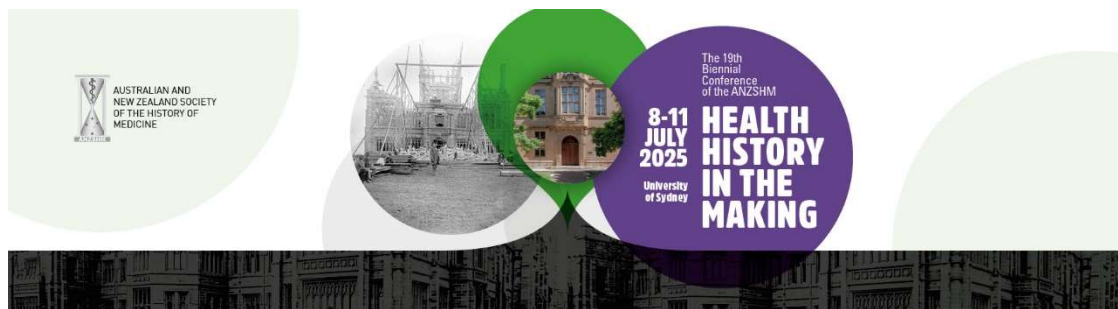




Marilyn McMurchie

What is the role of the clinical record in the history of medicine?

This presentation is about medical records from one general practice dating from the early 1980s to 2000. The underlying principles for clinical records are enunciated in the Australian Privacy Principles, that is, the medical record is sacrosanct and various attempts to institutionalise these records have been unsuccessful. Medico-legal advice is to de-identify all material. Possible repositories have said that they should not be defaced and that access would be restricted, either by decades of time or only to verified researchers. To date the only analysis has been of a convenience sample of 230 people's records by age sex and duration of contact. However this period covers the early years of the HIV pandemic. In this era there were no effective antiretroviral medications and most on going management was in the rooms of GPs; treatment of the devastating AIDS Defining Illnesses lay with specialists. People often came back to primary care for their terminal phase. It's a story that deserves to be told.