Editorial

Welcome to the third issue of the School of Primary Health Care Research e-newsletter. June was a busy month and marked the success of the ‘What works with women offenders: A cross-national dialogue about effective responses to female offenders’ conference, held at the Monash University Centre in Prato, Italy. In total, 155 delegates registered with representatives from 17 countries, including: Australia, England, the USA, Scotland, Canada, Ireland, Netherlands, Austria, Denmark, Czech Republic, Italy, Israel, New Zealand, Mexico, Sweden, Slovenia, and Wales. The conference was a great success with a call for a second conference from delegates.

Closer to home, at the General Practice & Primary Health Care Research Conference in Adelaide (July), the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Christopher Pyne, announced that the Australian Government would commit $60 million over the next four years to continue funding the Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation and Development Strategy (PHCRE). This is good news for the Department of General Practice. The evaluation report of the first four years of the PHCRE Strategy that informed the decision can be found at www.phcris.org.au.

In this issue you will see the huge effort researchers within the School made to submit funding proposals for the Faculty Strategic Grant Scheme. Eleven proposals were submitted in total! Congratulations to everyone involved and good luck. Congratulations also to those of you who were awarded funding (Thea Brown, Debbie Zaks, Britta Klein, and Peter Schattner).

The Department of Occupational Therapy features in this issue. You will read about the remarkable progress the department has made in just a short period of time. Ms Rebecca Allen from the Department of Occupational Therapy features in ‘Meet the Staff’ along with Ciaran Pier (Department of General Practice), Bob Davis (Centre for Developmental Disability Health Victoria), Phillip Mendes (Department of Social Work), Erin Smith (Centre for Ambulance and Paramedic Studies), and Belinda Lewis (Department of Health Sciences).

I wish you happy reading and look forward to receiving your contributions for the next newsletter.

Stella Koritsas
Editor

Areas of Research Interest

Department of Occupational Therapy

by Louise Farnsworth

Another of the new Health Sciences Peninsula Programs being offered by the School of Primary Health Care is the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy (BOT). The team includes Rebecca Allen (Course coordinator), Dr Ted Brown (Postgraduate Coordinator), Pamela Kirke (Fieldwork coordinator) and is headed up by A/Prof Louise Farnworth. In 2006, we will have students currently enrolled in the Diploma of Health Sciences, moving into 2nd year as well as a new intake of 60 students into the 1st year of the program.

The Monash Peninsula course is the only one serving the specific occupational therapy educational needs of the Mornington Peninsula and Gippsland area. Having the BOT program located at Monash Peninsula creates opportunities to develop strategic alliances and new partnerships between academic staff and the practice field that has otherwise not been afforded, and for the BOT to be innovative, entrepreneurial and cross-disciplinary in teaching practice, and research. The Monash Peninsula BOT program has both national and international, professional and research links. Three of the staff are also accreditors of occupational therapy academic programs for OT Australia.

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The BOT will use a combination of traditional and Problem-Based Learning, specifically, Scenario-Based Learning, as its main teaching method and will incorporate more than 1,000 hours of fieldwork education. This will include two specialist rural placements. Additionally, in third and fourth year, students will complete a substantial community development project where learners will shift their view beyond the occupational challenges facing individuals, to consider the ways in which the occupations, health and wellbeing of communities/populations may be impacted by social, political and organisational factors. This fits under the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (WHO, 2001).

The Occupational Therapy course will also incorporate Inter-Professional Learning as one of its core hallmarks. Links will be made with Nursing, Paramedic studies, Physiotherapy and Health Science/Social Work programs at Monash Peninsula. Occupational therapy students will also join business students enrolled in the double Psychology/Business degree. This will be a strategic step in a strategy to establish greater commonality in the first year curricula for health sciences courses at Peninsula campus. One outcome of this will enable more effective use of teaching resources, and encourage a more holistic approach to health science education that will assist in breaking down artificial barriers between the professions when graduates enter professional practice.

