**Abstract for RMA17**

**“It always helps you to become a better supervisor”: the importance of connecting with other supervisors for GP supervisor identity formation and professional development.**

Belinda Garth1,2, Catherine Kirby1,2, Debra Nestel2,3, James Brown1,2

1Eastern Victoria GP Training, Churchill, Australia 2Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Monash University 3Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, University of Melbourne

**Background**

Being a supervisor involves the expansion of a GPs professional role and identity as a clinician to accommodate the role of supervisor. Understanding supervisor professional identity formation is essential for supporting supervisor development. However, there is very little empirical research examining GP supervisors’ professional identity formation.

**Objective**

The objective of our study was to explore and identify factors that facilitate or impede professional identity formation of GP supervisors, in order to enhance supervisor training, support and retention.

**Methods**

Fifteen GP supervisors, with a range of years’ experience (from one to 20 years), participated in a one-on-one interview. Data was analysed thematically using a community of practice theoretical framework.

**Findings**

Relationships are fundamental to supervisor identity formation. The community of practice of GP supervisors provides an essential form of support for supervisors, and contributes to an increase in confidence, engagement and competence. The way in which connecting with other supervisors facilitates the professional development of GP supervisors will be explored.