**Title: Peer Connection in General Practice**

**Author and affiliations**

FMCER Grant 16b. Outcomes report.

Bio: Dr Karen Price was awarded the 2016 RACGP FMCER grant to undertake her PhD with the Department of General Practice. She is using GP data to inform policy and practice identifying the role of peer-connection in general practice. This explores GP’s well-being, goal-directed informal learning, quality and safety.

Karen’s research builds on her lifetime expertise as a GP. She is the co-developer and facilitator of GPs Down Under, a 5000+ member community of Australian and New Zealand GPs. She has chaired committees and developed mentor programs for both the AMA and the RACGP.

Karen has presented national and internationally; plenary lectures; workshops on women’s medical leadership; social media; resilience, and informal learning. She is published on women’s medical leadership and received a 2011 Monash University award for medical student teaching. Karen continues to develop evidence-based medicine, leadership, advocacy, and peer support, in both research and her ongoing clinical General Practice.

**Background:**

**GPs can experience isolation which has been described as a characteristic of the workplace. (1) Depending upon location, support can be challenging to characterise and access. (2) Informal connections between colleagues are not well described as a means of managing the many workplace demands upon the individual GP.(3)**

**Aims:**

**To explore the role of peer-connection in General Practice**

**Method:**

**This is an exploratory qualitative study using semi structured interviews and thematic analysis. Twenty one Australian GPs who had an interest in self-selected peer groups were interviewed. The data was analysed for themes using constructivist and humanistic approaches providing in-depth description of expert participation within the emerging concept.**

**Results: Major themes: (preliminary)**

**There are access issues regarding barriers and enablers to peer-connection as an informal learning and support concept. When access is gained, rich learning in clinical, affective and identity domains appears to be the result. The connection within the community appears to influence sustainability of practice and practice location.**

**Conclusion.**

**Peer-connection provides a means of sustaining General Practice work for the practitioners interviewed. This is a highly valued role and yet the language for this concept is sparse. Peer-connection is a preliminary concept that needs further development and research.**

**References**

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