Welcome to the third edition of the School of Population Health Newsletter!

Our newsletter is to facilitate communication within the School. It contain news from our Head of School, School Manager, highlights from the academic and planning committees, news from the Social Committee, introduce new staff, feature research groups, highlight successes and advertise upcoming seminars, special events, visitors and funding opportunities etc. Peta Tilbrook and Fiona Maley edit, coordinate the inclusion of articles and manage production and dissemination. We know you’ve been up to interesting stuff so please keep items coming in! Please support your Newsletter through interesting, informative and constructive contributions that we will all want to read. Front cover: with thanks to Mehdi for his beautiful photographs.

Head of School’s message

Dear SPH colleagues

It is already time for the third edition of the SPH Newsletter. The first two have been well supported and appreciated and so we will continue them. Special thanks to Fiona for soliciting material and putting it all together in a very efficient and professional manner.

We are well into 2009, with many staff having had some time off during January, developing and writing research grant applications for submission in February and March, and getting semester one units underway. Well done to all for what appears to be a successful start to 2009.

A vibrant organisation always has staff coming and going and the last few months have been no exception. I will not list them all but would like to mention that it was with mixed feelings that Dr Alison Reid has left the School to take up a senior post at WAIMR but will continue to work with the Occupational and Respiratory Epidemiology group. [Late breaking news - Dr Max Bulsara will also be leaving us in May to take up a Professorship with Notre Dame University - well done Max! - Ed.]

I would also like to welcome new staff who have started recently or will join us soon. Also, I would like to welcome back Jane Heyworth from her year of sabbatical leave (some of which was spent in India).

The new Master of Nursing Science degree commences in semester two and Judith Finn, Yvonne Hauck, Peta Tilbrook, Fiona Maley and several others having been working hard to make a successful start to this new degree. There has been much curriculum development and planning and considerable advertising and I am pleased to report that the response to the first call for applications for admission to this new nursing degree has been excellent [25 places have already been offered, so we have a cohort! - Ed.]

An exciting opportunity and also a big challenge in terms of re-structuring our coursework offerings has commenced with UWA’s review of course structures. The school’s contributions to the proposed new graduate medical degree and undergraduate programs, as well as Masters degrees, will have to be well thought out. To this end, a School Coursework Re-structure Working Party has been established, with teams working on different program areas, and will meet monthly.

It is pleasing to note that the School’s strong commitment to teaching and learning has recently been recognised by a number of awards [see Awards]

There is also much happening on the research and research training front. My last count was 16 NHMRC and 2 Healthway grant applications involving SPH chief investigators having been recently submitted. That is a wonderful effort and good luck to all applicants. The Research Committee, chaired by Dr Angus Cook, has continued to develop as an important forum for research development and planning discussion and change. One variation has been that it will meet every two months rather than monthly. The PHPS continues to do an excellent job in running the seminar and research skills development program and the 2009 format with seminars, workshops and journal clubs has got off to a flying start in 2009 with some well attended sessions. Our school (ie our research candidate supervisors) continues to be in demand by both domestic and international prospective research candidates as we seem to be getting more than our fair share of applicants for scholarships. Continued thanks to David Preen as Graduate Research Coordinator who receives, supports and evaluates all the scholarship and candidacy applicants.

The strategic planning process is in full swing with the Strategic Planning Drafting Group (convened by D’Arcy Holman) having completed its discovery and stakeholder consultation phases and prepared a discussion paper that summarises their findings in the form of several candidate new directions for the school to consider. The School is in many ways at a cross-road and needs urgent and considerable change in order to remain successful and relevant and so this strategic planning process is perhaps the most important one in the history of the school. All staff with a vested interest in the school in the future must be involved in this process. A very important event is the Workshop
scheduled for 28 April at which the various candidate new directions will be discussed and decisions made on which ones will be adopted by the School. All staff are expected to participate in these final phases of the development of the plan.

As many know, the School has been at the forefront of consumer and community involvement in research and, inter alia, has a Consumer Advocate (Anne McKenzie) and a Consumer and Community Advisory Council. Recent activities include the popular training workshops for researchers on involving consumers and the community facilitated by Anne McKenzie and Bec Hanley in late April and the invitation to Anne to join the NHMRC Council as an observer on behalf of the Consumers’ Health Forum. Well done Anne.

The new package of awards, rewards and prizes to acknowledge, support and stimulate a higher level of research performance has been implemented and a number of awards and prizes already announced. Anna Hynd was provided funding to assist with the development of her NHMRC grant, Louise Stewart was re-imbursed her PHAA membership fee under the scheme to support participation in external public health associations (she was elected to WA Branch Committee), and some staff have received travel support awards under the travel safety net scheme. Also, D'Arcy Holman and Min Zhang won an outstanding research grants performance award for their highly rated NHMRC grant in the 2008 round. The series of rewards and prizes for 2008 publications will soon be announced. Finally, I would like to acknowledge for their outstanding contributions to the school, the winner of the 2008 SPH Citizenship Award (D'Arcy Holman) and the Student Citizenship Award (Louise Stewart).