The Occupational Therapy course at Peninsula will also be developing a postgraduate stream where students who are already qualified as occupational therapists can enrol in either masters or doctoral degrees by research. This will provide opportunities for clinicians to pursue further studies and increase the research capacity of the Monash OT program.

The BOT will be launched by Marilyn Pattison (Honorary Secretary to the World Federation of Occupational Therapists, recipient of the 2006

Sylvia Docker Lecture) on Thursday November 17th from 5.00-7.30 pm at the Peninsula Campus. Occupational therapists and other interested people are cordially invited. If you would like to attend, please contact Cassie McMaster on 99044466 or email on cassie.mcmaster@med.monash.edu.au

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Meet the Staff

**Department of General Practice**

Dr Ciaran Pier

Ciaran is a Research Fellow in the Department of General Practice and a registered probationary psychologist. She has several years experience in research and teaching. She currently manages a project involving the development of a computerised resource for managing depression in patients with coronary heart disease and an internet-based cardiovascular risk reduction program for workplace employees (Pace Heart Lifeskills). She is also a therapist and research fellow on a project investigating the efficacy of an internet-based cognitive behavioural therapy program for treating panic disorder (Panic Online).

Ciaran recently completed a PhD entitled: Interoceptive Accuracy for Sympathetic Nervous System Activity in Panic Disorder. She recently presented the findings at the European Health Psychology conference in Galway. Ciaran has published in the area of panic and anxiety disorders. Her main research interests include the psychological determinants of health behaviours, anxiety disorders, the psychosocial aspects of cardiovascular diseases and internet-based and other mental health interventions.

**Centre for Developmental Disability Health Victoria**

Associate Professor Bob Davis

During his time at the CDDHV, Bob has been involved with the development of an undergraduate and postgraduate education program, a state-wide consultancy service for the physical and mental health problems of people with intellectual disability and provided a leadership role in the development of a national group of medical practitioners interested in health issues of people with intellectual disability as the founding president of the Australian Association of Developmental Disability Medicine (AADDM) and the chair of the RACGP curriculum development working group on disability. As a clinician Bob has a particular interest in the medical and psychiatric assessment of people with ‘challenging behaviour’ particularly self-injurious and pica behaviour, the topic for his PhD thesis. His research reflects the practical demands of the newly formed centre in a newly developing field of medical study and its remit to develop a knowledge of the health issues of people with developmental disability amongst health professionals and the day-to-day clinical exposure to people with challenging behaviour needing a medical and a psychiatric assessment.

**Department of Social Work**

Dr Philip Mendes

Philip Mendes joined the Department of Social Work in 1995 after a number of years of practice in the areas of child protection and income security. He is now Senior Lecturer, teaching in the Social Policy & Community Development subjects, and Coordinator for the on-campus undergraduate Bachelor of Social Work. He is an acknowledged expert on community welfare lobby groups, having completed his PhD on the peak community welfare lobby body, the...
Belinda holds a PhD in Health Promotion from Deakin University and has worked as a researcher and health promotion consultant with a wide range of government, professional and community organisations. Her current research on international health is in collaboration with the Globalism Institute, RMIT and focused on crisis, recovery and community sustainability in tsunami-affected areas of the Asia-Pacific Region (Sri Lanka). Other recent projects include community recovery in Bali after the Kuta bombings and health promotion planning for healthy communities.

Belinda’s expertise is in qualitative research and her work draws on the theoretical approaches of cultural studies, health sociology and communications research. Her publications and research interests include community sustainability; participatory approaches to health promotion; social diversity and health; perceptions of risk and health; media, communications and public health; and women’s health (particularly for women in lower socio-economic groups).

**Department of Occupational Therapy**

Ms Rebecca Allen

Rebecca Allen is a senior lecturer who commenced in May of this year. She has had extensive experience in academia, most recently having been course coordinator of the occupational therapy program and Sub-Dean of Learning and Teaching in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Charles Sturt University. Rebecca brings a strong interdisciplinary focus and understanding of rural education from these roles. She has also worked at La Trobe University in the School of Occupational Therapy, teaching in the Occupational Therapy and Occupational Health and Safety programs and at the University of Melbourne, Department of Psychiatry. At University of Melbourne, Rebecca developed curriculum for the Graduate Diploma in Mental Health Sciences - Community Mental Health, a program jointly offered by the University of Melbourne and Monash University.

