

# General Practice Registrars Australia

## Minutes – Annual General Meeting

Date: 14 November 2020  
via videoconference

### Meeting open: 12:30pm (AEDT)

Welcome and acknowledgment of country by Scott Williams, GPRA Chair

### Attendance:

Scott Williams	GPRA Chair		
Sama Balasubramanian	GPRA President	Dan Wilson	GPME
Antony Bolton	GPRA Director	Natasha Nottingham	GPEX
Jessica Tidemann	GPRA Director elect	Alyisha Tan	EVGPT
Xander Alpherts	GPRA Director	Michelle Kah	EVGPT
Rebekah Hoffman	GPRA Director	Chris Soo	GPTQ
Melanie Smith	GPRA Registrar Advisor	Kim Huynh	GPTQ
		James Robinson	GPTT
Andrew Gosbell	GPRA CEO	Amy Daly	GP Synergy
Mandy McDonald-Susic	GPRA Minutes	Hugh Stump	GP Synergy
		Genevieve Aisthorpe	JCU GPT
		Charles Aitken	MCCC
<b>By Proxy:</b>		Amy Harper	MCCC
Darlene Alarcon		Siobhan Hensey	NTGPE

### Apologies:

Erin O'Donnell-Taylor	GPRA Director	David Mildenhall	JCU GPT
Ingrid Williams	GPRA Director	Alexander Baggott	JCU GPT
Stephen O'Kane	GPR Auditor	Stephen Johnston	JCU GPT
Vidhya Subramaniam	EVGPT	Archibald Collyer	MCCC
Cheten Mistry	EVGPT	Ishani Nanayakkara	RVTS
Cici Li	GPEX	Erin Hawkey	RVTS
Aaron Hawkins	GPTT	Leigh-Anne Bingham	RVTS
Daniel Kirk	GPTT	Maulik Patel	WAGPET
Terri Haworth	GP Synergy	Anthony Rengel	WAGPET
Emma McQuillan	GP Synergy		

### Acceptance of previous Minutes:

**Resolution:** That the minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting be accepted.

Moved: Jess Tidemann Seconded: Rebecca Hoffman, all in favour

**Resolution:** That the minutes of the 2020 Special General Meeting be accepted.

Moved: Jess Tidemann Seconded: Sama Balasubramanian, all in favour

## 1.0 Election of President-Elect

- Ratification of the election of President-Elect

**Resolution:** That the appointment of elected Director, Antony Bolton, as President-Elect be ratified.

Moved: Siobhan Hensey   Seconded: Natasha Nottingham, all in favour

## 2.0 Chair Report

Presented by Scott Williams.

- On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to provide the Chairperson's report for General Practice Registrars Australia (GPRA) for 2019-20. It is not surprising that the most notable impact has been the coronavirus pandemic. With the Directors spread out across the country the restrictions with domestic travel has meant a reliance on video conferencing platforms as the closest substitute to face to face meetings. This has also meant a complete reorganisation of scheduled Board meetings from the normal full day Saturday every quarter, with ad hoc teleconferences in-between, shifting to a monthly 2 hour weeknight video conference. With several new Directors it has been particularly challenging to support their induction to GPRA.
- Our CEO Andrew Gosbell has also had to respond to the challenges of the pandemic with remote working of all staff while continuing to provide a service to our members. The early part of 2020 has presented many challenges, with the Board remaining ever vigilant as to the full impacts of the coronavirus both physically, mentally and financially yet to be fully realised.

### Governance

- The organisation's internal practices and procedures continue to be a focus for the Board, and I am pleased to report that as with the prior years we have had no regulatory breaches for 2019-20.