It is pleasing to see that finally we will have some progress on a more professional, navigable and informative school website. Special thanks to Peta, Fiona, the IT staff and web managers for keeping engaged with this UWA-wide development. The webpage is an extremely important information and marketing avenue for the school and now that it is happening I urge you all to update and polish the information on the school web pages.

Best wishes to all,
Matthew Knuiman

School Manager’s message

What can I say? I can’t believe that the year is zipping by so fast; new staff, new students, new courses and a whole pile of new reports to do [you know how I love them so much]! I have to say, it is great to see how the school is continuing to grow and change as time goes by. Hey, we even have a photo board and I have to say a special thanks to both Annette and her hubby Mark for achieving this milestone for the School. Also especially close to my heart is the growing postgraduate research and coursework student community - how good it is to hear talk and laughter coming from all the student rooms.

With an influx of postgraduate Nursing students in July, we are looking to put some computers into the two offices in the computer laboratory to cater for them. Other facilities will also be upgraded as the year progresses and resources allow.

Another major change for SPH in April and May is the transition across to a new website format and program. Bernie Jaw has taken the lead in this project for us and I am sure we will all be very pleased with the new look. The website is crucial to the School’s future, it is how the public see us and we need to make it the best we can. So please everyone, do your best to help us as much as possible.

With the new website, I really want to promote the development and use of the School’s intranet site. It will be our main site for school communication. Here we will put the minutes of the school meetings, powerpoints from the weekly seminars and have an easy reference of ‘how to information’. Whilst you will need to login to the site [using your same login and password as you do for your computer], this function does mean that you can access the site from home. Please make use of the site - it will save both you and Admin a lot of time if you follow the required processes.

Finally, I have retired as the supplier of chocolate frogs and caramellos; our Social Committee has taken over and will be raising money for school functions and charitable donations. For those that have their own chocolates to sell for their kids, sporting club etc, feel free to still bring them in as well.

So finishing off with a big thank you to all the Admin girls and IT boys who tirelessly beaver away quietly in the background keeping the school running.

Cheers
Peta
News in teaching

New course structures

Known as The UWA Future Framework, the course restructure was approved by the University Senate in December 2008 subsequent to a comprehensive analysis of education at UWA carried out over two years. The aim of the new structure is to educate our students with a global and culturally diverse outlook and to maintain the recognised excellence that a UWA degree provides. In deciding to move to a model of 3-year general bachelor degree, an Honours year for some, a 2-year master’s degree, and 3-years PhD, UWA is moving towards a model that has been implemented across Europe, known as the Bologne model. Melbourne University was the first Australian university to convert over, hence the ‘Melbourne model’ may also be used when referring to the process; UWA will be the second.

The implementation process has begun and to ensure we keep abreast of developments, the School of Population Health has a Course Restructures Working Party which will meet monthly throughout the course of events. Originally a Bachelor of Health was planned, but this has been subsequently withdrawn. The range of undergraduate degrees now comprises Arts, Science, Commerce and Design. Within SPH we are currently developing a suite of majors for consideration within the new framework.

Changes will also impact on our contribution to the medical program and our postgraduate degrees.

We look forward to the potential opportunities – and we will also be bracing ourselves for the potential challenges.

Recognition of excellence in teaching

Congratulations to Professor Judith Finn, who was the recipient of the Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award for Postgraduate Coursework for 2008.

Congratulations also to Ania Stasinska for her nomination for excellence in early career teaching for 2008.

New Units for 2009

Qualitative Research Methods, developed and coordinated by Associate Professor Colleen Fisher will provide a new elective unit for postgraduate students in semester 2 and will fill a recognised gap in our Public Health research training.

Similarly, Health Informatics will be a new option for students undertaking units in Summer School in 2009. This unit is currently being developed by Dr Keith Lui.

To cater for our students Epidemiology and Control of Communicable Diseases will be offered this year in a new Winter School (June 2009) by Angus Cook and Phil Weinstein. In the future, we hope to add more units to the Winter School.

New Courses for 2009

The information evening for the new Master of Nursing Science in March was a great success and enrolments have begun to trickle in. This course is an exciting new initiative to train postgraduates for a degree in nursing and will comprise a fourth teaching program within the School. Semester 2 2009 provides the first intake. 2009 provides the first intake.

