

	<h1>Clinician Researcher Mentoring Scheme</h1>	Effective:
		Version:
		Authorised by:
		Approved by:

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1 RATIONALE & STRUCTURE

1.1 Aim

To establish interdisciplinary relationships between junior and senior Clinician Researchers at QIMR Berghofer, leading to improved career development, support, and collaboration.

1.2 Structure

This scheme will be coordinated by the QIMR Berghofer-RBWH Clinician Researcher Academy (CRA), with administrative support provided by QIMR Berghofer.

2 MATCHING

Mentee-Mentor matching will be performed by members of the CRA. Pairing will be performed largely based on mentoring goals of mentees and expertise of mentors. Mentors will be Clinician Researchers either currently active or active within the last 2 years. Mentees may be matched with a mentor either within or outside of their field of clinical/research specialty.

Cross-specialty matching allows for exposure for both the mentor and mentee to other research disciplines and may encourage future interdisciplinary opportunities. Cross-specialty matching also allows for implementation of a developmental mentoring focus. A number of advantages for developmental mentoring approaches (detailed in the attached document) have been reported, including the focus on the personal development of the mentee and the opportunity for free conversation, away from hierarchical biases.

Mentoring pairs will be notified of their match by email. Once matched, it is expected that the mentee will drive the mentoring relationship, including setting goals and initiating the first and subsequent sessions.

While every effort is made to create suitable matches, it is acknowledged that not all pairs will 'click', and personality differences may occasionally affect the experience. If this occurs, either the mentee or mentor may choose to formally end the relationship by notifying the CRA. However, due to limited resources, rematching may not be possible within the same matching round.

2.1 Mentoring Sessions

This is an informal program, with frequency, duration and type of session to be negotiated by the mentee with the mentor. It is an expectation that the mentee will drive the relationship, having set clear goals for the mentoring program.

The CRA will provide support for mentees and mentors with information for how to approach initial meetings via the attached written guidance and in the form of an introductory video.

As a guide, it is recommended that there will be at least 3 mentoring sessions over a period of 12 months. Gaps in between mentoring sessions are expected during busy periods (e.g. end of year, peak grant-writing periods, etc.). Sessions may also be more frequent if agreed by both parties.

3 EVALUATION

CRA will distribute an evaluation survey to mentees and mentors 6 and 12 months into the program.

The aim of evaluation is to gain insight into the progress of mentoring pairs and evaluate the benefit of the scheme.

4 PROGRAM TIMELINE

The CRA will invite expressions of interest (EOI) from QIMR Clinician Researchers to become mentors or mentees once per 12-month period. Where appropriate some senior Clinician Researchers may be approached individually by the director of the CRA, for example where a mentor is being sought for a senior Clinician Researcher mentee. Due to the ongoing nature of Clinician Researcher enrolment at QIMR, invitations to newly appointed Clinician Researchers to submit EOI may be made outside of the annual mentor/mentee recruitment drive.

5 DEVELOPMENTAL MENTORING

Developmental Mentoring (cross-departmental)	Structured Mentoring (intra-departmental)
The mentor is more experienced in a relevant field but ideally independent of the mentee's direct professional life.	The mentor may have a hierarchical influence over the mentee and their career progression.
The mentor helps the mentee to discover their own wisdom and do things for themselves.	The mentor can promote and escalate the career of the mentee.
The mentor's experience and wisdom are not necessarily passed on but can be accessed when needed.	The mentor gives advice and guidance, and the acquisition of skills or knowledge is paramount.
There is recognition of mutual growth and learning together despite the different levels of experience.	The learning is one way; from mentor to mentee.

The primary focus is on the development of the mentee and their personal journey.	The primary focus is on career development.
Great questions are central.	Great advice is the focus.

5.1 Advantages of developmental mentoring

- A focus on developing levels of understanding and mutuality of learning for both parties.
- There is no line of accountability from researchers in the mentees own field, so the conversations are more likely to be free from bias.
- The mentor and mentee are able to address difficult issues as they arise due to the significant level of trust built between the two.
- Generosity of time and help by the mentor and the willingness of the mentee to take charge of their learning.

