

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 4: MAY 2018

ROYAL NORTH SHORE (RNS) SURGICAL EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND TRAINING (SERT) INSTITUTE www.rnssert.org

KEY EVENTS OCT 2017-MAY 2018

- ✓ The RNS SERT Institute Action Plan
- ✓ New academic appointment
- ✓ Three new positions to be advertised soon
- ✓ Visit from the NSW Ministry of Health
- ✓ International Clinical Trials Day showcase
- ✓ Sydney Medical Program update
- ✓ Postgraduate Research and Training update
- ✓ DASO recruitment and funds allocation



MESSAGE FROM PROFESSOR TOM HUGH

This is the fourth newsletter from the RNS SERT Institute.

I am pleased to welcome **Dr Anthony Glover** to his new role as Lead, Masters of Surgery in the RNS SERT Institute. Anthony has an impressive clinical, research and teaching background, and recently returned from an

NHMRC-awarded Neil Hamilton Fairley Early Career Fellowship in New York.

Another important **academic position** within the RNS SERT Institute (Lead, Surgical Excellence and Performance Change) will be advertised in the coming weeks and I encourage interested surgeons to apply (more on page 4). We will also be recruiting a 0.5 FTE **administrative officer** to support our ever expanding work! (more on page 4).

Based on feedback from surgical departments during our consultation process we have taken the following actions:

- Started the recruitment process to appoint a dedicated **surgical scientific officer** to provide research support to the RNSH Division of Surgery (more on page 4)
- Launched the **RNS SERT Institute website** (www.rnssert.org), which is being populated with information about surgical departments on the Northern campus, as well as profiles of surgical leaders working in the RNS SERT Institute. We anticipate this will become the main conduit for promoting surgical activity in our area. Shelly would appreciate any feedback you have about the website.
- Assessed and developed a **preliminary surgical research strategy**, including our bio-statistics capacity and how the RNS SERT Institute can strengthen this further
- Identified **opportunities for collaboration** with the academic anaesthetists at RNSH

We are planning an **official launch of the RNS SERT Institute** in June 2018. This will be another exciting milestone and an invitation will be extended to all clinicians and researchers within the Northern area.

The RNS **DASO unit** is also just about to announce the funding application outcomes to assist surgical departments with data management. (more on page 3)

RNS SERT INSTITUTE UPDATE

Shelly Dhaliwal

The last 6 months have been exciting for the Institute, with numerous milestones achieved:

- ✓ The RNS SERT Institute webpage is up and running (www.rnssert.org) and provides an excellent portal for communicating our activities
- ✓ The **RNS SERT Institute Committee** is working through an **action plan** in response to discussions and feedback from all surgical departments, including developing some key performance indicators

(continued next page)

- ✓ Some of our **planned actions** include:
 - Identifying and nominating **an academic lead within each surgical department** in consultation with the Head of that Department. We hope to drive surgical educational activities on the RNS campus through this identified lead and to provide them with the necessary support, including promoting them and their activities through our webpage
 - Expanding the **Fellow positions to include research and teaching** as an integrated part of the Fellowship
 - Supporting and strengthening surgical teaching in the newly revised University of Sydney **MD program**

SYDNEY MEDICAL PROGRAM UPDATE

A/Prof Margaret Schnitzler

The surgical teaching component of the Sydney Medical Program has been favorably evaluated by students. However, we are always striving to improve the teaching of surgery and student experience. With this in mind, we ran the **inaugural summer surgical program for 4 weeks in November/December 2017**. This program is designed to give stage 1 and 2 students some exposure to surgery ahead of their clinical attachments in stage 3. **Thirty two students were placed with various surgical departments at RNSH** and all participants indicated that their interest in surgery had increased. In the words of one student:

"I had the most fantastic week with the neurosurgery team. I learned many new skills and also gained a much greater understanding of how a surgical team fits into the day-to-day running of a large hospital. It was exciting and great fun and the surgeons were all very helpful and welcoming. I wish I could do it all again!"

