Message from the Chair

As many of you know, in the 2014-15 Federal Budget it was announced that Health Workforce Australia’s grants and programs would be transferred to the Federal Department of Health.

WA officially closed its doors in early August. I wish to use this opportunity to officially thank George Beltchev, Ryan Kennedy and the whole HWA team for their extraordinary work and support of the Clinical Training Networks, both in Western Australia and interstate. It has been a pleasure to work with the HWA team and we wish you all the best in the future.

We are in discussions with the Commonwealth Department of Health, awaiting indication of whether there will be an extension of time and/or funding for current budget allocations. While this is a challenging time for all, it has enabled a focused discussion of the benefits of the initiatives that have arisen and consideration of what needs to follow to continue the goodwill across sectors and professions.

The WACTN team and Governance Committee will continue with its current work program and will consider its future options in anticipation of the Commonwealth Department of Health advising their plans.

I am grateful for the work of the Governance Committee and welcome the newest member, Karen Bradley, who is the new Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer for WA Health. Karen brings a wealth of skills and knowledge from her role as the Area Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services at South Metropolitan Health Service.

Dianne Bianchini
Chair, WACTN Governance Committee

CLINICAL SUPERVISION TRAINING ON OFFER

The Clinical Supervision Support Program (CSSP) has engaged a number of high-quality training providers to deliver training for clinical supervisors across Western Australia in the last quarter of the year. A project of Health Workforce Australia, the Clinical Supervision Skills Initiative was created to build capacity and quality in clinical supervision.

In response to the needs identified by the Network, training will be provided in a number of locations and modalities. The skills initiative has a particular interest in meeting the needs of priority areas including aged care, primary care, disability, mental health and Aboriginal health. Participation will be sector-wide from government, not-for-profit and private providers of health care. The primary delivery mode will be the preferred face-to-face workshops; these will be delivered across the metropolitan area and in several regional centres to ensure a broad availability for most clinical supervisors.

With an externally imposed project completion date of 30 November 2014, the CSSP appreciates that there will be some time pressure on clinical supervisors to take up the training in addition to their busy workloads. However, it is hoped that this opportunity to receive quality training at no cost will be well utilised and will help achieve the outcomes of increased capacity and quality in the state’s health system.

Dates for training will be available soon and will be advertised across the network via several media. Interested parties should monitor the WACTN website for details or call Martin FitzSimons on (08) 9222 4393.

Rural and remote supervisors wishing to attend this training are eligible to apply for the Rural and Remote Participant Reimbursement – see article below.

Training support for rural participants

The WACTN is pleased to announce funding to financially support those in rural and remote locations wanting to access eligible events or training (ie events or training with demonstrated relevance to the WACTN’s focus on students undertaking entry level health profession qualifications).

Reimbursement of expenses is available for approved applicants to access an event or training which aims to:

• improve the quality of clinical placements for health profession students;
• increase the quantity of clinical placements for health profession students;
• provide access to clinical supervision support training; or
• provide access to simulated learning environments relevant to health profession students.

This funding is not available for enhancing or developing the clinical skills of people currently working as health professionals.

Further details of eligibility and the application form can be downloaded from www.health.wa.gov.au/wactn. The WACTN website for details or call Martin FitzSimons on (08) 9222 4393.

Rural and remote supervisors wishing to attend this training are eligible to apply for the Rural and Remote Participant Reimbursement – see article below.

Kendra Bell-Hayes has commenced work on an Interprofessional Learning and Interprofessional Education Literature Review and Analysis project. This project was identified as a priority by participants in our Communities of Interest workshops during 2013, but has been subject to a number of delays.

As part of this project, Kendra is requesting your assistance to identify teams or clinics that provide a model of interprofessional practice/collaborative teamwork in WA. Please sends contact details of the teams or clinics to Kendra for further follow-up. The intention is to gather evidence of the interprofessional practice or collaborative teams already in place, including details of student clinical placement activity and opportunity.

For more information on Kendra’s project, please feel free to contact Kendra (Kendra.Bell-Hayes@health.wa.gov.au) or via wactn@health.wa.gov.au.
Member Profile: Sandra Carr

Professor Sandra Carr has been a health professions educator for the past 18 years. She is currently Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences at The University of Western Australia and the university’s Director of Postgraduate Courses in Health Professions Education. At a national level, she has been involved in health curriculum projects addressing women’s health and interprofessional learning and has been on the steering committee for the National Health Education and Training in Simulation (NHET-Sim) group.

Her current involvement with clinical placements includes running short courses and postgraduate degree programs for clinical teachers and supervisors working in Western Australian health settings.

While she is aware from her own experience as a nurse and midwife that there are many competing demands on staff in the clinical environment, she would love supervisors to have more opportunity to reflect on their own performance.

“I think the ability of clinical supervisors to debrief is one of the major issues affecting the overall quality of clinical placements,” she explains.

“Supervisors and preceptors need opportunities to develop and practise the skill of giving meaningful feedback and they need more space and time to discuss their own performance as supervisors. I would love to see a culture develop where conversations around teaching practice are valued as much as, say, debriefs about critical incidents.

“Our short course participants really appreciate the opportunity of being with other clinical supervisors and sharing their different workplace experiences. Afterwards, they’ll often say ‘I wish I could come back and speak to you again, especially about what I’m doing now’. It would be good to have regular forums where clinical supervisors could reflect on their developing teaching practice with their colleagues.

“I hope the WACTN can create more opportunities for this to occur.”

Authentic observation of a student’s clinical performance – where supervisors directly observe students at work, rather than sending them away to do something and then report back on the experience – is, according to Sandra, also key to improving the quality of clinical placements.

“Without real observations of their performance and some constructive feedback from the supervisor, students can be left not knowing how to improve their practice,” she explains.

“This debriefing is also important in clinical simulation settings. Students need to be told what they did well and what they could do differently and they should be asked to reflect on their own performance. There is no point to these exercises if a meaningful debrief doesn’t occur.”

Interprofessional education DVD available

Margo Brewer’s presentation ‘Facilitating Interprofessional Education and Practice’ is now available as a watch-at-home DVD package.

The presentation was recorded at the Communities of Interest networking event in May this year. If you missed out on this presentation, you can request a copy by emailing your name and postal address details to wactn@health.wa.gov.au.

Students learn more about rural placements

Allied health students from Western Australian universities had the opportunity to learn more about rural clinical placements at a workshop run last month by the Western Australian Allied Health Interested in Bush Experience (WAALHIIBE) Student Rural Health Club. The workshop included information on application processes, placement opportunities and experiences, and scholarships available to students.

Maeva Hall from the West Australian Centre for Rural Health (WACRH) outlined the opportunities available to students undertaking a clinical placement through WACRH in Geraldton, including information on visits to Mount Magnet. Sarah Carlin provided information on the student vocational experiences available to allied health students through Rural Health West, which provides vocational experiences in a range of rural locations in Western Australia.

In partnership with WACRH, Rural Health West also provides an opportunity for 10 allied health students to visit Geraldton and Mount Magnet each year.

Two students who had recently completed a Rural Health West vocational experience in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands described how much they had enjoyed experiencing rural health service delivery firsthand.