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

Our Newsletter facilitates communication within the School. We aim to put an issue out every quarter and depend on you to support your Newsletter through interesting, informative and constructive contributions that we will all want to read. Huge thanks to everyone who has contributed so far, the response has been fantastic, and please keep items coming in.

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas, Hanukkah, Santa Lucia Day, Las Posadas, Al Hijra, Kwanzaa, New Year and Valentines Day, and a wonderful holiday break.
All the best for 2010!

Head of School and Deputy Head of Schools’ message

Dear SPH colleagues

How time flies when you are having fun? incredibly busy? It is already time for the final edition of the SPH Newsletter for 2009.

The year 2009 has been a good one in several respects because we have continued to increase levels of teaching and research activity and maintain standards and quality but also very challenging because of the reducing level of operating funds allocated to the School through the university budgeting processes. Unfortunately it looks likes 2010 budget will be the same.

A new Strategic Plan for the School entitled “Partnerships that make a difference” was developed in 2009 following an assiduous effort by the Strategic Planning Drafting Group. It includes 12 strategic initiatives each with 3 to 5 goals, and provides a blueprint for how we will develop in order to continue to be relevant and successful. Special thanks to the D’Arcy Holman and the SPDG, all those who participated in the workshops, and to the various groups who are already discussing and implementing the Plan. In 2010 we will commence a series of approaches with our important external stakeholders to discuss how we can better work together to achieve mutual benefit and in line with our new strategic directions.

There were several new academic teaching appointments in 2009 including Fiona Bull, Yvonne Hauck, Niyi Awofeso, Rosemary Saunders and Anu Rammohan and some existing people secured new or further teaching appointments (David Preen, Rachael Moorin, Christine Smith, Ania Stasinska). All these staff have already made their presence known to students and staff through their energetic approach to teaching duties within the School.

Under the academic leadership of Professor Judith Finn, with planning and business support from Dr Peta Tilbrook, and with frenetic but high quality development of teaching syllabi and materials and systems by Rosemary Saunders and Yvonne Hauck, a new Master of Nursing Science degree commenced at UWA with the first intake of about 25 students in July 2009. This was truly a commendable effort and special congratulations to all those involved in making this become a reality. Natarla Brooks and Olivia Hill have been appointed in December to teach the two Nursing cohorts in 2010. Next year will see the commencement of a second larger cohort and so the prominence of the degree will continue to grow in 2010.

The higher powers at UWA have decided that the new course structures (Future Framework) will be introduced in 2012. For the School this means the phasing out of the current Health Science degree and (hopefully) the introduction of a suite of 8 units leading to a major in population health within the new BSc degree as well as other offerings as broadening units. Special thanks to Jane Heyworth and Colleen Fisher who have led the development of the submission from the School for the new population health major. The restructure also means the phasing out of the current 6 year undergraduate medical degree in which the School teaches in the Foundation of Clinical practice stream in years 1 to 3 and the introduction of a new 4 year graduate medical degree and the role of the School in this new degree is still to be determined. The transition phase will last until about 2014.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the teaching program coordinators, the teaching administrative staff and all the teachers for successful delivery of teaching programs this year.

The research programs within the School have continued to demonstrate good performance with a strong record of publications. The grants success in 2009 was not as good as hoped but there is always next year. Congratulations to all grant winners including a team led by D’Arcy Holman that won a major NHMRC Partnership Grant, the Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Group who won an NHMRC project grant, the Centre for Built Environment and Health led by Billie Giles-Corti that won two Healthway grants, and to newcomer Anu Rammohan who was a chief investigator on a
The Research Committee, chaired by Dr Angus Cook, embarked on a series of efforts to provide more support to early career researchers (special thanks to Lisa Wood for her efforts), oversaw the development of a new Confidentiality of Research Data Policy (special thanks to David Preen), and re-instigated an internal review process for research grant applications.

Special thanks to D’Arcy Holman and others for quick and successful action to reverse the intention by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing to close down the cross-jurisdictional linkage facility and to secure a new arrangement that will enable more speedy access to such data for research projects. Congratulations to research academics Tom Briffa and Anne-Marie De Vos who both secured promotions this year. Special thanks to the PHPS and Nita Sodhi for convening the very successful SPH seminar and workshop series in 2009. The mix of research group presentations and journal clubs, external speakers, research student research proposal seminars, and special research methods seminars was very well received and it would be great to see this successful format continue next year.