It is intended that this will be an annual activity at the Northern Clinical School and we hope to expand the number of placements in coming years.

The structured **surgical teaching program** has been **extensively revised** in the past couple of years with **a focus on interactive and case-based sessions** to complement the online lecture program. This year has seen the introduction of a series of clinical reasoning sessions on common surgical topics with a case student presentation and an expert surgical mentor. All of our teaching is evaluated and student feedback is used to plan future sessions. We are fortunate to have an enthusiastic group of consultant surgeons and fellows who contribute to the surgical program at the Northern.

VISIT FROM THE NSW MINISTRY OF HEALTH

We were recently **visited by delegates of the NSW Ministry of Health's Health System Purchasing and Performance Branch** Melinda Pascoe and Chrissie Crawford. Their role includes advising the Ministry on improvement strategies, performance against key indicators and issues regarding elective surgical services. The purpose of their visit was to get a better understanding of the innovative projects going on within the RNSH Division of Surgery and Anaesthesia.

The meeting was attended by Prof Tom Hugh; Diane Elfleet (A/Divisional Nurse Manager, Division of Surgery and Anaesthesia), Shelly Dhaliwal, Maria Albania, Joe Portelli (Manager, Analytics and Business Intelligence Unit), Graham Hanson (Senior Business Analyst) and Olivia Kirkland (CNC, Acute Surgical Unit).



L-R Top row: Chrissie Crawford, Melinda Pascoe, Shelly Dhaliwal, Joe Portelli, Graham Hanson, Diane Elfleet, Prof Tom Hugh
L-R Bottom row: Maria Albania, Olivia Kirkland

We had an opportunity to present the **RNS SERT Institute** and the **RNS DASO Unit** activities to date. We also discussed the **Theatre Information Management System (TIMS)**, the **Waitlist Application** and the **Acute Surgical Unit**. It was an opportunity to share knowledge and there were discussions of the state-wide roll-out of some of our projects. Needless to say, the Ministry delegates were impressed by the great work going on at RNSH.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH AND TRAINING UPDATE

Lead, Postgraduate Education and Research - Dr Jonathon Parkinson

During the next few months we will continue to **audit postgraduate research and training** at RNSH. Many surgeons have already participated in a **survey conducted by the Discipline of Surgery** at the University which looks at recent research activities including student supervision, grant success and publications. In addition to this, I have been **meeting with the supervisors of training** within the surgical units to discuss what the expectations for research placed upon trainees are and how the RNS SERT Institute might be able to further facilitate this occurring. We will also be holding an **education/support day** for all surgical registrars and fellows later this year, likely in November. Stay tuned for details!

NEW APPOINTMENT

Lead, Masters of Surgery – Dr Anthony Glover



Anthony is an Endocrine, Oncology and General Surgeon, and an NHMRC Early Career Fellow. His research focuses on **understanding the molecular biology of endocrine cancers (thyroid and adrenal) to develop new treatments to improve outcomes**. Anthony completed general surgical training at St Vincent's Hospital (Sydney) and clinical fellowships in surgical oncology with the Royal Marsden Hospital (London) and with the University of Sydney Endocrine Surgical Unit. Anthony obtained a PhD for his work on the molecular biology of adrenal cancer with the Cancer Genetics Laboratory of the Kolling Institute (University of Sydney) and subsequently was awarded an NHMRC Neil

Hamilton Fairley Early Career Fellowship which allowed him to obtain post-doctoral research training with the James Fagin Lab at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (New York).

Anthony is a newly appointed VMO at RNSH, a Clinical Lecturer with the Northern Clinical School and an instructor for the College of Surgeons for the CCRISP and ASSET courses. His main role within the RNS SERT Institute will be to coordinate and expand the Masters of Surgery program on the Northern campus.



