Project Title: Summer Research Scholarships 2005-2014 evaluation  

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Project Type: Qualitative Analysis, survey  

Project Category: Education  

Project Keywords: 
1. Medical Education  
2. Research experience  
3. Project evaluation  
4. Career  

Project Description:  

Background  
Over the past 10-15 years research publications around the world have expressed concern about the declining number of undergraduates with a career interest in research. To address this concern, Sydney Medical School (SMS) developed the Summer Research Scholarship (SRS) Program, which has offered competitive summer research scholarships since 2005 to students to undertake research for 8 weeks over the summer break. The main objective of the SRS Program has been to offer promising undergraduate students an apprenticeship with top career scientists in order to encourage the students towards a research career. 

In 2010, an evaluation of the SRS Program was conducted using an online survey emailed to past scholarship holders. This survey covered students’ experiences of the program and their subsequent intentions regarding future involvement in research. However, at the time of the 2010 evaluation, only a limited number of scholarship students had completed their undergraduate study and had progressed to a point where involvement in further postgraduate research could be assessed.  

The Proposed Project  
The purpose of the proposed project is to further evaluate the longer-term success of the SRS Program in meeting the program objectives. The project will involve a mixture of quantitative and qualitative skills which will be developed in the course of the project. The methodology for the project will involve an online survey of all scholarship holders since 2005, followed by interviews with selected individuals, particularly those who have progressed well past their undergraduate degrees.