Next Teaching and Learning Committee meeting

The next TLC meeting will be held on 11th May and will include an overview of Health Informatics followed by a workshop on Assessment in Teaching facilitated by Zarrin Siddique.

by Elizabeth Geelhoed

New staff

Dr Anu Rammohan

Anu has a PhD in Economics from La Trobe University and an MA in Economics from Simon Fraser University in Canada. Anu has a range of teaching and research experience in applied economics with special focus on development economics and health economics. She leaves the position of Senior Lecturer in Economics at the University of Sydney to join UWA in June/July 2009 in a shared appointment between the School of Population Health and the Business School.

Rosemary Saunders

Rosemary has a Diploma of Nursing (RN), BAppSc, PGDip in Health Promotion, MPH and is currently enrolled in a PhD. She has a range of industry, clinical and university teaching experience in nursing with special expertise in clinical skills training, aged care and paediatrics. She has over 5 years experience at ECU in course coordination and teaching. Rosemary’s most recent position has been as the Clinical Nurse Consultant of the Bethanie Group (Aged Care). She joins the School as the Course Coordinator Nursing.

Lucy Lewis

Lucy is a registered nurse (RN) and Midwife (RM) has commenced a nursing research position within SPH in early April 2009. Lucy will be principally based at the Centre of Nursing Research at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, where
she will develop and lead a programme of clinical nursing research. Lucy is currently completing her PhD within the School of Women’s and Infants’ Health of The University of Western Australia.

**Nursing studies at SPH**

The ‘discipline’ of nursing within the UWA School of Population Health continues to grow and we welcome new academic staff and postgraduate students to the School. We are excited about the commencement of the new Master of Nursing Science (entry-to-practice) course in July 2009 and are very pleased to welcome Ms Jannette Barrett to the role of Teaching Administrative Officer for the MNursSc course. A MNursSc information session was held on March 25th and was well attended – with enthusiasm high – two students submitted their applications on the night!

**PhD scholarship success for nurses**

Over the years there have been a number of nurses who have successfully completed postgraduate research degrees (PhDs) through the UWA School of Population Health, including Professor Judith Finn (RN, RM) and Professor Ian Jacobs (RN).

However, lately there has been an unprecedented number of PhD Scholarships awarded to nurses within the School, including the SCGH/ UWA Olive Anstey PhD Scholarship and NH&MRC Postgraduate Scholarships.

Nursing Services at SCGH fund the SCGH/ UWA Olive Anstey PhD Scholarship. Olive Anstey was the Director of Nursing at SCGH from 1963 until the year before her death in 1983, and she was a staunch advocate for better working conditions and pay for nurses, which she saw a synonymous with improving care for patients. She also agitated for improved education and the formal development of nursing knowledge through research.

Louise Schreuders (RN) is the 2009 recipient of the SCGH/UWA Olive Anstey PhD Scholarship. Louise will be investigating the relationship between nursing care and patient outcomes within an acute care hospital environment.

Sonya Rogal (RN) was the inaugural winner of the Olive Anstey scholarship in 2008 and she is investigating patient outcomes after in-hospital cardiac arrest and the factors associated with survival.

Sally Wilson (RN) was awarded a NH&MRC PhD Scholarship this year, which will enable her to conduct full-time study into indicators of quality nursing care in paediatric nursing.

Linda Coventry (RN) was awarded a NH&MRC PhD Scholarship last year – and she commenced her PhD in July 2008. Linda is investigating gender issues in the presentation, treatment and outcomes of acute coronary events.

The School also has a growing number of nurses/midwives undertaking the Master of Nursing Research and the Master of Public Health (Nursing).

by Judith Finn

**Another nurse about to become a doctor!**

I have much pleasure in advising that Teresa Williams has received notification from the UWA Graduate Research School that her PhD thesis entitled: “Long-term outcomes for patients treated in the intensive care unit (ICU); a cohort study using linked data” has been classified as “Pass with minor revisions” - which is a great result. In addition, she received a number of very positive comments from the Examiners.

Teresa is a critical care nurse researcher at RPH - and her PhD was supervised jointly within the UWA School of Population Health (Prof Judith Finn and Prof Matthew Knuiman) and the School of Medicine and Pharmacology (Clin A/Prof Steve Webb and Clin Prof Geoff Dobb).
Achievements: Awards!

Faculty Student Awards

A number of undergraduate prizes were presented at the Faculty Prize Award evening. These included two SPH Health Prizes for Excellence in Public Health which was awarded to Sarah Stone for achieving highest aggregate mark in Public Health 201 and Public Health and Health Care Systems 202; and to Claire Taylor for highest aggregate mark for any two of the following units: Foundations of Epidemiology 206, Health Research Design 205, and Introductory Biostatistics 207. The CDJ Holman Prize For Excellence In Public Health (4th Year Prize) was awarded to Renae Fernandez. The Faith Stewart Book Prize in Health Sciences was awarded to Caris Jalla. Finally, the prize for the Best Honours Student was awarded to Vanessa Sakalidis.