The need for increased scrutiny of finances and the introduction of a new nursing course in addition to all the usual administrative functions has meant that this year has also been a challenging one for the administrative team (Peta Tilbrook, Annette Stewart, Diane Valli, Fiona Maley, Denise Bracken, Jannette Barrett). This team do an excellent and professional job managing our affairs and supporting me and Liz Geelhoed as HOS/DHOS and all the teachers and researchers. Thank you admin team.

The Social Committee has been very active this year with a number of very successful functions. They are to be congratulated for some innovative ideas such as the Multicultural Lunch Fundraiser in addition to the usual popular activities such as the upcoming ‘Christmas’ lunch. Social events are an important aspect of life in the School; they provide opportunities for people to mix and get to know each other better, the ‘farewells’ are important in acknowledging the services of people leaving and saying ‘farewell’, and social events help to build collegiality, which is a necessary attribute of a well-functioning workplace. A big thank you to the social committee for their efforts in 2009.

The year 2009 is now almost over and the festive season has begun. Please use this period to have some rest and relaxation, re-discover your family, friends and hobbies, and come back invigorated for 2010. Season’s greetings, best wishes and have a great start to 2010.

Matthew Knuiman and Liz Geelhoed

School Manager’s message: 2009 and where we have been.

Another year ends in a blink, where did all that time go? in a binge of productivity, thats where. The school has done extremely well throughout the year, so I will end our year giving a few facts and noting our achievements.

SPH had 125 staff of which 80 were fixed term or ongoing and 45 are casual. There are 31 males and 94 females [note to oneself - recruit more men].

Unfortunatley, our undergraduate Health Science teaching decreased by 23%, however Medical student teaching increased by 6%. PG Coursework teaching increased by 46%, half of which was attributable to the Nursing coursework units. In addition, we increased our International student teaching % in PG coursework by 20%.

Full time PhD students have increased dramatically by 24% whilst overall research students increased 8%. We have had 5 PhD and 2 MPH students passed with another 6 PhDs submitted and awaiting completions.

This year we started a Winter School with Epidemiology and Control of Communicable Diseases which will move to Spring School in 2010. Aboriginal Health and Food and Nutrition will be taught in Winter School in 2010.

2009’s Summer School was biggest we have had in my time in the school, certainly in terms of units - seven 6pt units, one 2pt unit and two 2day workshops and 210 people attended. Congratulations to everyone involved and special thanks to the Admin team for organising everything. Both Marion and D’Arcy set records for class size, Aboriginal Health had 31 students and Introduction to Data Linkage had 37 students whilst Anne and Bec Hanley taught 43 students in the two Consumer and Community Involvement courses. Great effort!

Our website received a major overhaul this year and here are a few facts - in six months we had:

24,000 visitors, 21,000 from Australia and the rest scattered over most of the world….except Greenland and half of Africa.

The most visited sites for teaching were Summer School, PG Coursework and Master of Nursing Science [well done Fiona because this is what we have been marketing this year!]

The most visited sites for Research groups were CBEH, then CHSR whilst Min’s project on Green Tea had the longest average time spent on a page at 4.51mins.

Our postgraduate students’ profiles are popular too with Rosie Barnes and then Fatima Haggar the top two students sites visited.

Anyway, I hope everyone has a great Christmas and summer break……...Peta
Achievements and Awards in SPH

PhinisheD!!
Anita Furhmann

Anita submitted her thesis this week: Respiratory health and lung function of wind and brass musicians

Wind and brass musicians must inhale and exhale large volumes of air with precise control in order to play their instrument effectively. Musical expression is largely created by control of airflow. Airway diseases such as asthma can impair respiratory function, potentially interfering with musicians’ control of their respiration patterns. It follows that asthma could be a limiting factor in W/B playing, particularly among elite musicians. With reference to musicians’ lung function, there are some data to suggest that pulmonary function is improved in wind instrument playing. In contrast, some research indicates that evidence that wind instrument playing increases strain on the respiratory tract and may be detrimental to one’s respiratory health.

My thesis is examining the following aspects of musicians’ respiratory health: the prevalence of asthma among wind and brass musicians and perceptions of the ways that asthma may or may not impact on performance. I am also conducting a study of wind and brass musicians’ lung function as compared to those who do not play these instruments using a wide range of both established and relatively new measurement techniques.

