

Community Participation in the UWS School of Medicine

The School of Medicine has adopted the concepts developed by the International Association for Public Participation. They use a spectrum of 'Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower' (IAPP, 2000) to describe the possible levels of (increasing) public impact in an organisation.

The School established a Community Council in 2006 to engage with the School in some critical activities, including its admissions process and curriculum development. With UWS recognised as a 'university of the people' by the Australian Universities Quality Agency, the School of Medicine has been seeking advice from the community and health providers within Greater Western Sydney about the desirable attributes for the graduates from this medical school to possess. This in turn actively informed both the admissions process and the shape of the curriculum.

Graduate attributes

As well as high levels of skills as a medical practitioner the special qualities that the School will strive to encourage in its graduates are:

- The capacity to welcome and facilitate change
- A commitment to life-long learning
- A capacity and preparedness to work in conjunction with other services where appropriate in locations where health is poor and health care resources are limited
- An ability to work competently across the continuum of community, primary, secondary and tertiary care,
- An understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of preventive medicine
- An ability to resolve the tension between the medical practitioner's responsibility to the individual and responsibility to the community
- A commitment to the scientific method and evidence-based practice.

Community participation

The School of Medicine is appreciative of the commitment that members of the community have already made.

With the advice of the inaugural Community Council, which has been guiding our strategy development, the School has recently established a community participation agreement which seeks to establish a formal relationship between the School and its 'Friends' in the community, as individuals or organisations.

Friends can elect to participate by:

- Receiving information about the School's activities and passing this information on to their contacts or networks
- Being a student interviewer or helping to recruit interested people
- Mentoring or supporting a student, or connecting a student to the community
- Becoming involved in making a direct input to our planning and management (this might be a time-limited planning group or process, a review process, or a School Committee which oversees these)
- Being a patient actor or helping recruit interested people
- Providing student accommodation or helping recruit people willing to do so
- Providing opportunities for students to undertake assignments in the community
- Advocating for the School and its students in the Community

For more information

Please contact the Dean's Unit on (02) 4620 3683 or contact us by email medschool@uws.edu.au