**Department of Health Sciences**

Dr Belinda Lewis

Belinda Lewis joined the School of Primary Health Care in late 2004. She is currently the Curriculum Development Coordinator for the new Health Sciences program at Peninsula campus which includes Health Science/Social Work, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy. She has coordinated a multi-disciplinary approach to development of the new curricula with a strong focus on inter-professional education, health promotion and prevention. Belinda is currently developing new multi-disciplinary units in areas of health promotion, health communication and community partnerships and capacity building. These will be undertaken by students across the Health Sciences Peninsula program.

Erin is a Research Fellow with the Centre for Ambulance and Paramedic Studies and the Field Coordinator for the Cochrane Collaboration’s Prehospital and Emergency Health Field (CPEHF). In August 2004, the CPEHF was officially registered as an entity of the Cochrane Collaboration and the administration base was located at Monash University. In June 2005 the CPEHF received funding from the Federal Government to assist in the administrative duties of the field for the next three years. In addition, Erin is the Section Editor for the Cochrane Corner in the electronic Journal of Emergency Primary Health Care, a member of the CPEHF Advisory Board, the Australasian Trauma Society Research Group, the Cochrane Collaboration’s Coverage Working Group and is a member of a number of professional organisations. Erin’s background is in Health Science and Health Information Management, with postgraduate studies in Clinical Trials and Clinical Epidemiology. Erin is currently a PhD candidate in the field of disaster epidemiology and emergency public health under the supervision of Prof Frederick Burkle Jr (USA) and A/Prof Frank Archer (Aust.).
Upcoming Funding Opportunities

**beyondblue**
Future grant rounds have not yet been announced, however these grants are generally due in early to mid December. [http://www.beyondblue.org.au/vcoe/](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/vcoe/)

**NHMRC**

**GrantsLink**
GrantsLINK makes it easier to find suitable and relevant grants for community projects from the many Commonwealth grants that are available. GrantsLINK also helps you find the best source of funding and assists you to complete application forms.

**AusTender**
AusTender provides a comprehensive list of tenders.

Conference Activity

**Australia's ageing population summit 2005**
27-28 September 2005, Sydney

**Paediatric Occupational Therapy Symposium**
7-8 October 2005, Melbourne
For more information visit [www.otausvic.com.au](http://www.otausvic.com.au)

**Australian Society of Rehabilitation Counsellors Conference 2005:**
Work and Wellness: Everybody Wins
13-14 October 2005, Melbourne
Visit [http://www.asorc.org.au](http://www.asorc.org.au) for more information

**2005 National Coalition Against Bullying: Creating Safe and Caring Communities**
29-30 October 2005, Melbourne

**Primary Mental Health Conference.**
Primary Care Led Mental Health Care Reform: Reaping the Gains
3 November 2005, Perth
For more information visit [www.adgp.com.au](http://www.adgp.com.au)

**The Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol & other Drugs 2005 Conference**
6-9 November 2005, Melbourne
For more information visit [www.apsadconference.com.au](http://www.apsadconference.com.au)

**The 4th National ERA 2005 Emerging Researchers on Ageing**
8 November 2005, Brisbane
For more information visit [www.uq.edu.au/aca](http://www.uq.edu.au/aca)

**7th Australian Conference on Quality of Life**
24 November 2005, Melbourne

**Dangerous Consumptions III Colloquium, University of Melbourne**
24-25 November 2005, Melbourne

**Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Australia Conference 2005**
24 - 26 November 2005, Brisbane

**18th Annual National Physiotherapy Student Symposium**
8 - 14 January 2006, Western Australia

Hotlinks

http://www.med.monash.edu.au/mentalhealth/paniconline/
The on line resource and treatment program for people with panic disorder from the Department of General Practice.

