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ACAP Education Special Interest Group (Victorian Branch)

Brett Williams

brett.williams@med.monash.edu.au

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ACAP Education Special Interest Group (Victorian Branch)

Brett Williams, Senior Lecturer
Monash University Department of Community Emergency Health and Paramedic Practice
Melbourne, Australia

The establishment of the ACAP Education Special Interest Group (SIG) (Victorian Branch) has a number of broad aims. Firstly, to provide an opportunity for educators in Higher Education and industry to identify gaps and synergies in the emerging body of paramedic pedagogy. Secondly, the group will attempt to foster leadership and guidance in paramedic education and training, offering opportunities for early-career researchers and clinical educators to develop skills in teaching and educational research. Finally, the group will provide greater opportunities for collaboration between universities, industry and external peak bodies.

The inaugural meeting was attended by the following members:

Jeff Allan (Ambulance Victoria/Monash University)
Peter Hartley (Victoria University)
Peter Jurkovsky (Monash University)
Brett Williams (Monash University)
Michael Williams (Ambulance Victoria/Victoria University)

Apologies:

Gareth Becker (Ambulance Victoria)
Kathryn Eastwood (Ambulance Victoria/Monash University)
Chris Huggins (Monash University)
Tina Ivanov (Ambulance Victoria)
Bill Lord (Monash University)
Andrew McDonell (Ambulance Victoria)
Tony Walker (Ambulance Victoria)

The following topics were broadly discussed:

1. Simulation
2. e-learning/online teaching and learning

3. Clinical placement education/work-readiness/job-readiness
4. Interprofessional education/double-degrees/extended scope
5. Curriculum and Evaluation

Each topic was discussed individually providing opportunities for future exploration at the next SIG. These discussions covered the following aspects:

Simulation:

- Definition of simulation.
- What does simulation provide us e.g. technical vs. non-technical skills?
- How is it currently used? Undergraduates/Postgraduates?
- Relationship between simulation and clinical placements?
- What fidelity fits what?
- Development of simulation policy.
- Undertake simulation research.
- Linkage to educational theory.
- Linkage to professional outcomes ie. Student self-confidence.

e-learning/online teaching and learning:

- Distance – blended – what model works best?
- Educational theory supporting pedagogy.
- Principles of good teaching practice.
- Digital natives versus digital immigrants, what are the teaching and learning implications?
- Do learning styles/attitudes change in elearning modes?
- Are digital natives more e-savvy – ePCRs and e-health informatics?
- Are there implications using social networking, wikis, blogs etc.?

Clinical placement education/work-readiness/job-readiness:

- Where does simulation sit?
- What are the objectives or purpose of clinical placements – ambulance and hospital settings?
- No consistent approach or expectations between universities and industry.
- Are there implications with reduced or no hospital placements?
- Pre-employment students upon graduation are not intended to be work-ready – why is this notion still opaque?

Interprofessional education/double-degrees/extended scope

- Are issues surrounding clinical placements (hospital and health services) likely to impede IPE/IPL and notion of generic worker?
- What are the implications of physician assistants/practitioner models for the Australian context?
- Occupational encroachment = turf war = potential loss of our ‘professional’ status without national registration/regulation.

Curriculum and evaluation

- National educational standards and nationally-accredited curricula need to be implemented to ensure the educational topics discussed above enhance the development of paramedic education and training in Australia. Therefore, national standards, competencies and attributes are urgently required.

- How can we improve our evaluative processes?

Jeff Allan has kindly offered to convene the SIG.

The next SIG meeting will take place on Wednesday 13th May. Please contact Jeff Allan (Jeff.Allan@ambulance.vic.gov.au) if you have further queries regarding SIG membership or any other matters.

Warm regards,
Brett Williams, MACAP

Disclaimer: Official endorsement of the Education SIG will be ratified at the next ACAP National Board Meeting.