

General Practice Training in Victoria

Liz Wearne, GP Registrar



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Nothing helps a doctor know their community better than General Practice, even if it does occasionally mean you are standing in the supermarket, in your tracksuit, with a handful of groceries, providing medical advice.

That's according to GP Registrar Liz Wearne, who was drawn to General Practice right from her University days.

"I liked the idea that I could get to know a community well, have a deeper understanding of people's lives and provide some continuity of contact," she says. "I like the thought of being a jack-of-all-trades, and I like that I can deal with all sectors of the community. General Practice offers such a great lifestyle - reasonable hours and flexibility seem harder to control in other specialties, especially while in training."

A country girl brought up in Gippsland, Liz is working again in her home region, albeit in the seaside resort of Lakes Entrance on the Ninety Mile Beach. A keen and accomplished photographer, she is drawn to rural areas for a number of reasons.

"I find working with rural people a completely different experience to dealing with city folk. It's much more fluid and easy-going somehow, I can identify with the pace, and the humour!" she says.

"The altruistic part of me that chose general practice still feels very strongly about advocating for and assisting those in rural communities who are least able to help themselves."

The GP Registrar program also strikes a chord for Liz Wearne. "There are advantages to being the one with L-plates on; the support for education is fantastic from both the practice and the training program. It's really like being an apprentice. I like being in a small town too despite the occasional fishbowl moment!"

There have been opportunities, too, that were as pleasing as they were unexpected. "I took part in getGP's Irish Exchange Program earlier in 2007, which was one of the most challenging and most rewarding experiences I've ever been part of. It was such an eye-opener to find myself trying to make sense of what felt like such a counter-intuitive health system."

"I had a ball though, met some fantastic people, saw some stunning places and got an insight into a totally different training program. I got to come home with a whole new appreciation for the way Aussies do things!"

Liz is excited by new opportunities that are opening up in her career, including "the prospect of dipping my toes into some teaching and working with the Gippsland Regional Clinical School in Traralgon next year."

"I like feeling that the options for work in addition to clinical General Practice seem to be opening up."

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 General Practice Education & Training – 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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