

Curriculum Update

As previously reported in the NCPO Newsletter, the proposal for the combined Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Prosthetics and Orthotics has been approved by the University. This innovative Bachelor and Masters program structure is aimed at developing health professionals ready to meet the challenges of the future changing health care environment.

Interprofessional practice is one of the underlying principles of the new curriculum for all new Allied Health courses at La Trobe University. NCPO staff are working with the other staff in the faculty to develop the individual units that make up the new program.

The first year of the new course is common to all the allied health clinical programs and the curriculum is well on the way to being finalized. Development work on the more specific prosthetics and orthotics clinical units will continue, with the second year subjects scheduled to be completed by the end of this year. Subsequent development work will see the finalization of the units for the

later years of study.

The NCPO and other clinical programs within the Faculty of Health Sciences will introduce these new, flexible and integrated professional degrees from 2009, with the first cohort completing their studies in 2012. A Graduate Entry Masters (GEM) will be available from 2011. This will allow an alternative pathway into the P&O profession for those who have already completed a degree in a relevant field. These GEM students will be able to complete their studies over a two year period.

The NCPO has had enquiries about the availability of a conversion course that would enable those who presently hold a Bachelor Degree in P&O to convert to a Master of P&O. It is anticipated that this will be available in the future but will not be instigated until the new undergraduate curriculum is finalized. Post graduate study leading to a Masters or PhD by research will continue to be available at La Trobe.

What's Happening in Clinical Education

4th Year Clinical Placements

The NCPO currently has eighteen 4th year students completing their first 8-week block clinical placement. The Block 1 placement is due for completion on Thursday 20th March, with Block 2 placements scheduled from Monday March 31st to Friday May 23rd.

The NCPO wishes to thank all facilities involved in undertaking 4th year clinical placements for their time and involvement. The feedback we receive from students is that these placements are invaluable and allow them to apply the theory taught at University to a clinical setting.

4th Year Clinical Exams – Call For Examiners

4th year clinical exams are fast approaching and the NCPO requires 3 Orthotists and 3 Prosthetists to assist in assessing the clinical component of these examinations. The dates for the clinical exams are Monday June 2nd to Wednesday June 4th. If any clinicians are interested in assisting with the examinations, can you please contact An-

gela Peluso on T: (03) 9479 5037 or by email: A.Peluso@latrobe.edu.au. Please nominate your preferred day and discipline when expressing your interest.

1st Year Clinical Placements

These are are scheduled for:

Block 1: June 30th – July 4th

Block 2: July 7th – July 11th

Clinical Supervisor's Meeting

The biannual clinical supervisor's meeting will be scheduled on Wednesday 16th April at 4.00pm. An agenda will be forwarded to all clinical supervisor's shortly.

For any enquiries regarding any aspect of Clinical Education, please contact Angela Peluso on T: (03) 9479 5037 or A.Peluso@latrobe.edu.au.

Beyond the Campus - NCPO's Contribution to the Development of Prosthetics and Orthotics Care

The National Centre for Prosthetics and Orthotics takes pride in its collective ability to expand and progress our profession through community activities, professional responsibilities and through participation in other organisations.

Through involvement with organisations such as the Australian Orthotics and Prosthetics Association (AOPA) and the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO), NCPO staff help to lead the profession and advance the care we are able to provide to our clients and patients.

NCPO staff member Sarah Anderson participates in the AOPA grant committee and NCPO Head Rowan English participates as a member of the certification committee. Other staff members have had long and varied roles with AOPA and continue to participate in speaking, committee and task officer roles. Currently, several staff members are on the executive committee of ISPO Australia. Margaret Hodge is a member of ISPOs International Board and the International Education and Publications Committees. Margaret has recently assumed responsibility for preparing an international newsletter for ISPO. Wesley Pryor is currently the Consultant for the South Pacific and Chair of the ISPO Australia Outreach committee. These relationships provide outstanding opportunities to support our national, regional and international colleagues. Many benefits return to the department's students where we enjoy positive working relationships with these key stakeholders in our field. Students can be sure that the departmental team stays abreast of cutting edge developments in service provision, research and development and the professional working context.

As well as providing undergraduate and postgraduate education and conducting research, the NCPO is able to contribute to the advancement of the evidence base through work with the Scientific and Education Committee (SEC) of ISPO Australia and through editorial work for scholarly journals. Dr. Michael Dillon is currently chair of the SEC and A. Prof Tim Bach, Ms. Renee Mackenzie and Ms. Hodge serve as members of that committee. A/Prof. Bach is on the editorial board of Prosthetics and Orthotics International as well as a regular editorial contributor to other journals. Dr. Dillon and Ms. Hodge are regularly invited to review journal submissions for a range of titles.

