PhD student	Program management / organisational skills via RA. Think differently. Conference presentation. Journal article.	"Non-linear challenge". Exciting. Entranced. Hassle. Frustrating. "Scared away a bit".	"Feeling deskilled". On target with PhD. <u>Will continue</u> with research, post PhD.

## Issues

- Difficult to tailor to the true novice
  - How do you do this effectively... to write a proposal you have to have some knowledge
- How do you rank rawness?
- Requires intensive mentoring
- Dipping vs diving
- What happens next?



## What Did We Learn?

- Target appropriately
- Money is not everything - protected time
- Doing it yourself vs employing others
- More structured administration
- Link to training & other support
- Non research skills also needed
- More flexible arrangements

## Researcher Development Program

- Major opportunity for those new to research
- Very popular - huge number of applicants across NSW
- Mix of professional backgrounds:
  - Clinical psychologists, dietetics, Division staff, GPs, nursing
- Most have limited research experience
- Range of projects and interests

## Points for discussion

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- ▣ Anecdotal feedback indicates positive response from potential applicants
- ▣ Transaction costs - intensive mentoring and supervision is likely to be required
- ▣ Salaries not competitive for all (particularly GPs)
- ▣ Additional costs to be covered
- ▣ What happens to applicants post the initial injection of funds?
- ▣ Need some limits