**An Evidenced Based Approach to Mentoring in Palliative Medicine**

**Introduction**

Mentoring is increasingly seen as a critical aspects of Palliative Medicine (PM) training, facilitating personalized learning and development and providing holistic support to mentees and mentors throughout the mentoring relationship. The Palliative Medicine Initiative (PMI), a mentoring program aimed at advancing medical student led publications in peer reviewed journals reveals that mentoring in PM, also evidences mentoring’s ability to enhance interprofessional working, realize PM’s goals, improve recruitment and retention of staff, and change a mentee’s “*conceptual model from disease and diagnosis to patient goals, prognosis and function*”. Whilst these accounts of mentoring success come from accounts novice mentoring which is defined as “***a dynamic, entwined, evolving, adaptable, context-specific, goal-sensitive, mentee-, mentor-, host organization-, mentoring approach-, mentoring relationship- and mentoring dynamic-dependent approach focused upon creating personalised and enduring mutually beneficial ‘fit for purpose’ relationships between an experienced clinician, junior clinicians and or students and the host organization”***,little data is available on this form mentoring in novice mentoring.

These gaps in knowledge and growing concerns that variations in practice, poor structuring of mentoring processes and a lack of effective assessments of the mentoring relationships and processes have stymied the development of mentoring’s role in PM training and threatened the continuity of programs such as the PMI, and could see mentoring relationships being misused.

With most concerns focused around issues of structuring of the mentoring process, this thesis queries if a structured approach to novice mentoring could overcome regnant concerns. Asking “what is known of novice mentoring practice?”, “ what is known about the structuring novice mentoring programs?” and “ would a novice mentoring framework be applicable to mentoring in PM?” in order to design a mentoring framework I will study novice mentoring data in the closely related field of Internal Medicine (IM) and use the data to design a framework to ensure consistency to the mentoring process. I then propose to evaluate if this framework could be applied to the PM setting.

**Key AIM(s**)

The primary aim of this thesis is to create an evidenced based novice mentoring framework (NMF) that will ensure a consistent approach to novice mentoring in PM and address regnant concerns surrounding novice mentoring.

To meet these aims, this thesis will adopt a novel research approach called the *sequential evidenced based approach* (SEBA) to create a robust narrative drawn from prevailing novice mentoring data in IM.

This narrative will form the basis for the evidenced based novice mentoring framework (NMF). To determine if the NMF would be applicable to novice mentoring in PM, SEBA will be employed to map the mentoring practice in PM and better understand Interprofessional Mentoring (IPM) in PM, an evolved form of novice mentoring increasingly used in PM. The viability of NMF will then be considered in light of this NR.

**Structure of Thesis**

To meet its primary and secondary aims, this thesis will consist of the following six sections.

**Section 1**- considers use of novice mentoring in PM, the educational theories that underpin them, and the rational to examine novice mentoring using evidence from Internal Medicine (IM)

**Section 2 -** proposes SEBA. Guided by a constructivist perspective underpinned by the belief that the experience and meaning of mentoring is socially constructed and adopting a relativist view to draw the diverse perspectives of mentoring experiences together particularly when much of the available data comes from a variety of sources, programs and sociocultural, clinical and academic settings. SEBA thus combines prevailing systematic scoping review (SSR)s, Narrative Reviews (NR)s, Thematic Reviews (TR)s and systematic reviews (SR)s of different aspects of novice mentoring to create a holistic perspective of novice mentoring.

Elements of SEBA include;

1. the ‘jigsaw’ perspective within SEBA sees each domain studied by prevailing SRs, TRs, NRs and SSRs as a piece of a jigsaw. The jigsaw perspective seeks to ensure that complementary pieces of the jigsaw are brought together to provide a holistic and realistic perspective of the mentoring.
2. To ensure that **key** elements of mentoring such as Mentoring Relationships (MR), Mentoring Structure (MS), the matching, mentor training, assessment tools, mentoring guidelines, mentoring culture (MC) and the mentoring environment (ME) are considered, the ‘split approach’ sees directed content analysis being used. The findings of the directed content analysis is verified by concurrent and independent use of Braun and Clarke’s approach to thematic analysis and comparisons with detailed summaries of the included articles in keeping with Wong, Greenhalgh (14)’s “RAMESES publication standards: meta-narrative reviews” guidelines. These themes/categories are then pieced together to create a narrative review (NR).
3. SEBA forwards a unique new approach to enhance the reproducibility and transparency of the synthesis of NRs.

**Section 3** - Synthesis of a narrative review (NR) in SEBA of novice mentoring.

**Section 4** – Critically analyses the NR on novice mentoring

**Section 5** – Presents the development of the Novice Mentoring Framework (NMF) based on the evidence and analysis in Section 3 & 4.

**Section 6 –** Drawing upon lessons learnt from novice mentoring in IM, and employing SEBA based NRs, a new map of novice mentoring in PM will be synthesised. This NR of mentoring in PM will be employed to determine if the NMF is applicable in PM and thus address concerns about the consistency of the mentoring process.

This section will also consider areas of future research.