

2014/2015 Summer Studentship Project Application Form

Send to: Research Office, University of Otago Christchurch, PO Box 4345, Christchurch, by 5pm on **4 July 2014**

Supervisor Information (First named supervisor will be the contact):

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Research Category (Choose one category only – to be used for judging the students' presentations):

Community

Project Title (20 words MAXIMUM):

Developing Practice Managers: Understanding the General Practice Management Workforce

Project Description:

Introduction

Practice managers are an integral part of the primary care workforce, with practice management becoming an increasingly complex field. Little is known about the career pathway to becoming a practice manager, the scope of practice within the current practice management workforce, or the influences on job turnover and retention rates for this sector of the workforce. These factors will all have an impact on the level and type of professional development required to support a high standard of practice management in general practices.

In 2010/11 a Pegasus Health summer student project "Exploring and Understanding the Learning Needs of General Practice Administrative Support Staff" was undertaken to establish the learning needs and levels of training required to support this group. As a result of this project, the Practice Manager's and Administrator's Education Programme was established by Pegasus Health in 2013, with the objectives of developing a professional development pathway for non-clinical practice staff, fostering peer-to-peer networking and developing standardised resources, guidelines, policies and procedures for use within general practices. The programme will have delivered 4 large group education sessions to general practice staff by the end of 2014.

Aim

- To understand the composition of the current practice management workforce, including varying skill levels and scopes of practice
- To appraise the effectiveness of the Practice Manager's and Administrator's Education Programme in meeting the professional development needs of practice managers
- To identify opportunities for further development of the education programme to ensure all levels of the practice management workforce are supported

Method

- Analyse data collected from the large group education sessions delivered in 2013/14
- Interview Pegasus staff and others involved in the development and delivery of the education programme
- Develop a questionnaire to be sent to practice managers to survey self-assessed skill levels and scopes of practice using the PMAANZ determined framework
- Collate and analyse survey responses
- Facilitate a focus group to discuss survey results and to explore opportunities for further development of the education programme
- Provide a written report to Pegasus Health and present findings and recommendations to Pegasus Health staff

Significance

Pegasus Health recognises the significant contribution that practice managers make to general practice and the need for professional development support for this group. Understanding the current workforce will help inform further enhancement of the Practice Manager's and Administrator's Education Programme to ensure that it supports all levels of the workforce from entry level through to advanced practice managers.