6 ETIQUETTE

6.1 For both Mentees and Mentors

- Agree on how to schedule mentoring sessions (see Mentoring Agreement), including frequency and duration and how you will communicate.
- Attend mentoring sessions and follow up with action items.
- Be professional, respectful and observe confidentiality.
- Be punctual and provide advance warning of changes where possible.
- Respond to communication in a timely manner.

6.2 Suggestions for the First Session

- Introduce yourselves; include both personal and professional experiences, career paths and ambitions.
- Agree on how you would like to communicate and the number of sessions you can both commit to.
- Advise of any known upcoming periods of absence.
- Discuss what you both would like to get out of the relationship and set goals.
- Agree on action items to be completed before the next session.
- Consider using a structured framework (e.g. OSCAR) to make sure mentor-mentee pairs get the most from mentoring sessions, as it will help with focus.

7 GUIDE FOR MENTEES

7.1 Your Role

As the mentee, your role is to drive the mentoring relationship. This requires setting clear and specific goals that you want to achieve and, more importantly, that your mentor has relevant insight and knowledge on. The interdepartmental nature of this mentoring scheme has been implemented in order to allow open communication of goals. Hence, the key is to communicate these goals clearly to your mentor so that they can give you the right advice from the outset.

7.2 Expectations for you as a mentee

- Communicate with your mentor; be clear on your needs.
- Have an ability to reflect on personal limitations and accept critique.
- Come to each session prepared with an agenda.
- Provide feedback to your mentor so that they can improve but also know when they are doing it right.
- Do not expect your mentor to have all the solutions.
- Recognise that your mentor is a volunteer with an already busy schedule.
- Commitment to the mentoring program; you get back what you put in.
- Discuss etiquette for inter-meeting contact.
- Keep track of actionable items between meetings and follow them up.

7.3 Before Your First Mentoring Session

- Solidify in your mind a short-term and a long-term goal for your career.
- Be prepared to be open about your successes and your setbacks.
- List some opening questions for your mentor relevant to your aspirations; how did they get to their current position? What do they wish they knew when they were an early Clinician Researcher that they know now?
- Be ready to organise the next meetup with them, have possible dates in mind.
- Bring along any materials in an appropriate format for review.

8 GUIDE FOR MENTORS

8.1 Your role (what is a mentor?)

The role of a mentor is to use the experience and knowledge you have gained during your career to both support and challenge your mentee in a way that promotes and fosters their career development and goals.

This may be achieved in different ways; however common themes are that a good mentor 'listens more, talks less' and 'asks the right/challenging questions' and empowers their mentee to solve their own problems.

Be sure you have the time to be involved with mentoring: although it needn't be hugely time consuming, it needs to have an adequate investment from the mentor in order to work.

8.2 What's in it for you (why be a mentor)?

Pay-it-forward: Reflect on your own career - has there been someone that has helped you succeed? Supported you in a tough situation? Made you look at the tough situation differently? If so, consider this an opportunity to pay it forward.

Self-interest: The clinical and research environment has and is continuing to change rapidly. As an established Clinician Researcher, you may be more removed from the modern day-to-day challenges of more junior staff. Mentoring can provide you with acute insight, and reduce the 'echo-chamber' phenomenon, resulting in better leadership outcomes for you in your own role.

8.3 Expectations for you as a mentor

- Consider beginning with a mentoring 'contract': agree the length of the mentoring relationship, the number of meetings you will aim for, their length, and the extent to which between-meeting contact will take place. This helps ensure mentee and mentor know what to expect and don't make unreasonable demands of each other.
- Allow the mentee to have autonomy in selecting issues to explore, considering their options, and making decisions.
- Listen to your mentee.
- Challenge your mentee's preconceived conceptions and assumptions of themselves and their career.
- Help your mentee to find their own solutions to problems and encourage their confidence in making career choices.
- Be open to sharing your own experiences and stories. Professional savvy is a great attribute for mentors to have and share ('how things work around here') and comes from experience. Be prepared to self-disclose on occasion, even regarding your failures.
- Uphold confidentiality.
- Remember, mentoring is a discussion between two colleagues, not a dictatorial relationship. Remember that you may be an expert in your field, but the mentee is the expert in their own life.
- Check in regularly for feedback about the direction, progress and value of the mentoring.