Although musicians, physicians and researchers have investigated various aspects of musicians’ health for over 100 years, music medicine has only emerged as a distinct field of research in the last 25 years or so. Musicians’ respiratory health has received little attention in the research literature. The prevalence of asthma among wind musicians, as compared to non-wind musicians is unknown. Furthermore, possible impacts of asthma on wind musicians’ practice and performance is largely unreported, except for a few reports of clinical observations. Research to date on the lung function of wind and brass players has given conflicting results and many studies in the field are flawed with methodological problems. Further research is necessary to investigate possible differences between wind / brass musicians and the general population in terms of lung function.

MPH submitted
Jo Granich

This is to let you know that Jo Granich submitted her MPH thesis “Electronic-based sedentary behaviour among children within the family home environment: a descriptive study” and it has been passed. Both examiners rated the thesis as Exceptional or Excellent on almost all criteria.

Jo’s project was supported by a Healthway Project Grant, her supervisors were Michael Rosenberg (now with UWA School of Sports Science, Exercise and Health), Matthew Knuiman (still here) and Anna Timperio (now at Deakin University) and there are two publications from the thesis work.


Granich J, Rosenberg MR, Knuiman M, Timperio A. Individual, social and physical environmental factors associated with electronic media use among children: sedentary behaviour at home (revised manuscript under consideration by Journal of Physical Activity and Health).

Please join me in congratulating Jo on this fine effort.

PS. For those of you with children, do no inundate Jo for tips on how to get them away from the screen and physically active outside (you will have to read the papers when they come out!).

Matthew Knuiman
Excellence in Research
Judith Finn

As those of you who read the August 2009 SPH Newsletter would know, Judith Finn was nominated for the Nurses and Midwives Board of Western Australia Award for Excellence in the category of Researcher of the Year. I have been advised that Judith did indeed win this award in recognition of her outstanding and sustained excellence to clinical research. Judith has worked very hard in building an education and research program in nursing at UWA and this award is very much deserved. Please join me in congratulating Judith on this award.
Matthew Knuiman

Research Development Awards Results 2010 Round

Dear All

On behalf of the Research Committee and the School, I would like to congratulate the following successful recipients of the Research Development Awards for 2010.

Anna Kemp
Does Treatment of Age-Related Macular Degeneration with Intravitreal Injection of Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Inhibitors Increase Arterial Thromboembolic Events?

Dick Saarloos
Measuring the Impacts of the Built Environment on Health in Older Adults

Lisa Wood
Childs Play - Exploration of the Factors that Encourage Play in Neighbourhood Parks & Playgrounds

Well done all!

To those of you who were not successful this time around - our commiserations - but hang in there!

Best regards,

Angus Cook

Britsh Medical Association Book Awards 2009

Richard Riley

Please join me in congratulating a member of our graduate research student community, Dr Richard Riley, who has been awarded the prestigious First Prize in the ‘basis of medicine’ category of the British Medical Association Book Awards for 2009. Details of Richard’s prize are at:


I would like to acknowledge Richard’s outstanding achievement in winning such a highly competitive award.

D’Arcy Holman

WAMSS Award
Helena Iredell

The WA Medical Student Society awarded Helena Iredell the pre-clinical teacher of the year and she was presented with a plaque at the medical dinner.

HSS Awarded Most Innovative Faculty Society

Congratulations to the undergraduate Health Science Society (HSS) for winning the award for the Most Innovative Faculty Society for the second time (also in 2007), announced at the 2009 Cruickshank-Routley Memorial Guild Ball on Friday night.

This award recognises innovation in response to the changing needs of students and HSS won over the ten other Faculty Societies. The prize includes some funding towards future events.

It is a great achievement for these students!
2009 Staff Citizenship Award

Congratulations to Vicky Gray

Good citizenship is defined as 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.

This prize was initiated in 2004 to recognize good citizens in the School of Population Health. Previous winners are Helen Bartholomew (database manager), Judith Finn (Senior lecturer), Gail Earl (Admin Officer), Peta Tilbrook (School Manager), D’Arcy Holman (professor).

The winner receives a certificate from the School, a sum of $250, and their name is inscribed on the Citizenship Honour Board.

