

General Practice Training in Victoria

Louise Sterling, GP Registrar

Advanced Registrar Louise Sterling, working at Trafalgar and Warragul through getGP, the Gippsland-based Regional Training Provider, tells why she chose general practice.



Louise Sterling, getGP Registrar, "It's great to have the opportunity to speak to residents about 'real' general practice as opposed to the perceived version that permeates through hospitals where GPs don't have a strong presence."

When Louise Sterling graduated from Monash University in 2001, she had a wide range of options. It turned out to be no contest; general practice just made sense.

"It has always appealed to me on an emotional level - it just felt right," she says. "On an intellectual level it met all of my requirements for a career; varied experiences with the opportunity to change direction and focus over time, flexible, well remunerated, mobile if required and not too demanding of personal sacrifice in order to complete training and maintain skills."

The thing that Louise enjoys most about her role is having access to a broad range of experiences and resources which allows her to trial different aspects of general practice while being fully supported by the Regional Training Provider, getGP, which, in Louise's words, has a long record of providing high quality training.

"The knowledge that I am not expected to know all the answers, that I will make some mistakes from which I will learn and am free to ask all the questions in the world, is very liberating," she added.

So far the highlights have been many. "Overall there is a sense of satisfaction at the end of a session, which has been varied, challenging and satisfying on both personal and professional levels."

Louise is obviously an advocate for general practice and has been prepared to share her experiences with students, from secondary level right through to medical students at Monash.

"It's great to have the opportunity to speak to residents about 'real' general practice as opposed to the perceived version that permeates through hospitals where GP's don't have a strong presence.

"In larger hospitals there is so little contact with GP's that it is hard to imagine what it is really like out there in the community.

"I think it is good for residents to have the opportunity to talk to GPs face to face so they can have the opportunity of asking all those personal, sometimes seemingly insignificant questions that are actually important."

Louise believes all GPs have a role to play in the promotion of general practice. "We need to make sure that our interaction with the residents is always professional and respectful and that we seize opportunities to promote our profession to them as a viable career option."



www.bogong.org.au



www.getgp.net.au



www.gtgtpet.com.au



www.vma.com.au



www.vicfelix.com.au

About VicNet

VicNet is a consortium comprising the five Victorian Regional Training Providers – Bogong Regional Training Network, Gippsland Education and Training for general practice (getGP), Greater Green Triangle GP Education & Training, Victorian Felix Medical Education and Victorian Metropolitan Alliance (VMA) – and Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV).

About RWAV

RWAV's a major player in rural general practice. RWAV's recruitment programs and ongoing support services have been fundamental to increasing rural GP numbers in Victoria. Key priorities include the provision of support services for rural doctors and their families, professional development programs, locum support, marketing of rural general practice, recruitment of rural doctors including specialist outreach services, workforce planning and research to inform government policy. For more information contact RWAV on (03) 9349 7800 or visit the RWAV website at www.rwav.com.au



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