This website is currently being developed and will have comprehensive records of current and recently completed primary health care research projects, profiles about researchers and their research interests, links to research organisations across Australia, and information about scholarships, fellowships, and grants for primary health care research.

http://www.psycho.uni-duesseldorf.de/aap/projects/gpower/index.htm
G*Power is a general power analysis program that comes in two essentially equivalent versions: Macintosh OS and MS-DOS. Free to use!
School News

Welcome to Dr Kay Jones. Kay has been appointed to work part-time in research in the Department of General Practice. She is keen to pursue the research which involves GP education and has been appointed part-time to PHCREDS.

Welcome to Associate Professor Danielle Mezza. Danielle has been appointed to work part-time in research in the Department of General Practice. She is keen to pursue a research agenda involving sexual and reproductive health aspects of women’s health as well as the implementation of clinical guidelines in general practice.

Congratulations to Sandra McGibbon from the CDDHV who has been employed as a PHCREDS research fellow. Sandra will develop a health screening tool to be used by GPs for adults with developmental disability.

Congratulations to Martin Halperin from the Department of General Practice who has been awarded the PWH Grieve Memorial Award (awarded annually for education / research purposes). Martin is a GP registrar who is conducting a project investigating GP perspectives on using unannounced standardized patients in research.

Congratulations to Stella Koritsas who recently enrolled in a PhD under the supervision of Dr Teresa Iacono from the CDDHV. Stella’s PhD research will investigate predictors of problem behaviour in people with intellectual disability.

Farewell to Sandra Davidson. Sandra will take maternity leave in October and begin a PhD in the new year. Her PhD is in the area of social support and depression, focusing on the social support role of GPs. Stella will be supervised by Associate Professor Jane Gunn (Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne).

Congratulations to David Austin from the Department of General Practice who recently submitted his PhD entitled “The Interpretation of Ambiguous Stimuli in Panic Disorder”. David’s principal supervisor was Professor Jeff Richards (1999 to April 2005) then Professor Ron Rapee (Macquarie University, April 2005 to present). His associate supervisors are Dr Britt Klein and Dr Litza Kiropoulos.

Grants Awarded

Department of General Practice

Learning to use the Internet for evidence based practice. Zaks D, Schattner P, Klein B. Royal Australian College of General Practice, General Practice Informatics Scholarship. $30,000.


Department of Social Work


Department of Social work

Risk and recovery in forensic settings: A qualitative investigation of the responsibilities and experiences of mental health professionals. Monash University Strategic Grant Scheme, Collaborative grant. Sullivan GB, Sheehan R.

An analysis of supervision skills used by youth justice workers and how these relate to client outcomes. Monash University Strategic Grant Scheme, Industry grant with the Department of Juvenile Justice. Trotter C, McIvor G.

Department of Occupational Therapy

Promoting and maintaining good sensory health across the lifespan: Measuring sensory processing skills in children and adults. Monash University Strategic Grant Scheme, Early Career Development Grant. Brown T, Farnworth L.

An interdisciplinary collaborative project designed to ascertain knowledge of the risk of lymphoedema in a rural and urban Victorian population: a comparative case study. Monash University Strategic Grant Scheme, Collaborative grant. Barnett T, Chapman Y, Francis K, O’Connor M, Sollick K, Farnworth L, Piller N, Donovan J.


Promoting and maintaining good sensory health in childhood: Measuring sensory processing skills in infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-age children. Telstra Foundation. Brown T.

Grants Submitted

Department of General Practice

What happens after dark? After hours palliative care service delivery in urban and rural Victoria. Monash University Strategic Grant Scheme, Collaborative grant. O’Connor M, Schattner P, Klein B, Miles G.

Centre for Developmental Disability Health Victoria


Effects of caring for people with intellectual disability and problem behaviours. Monash University Strategic Grant Scheme, Industry grant with Noweyung Inc. Iacono T, Koritsas S, Davis R.


Promoting and maintaining good sensory health in childhood: Measuring sensory processing skills in infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-age children. Telstra Foundation. Brown T.