NCPO staff are regularly invited to participate in professional development seminars, scientific meetings and congresses. These are outstanding opportunities not only for our team to showcase developments at the NCPO, but to collaborate with peers and colleagues from around the world. Current examples our involvement include Renee Mackenzie's involvement with the Mental Health First Aid course at the ORYGEN Research Centre at the University of Melbourne. Ms. Mackenzie is working with that group with an aim to improve mental health literacy and awareness within the P&O profession. A/Prof Bach was recently the Convenor of the Scientific Program of the 13th World Congress of the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics, widely regarded as the premier scholarly congress in our field.

Ms. Anderson and Ms. Hodge are also regular contributors to the Advancing Clinical Education workshops, a collaboration between leading health and welfare training providers. This course is widely regarded as an outstanding professional development opportunity and as having contributed a great deal to the clinical placement experience of many undergraduate students in the health sciences.

The NCPO has also been proud to contribute to the development of P&O in low income nations. Mr. Pryor has made several consultancies to international organisations and worked closely with the Cambodian School of Prosthetics and Orthotics on the NCPO's innovative distance-based upgrade program for Category II trained P&O professionals. Currently, Ms. Anderson has taken over as project officer for the upgrade program and is also involved in development activities through her role as Disability Adviser for the Kianh Foundation, an orphanage in Vietnam for disadvantaged children and children living with disabilities.

We are also able to serve our local community through the provision of clinical services through our NCPO clinic, managed by Mrs. Angela Peluso and staffed by staff members including Mr. Les Barnes and Mr. Anthony Francis.

Through these activities, the NCPO is able to make substantial contributions to the development of our profession above and beyond our undergraduate and postgraduate teaching programs.



The P&O Student Society or P.O.S.S.

The Prosthetics and Orthotics Student Society or P.O.S.S is an organization which allows students to communicate ideas and improvements which they feel could be made to the course with the rest of the student body and the NCPO staff. The society is also a way of making university life fun for students with regular barbeques and social events. In 2008 social events will include the Prosthetics and Orthotics ball which will be held in late September and the annual Pub Crawl which will take place around the streets of Melbourne in the coming weeks.

The Ball is our major event, with last year's happening on Wednesday September 12th. Students and other guests met at Albert by the Lake Reception Centre. Everyone was dressed in their best dresses or suits and with a 'Splash of sparkle' the ball began. A few highlights of the night were the raffle (which everyone was keen to win), the live music and the best dressed awards from each year

level nominated by the respective representative, including Steelo with his silver sequin sparkle vest. All eyes will be out next year to see who can top Steelo's dress efforts of the past few years. POSS would like to thank all of our sponsors for this year's ball in particular Ossur and Otobock who provided the band and the security respectively. Finally the representatives, Luke Lorenzin, Rhiannon Assetta and Gaby Aro need to be thanked for the large amount of effort that they put into the ball and all other events held in 2007. Everyone enjoyed the night and we are already looking forward to the ball in 2008.

Members of POSS are also working on building an international student volunteer program to further develop student experience in connection with the course. If you have an event in which you would like POSS to take part please feel free to contact Sarah Carter, the society's president for 2008, via the NCPO.

Clarification - Newsletter Distribution

As you may be aware, the Faculty of Health Sciences underwent an administrative restructure in 2007. As a result of this, we may have lost some of our data on newsletter subscriptions.

If you are receiving the newsletter and no longer wish to, or you know somebody who wants to receive the newsletter, please contact the editor via the details in the box below.

Please note that we no longer distribute the newsletter electronically. However, if you would like to be notified about the publication of each new newsletter by email rather than receive a hard copy, please notify Sasho Bogdanoski on S.Bogdanoski@latrobe.edu.au. You could

then download the newsletter yourself from our website. This will help the NCPO to reduce costs as well as positively impact on the environment.

The electronic copy in PDF format is placed on the NCPO website soon after the printed version is published. The URL for the site is:

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/ncpo>

The main stories from each newsletter are also posted to our news page at:

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/ncpo/news.html>

The NCPO NEWS is produced in March, June, September and December by the National Centre for Prosthetics and Orthotics, La Trobe University, 3086, Victoria, Australia.

Subscription is free to people or organizations with an interest in prosthetics and orthotics.

Please contact us if you would like:

- *More information about any news item*
- *Advertising rates*
- *To be added to or removed from the mailing list*
- *Discussion about another matter*

An electronic copy is always available from our website: www.latrobe.edu.au/ncpo

Please contact the Editor on 03 9479 5747 or email: s.hockey@latrobe.edu.au