Another postgraduate prize awarded at the Faculty Awards evening was the School of Population Health Postgraduate Student Association’s Prize for Academic Excellence in the Postgraduate Public Health coursework program awarded to Revele Bangor-Jones. A Head of School Letter of Commendation was also received by postgraduate course-work student Anastasia Phillips who achieved the highest mark in a core unit in 2008.

Research Stimulus Package Awards

In late 2008, Prof Matthew Knuiman announced a series of prizes as part of a ‘research stimulus package’ which are aimed at both rewarding and stimulating research activity in the school.

The Outstanding Grants Performance Prize is to recognise research excellence; it is awarded to lead responsible investigators for any NHMRC/ARC Project/Discovery Grant won in last round with a rating 6. The 2008 Prize was jointly awarded to Prof D’Arcy Holman and Dr Min Zhang for their NHMRC grant entitled: Green tea polyphenols and cancer prevention: use of population controls and biomarkers to elicit causal pathways. The grant totalled $913,289 and was ranked Level 6.

The Outstanding Peer-Review Publication Prize is awarded to the first author of a peer-reviewed journal article with highest Impact Factor published by a Level A/B staff member. The winner was Dr Alison Reid for her paper published with Jane Heyworth, Nick De Klerk, and Bill Musk in the International Journal of Cancer, 2008:122; 2337-2344 (Impact factor 4.555).

Dr David Preen, Graduate Research Coordinator presented the Postgraduate Student Association’s Prize for the student who made the most contribution to the formal and informal activities of the School. This prize was awarded to Louise Stewart and was officially awarded at the April Faculty Prize Award evening.

D’Arcy Holman - Citizen of the Year

The Staff Citizenship Award is to recognize a good citizen in the School of Population Health, one who has made altruistic contributions and effort devoted to helping others and helping the School overall to be more efficient, productive and a good place to work/study.

The winner of the 2008 Award was Prof D’Arcy Holman. He was honoured as someone who consistently contributes to the School by taking on time-consuming corporate duties while at the same time carrying a full teaching load, an above average research supervision load, without any dent in his already impressive research publications output and successes in winning NHMRC and other grants, and whilst still making service contributions outside the University.
Congratulations!

Congratulation to Annemarie de Vos who graduated in March. Her family was very happy too...

...although apparently the ceremony was a little long...

If you look closely you may see a couple of other familiar faces. Huge congratulations to Karin, Max and Caroline!

Many thanks for Karin Ljung for the great photos!
Consumer and community participation in health and medical research

A training workshop for researchers on involving consumers and the community

Anne McKenzie, SPH Consumer Advocate, is running a consumer and community participation in health and medical research workshop in April. Anne is a leader in Australia in this field and has recently joined the NHMRC Council as Consumer/Community representative. As many of you know there is, for good reason, an increasing argument for consumer/community input in research and slowly the NHMRC grant applications process is increasing its requirements in this regard.

Thanks to the efforts of D’Arcy, Anne and others, SPH has been at the forefront of this development in Australia and it is important that as many senior SPH researchers as possible are trained in the ‘how and why’ of consumer and community participation. There are 12 places available for SPH researchers on April 22 so get in quick.

Workshop details:

A series of pilot workshops are being offered to researchers and PhD students at The UWA School of Population Health (SPH) and the Institute for Child Health Research (TICHR). The pilot workshops will inform the development of a training package for researchers on the ‘how and why’ of involving consumers and the community in research. The training package is being developed in response to queries from researchers and students on practical ways to start involving consumers and the community in their research.

Facilitators

Anne McKenzie and Bec Hanley (see over for facilitator information).

Aims

- Raise awareness of the contribution consumers and the community can make to research when involved as active partners.
- Identify and address barriers to consumer and community participation.
- Equip researchers with an understanding of ways to start involving consumers and the community as partners in their research work, and to develop good practice.
- Encourage and support researchers and students who have an interest in consumer and community involvement in research and/or a role in supporting existing participation initiatives.

Learning outcomes

Following the workshop it is intended that participants will:

- Be able to identify why and how consumers and the community can contribute to research.
- Have an awareness of consumer and community perspectives and experiences on being actively involved in research.
- Have an awareness of researchers’ perspectives and experiences of working with consumers and the community.
- Have knowledge about organisations that are working towards increasing consumer and community involvement in research activities and the support and/or help these organisations can provide.
- Start to consider how the theories and examples of good practice covered in the workshop can be utilised in their own research.

Format

The courses will be conducted in a workshop style. They will be interactive and aim to provide a stimulating learning environment for all who take part.

At the end of the workshop participants will be asked to complete an evaluation form to provide feedback on the format and content.

