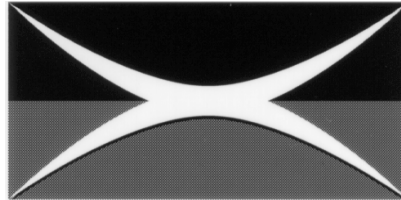


**PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA**

**NORTHERN TERRITORY BRANCH**



**MENTORING PROGRAM**

**for:**

**Students**

**Early Career**

**Career Transition**

**Professional Development**

**INFORMATION PACK**

**2007**

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## **Acknowledgements**

The Executive Committee, (Northern Territory Branch), of the Public Health Association of Australia acknowledges the South Australian Branch of the PHAA and through them the Australian Health Promotion Association for their resources which assisted with the development of this mentorship program.

## **Disclaimer**

Please note that mentors and mentees enter this program at their own risk and the PHAA takes no responsibility for any loss or damage, financial or otherwise, to person or property directly or indirectly resulting from any persons participating in the scheme. Also, the views of the mentors are not necessarily those of the PHAA and the PHAA does not accept responsibility for the information exchanged between mentor and mentee.

## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

PHAA	Public Health Association of Australia
NT	Northern Territory

## **Forward**

This Information Pack has been designed to introduce the PHAA membership to the *Student, Early Career, Career Transition & Professional Development Mentorship Program*, as well as to provide step-by-step guidance on how to participate in the program. It has been developed to provide a valuable service to newly arrived or beginning public health professionals in the NT and students studying in the field in the NT. In addition it is hoped the program will be valued by existing NT PHAA members as a mechanism by which they can assist in building the public health workforce in the NT. It is based upon the successful pilot Public Health Association of Australia *Student and Early Career Mentorship Program* which was undertaken by the South Australian branch in 2004.

**If you are considering taking part in the program, please save this document to your computer so that you can refer to it in the future.**

## 1 Introduction

The Executive Committee of the Northern Territory branch, Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) invite you to become a mentor or mentee in our *Student, Early Career, Career Transition & Professional Development Mentorship Program*. Further information on the Association is provided in Appendix 1. This Information Pack has been designed to introduce the PHAA membership to the *Mentoring Program*, as well as to provide step-by-step guidance on how to participate in the program.

In the Northern Territory, there is currently no formal program for public health career mentorship. Public health encompasses an enormous variety of employment opportunities, and it can be difficult for people new to the field or the Northern Territory (and even for those established in the area) to make decisions about work and study directions.

The *Student, Early Career, Career Transition & Professional Development Mentorship Program*, has been designed to fill this role. This mentoring program aims to assist:

- **Students** to explore their career opportunities by pairing them with a more experienced member.
- People **early in their career** by pairing them with a person to explore and consolidate their learning and understandings.
- People in a process of **career transition** by pairing them with another person who may have had a similar experience and can provide advice/ resources to begin the transition.
- **Professional Development** by pairing members with a person who can enhance their current work capacity and provide a differing perspective to the work they undertake.

The mentoring pair is encouraged to meet face-to-face up to three times over a period of three months for the purposes of the mentoring program.

## 2 What is mentoring?

There are many definitions for ‘mentoring’, and many different forms of mentorship relationships that serve different purposes.

The following broad definitions underpin the mentoring program offered by the PHAA and AHPA (adapted from Health Promotion Association of Australia Mentoring Programme Facilitator’s Manual, p.22):

- A development relationship that enhances both growth and development for each partner
- A relationship that facilitates the sharing of experiences, skills and knowledge and provides opportunities and support for both parties
- An opportunity to enter into a relationship with another person that will assist in your professional development and support

- An opportunity to acquire skills, open doors, increase confidence, widen your perspective, avoid errors, and enhance your career

### 3 Benefits of the program

Participants, both mentees and mentors, benefit from the Program in different ways, depending on what they hope to get out of the process. Table 1 shows the likely benefits for mentees and mentors of the *Student, Early Career, Career Transition & Professional Development Mentorship Program*.

**Table 1 Benefits of the Mentoring Program**

Mentee	Mentor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to discuss and seek guidance and advice regarding own career ideas, helping to make more informed choices in the future</li> <li>• Opportunity to meet a public health practitioner with experience in your area of interest</li> <li>• Advice on resources relevant to your area/s of interest</li> <li>• Enhanced professional development and Increased confidence due to the above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to facilitate the mentee's professional growth</li> <li>• Revitalised enthusiasm and affirmation of role as an experienced worker</li> <li>• Experience in explaining the scope and skills of your work, to other</li> <li>• Assist in stabilising the NT Public Health workforce thus leading to greater continuities of programs and collegiate activity.</li> </ul>

### 4 How to become involved

To determine if you are eligible and to register your interest, please read this section and follow the steps outlined.

