First philanthropic gastro register launched

Gastroenterologists and hepatologists undertaking philanthropic medical missions in Australia and overseas will have their charitable work captured for the first time in a register established and managed by the Gastroenterological Society of Australia.

Launched during the Australian Gastroenterology Week (AGW) Conference, the Philanthropy in Gastroenterology and Hepatology Register will shine a spotlight on the humanitarian activities undertaken by Australian physicians, surgeons and nurses to prevent and treat gastrointestinal and liver diseases.

The register will also help inform specialists and nurses on how they can support philanthropy, whether by donating their clinical expertise or providing financial support to colleagues who volunteer gastroenterology and hepatology services in areas of disadvantage.

GESA board member Professor Anne Duggan, who chaired an AGW session on philanthropy, said, “It is important to capture and share the many outstanding examples of philanthropic work that occur throughout the profession”.

Professor Duggan describes the register as a “celebration of the often life-saving contribution that doctors and nurses provide to disadvantaged communities in Australia and overseas”.

“The provision of philanthropic services often flies below the radar, so this new register will be a powerful vehicle to highlight the charitable footprint of GI and liver specialists and nurses.

“The register will also act as a reminder to many gastroenterologists and hepatologists of the opportunities that exist to use their skills outside of daily practice,” she added.

Many of the gastroenterological procedures routinely performed in metropolitan and regional centres are all but non-existent in remote parts of Australia and neighbouring countries.

Professor Duggan said that many specialists report that using their skills in a different setting, where medical need is greatest, or combining travel with philanthropy, provides a stimulating and rewarding change from everyday practice.

The Philanthropy in Gastroenterology and Hepatology Register will be updated and shared with the gastroenterological community on a regular basis, including at AGW each year.

GESA President, Professor Narci Teoh said the register “will ensure that outstanding humanitarian efforts are recognised among peers”.

“It will also act as valuable resource to share with government and other stakeholders to ensure the enormous contribution of the gastroenterology and hepatology profession is fully appreciated,” she said.
The launch of the *Philanthropy in Gastroenterology and Hepatology Register* at AGW included a panel discussion about the success of a few of the existing medical missions in Australia and overseas.

To help establish the register, gastroenterology and hepatology professionals are being asked to provide GESA with the details of medical care they provide in a charitable capacity. Details can be emailed to gesa@gesa.org.au

GESA will continue to connect members with existing initiatives that deliver training programs to doctors and nurses worldwide.

**Distributed by Ethical Strategies of behalf of The Gastroenterological Society of Australia**

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**About The Gastroenterological Society of Australia**

The Gastroenterological Society of Australia (GESAl is the peak membership organisation for health care professionals and researchers working in the fields of gastroenterology and hepatology.

The Society sets, promotes and continuously improves the standards of clinical practice, training, research and patient care in gastroenterology and hepatology in Australia.

As the chief advocacy group, GESA works with the Federal and State Departments of Health and other policy setting organisations.

GESAl is involved in a range of committees and advisory groups that shape the future of gastroenterology and hepatology in Australia.

For more information, visit [www.gesa.org.au](http://www.gesa.org.au)