About the facilitators

Anne McKenzie has worked as the Consumer Advocate at The University of Western Australia’s School of Population Health and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research since 2004. The key task of this position is to increase and support consumer and community participation in health and medical research.

Anne is involved as a consumer advocate in the following community areas as:

- A current member and consumer representative for the Health Consumers’ Council of WA and the immediate past Deputy Chair of the Council’s Board of Management.
- A senior consumer representative for the Consumers’ Health Forum of Australia on the NHMRC Council, and serves as a consumer representative on national e-health and quality use of medicine committees.
- A member of the Cochrane Consumer Network, the consumer arm of the Cochrane Collaboration.
- The female lay member on the Silver Chain Nursing Association Human Research Ethics Committee.
Bec Hanley is a consumer advocate in the United Kingdom where she has spent the past twelve years working to promote the involvement of people who use services in health care and health research in the United Kingdom.

She was the director of the INVOLVE Support Unit for five years – which is a unit funded by the Department of Health in England to promote and support public involvement in health, public health and social care research (www.invo.org.uk). During this time she worked in partnership with people who use services, and professionals, to develop policy and practice on involvement in research. She is the lead author of INVOLVE’s acclaimed Involving the Public in NHS, Public Health and Social Care Research, now in its second edition.

Bec now works with a variety of organisations in the United Kingdom to promote and support consumer and community participation in health services and health research. These include the Department of Health, the Medical Research Council and a range of voluntary organisations. She is co-director of a company called TwoCan Associates (www.twocanassociates.co.uk)

Please note: the workshops are not about recruiting research participants but will encompass the principles outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council and Consumers Health Forum of Australia’s Statement on Consumer and Community Participation in Health and Medical Research.

All workshops were oversubscribed in record time. Due to this popularity, two 2-day workshops will be offered in Summer School in Week 3. Information will be on the SPH website shortly.

**Winter and Summer School 2009**

SPH will be running both Winter and Summer Schools on the Nedlands Campus in 2009 with 9 units and 2 workshops on offer. This year only one of these will be available in June with the rest taking place in November/December, but there will be more Winter School units available in 2010.

**Winter School**

**Monday 22nd - Friday 26th June**

Epidemiology and Control of Communicable Disease
PUBH8761
Prof Phil Weinstein and A/Prof Angus Cook
5 day course - available for 6 points credit

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**Summer School 2009**

**Week 1**
**Monday 23rd - Friday 27th November**

Aboriginal Health
PUBH8755
A/Prof Marion Kickett
5 day course - available for 6 points credit

Introduction of Data Management and Analysis using SPSS
PUBH8774
Prof Judith Finn and A/Prof Alex Bremner
2 day course - available for 2 points credit

**Week 2**
**Monday 30th November - Friday 4th December**

Introductory Analysis of Linked Health Data
PUBH8785
Prof D’Arcy Holman and A/Prof David Preen
5 day course - available for 6 points credit

Economic Evaluation of Health Care
PUBH8801
Prof Liz Geelhoed
5 day course - available for 6 points credit

**Week 3**
**Monday 7th - Friday 11th December**

Advanced Analysis of Linked Health Data
PUBH8802
Prof D’Arcy Holman and A/Prof David Preen
5 day course - available for 6 points credit

Clinical Epidemiology
PUBH8757
Prof Judith Finn and Prof Ian Jacobs
5 day course - available for 6 points credit

**Week 4**
**Monday 14th - Friday 18th December**

Health Informatics
PUBH8784
A/Prof Keith Lui
5 day course - available for 6 points credit

Fundamentals of Genetic Epidemiology
PUBH8742
Prof Lyle Palmer and Dr Pam McCaskie
5 day course - available for 6 points credit

**Enrolments**

Enrolments for all units are now open, please see the website for details and online enrolment information. If you have any queries, please see Di Valli for more information.
HSA news

Welcoming of 2008 Graduates

The 2008 Health Science graduates were congratulated and welcomed by the Health Science Alumni (HSA) at a sundowner in the School of Population Health courtyard.

Graduates from the class of 2008 came to meet and chat with other graduates from all year groups, including members of the HSA Committee. Matthew Knuiman (Head of School), Liz Geelhoed (Deputy Head of School), Jane Heyworth (Sub Dean Health Science) and Louise Stewart (Lecturer) were there to represent Health Science staff.

On this evening, the HSA website was also launched by Jane Heyworth. The website contains information on what the alumni does, how to become a member, upcoming events, and the HSA terms of reference. The alumni website is: http://www.meddent.uwa.edu.au/alumni/health

The sundowner also marked the 1st birthday of the HSA since its launch and the president, Pippa Robb, acknowledged the work of the committee and thanked all graduates and staff for their support of the HSA events so far. Keep your eyes out for our next events: the Health Ball on May 22 and the second of our Lecture Series which will be combined with the Annual General Meeting for the HSA, where committee elections will be held, this is earmarked for June 2009.

