

Editorial

On service

“Service” has been much discussed this year. Internationally, those working in the frontline health services have been publicly applauded (literally and figuratively) for their dedication to caring for patients who have contracted COVID-19. These patients have been treated in health systems that have largely been unprepared for the pandemic, resulting in a range of challenges for health professionals, many of whom have put their own health at risk (Nyashanu et al., 2020). The need to support the mental health of these health professionals has been recognised (Azizoddin et al., 2020). Unrelenting exposure to work stress can lead to burnout, characterised by emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced efficacy (Panagioti et al., 2018).

In this issue, Schmulian, Redgen and Fleming explore the mental health of graduate allied health students, focusing on impostor syndrome and compassion fatigue. The authors point out that most related research has focused on medicine and nursing (Sorenson et al., 2016). This overlooks the work of allied health professionals in caring for patients in difficult circumstances and the impact on their mental health. A single-session mindfulness intervention, outlined by Carsley, Sadowski, Health, Montoro and Miller, was found to benefit clinicians who engaged in regular practice. This study adds to Bailey et al.’s (2019) research into the effectiveness of a mindfulness program for undergraduate medical students.

Also in this issue, Enright and Gray analyse the learning and teaching that occurs on paediatric ward rounds; Wilesmith, Forbes and Yong Yao Lao explore graduate physiotherapists’ preparedness for patient education; while Craig and Thompson explore clinicians’ knowledge about consent law. Pain, Lindsay and Fernando report that allied health professionals are more likely to engage in research if they have a research question, honours or higher research degree and previous research education.

Returning to the concept of “service” and focusing on its use in the higher education sector, one finds it refers to academic contributions to the institution, discipline and community. Service in this sense is sometimes understood as in addition to—and potentially an impediment to—teaching and research. However, Pfeifer (2016) argues that a thoughtful approach to service can in fact enhance teaching and research. Indeed, Ernest Boyer (1995) encouraged academia to reimagine their work as a “scholarship of engagement” that incorporates discovery, teaching, application and integration, as well as collaboration with partners beyond the university to contribute to the advancement of society.

In this final issue for 2020, I would like to thank everyone on the accompanying list of those who have reviewed one or more articles for *Focus on Health Professional Education* this year. COVID-19 has affected the workloads of most in higher education and healthcare, and reviewers’ ongoing service to the journal, even in difficult times, is greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank the Editorial Board members, whose tireless service to the journal on top of their busy university and healthcare work has enabled the publication of the

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A/Prof Karen Scott
Editor

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