#### 4.1 Are you eligible?

Careful selection and matching of participants in the mentorship program is critical to maximise the benefit of the mentoring process. If you are interested in becoming involved in the PHAA *Student, Early Career, Career Transition & Professional Development Mentorship Program* either as a mentor or mentee, you will need to consider your eligibility by looking at the criteria in Table 2. To help identify which theme area you fit as a mentee, please refer to Table 3.

**Table 2 Eligibility Criteria**

Mentee	Mentor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member of the PHAA (or prepared to become a member),</li> <li>• Over 18 years old,</li> <li>• A current undergraduate or postgraduate student of public health or related discipline, OR</li> <li>• An early career public health practitioner/ researcher seeking mentorship,</li> <li>• A desire to explore career options,</li> <li>• Preparedness to maintain confidentiality regarding discussions had with mentor,</li> <li>• A commitment to the mentoring process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member of the PHAA (or prepared to become a member),</li> <li>• More than four years working in public health related employment,</li> <li>• Strong interpersonal and communication skills,</li> <li>• Access to a network of appropriate referrals and/ contacts,</li> <li>• Preparedness to maintain confidentiality regarding discussions had with mentor,</li> <li>• A commitment to the mentoring process.</li> </ul>

**Table 3 Mentee Criteria**

Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undergraduate or pre-doctoral post graduate student</li> </ul>
Early Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PHD Student</li> <li>Within your first five years in the field</li> </ul>
Career Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional "sea change"</li> <li>Diversion in current career</li> <li>Changing professional discipline</li> </ul>
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhancing current capacity</li> <li>Undertaking research</li> <li>Seeking differing perspective</li> </ul>

#### **4.2 What is expected of you as a Mentor or Mentee?**

As a mentee and mentor you are expected to be:

- Sensitive to each other's needs
- Be flexible with time management
- Focus on goals that build the skills of the mentee and draw on the expertise of the mentor
- Maintain confidentiality in all aspects of the relationship
- Honest about the outcomes of the program

You do have the right to end the mentoring partnership at anytime.

It is encouraged that you meet a maximum of three times face-to-face through the three-month period. As this project is only for three months, we will evaluate it after that time. However, you as the mentoring partnership may choose to continue to meet beyond this formal mentoring program.

#### **4.3 Register your interest**

If you meet the criteria in Tables 2 and/or 3, please register your interest in becoming involved in the program by completing a Mentor or Mentee Expression of Interest form and forwarding it electronically to the contact designated on the form. The Expression of Interest forms should have been forwarded to you at the time that you received this Information Pack. If not, please contact us using the contact details given in Section 9 and we will forward the appropriate form to you.

The information you provide on these forms will ensure that you are matched with the most appropriate mentee/mentor to suit your needs/interests/experience. Therefore, please take some time when filling out these forms to ensure that the information you provide will help us to determine who your 'best-fit' mentee/mentor is.

We encourage you to obtain the support of your manager/supervisor for participation in the program.

### **5 What happens from there?**

Once the NT Branch Executive Committee has received Expression of Interest forms, we will match mentor and mentees according to areas of interest and experience. The

matching process will be limited by the suitability of applications and the similarity of mentor/mentee interests.

We will endeavour to match all potential mentees to a mentor, and where no appropriate mentor has applied, will approach potential mentors on an individual basis.

While we cannot guarantee that all expressions of interest for mentor roles will be filled in the current round of the program (since this is dependant on mentees who apply), please let us know on your Mentee Expression of Interest form if you would be happy for us to keep your form on file for possible use in the future.

Once we have linked appropriate mentee/mentor relationships, the process outlined below will be followed. Note that should you undertake the program, further information and support will be provided to guide you through these processes.

- Mentee and mentors will be sent a Letter of Acceptance into the program, including contact details of your mentee/ mentor.
- The mentee will decide on the objectives of the mentorship relationship, fill in a Mentorship Objectives form and forward this form to their mentor for agreement. See Section 6 for further information on how to set the Mentorship Objectives.
- Once the mentor has agreed with the objectives, they will initiate organisation of the first meeting date.
- Once the mentor has agreed on the objectives, the completed Objectives form should be forwarded to the Executive Committee for our records.
- The mentee and mentor will meet up a maximum of three times over a three-month period in order to meet their Mentorship Objectives. See Section 7 for more information about the mentorship meetings.

## **6 Setting the Mentorship Objectives**

If you are a mentee, you will need to set the Mentorship Objectives once you have received your Letter of Acceptance.

### **6.1 What is a Mentorship Objective?**

A Mentorship Objective is a statement describing what is to be accomplished as a result of the mentorship program.

### **6.2 Why set up Mentorship Objectives?**

The Mentorship Objectives are set so that both you and your mentor are aware of what is to be achieved at the outset of the mentorship relationship, such that meetings can be directed appropriately.