Top right, L to R: Rudey Pillay, Kendall Hutchinson, Tom Moreton, Adrian Koh.

Middle right: Jane Heyworth launches our website.

Bottom right, L to R: Myra Robinson, Jen Girschik, Louise Stewart.
Are you a Population Health Researcher who uses Data Linkage?

We need you for an international study!

The International Health Data Linkage Network aims to foster collaborative projects that show the value of data linkage applications or those that improve the quality of data and linkage methods.

We are seeking Australian population health researchers who are interested in collaborating with researchers in Canada, New Zealand and the UK to perform an international health data linkage study.

What health study is performed is up to you. Do you need to replicate your local data linkage study on an international scale? Do you need to increase the power of your study by knowing what is happening in other countries?

Your ideas are needed and welcomed.

If you would like to participate or for more information, please email: Emma.Fuller@health.wa.gov.au, Director of the International Health Data Linkage Network www.ihdln.org
During my recent visit to Nigeria, I travelled to Katsina city, close to a Nigeria-Niger border. The visit was planned to say hello to former students and staff, as well as reacquaint myself with the rich culture of the Hausa people. I worked as an infectious diseases physician in Zaria (220 km from Katsina) between 1990 and 1996.

One of my former students at the National TB & Leprosy Training Centre is currently a Primary Health Care Coordinator at Jibia Local Government Area, north of Katsina city. He is ‘blessed’ with three wives and five children, so far.

The highlight of my visit to the Katsina central market was my observation of the marketing skills of an ‘alternative medicine’ salesman whose concoctions seemed to cure everything, and probably included an anti-ageing snake oil! On my last day in this vibrant city, I was pleasantly surprised to be clad in traditional robes and honored as a ‘resident’ of Katsina - the Hausas have a way of making most visitors feel special!

by Niyi Awofeso

D’Arcy and Min in collaboration with Zhejiang University

Min Zhang and D’Arcy Holman with Zhejiang University research collaborator Professor Xing Xie, visiting the Zhejiang Orient Development Tea Company just out from Hangzhou.

Min Zhang and D’Arcy Holman at the Zhejiang Women’s Hospital Molecular Laboratory, China, with Lab Director, Professor Feng Ye, and a coworker.
What I did on my holidays'

Escaping the Christmas chaos this year, I went to an even hotter region and spent a month in Cambodia and Vietnam. Two countries side-by-side but greatly different in culture, history and politics, they were a real learning experience, particularly from an Ecology and Health perspective... seeing a man fishing in a canal with raw sewage being directly dumped in it, being eaten alive by mosquitoes... Mainly a sightseeing (and of course, shopping) group trip, I learned more about responsible tourism, visited a number of schools to help teach English, ate wonderful food in locally owned community restaurants and gleefully shopped in fairtrade shops.

We celebrated Christmas (couldn't get away from it after all, even in a Buddhist country) in a family’s house in Cambodia. New Years was celebrated twice: in Phnom Penh on New Year’s Eve in a funky boat-nightclub which was followed by a 5am bus trip to Ho Chi Minh City, where they were still celebrating from the night before so we celebrated again.

Highlights of the trip were Angkor Wat, and Bayon, My Son, boating in Halong Bay, wandiering in Hoi An, massage-by-fish (“Dr Fish”), great food, shopping in fascinating markets and stores, and the amazing friendliness particularly of the Cambodian people.

Not lowlights but profoundly disturbing were Tuol Sleng S21 and the Killing Fields of Cambodia and the officers hospital and Cu Chi tunnels of Vietnam, the latter used in the ‘American War’. Also disturbing were the deep-fried tarantula, BBQ snake and stir fry with ants which I got to try. All educational albeit for different reasons.

Visitors to SPH

Professor Neville Owen

Professor Neville Owen, Director of UQ’s Cancer Prevention Research Centre (CPRC) was hosted by the Centre for the Built Environment and Health (C_BEH) during his visit to Perth for the Heart Foundation’s ‘Weighing Up Our Future’ conference held in Fremantle in March. Professor Owen is an internationally recognized physical activity researcher and one of the ‘fathers’ of the physical activity and public health research field in Australia. While visiting the C_BEH, he outlined his group’s future direction, which will have a focus on sedentary behaviours, as an independent risk factor for obesity and diabetes. Through his work with the AusDIAB project, Professor Owen’s team has access to both self-report and objective data (accelerometers) which is being used to show strong relationships with hard health endpoints. C_BEH’s PhD student, Jacinta Francis and CPRC’s Dr Takemi Sugiami, are currently collaborating on a project examining the impact of the quality of public open space on physical activity and mental health.