### Board Membership

- In line with Board renewal practices there have again been a number of changes this year with the Board membership in 2019-20, due mainly to the completion of tenures of past Directors and the decision to increase the elected member numbers following the 2019 AGM.
- In the elected member positions a total of three new Directors were appointed throughout the year, we have welcomed Dr Jessica Tidemann in November 2019, and more recently, Dr Erin O'Donnell-Taylor and Dr Antony Bolton in April 2020. Dr Sama Balasubramanian will complete his tenure at the end of 2020 as President with succession planning a key component of success for the incoming President.
- Xander Alpherts, also joined the Board in August 2019 to the vacant appointed Director role. Xander joins the Board with significant experience within the financial services industry, and has also assumed the Chair role of the Board Finance and Risk Management sub-committee.
- Dr Eranthi Hettiarachchi, stepped down from her elected Director following the completion of her full term in November 2019 and although Dr Melanie Smith had completed her time as President the previous year, she remained on the Board in her past president role also until November 2019. I would like to thank both of them for their contributions to the Board especially for their lived experience of transition through general practice during their time on the Board.
- The Board continues to support the equality agenda and has a gender ratio of 50:50 of females to males, well ahead of the current industry average.
- As Chair, I would like to thank all the Directors, both our new appointees and those who left us in 2019-20 for their outstanding contributions to the Board and in particular with the recent challenges for agility in responding to the impacts of the global pandemic.
- In closing, the year ahead is probably one that continues to have great uncertainty and

significant demands on health practitioners, all of which are front and centre for the GPRA Board as we all learn to navigate in this new world.

**Resolution: To accept Chair Report.**

Moved: Xander Alpherts      Seconded: Antony Bolton, all in favour

### **3.0 President Report**

Verbal report presented by Sama Balasubramanian.

- Acknowledgement and thanks to the Board, GPRA CEO Andrew Gosbell and staff and Mel Smith, Registrar Advisor for hard work and dedication, particularly during these challenging times.
- GPRA is mindful of the need for the Board to have a balance of lived experience and governance experience to function effectively. GP trainees are encouraged to nominate for the GPRA Board to gain governance experience in a formalised way to represent the profession moving forward and the interest of trainees.
- Particular focus has been working across the three domains of trainees, stakeholder and government engagement covering interaction with individual trainees, collaborative discussions with stakeholders, including the two GP colleges and AMA. Initiating GP trainees Roundtable Discussion bringing together different GP training representatives and demonstrating GPRA is a leader in the field focusing on collaboration and understanding our voices together will best benefit everyone's needs. Government level interaction includes ad hoc conversations with different levels of the Department, letters to the Federal Health Minister and the Health Secretary engaging with Professor Michael Kidd and engaging and being an active part of groups such as General Practice Training Advisory Committee (GPTAC), and the recently formed General Practice Workforce Reform Advisory Panel (GPWRAP).
- Advocacy and engagement are guided by the Board in order to make decision-making a safe, robust and effective process with the rationale behind GPRA actions articulated as best we can clearly to the membership in the form of the e-newsletter as well as ad hoc correspondence and media releases.
- GPRA exists as a bridge, a conduit and driver to get the best outcomes for trainees and we need to make sure we continue to work with similar minds to achieve this goal.

**Resolution: To accept President Report.**

Moved: Antony Bolton      Seconded: Jess Tidemann, all in favour

### **4.0 CEO report**

Verbal report presented by Andrew Gosbell.

- Membership: GPRA currently has more than 8,000 GP trainee and early career GP members, with at least 70% of registrars on AGPT pathway in our member database. In addition, nearly 7,000 prevocational doctors and over 5,000 medical students are associate members.
- COVID-19: the response to the coronavirus involved a rapid re-prioritisation of activities to focus on providing support for, and advocating on behalf of, GPRA members impacted by the pandemic. This has been the dominant focus of our activities since mid-March 2020.
- GP Registrar employment arrangements and the NTCER: GPRA has continued to actively engage in discussions with GP training sector stakeholders on approaches to address long-standing concerns many registrars have with the current employment terms and conditions during their GP training.
  - Our discussion paper, *Employment Conditions for GP Registrars*, and facilitated *Round Table on GP Trainee Employment* were key initiatives that have been well

received by the GP training sector and informed consultations with a range of stakeholders, which will continue throughout the coming year as alternative employment models are considered and trailed.

