

Editorial

As we learn to live with the challenges brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, many are turning to literature, music, the arts and nature to manage stress and anxiety, enhance wellbeing and experience a sense of joy, however momentary. Many in health professional education have long incorporated the arts and humanities in teaching, research and practice (Stewart & Swain, 2016). The arts and humanities can help health professionals and students to be more people centred, caring and compassionate; live with ambiguity and complexity; and act ethically in their approaches to health and healthcare (Pattison, 2003; Bleakley et al., 2006). An interdisciplinary inclusive field, the health humanities “[draw] on the creative and intellectual strengths of diverse disciplines, including literature, art, creative writing, drama, film, music, philosophy, ethical decision making, anthropology, and history, in pursuit of ... educational goals” (Kirklin, 2003, p. 1050).

In their scoping review, Dennhardt et al. (2016) highlighted the rich variety of arts-based teaching in health professional education. They identified three foci—the arts and humanities as expertise (for mastering skills), dialogue (for interaction, perspective taking and relational aims) and a means of expression and transformation (for personal growth and activism). Further, they found the arts and humanities have variously been conceived of as intrinsic, additive or curative in their relationship with health professional education programs. In their critique of teaching, research and practice in the health humanities, Viney et al. (2015) call for a richer, more critical, collaborative and cross-disciplinary form of enquiry, with diverse methods that move beyond measurement to meaning making.

Teaching and research in the health humanities is undertaken at a growing number of centres in Australia and New Zealand. Many programs provide core and/or optional humanities learning. The University of Western Australia has recently launched Australia's first undergraduate major in Humanities for Health and Medicine and is leading a World Universities Network grant in this area, in which I am involved. The recently launched “Arts and Health Network”, led by my colleague Dr Claire Hooker and Professor Katherine Boydell, broadly aims to promote the creative arts in improving health outcomes. In recognition of the increasing interest in the health humanities, the 2020 ANZAHPE Conference announced the “Ways of seeing in healthcare” exhibition (which was later cancelled due to social distancing requirements brought about by the pandemic and replaced by a publication of the exhibition works and the first workshop in ANZAHPE's 2020 professional development workshop series).

It is fitting, then, that this issue of *Focus on Health Professional Education* features Ní Chróinín's poem “Doctor-Speak”, which highlights the many, often amusing, ways in which language in healthcare differs from everyday language use. Language and literacy have featured strongly in my teaching and research. Most recently, I have had the pleasure of working with a multidisciplinary group that developed the verbatim theatre play *Grace Under Pressure*, which explored the culture of health workplaces and training. The play has been performed at a major Sydney theatre and numerous hospitals in New South Wales

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(2020 national performances have been postponed due to social distancing requirements). We found health professionals recognised their experiences in the play, which enabled new insights and opened up conversations about healthcare culture (Dalton et al., 2020).

Serendipitously, other papers in this issue focus on language, beginning with our Focus on Methodology article on discourse analysis by Associate Professor Robyn Woodward-Kron of the University of Melbourne. Document analysis is exemplified in Furness, Ostini and Tynan's article focusing on the contribution of clinical placement documents to the development of student identity. Penman, Brown and Hill highlight the increase in speech pathology students' learning and confidence after participating with clients in an intensive 2-day fluency program. Harvey, Barker and Tynan outline action research aimed at increasing allied health professionals' research writing skills. Related to this, Foo, Atherley, Ash and Hu describe the creation of a community of practice in health professional education research through an annual meeting at ANZAHPE conferences. Finally, Alamri, Alsahli and Ravindran examine trends in junior doctor applications to radiation oncology and radiology training programs in New Zealand.

The Editorial Board of *Focus on Health Professional Education* is delighted that Associate Professor Andy Wearn is remaining on the Editorial Board as Associate Editor after stepping down from his term as Editor. We thank Andy for his friendship and exemplary leadership over the past 5 years. In another serendipitous link to the health humanities, Andy has an art work in the "Ways of seeing in healthcare" exhibition and, before joining the Editorial Board, curated a creative arts section of the ANZAHPE bulletin and oversaw the redesign of the ANZAHPE logo, among other responsibilities on the ANZAHPE Committee of Management.

A/Prof Karen Scott
Editor

With thanks to Prof. Sandra Carr of the University of Western Australia for her insightful comments on an earlier draft.

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