By Lisa Bayly
Visitors from the East...side of the UK

During March and April 2009, Jenna Panter and Andy Jones have been visiting the Centre for the Built Environment and Health (C_BEH) from the School of Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, England. The School of Environmental Sciences is one of the largest and most successful interdisciplinary science departments in Europe, and houses an active research group undertaking work exploring the manner by which characteristics of the social and physical environments may act to influence the health of the public. Jenna and Andy both have a particular interest in the environmental determinants of physical activity and obesity. They have worked with the UK Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) to examine the relationship between provision of urban green space and physical activity. They are currently collaborating with researchers at the Medical Research Council Epidemiology Unit in Cambridge on an Medical Research Council funded project, 'SPEEDY', investigating the social and environmental determinants of physical activity and bodyweight in over 2000 local schoolchildren. Jenna is also currently studying for her PhD which is examining the environmental and social influences on active travel behaviours in both children and adults.

Jenna and Andy have been visiting C_BEH to exchange information, ideas, and also to explore the potential for longer term research collaborations. Coming from an environmental background, they have particular interests in working with computer mapping datasets to characterise the features of built environments that may promote or deter particular health behaviours, and they hope to work with C_BEH researchers on the rich data they are currently collecting on the city of Perth and its environs.

Visitors from Singapore

As a result of the data linkage workshops Professor Holman carried out in Singapore last year, a delegation from the Ministry of Health in Singapore visited Perth to see how the WA data linkage system operates and how the various government and academic research and evaluation groups make effective use of the system.

Emma Fuller coordinated the three day visit which included a workshop at the WA Data Linkage Unit and meetings with health data custodians, epidemiologists and the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee at the Department of Health; a visit to the Centre for Population Health Research at Curtin University; and a meeting with Professor Fiona Stanley and ARC students at the Telethon Institute of Child Health Research.

Prof D’Arcy Holman hosted a lunch for the guests followed by a meeting with Assoc Professor David Preen and staff from the School of Population Health.

Finally the visitors enjoyed a tour of the UWA main campus provided by Tour Leader Vicky Gray.

Members of the delegation included:
Dr Mabel Yap, Director Health Services Research and Evaluation
Mr Tong Ming Shen, Director Health Information Division
Dr Chow Khuan Yew, Deputy Director National Registries Diseases Office
Mr Lim Shih Hsien, Deputy Director (Information Security) Ministry of Health
Dr Kung Jian Ming, Medical Officer, Health Services Research and Evaluation

By Margaret Mathews
Special Journal Editions with a focus on the Built Environment

Active living research is a growth area internationally and becoming more important with growing concerns about the obesity epidemic. In 2007, the US National Cancer Institute in Washington DC hosted a two day workshop entitled ‘Measuring the Built and Food Environment’. The aim of the workshop was to review the field’s progress to date, to provide direction for the future and to stimulate further progress in this area. The workshop brought together leading active living researchers from all over the US, as well as a number of researchers from the UK and Australia, including Prof Billie Giles-Corti from the Centre for the Built Environment and Health. The meeting’s discussion was stimulated by a series of ‘state of the art’ papers, followed by a series of workshops, that have now been published in a special issue of the American Journal of Preventive Medicine Volume 36, Issue 4, Supplement 1 (April 2009) titled Measurement of the Food and Physical Activity Environments - Enhancing Research Relevant to Policy on Diet, Physical Activity, and Weight. It is worth a read for anyone interested in this emerging field and wanting an overview of the ‘state of the art’ and future directions.

Undertaking research that can be translated into policy and practice is a focus for the NHMRC and other funding bodies. A key to research translation is asking policy-relevant questions, which is a focus of a recently published special issue of the Journal of Public Health Policy titled Connecting Active Living Research to Policy Solutions. Professor Billie Giles-Corti (Centre for the Built Environment and Health) was a guest co-editor of this special issue which features an article by Professor Rob Moodie, Chair of the Preventative Health Task Force. In his article, Professor Moodie explores how researchers can expand the influence of their research and in so doing, influence policy. Copies of Professor Moodie’s article can be downloaded free-of-charge from the Journal of Public Health Policy, available on the Active Living Research website http://www.activelivingresearch.org/resourcesearch/journalspecialissues.

Good news for C_BEH

Sponsorship - Working together for healthy communities

The Centre for the Built Environment & Health recently joined forces with LandCorp in a three year research partnership that will provide a greater insight into the influence of planning and design on the health of urban communities.

Prof Billie Giles-Corti said, “there are a number of synergies that have been identified between the Centre’s research and the work being undertaken by LandCorp’s Design and Sustainability Unit in the planning of their developments”.