The winner of the 2009 Staff Citizenship Award is a staff member who consistently, regularly and voluntarily initiates and assists with many School-wide activities. She does this very professionally and competently, without any fanfare, sometimes with few people actually knowing she has gone to this amount of effort for others, and she does these activities without any expectation or anticipation of acknowledgment or reward. This is true meaning of altruistic behaviour.

Examples of this behaviour include

- Conceptualising and organising the Multicultural Lunch Fundraiser that provided a wonderful opportunity for staff and students to mix socially and celebrate cultural diversity as well as raise funds for an orphanage in India.
- Organising the Health Science Ball for staff, health graduates and the Perth public health community.
- Developing the Social Committee on-line survey and being the designated ‘photographer’ for social activities.
- Initiating and promoting a school walking group and
- Organising food for social activities even to the point of quietly bypassing caterers by buying and preparing the food herself to save the school money!

We often talk of having good role models for our younger colleagues but in this case it is a younger person being the fine role model in demonstrating an exceptional degree of good citizenship behaviour from the moment she joined the School.

If you haven’t already guessed the 2009 Citizenship Award goes to Victoria Gray and she is clearly a very worthy winner of this award.

Ode to Vicky

There was movement at the School, for the word had passed around
That a new addition was on the premises and planned to stay
They joined the wild HOURA group for the sum of a thousand pound
And quickly proved their worth in their own sweet way

There was volunteering for everything, yes the hand was always up
No function, School Ball was too hard as they love a good show
The ‘fairy dust’ was spread on everything by this young pup
Who would venture where no man nor beast would go

This new addition is certainly lots of fun
No technical glitch, high heels or magpie would ever knock ‘em down
Very dedicated to all tasks whether they be work, play or walking in the sun
For all the help and caring we think you deserve a crown!

Thank you Vicky Gray, we think you’re pretty grand!
2009 Jan Watt Memorial Prize for Excellence in Public Health Field research

Congratulations to Gina Wood

This prize is in honour of Mrs Jan Watt, a research nurse and a pioneer in the collection of data from the community for the purposes of epidemiological research, and in recognition of her contribution to public health science and to the development of excellence in field research methods in that area.

The prize is awarded by the selection committee to the person who has demonstrated the most exceptional standard of field work over a period of time, taking into consideration the fostering of a ‘research culture’ within the community by assisting those approached to participate in the research process to have a favourable experience of the process and to be more inclined to assist in further public health research as a result.

It is my pleasure to nominate Ms Georgina Wood for the Jan Watt Prize. Gina joined the School in 2006, and in January 2007 became the project officer for the TRavel Environment and Kids Study (TREK). The TREK study forms the basis of her PhD, which she commenced in 2009.

Gina joined the project team when the TREK questionnaires were being developed and trialled, and the schools were being recruited. Gina inherited a difficult project: it involved recruiting 25 schools across metropolitan Perth, and conducting a survey with nearly 1500 children and their parents; a survey of school principals; and an environmental audit of the neighbourhood surrounding the school. The project proved quite difficult for our team because we had limited experience in working with schools and with children. Moreover, the survey instruments were still being developed and required extensive pilot testing to ensure they were readable to the children (aged 10-12 years). Finally, the project was already behind schedule.

Soon after joining the project, Gina approached the Chief Investigators with a revised study plan for the project to maximise the quality of the study outcomes, yet bring the study in on time and within budget.

After reviewing her proposal, the CIs accepted her recommendations and, as she predicted, a high quality study was implemented and the data collection was completed on time, and within budget. In the first six months of 2007, Gina commenced conducting the pilot studies of the questionnaire, data collection protocols and resources.

On her own initiative, she used this information to establish a TREK Protocol. Working with children and in schools was a new area of research for our study team. Ms Wood consulted with 3 teachers to establish a series of class control methods that would assist in the classroom where the data were collected. She trained all of those who worked in the field with the use of these methods.

For a young inexperienced study team, these methods proved invaluable in working in the schools. The importance of this methodological work is reflected in the fact that she had a poster accepted on this topic, which she presented in Banff Canada in 2008. She will be writing this up as a chapter of her thesis and is planning to publish it in the future.