- If issues crop up during the mentoring that you'd like assistance with, contact the CRA. Most problems can be resolved. As a last resort, if you really don't get on with your mentee, consider the 'no blame divorce'; a rematch will usually be better for both parties.
- Enjoy your mentoring and recognise its benefits for your own self-development as well.

8.4 Advice for getting started

- Ask open-ended questions and take time to get to know each other.
- Set mutually agreeable goals.
- Consider other activities e.g. CV check, job shadowing, 'sitting in' on a meeting.

9 MENTORING AGREEMENT

Mentor-mentee pairs could consider implementing a mentoring contract during their first meeting. This will make clear the exact shape and nature of the mentoring relationship, and the expectations for both the mentor and mentee. This is optional and the questions below are a guide to help facilitate this, if required.

1. The purpose of the mentoring relationship

- What do both parties understand as the overall intention of the mentoring relationship?
- What do you want to achieve from the relationship?
- What are the boundaries of the relationship? How will you handle confidentiality?
- How is mentoring support different from research supervision, appraisal and counselling?
- The roles and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee.

2. The potential topics for discussion

It is always helpful to agree on:

- The broad areas with which you are both comfortable as the main focus for mentoring.
- Are there any limits or conflicts of interest?
- Are personal issues acceptable to discuss?

3. The practical arrangements

- How often do you want to meet?
- Where will you meet?
- Will you be available for telephone or email conversations in between face-to-face meetings? What are the limits to that contact?
- Will you respond to queries on weekends or holidays?
- How long do you anticipate the relationship lasting? It may be helpful to discuss the future of your mentoring relationship regularly and whether it is still useful.

- Having this clarifying conversation at the start of the mentoring relationship enables both parties to be confident that there is a shared understanding of the mentoring process.

10 THE OSCAR MODEL

<p>Stage 1</p> <p>Outcome</p> <p>Your destination</p>	<p>Focus on outcomes for the mentoring session and for the issue being discussed during it. Establish what the mentee wants to achieve.</p> <p>Useful questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you want to achieve? • How will you know that you have achieved it? • Describe what success looks like? Be sure you have the time to be involved with mentoring: although it needn't be hugely time consuming, it needs to have an adequate investment from the mentor in order to work.
<p>Stage 2</p> <p>Situation</p> <p>Your starting point</p>	<p>This is an evaluation of the current situation. The mentee needs to identify relevant detail ready to move onto the next stages. Useful questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the current situation look like? • What factors are contributing to the current situation? • What are you doing that might be contributing to the situation?
<p>Stage 3</p> <p>Choices and Consequences</p> <p>Your route options</p>	<p>The mentee may have many options to explore, and these choices need to be considered alongside the likely consequences</p> <p>Useful questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could you do to sort out the issue? • What might be the consequences of doing that? • What would you do if you knew there would be no repercussions?

<p>Stage 4</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>Your detailed plan</p>	<p>The mentee needs to decide on a preferred strategy and how this will be implemented in terms of actions and timescales. Useful questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will you do next? And when? • How motivated are you to do this on a scale of 1 to 10 • (If it's not 9 or 10) Why isn't it a 9 or a 10?
<p>Stage 5</p> <p>Review</p> <p>Making sure you are on track</p>	<p>Before the session is finished, decide with the mentee how progress will be reviewed; regular monitoring is important to help stay on track. You can also return to the issue at the next mentoring session and implement further plans as necessary to achieve the desired outcome.</p> <p>Useful questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you monitor your progress? • How will you measure the outcomes? • How will you know you are moving towards the results you want?