RNS DATA ANALYSIS AND SURGICAL OUTCOMES (DASO) UNIT UPDATE

Maria Albania

The RNS DASO Unit continues our recruitment progress by welcoming our **first data manager Wally Shi**. Wally has a degree in BSc. (Biological Science) and joined the Unit after a decade of service to NSW Health Pathology with SSWPS Liverpool, SEALS Prince of Wales, and Pathology West, Westmead. Wally has extensive experience in human resource management, auditing, preparation and presentation of key performance indicators, quality control, quality assurance, training, and workflow review, analysis and improvement. Wally is keen to continue developing strategies to help reduce errors and improve efficiencies of data processes.



The RNS DASO Unit also welcomes **Peter Moritz, Acute Surgical Unit/DASO Unit data manager**, who has extensive experience in clinical data systems, data management and analysis. Graduating with a Bachelor of Science (Biomedical Science) from the University of Queensland, Peter went on to study as a medical student within the Queensland Health and gained a valuable insight into the hospital system from a clinical perspective. Prior to joining the DASO Unit, Peter was a Clinical Data Analyst with a corporate healthcare company and developed reports on clinical data for a range of projects, including research investigations and the evaluation of federal government initiatives. Peter's keen interest in the medical field has also seen him assist in biological research and volunteer with

charities that help patients and their families. Peter brings a passion for developing robust data processes to evaluate programs and is always keen to further his knowledge of statistical analysis.

In other exciting news, we have been busy **developing Powerforms and KPI data collection and analysis tools** for the new Acute Surgical Unit, and a data manager for Interventional Neuroradiology is soon to come on board. A data manager for Cardiothoracic Surgery is also in the process of being recruited.

New positions to be advertised through the RNS SERT Institute over the coming weeks:



- 1) **Lead - Surgical Excellence and Performance Change** (0.12FTE staff specialist/up-to 4 hours VMO). The Institute will send out an Expression of Interest once the position is open. The successful candidate will need to demonstrate surgical practice integrated with teaching and research. There are no clinical privileges associated with this appointment other than what the candidate already has or can be separately negotiated with a clinical department.
- 2) **Surgical Research Officer** role (0.5FTE temp part-time HSM1)
- 3) **Administrative Officer role** (0.5FTE temp part-time level 3 year 2)

Please keep your eye out on <https://iworkfor.nsw.gov.au/> and e-Recruit for these position advertisements.

INTERNATIONAL CLINICAL TRIALS DAY SHOWCASE 18 MAY 2018

The RNS SERT Institute is collaborating with the Kolling Institute of Medical Research to **celebrate the International Clinical Trials Day at the RNS hospital**. The event is highly supported by the NHMRC. The Day itself falls on 20 May but because it is a Sunday this year, we will be celebrating it on Friday 18 May.

The RNS hospital's main entrance foyer will be the showcase area where clinical trial posters will be displayed to raise awareness on the significance of innovation and research in professional practice.

All **surgical departments are strongly encouraged to show-case** their clinical trials, and also other research projects, at the foyer. This will also be an opportunity for us all to come together, including our community members and visitors, and learn about the great work that we are doing here!

Please contact Linda Pallot, Clinical Trials Research Nurse, Vascular Surgery, Linda.Pallot@health.nsw.gov.au , if you are interested to showcase or will like to help organise this event.

COMING UP IN THE NEXT THREE MONTHS

- ✓ Advertisement of 3 new part-time positions within the RNS SERT Institute
- ✓ RNS SERT Institute Official launch – please stay tuned!
- ✓ RNS SERT Institute work-plan finalised

CONTACT US

RNS SERT Institute

Level 4, Kolling Institute of Medical Research
Royal North Shore Hospital
St. Leonards NSW 2065
T: 9926 4526
E: shelly.dhaliwal@health.nsw.gov.au

RNS DASO Unit

Level 4, Kolling Institute of Medical Research
Royal North Shore Hospital
St. Leonards NSW 2065
T: 9926 4560
E: maria.albania@health.nsw.gov.au