



PHOTO: SIMONE DALLINGER

**DR AYMAN SHENOUDA**

Age: 48

Title: GP, Wagga Wagga, NSW

His choice of most influential: RACGP president Dr Chris Mitchell. "He worked on three major things that were really needed: GP unity, the Aboriginal faculty, and being able to involve the college more with members."

# All about the patient

Ayman Shenouda has inspired local and internationally trained doctors alike with his enthusiasm for general practice. By Marge Overs

A quick glance at Dr Ayman Shenouda's practice website will tell you much about how this passionate rural doctor is making his mark on general practice.

In the centre of the home page, a photo of the beaming team at his Glenrock Country Practice in Wagga Wagga takes centre stage – eight doctors, five nurses and several allied health staff. To Shenouda, primary health care is all about the team.

The page has a long list of patient services that would surpass most city practices. Shenouda and his wife, Dr Samiha Azab, designed and purpose-built their one-stop shop for primary health care long before any politician jumped on the super clinic bandwagon.

Most obvious on the Glenrock website is the practice mission: "To provide our communities with quality healthcare services that meet the individual needs of patients, delivering care in a manner and environment that promotes dignity, safety and quality of life."

This is not a mission that has been workshopped on butcher's paper for maximum marketing spin. It is a genuine vision for Shenouda, 48: "General practice is the speciality of patients," he says. "If I care about my patients and I listen to them, my success will flow."

And success has found the Egyptian-born doctor. In 2009, he won the RACGP's GP of the

Year award; in 2007, Glenrock won the NSW/ACT General Practice of the Year and, in May, AGPAL handed the Wagga GP awards in three of four categories.

Shenouda came to Australia in 1992, a surgical registrar who had no preconceived ideas about general practice.

As he settled into the NSW regional city of Wagga Wagga, he knew that general practice needed to adapt. "I could see that patient care and chronic care were number one on the government's agenda and that, with the shortage of doctors, there would be no way a doctor could deliver all the services on his own."

As well as providing many and varied patient education and support services through his multidisciplinary team, Glenrock is part of the National Primary Care Collaborative, providing a comprehensive and innovative diabetic program, which involves patients taking a strong role in their own care.

Another of Shenouda's passions, which involves local action and national influence, is his role in training and mentoring IMGs.

He supervises IMGs and has established a program where IMGs observe GPs at work to prepare for the AMC exam. He was also one of 11 GPs across Australia who did the RACGP's rural faculty first IMG mentor training. In turn, he has trained another five IMGs in his region to become mentors.

His work with IMGs is part of his can-do approach: when he sees a problem, he rolls up his sleeves and does something about it.

When he came to Australia, he encountered the negativity between IMGs and authorities, such as the AMC.

When he moved to Wagga, Shenouda joined the board of the local GP division and got involved with the RACGP and the training provider.

"I try to look at what the negative things are about the system and how we can meet midway," Shenouda says. "I want to see how IMGs can develop confidence in their talents and deal with their issues in an open manner rather than a threatened manner."

RACGP president Dr Chris Mitchell, in awarding Shenouda GP of the Year last year, summed up the GP's achievements: "Through his community involvement, his focus on quality patient care, his commitment to training GP registrars, his support for IMGs and enthusiastic advocacy of general practice as an exciting and rewarding career, Dr Shenouda is an inspiration to all."

**Judges' comments**

This rural GP has worked locally to show what can be achieved nationally. Dr Shenouda's support of IMGs and his model practice have won him a swag of awards and the respect of his profession.



**DR ANDREW PESCE**

**Inclusive leader**

"Hi, I'm Andrew Pesce. I'm from the AMA, and I'm here to help" was how the AMA president last year described his approach to the Federal Government when dealing with the thorny issue of health reform. Less confrontational in style than his predecessor, Dr Rosanna Capolingua, Pesce is believed to have won the ear of government through his focus on reasoned debate and his inclusive approach. The obstetrician has been a staunch advocate of GP independence and maintenance of the traditional role of GPs as leaders in the provision of primary care.

