

Junior Doctor of the Year 2019 Dr Sanjay Joseph



Dr Sanjay Joseph, is currently a postgraduate year two (PGY2) resident medical officer (RMO) at Royal Darwin Hospital, Darwin, Northern Territory. Dr Joseph's dedication to his role as a JMO not just in his clinical role as a medical practitioner but as a peer and mentor to other JMOs is demonstrated by the support and number of nominators for this award.

Dr Joseph commenced his internship in 2018 and was one of the first cohort of Interns to rotate through Katherine District Hospital (KDH). He completed two terms at the hospital (medicine and Emergency medical care). He was commended for his attitude and hard work by his supervisors in Katherine Hospital and as one of the first interns to rotate through KDH his diligence secured a strong future for interns rotating to KDH as part of the bigger Top End Health Service prevocational rural and remote medical education and training program. Dr Joseph has been asked to speak at the 24th Australian and New Zealand Prevocational Medical Education Forum in Canberra, ACT in October where he will be able to show his passion for NT rural and remote medicine giving examples of exciting opportunities and experiences that he invested in.

To give some background of the region that Dr Joseph found himself in as an Intern - Katherine Hospital is a regional hospital with 60 overnight beds and provides a broad range of services in all specialty areas to the Katherine Region population of approx. 19,000 people of which 48% identify as Indigenous. This population is spread across one of the largest regions in the NT. To give you some idea of the demographic the Katherine District Hospital covers - it is made up of approximately 340,000 sq. km it is situated between the WA and Qld borders extending south to Dunmarra and north to Pine Creek. It includes the Victoria River area and the Gulf region across the Roper to Borroloola and serves as a referral centre for those remote areas of the Top End of the Northern Territory. KDH provides outreach services in partnership with Royal Darwin Hospital to many of these remote locations which Dr Joseph participated in with supervision from the senior staff when the opportunity was presented as part of his rotation.

As an alumni of Flinders University since 2017, Dr Joseph has been exceptional in his deliverance of voluntary teaching to medical students on the hospital wards, showing enthusiasm and encouragement to the medical students to broaden their learning through different medical topics usually out of their scope to expand and add to their foundation knowledge. As well as medical students, Dr Joseph continually supports all the interns with both practical and theoretical information, mentoring, and ensuring they are supported and able to attend weekly mandatory teaching in a timely manner and is focused on their health and well-being which includes ensuring junior doctors get to take their breaks whilst on shift.

Dr Joseph values and appreciates the need for term and division orientation for all staff but particularly for junior doctors. He took on a leadership role and proposed an idea for the Division of Medicine Orientation to be implemented at the Palmerston Regional Hospital (PRH) after it recently opened in late 2018. Prior to the existence of the orientation, there was no physical orientation to the hospital for PGY2s. This initiative has enabled the coming together of relevant stakeholders to create the orientation for newly rotating RMOs in Rehabilitation, General Medicine and Geriatrics all relocated to PRH. Dr Joseph assisted in the creation of new ROVER documentation, updated the new PRH Orientation Handbook and created the orientation timetable and agenda. This was all done without being asked and in his own time whilst carrying out his usual clinical duties.

As well as his work with medical students, PGY1s and PGY2s, Dr Joseph was the lead coordinator of the Healthy Start Program since 2016. The program promotes health literacy for newly arrived refugees in Darwin, NT. He promotes, encourages and enlists the assistance of fellow RMOs and as a team they recruit volunteers to assist in the running of the program which occurs four times per year. While supporting the refugee community, these training days allow health professionals and students to gain an understanding of different cultures, and builds their confidence to utilise the range of interpreter services available in the NT. This program has enabled many medical students and other health professionals (multidisciplinary) to receive training that is in addition to other cultural training on offer in NT health services. This program is run and organised outside of his work rosters in his personal time.

Dr Joseph also makes the time to be involved with a number of forums and committees related to education and training. He has made a difference to many of the outcomes within NT medical education and training programs through his genuine passion and participation. The Northern Territory equivalent of the PMC, Prevocational Medical Assurance Services (PMAS) has found Dr Joseph's contribution and commitment to medical education and training programs in the NT has been through his JMO representation at the Prevocational Education Advisory Group

(PEAG) and the Medical Education Council at Top End Health Service. At these committee meetings he provides valuable updates from the JMOs in general, NT Junior Medical Officer Forum (NT JMOF) and shares in these discussions any educational issues, and feeds back any outcomes to the JMOs via email and face-to-face to ensure the communication gaps are closed off. Dr Joseph also provides opportunities for JMOs to give feedback confidentially through surveys, and utilises the data to work towards change within the work settings both identified and across NT education and training programs. Dr Joseph takes his role seriously on these committees and uses these opportunities to provide feedback and advice to the TEHS Executive about the work life of JMOs and advocates for improved conditions and resources in line with the Prevocational Accreditation Standards.

Dr Joseph is a dedicated lifelong learner and demonstrates this through many aspects of his work one such example is when he conducted an unpublished audit on 'The prevalence of Anaemia in Indigenous adults of the NT'. Currently he is undertaking a study with Dr Pyi Naing (Senior Registrar) to evaluate the epidemiology of pulmonary hypertension in the NT.

This year, Dr Joseph has completed the NT Accrediting Authorities Surveyor training and was a valued survey team member of the Central Australia Health Service Reaccreditation Survey Visit in June 2019. He has made a significant time commitment to fulfil this role and continues to be part of the junior medical officer presence for the NT Prevocational Accreditation Committee.

Dr Joseph is a passionate advocate for adopting technology that encourages, promotes and supports JMO health and wellbeing in all facets of their life. Currently, Dr Joseph has developed a proposal and business case to gain support from Top End Health Service Executive to introduce and implement a medical education smart phone application which aims to be a platform to provide health and wellbeing materials among other work related materials and resources. Dr Joseph has been engaging with stakeholders both internally within his health service and externally with the Department of Health to advocate the needs and benefits of this app. Briefing papers and presentations have been produced, a gap analysis has been conducted and he has undertaken a wide stakeholder consultation process. To date, Dr Joseph has presented the smart phone application in a number of forums to senior clinicians and health service executives.

Another hat that Dr Joseph wears proudly as a NT wide JMO representative he is also the Chief RMO of the Top End Health Service Division of Medicine. As a result of this role he provides ongoing health and wellbeing support within that division for all JMOs both local and visiting. One way he does this is to periodically disseminate questionnaires to all of the JMOs to gain feedback about any issues or concerns regarding their work life and its impact on their personal life that they may be experiencing and would like to share. This information is then used by the NTJMOF and other committees to progress any health and wellbeing concerns or issues that may need addressing at higher or wider levels after providing the assistance/advice where needed for the JMO.

Since commencing in the NT Medical Program in 2012, Dr Joseph has demonstrated his passion and commitment to working in and around the NT. Dr Joseph is planning to commence the Basic Physicians Training (BPT) Program and hopes to remain in the NT during this time of specialty training as he aims to continually support the NT health community as part of his medical career.

Dr Joseph has also made a myriad of contributions outside of his scope as a RMO including participation in the Health Careers' Try day' in 2019, which showcased medicine for school students from year 10-12, as well as assisting with orientation for PGY1 and PGY2s, and represents JMOs for the Top End Medical Society medical students through Flinders University.