



# 2017 Disaster Management Scholarships

The Office of the Chief Health Officer, Public and Aboriginal Health Division, offers annual scholarships to WA Department of Health and Health Service Provider staff to contribute towards the progression or completion of post-graduate or other relevant studies.

The aims of the scholarships are to:

- increase disaster management capacity in the health services sector;
- broaden the skill base of staff engaged in disaster management activities;
- raise awareness of disaster management practices among staff working in the health sector.

Four scholarships were awarded in 2017 and each recipient has provided feedback on how the scholarship has positively contributed towards their learning and career. Applications for the 2019 scholarship will be advertised on the [Disaster Management Scholarships page](#).

## 2017 scholarship recipients

### Tess Robinson



As a former East Coaster now working in WA, I experienced my fair share of disasters in QLD, mainly with floods and cyclones. On arriving to run a facility in WA, I again encountered floods after being here only a month.

I applied for the Disaster Management Scholarship to study a Graduate Certificate Disaster Management course run by QUT. This course focused on risk management in disasters and it showed how well Emergency Services can work together as a team, along with State and local governments, to reduce risk into the future.

I have used these skills to reduce risk for our facility, which borders on bushland, and worked with the local Shire and local Rural Fire brigade to ensure that we have plenty of fire breaks around our hospital. We now have solid strategies in place for fire training and evacuation, we have an SES two way radio on site and I regularly attend the Local Emergency Management Committee meetings so we can all work together for our community. If you reduce risk in your work environment you make positive outcomes happen.

I would encourage anyone who is keen to learn more about Disaster Management and Preparedness to apply for a Scholarship.

## Kumar Deep



I completed a Graduate Certificate in Emergency and Disaster Management from Central Queensland University. This course has provided me with a specialised understanding of Emergency and Disaster Management, which is essential for my role as Regional Public Health Manager with the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) Midwest Population Health Directorate.

It increased my confidence to manage regional procedures for public health responses to emergencies in rural and remote communities by increasing my understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of emergency and disaster management.

A key component of the course was exploring current and emerging trends and national and international approaches. This expanded my knowledge of research and evidence-based practice as well as the key concepts and perspectives that underpin contemporary practice, which are essential to an effective Public Health response.

Emergency preparedness is a key outcome in the WACHS Public and Primary Health Directions Strategy 2015 - 2018 and this learning has provided the opportunity to expand my knowledge to effectively manage emergencies and disasters on a more local level.

## Emily Harper



I am a Senior Clinical Psychologist in child and adolescent mental health, with a longstanding interest in child and community resilience, particularly in the context of increasing population exposure to climate-associated disaster risk (such as bushfires, floods and severe storms).

I was keen to broaden my knowledge and experience in emergency management experience in a health and hospital context so applied for the DPMU training scholarship to support my studies in a Graduate Diploma of Disaster and Emergency Management through Charles Darwin University. This course provides opportunities to build knowledge and skills relevant to disaster preparedness, response, recovery and resilience, with particular emphasis on the Australian and

Asia-Pacific region.

I have found the course to be highly valuable in building a strong understanding of the interconnected issues that make communities more (or less) vulnerable to disaster, and more resilient when a disaster occurs, as well as the local, national and international complexities of establishing effective disaster preparedness and response programs. I am considering working towards the full Master of Disaster and Emergency Management degree, and I am excited about the potential to take this learning into my work with children, families and communities, and to support a disaster-resilient health system.

I look forward to opportunities to work in the broader disaster response and resilience field over the coming years and I am incredibly grateful for the support of DPMU's scholarship in assisting my studies so far.

## Rob Stewart



I am the Manager of Disaster Preparedness & Management at Fiona Stanley and Fremantle Hospital Group (FSFHG) and South Metropolitan Health Service (SMHS). I've worked in Crisis, Disaster and Emergency Management for nearly twenty years and have now been at FSFHG and SMHS for 4 ½ years. My special areas of interest include mass casualty and clinical surge management systems as well as clinical business continuity in technically complex facilities.

In 2017 I applied for, and was awarded, a scholarship to allow me to undertake a 12-day residential training course in Israel titled Developing and organising a trauma system and MCS organisation course. In short, the course provided an exceptional introduction and overview of how to establish and develop a trauma system as well as considerations in organising for, and responding to Mass Casualty Incidents. The course provided an exceptional opportunity for me to be exposed to, and learn from, the Israeli Trauma Management System as well as networking with course attendees through cultural immersion throughout the course. The take-away learning for me was the recognition that WA (and Australia in general) has exceptional health care systems and facilities and that we have an ongoing opportunity to assist in developing trauma and mass-casualty management systems in developing countries – both near and far.

The course costs were around \$8000 in total and without the DPMU Scholarship, I would not have been able to attend. I recommend that anyone who is eligible to apply for the scholarship should apply as I have found this opportunity both personally and professionally rewarding.

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