



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **PILOT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM GENERATES INTEREST IN GENERAL PRACTICE**

GP Registrars and medical students have united to produce what may become the most effective tool to raise interest in General Practice amongst students. An expanded pilot of the GPSN Schwartz First Wave Scholarship Program is being rolled out this year which will see 54 first and second year medical students across 14 universities receive this scholarship which provides an early positive exposure to General Practice.

Speaking at the scholarship workshop in Sydney today Ms Elina Gourlas, GPSN Chair, said "The GPSN Schwartz First Wave Scholarship Program was introduced to create an opportunity for medical students in their first or second year to experience General Practice under the guidance of a GP Registrar. Using a peer-to-peer model, students complete a series of supervised clinical placement sessions in a fully functional medical practice."

"This sought after scholarship allows medical students to embark on an experience of General Practice that is positive and inspiring very early on in their medical journey. We received in excess of 200 applications for the 54 advertised positions demonstrating that students are very keen to take up this opportunity." Ms Gourlas noted

"Key to the success of this program is the use of Registrars as GP preceptors. Being closer in age and to that stage of their training they better understand the needs of the students and present a really positive role model to students. It appears that Students are often more comfortable in asking questions and interacting with registrars in the GP training program. It also provides a positive experience for Registrars who realize that they have considerable knowledge and experience to share." commented Dr Belinda Guest, GPRA Chair.

"The First Wave program focuses on more than just clinical skills and the structure ensures that the students have a good understanding of the training environment and GP career opportunities", she added.

"Research indicates that medical students can be deterred from General Practice due to negative stereotypes and poor quality rotations during university years. With the FIRST WAVE scholarships we want to break that cycle and put students through a quality placement in general practice. We want students to gain a true appreciation of what the specialty has to offer and learn through positive role models who resonate with their own lifestyles and interests." said Amit Vohra, GPRA CEO.

"We work closely with Regional Training Providers to ensure that the Registrar supervisors are hand-picked thus guaranteeing that the students are mentored by someone who is enthusiastic and interested in talking to them about General Practice." he added

The First Wave Scholarship program is administered by General Practice Registrars Australia (GPRA) and supported by funding from General Practice Education and Training (GPET) and the regional training providers. The Pilot program has been made possible by a donation from GPRA benefactor Dr Jerry Schwartz.

### **For more information or comment:**

Mr. Amit Vohra, Chief Executive Officer, GPRA- 0431 909 502