- Support and advice for GP trainees: advice for members in relation to employment and/or training issues is a core service provided by GPRA. Our Registrar Advisor, Dr Melanie Smith, has continued to provide excellent service in the form of individual advice to members enquiries. A range of other resources, webinars, brochures, FAQs, etc are provided to give general advice on issues commonly experienced by GP registrars.
- Education and exam preparation support: Examination preparation activities specifically targeted to IMG doctors were successfully trialled as low-cost workshops and will continue to be offered in the coming year. The 3rd edition of *GP Companion* was launched in August 2019. GPRA's suite of low-cost exam preparation books, used by many GP trainees as a key resource in preparing for the written and clinical exams, have been peer-reviewed and updated to ensure alignment with current clinical guidelines and college examination requirements. A new Written Exams book was released in July 2020. Clinical Cases Vol1 was released in August 2020 and Vol2 will be published by the end of 2020.
- Our networks: We have been working to re-establish and strengthen engagement with prevocational doctors through the development of our new Future General Practitioners Network. An initial pilot of this program is progressing in three regions: WA, SA and Victoria. GPRA continues to support a vibrant and active cohort of medical students through a national network of GPSN clubs engaging students with interests in general practice at every Australian University medical school. The introduction of large state-based events has been a recent successful GPSN initiative during 2019-2020.
- Operations: Robust cost control and continuation of government funding through our Department of Health grant supplemented with revenue from advertising and sales of goods and services have ensured a continued stable financial position for GPRA.
- Thank you: to the GPRA Board for its guidance and support, and the Advisory Council for input and support. Most of all, the hard work and dedication of the staff must be acknowledged – though small in number, they truly deliver for GPRA and its members – thank you team.

#### **Resolution: To accept CEO Report.**

Moved: Sama Balasubramanian      Seconded: Natasha Nottingham, all in favour

#### **5.0 Nominations and Remunerations Report.**

Verbal report presented by Scott Williams.

- There has been a focus on renewal of policies and procedures and given the challenges from the coronavirus pandemic, maintaining a strong focus on governance to support the organisation to continue delivering appropriate support to members despite the changed circumstances.
- The Board had undertaken a detailed Board evaluation as in previous years however the professional development schedule has been postponed until 2021 due to the current travel restrictions. Annual performance evaluations were also completed on the CEO, Chair, President and all Directors in 2020.

#### **Resolution: To accept Nominations & Remunerations Report**

Moved: Xander Alpherts      Seconded: Jess Tidemann, all in favour

#### **6.0 Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee Report**

Powerpoint presentation report presented by Xander Alpherts.

- FY20 Financial Results
  - Despite a COVID-19 impacted year, the organisation produced a steady small surplus for the year.
  - Revenue was up \$103k, primarily due to an increase in Commonwealth Government Grant and \$62k COVID-19 cash flow boost, offsetting declines in sponsorship and educational sales.
  - Expenses were marginally up, mostly due to employment of a Medical Educator for IGPRN and increased consultancy fees due to volume of employment related enquiries.
- Financial position
  - Overall financial position remains strong.
  - Cash increased due to change in receipt of government grant from quarterly to biannually.

**Resolution: That the 2019/20 Annual Report be received.**

Moved: Jess Tidemann      Seconded: Sama Balasubramanian, all in favour

**Resolution: That the 2019/20 Annual Financial Statements be received.**

Moved: XA      Seconded: Natasha Nottingham, all in favour

**Resolution: That the 2019/20 Auditor's Report be received.**

Moved: Rebekah Hoffman      Seconded: Antony Bolton, all in favour

**Resolution: To accept Finance, Audit & Risk Management Report.**

Moved: Antony Bolton      Seconded: Jess Tidemann, all in favour

## **7.0 Business arising and members queries**

- Are there any strategic plans to use surplus finds towards registrar advocacy?
  - GPRA continues to manage finances and monitor any available surplus. Conscious to carefully manage current surplus due to uncertain times so as to retain a modest buffer.
  - Aim is to minimise any surplus due to government grant requirement to return any significant underspend and to provide high quality services to our members at no cost or low cost.
  - The COVID-19 cash flow boost was unanticipated revenue that will be utilised for capacity building initiatives, in particular for infrastructure funding to upgrade our outdated website and member database so as to provide better services to members.
  - Advocacy is one of three key strategic pillars for GPRA Board, and is recognised as a fundamental function of the organisation. Board strategic planning later in November 2020, will be considering how this will continue to be strengthened in future organisational activities and initiatives

**AGM close: 1:08pm**