### **6.3 How to set up Mentorship Objectives**

Setting the objectives for the mentor/mentee relationship need not be a stressful experience. The following points may help to guide this process:

- Keep in mind the ‘benefits to the mentee’ that were outlined in Section 3. Your objectives should focus on these points.

- The best objectives will be those that are: specific, measurable, achievable, and reasonable given the available timeframe of three months.
- Frame your objectives using terms that will be easily understood by your mentor.
- You may outline as many or as few objectives as you deem appropriate.

#### **6.4 Example objectives**

The following are some examples of appropriate objectives for the *Student, Early Career, Career Transition & Professional Development Mentorship Program* (but keep in mind objectives will vary greatly due to the varying needs of mentees):

- To discuss and list employment options in Northern Territory for a ‘new career’ (e.g. recently completed Masters of Public Health) epidemiologist
- To discuss and list long term career opportunities within the public health/ primary health care sectors
- To learn about, and participate in, (as appropriate) the public health/ primary health care sectors conferences/ journals/ associations
- To discuss a current research project and elements to consider in the formation of the hypothesis
- To discuss strategies of implementing a health promotion approach within your current work
- To provide practical information and resources to enhance one’s work.

### **7 Mentorship meetings**

We envisage that mentee/mentors will meet a maximum of three times over a three month period, at a mutually convenient location, for ½ hour- 1 hour for each meeting, with the opportunity of meeting other relevant people. However, these parameters are flexible, and it will be left to mentees/mentors to arrange, according to the mentoring needs and the availability of those involved to attend meetings.

The meetings would be face to face (unless there are real obstacles to this) and might include: discussion of key issues (eg research dilemmas, career directions, the context of public health and health promotion); suggestions for readings or other people in the field to contact; problem solving and anything else that the mentee identifies as a need or the mentor considers might be useful. Other forms of communication are encouraged such as e-mail and telephone calls. We also encourage mentors and mentees to attend meetings held by the Association as a way of having contact and considering new issues.

Both the mentee and mentor should feel free to contact a member of the Executive Committee of the NT branch, PHAA (using the details given in Section 9) at any time during the conduction of the mentorship program to discuss any matters arising from the program.

### **8 How the program will be evaluated**

Evaluation of the *Student, Early Career, Career Transition & Professional Development Mentorship Program* is crucial for future program improvement. All information collected for evaluation purposes is confidential and will be de-identified at the stage of data entry. An analysis of de-identified information may be used in the future for program promotion purposes.

### **8.1 Evaluation 1**

A member of the PHAA (NT Branch) Executive Committee will ring all mentees after the first mentoring meeting to gain feedback on the program to that stage: this will not take any longer than 10 minutes.

The following questions will be used to ascertain feedback from mentees after their first mentorship meeting:

- Were your objectives met in the first meeting?
- Were there any issues/ problems that arose in the first meeting?
- Will you be meeting up with your mentor again? When?
- Do you have any suggestions for us in terms of running this program in the future?
- Have you found the program useful so far?

### **8.2 Evaluation 2**

Three months after the Letters of Acceptance have been sent, we will ask both mentee and mentors to complete feedback questionnaires which will help us to provide a high quality program in the future. Again, this will not take more than 10 minutes to complete.

## **9 Contact us**

See the PHAA NT Web page for key contact details of members of the Executive Committee, NT branch, PHAA. If you have any comments, compliments, questions or complaints about the *Student, Early Career, Career Transition & Professional Development Mentorship Program* at any time, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## **APPENDIX 1                      Sponsoring Organisation- Public Health Association of Australia**

The Public Health Association of Australia Inc (PHAA) provides a forum for the exchange of ideas, knowledge and information on public health. The Association is also involved in advocacy for public health policy, development, research and training. The Northern Territory Branch of the PHAA is committed to advancing public health in Northern Territory. Further information is available at [www.phaa.net.au](http://www.phaa.net.au)

Membership is open to any person who is supportive of the objects of the Association. These are:

- to encourage research and promote knowledge relating to the problems, needs and development of public health;
- to promote and provide a forum for the regular exchange of views and information;
- to promote the development and education of public health workers;
- to promote, maintain and extend the interests of PHAA's Branches, Special Interest Groups and any affiliated organisations;
- to promote excellence in public health practice; and
- to advocate the objects and policies of the Association.

As PHAA has a national and multidisciplinary perspective on public health issues it is able to make a major contribution to the public health debate in Australia through representation on government boards, committees and other decision-making bodies such as the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. PHAA members also sit on many state and territory committees contributing to a broad spectrum of public health issues.

PHAA members also contribute to the development and execution of public health policy in Australia, and in particular bring their experience and expertise to the development of [policies for the Association](#). These policies are considered by the annual general meeting of the membership, and if endorsed, become the basis for public health action for the association.