Social Committee news -Pop Goss

Recent events: Easter BBQ

Great success with the BBQ- and everyone pitching in! Good cooking boys :) Many thanks to Peta for the emergency gas bottle run, we couldn’t have done it without that. We hope everyone had a good time. We did!

Massage

The Monday Morning Massage seems to be going well and is certainly a good way to start the fortnight. The booking sheet can be found in the shared drive ‘Elmer’ under the ‘Massage’ folder. Treat yourself to a shoulder massage at your desk.

Fundraising

The SPH Social Committee (SC) plans a number of events over 2009 including BBQs, morning teas, the Melbourne Cup lunch, the Christmas lunch and a number of charity fundraising events. In order to cater for these functions and to subsidise half the Christmas lunch as per previous years, the Social Committee will be selling charity chocolates.

In keeping with the School’s population health image and aim, we will also offer healthy snack alternatives for purchase, possibilities include fruit, muesli bars and fruit/nut packs. (We will do our best to keep the fruit available but keep in mind that fruit has a shorter shelf-life than does chocolate and other packaged foodstuffs.)

At the end of the year, once all events have been paid for and the Christmas lunch subsidy is made, it is intended that any additional proceeds be donated under the School’s name to a population health-related charity, such as Oxfam for the purchase of bicycles for health care workers or livestock for community food security. We will then start again next year.

So enjoy the range of snacks and buy up, know that the proceeds ultimately go to a great cause.

Your Social Committee are Georgie Dolphin (Chair), Margaret Mathews, Fiona Maley, Steve Ridut, Vicky Gray, Svein Van-Oyen and Ruliang Pan.

Good news for C_BEH

Morning Tea Friday 24th April

The next event organised by your loving Social Club will be a general morning tea. This will take place next Friday 24th April at 10.30am in the Clifton Street tea room. This morning tea is in honour of Anzac Day and will be gold-coin donation, proceeds to go to the Australian Red Cross.
UWA Health Ball
Friday 22nd March 2009
Perth Exhibition and Convention Centre
River View Room

7PM - MIDNIGHT
3 Course Meal & Beverages
DJ Jacob Gray & Proof the Band
Early Bird Specials - $925 for a table of 10

HSA, HSS, PHPS Members and UWA Staff - $98
Non-Members - $105

Tickets on Sale
Tuesday 28th April

Tickets available from:
HSS - Gemma Rosato- rosatg01@student.uwa.edu.au or your HSS year Rep
Staff - Victoria Gray - victoria.gray@uwa.edu.au
PHPS - Fatima Haggar - fhaggar@meddent.uwa.edu.au
HSA - Ania Stasiniska - ania.stasinska@uwa.edu.au
Housekeeping
If you have any ideas on how SPH can be more environmentally neutral, let someone in Admin know.

Surreal picture du jour
(Why there is always one sock missing)

Bad joke du jour
WARNING: Al Qaeda are putting bombs in tins of alphabet spaghetti.
... If they go off
... it could spell disaster.

Youtube du jour
Inspirational
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42E2fAWM6rA
http://www.vimeo.com/1211060
Silliness
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hnnG2op4kY

Cute photo du jour
Kim Chisholm and Gavin McAuley are now officially Mr and Mrs McAuley. A beautiful wedding and a wonderful day were followed by 2 weeks of fun and adventure in the US, ending up with 4 days in Hawaii.

Kim and Gavin are now celebrating the arrival of their new 7 week old baby, a beautiful chocolate labrador puppy 'Dakota'.
Brand new people and birthdays

Introducing Holly
Fiona and Grahame Smith welcomed baby Holly into the world on the 16th of February. Holly Blossom Hunt is a little sister to Ella and Alexander.

Introducing Allegra
Henry, Felix, Marie-Claire and I now have a new little hand to hold. Allegra Emma Hickling arrived on Mar 1st, weighing 3.1kg, 49cm long. All well.

Introducing Hamish
Nick and Katrina Middleton became the proud father of Hamish Terence Middleton at 12:15pm on the 5th of March. Hamish’s birth details:
Birth Weight: 3.415kg (7lb8oz is what I am told the conversion is), Birth Length: 50cm

Happy Birthday Darwin!
Vale Kathie McLure
30/3/1948 - 17/1/2009

Kathie McLure was the inaugural Chair of the Consumer and Community Advisory Council at the School of Population Health. Kathie was a member of the original steering group which was set up in 2005 to oversee the establishment of the Council and the selection of its inaugural members.

Kathie was also very actively and involved in other consumer and community participation activities at the School of Population Health. She willingly undertook roles as a facilitator, presenter and advisor at consumer forums, focus groups and the Involving People in Research Symposium.

Her quiet and dedicated approach and support for greater consumer and community participation at the School of Population Health will be sadly missed.