To be awarded the Jan Watt Prize, the successful nominee must also be some who contributes to fostering a research culture, and Gina is someone who is also outstanding in this regard. Throughout the course of the TREK project, Gina recruited and trained a host of Health Science and other students who worked on TREK as work experience students. Moreover, she has assisted a number of other PhD students who have been conducting major data collections and provided them with information and resources to facilitate their research.

Apart from her commitment to excellence, Gina has a strong commitment to service and contributed in many ways to the establishment of our new Centre and is an excellent corporate citizen within the School. She has organised a number of school-wide events including Walk Week activities.

Finally, Gina is an excellent communicator and has presented TREK research results at a number of conferences.

Now that data cleaning is complete, she has just completed writing the first TREK report for our Industry Partner, the Department of Transport. She will now commence the process of writing manuscripts as part of her PhD.
Throughout the management of TREK, Gina regularly demonstrated her commitment to producing the best quality research possible, and thoughtfulness in terms of devising and revising protocols that produced the highest quality data. It is on this basis that I have no hesitation in recommending her for the Jan Watt Prize for Excellence in Public Health Field Research.

**Grant success - Cancer Council**

On behalf of the Research Committee, I would like to inform you of some further grant success.

Liz Geelhoed was one of the CIs on a team which was awarded a Cancer Australia Grant


Well done Liz on a great achievement!

**Grant success - National Heart Foundation**

David Preen was on one of winning teams for a National Heart Foundation grant:


Well done to David!

**Grant success - NHMRC Partnership**

Congratulations to D’Arcy and his team in the achievement of a NHMRC partnership grant:

Holman, CDJ, Emery JD, Saunders SM, Walter FM, Moorin RE, Auret KA, Preen DB, Bulsara MK.

Partnership Intervention Trial to Redress Treatment Delay and Improve Outcomes in Rural Cancer Patients.

Partnership Project Grant 2010-2014. Total budget $2,216,262 ($1,965,262 cash).

Well done to all on this successful application!

**Grant success - Healthway**

C_BEH has been awarded two significant Healthway research grants that will commence in 2010:

The built environment and health: associations across the life course (3 years - $323,668)

Dick Saarloos took the lead on the preparation of this research grant. The study involves a collaboration with the Health Department of Western Australia. Data on lifestyle factors and self-reported health and well being will be obtained from the Health and Wellbeing Surveillance System administered by the Department of Health. This will be linked to the Western Australian Data Linkage System which provides access to a comprehensive set of objectively measured health outcome, and Department of Planning’s GIS data that will provide objective measures of the neighbourhood. The study team members who contributed to this grant include: Dick Saarloos, Matthew Knuiman, Kimberly van Niel, Steve Zubrick, Lisa Wood, Hayley Christian and myself. Associate investigators include Nick Middleton, Alison Daly (Health Department of Western Australia), and Osvaldo Almeida.

Long-term follow-up of Liveable Neighbourhoods: research into practice (5 years - $750,000)

This 5-year study involves a long-term follow-up of the RESIDE study participants and a continued collaboration with the Department of Planning. RESIDE II will examine the longer-term health impacts of urban design and the home and work environment, on eating, sedentariness, walking, cycling and physical activity; weight status and mental health. The last two years of the grant involves working with the Heart Foundation, Department of Planning and Urban Design Centre to turn the findings into recommendations for policy and practice. The study team members who contributed to this grant include: Matthew Knuiman, Kimberly van Niel, Fiona Bull, Lisa Wood, Steve Zubrick, Sioban Hickling, Hayley Christian, Trevor Shilton and myself. Max Bulsara, Nick Middleton, and Gina Wood are associate investigators. Ruth Durack (Urban Design Centre) and Charles Johnson (Department of Planning) are the practitioner investigators who in the last two years, will assist in formulating recommendations and contributing to the research translation phase.

These two grants come hot on the heels of two former student awards:

Dr Ryan Falconer being awarded the Sinclair, Knight Merz John Winton Medal for Technical Excellence and Innovation for a chapter published in a recent CSIRO book entitled Transitions based on some of his PhD work with RESIDE. Ryan worked on the RESIDE project from 2005-2008 and was awarded his PhD last year from Murdoch University.

Dr Gavin McCormack, who completed his PhD with us in 2007, being awarded the Canadian Bickey Fellowship Prize for being the top ranked applicant for a Fellowship awarded by the Canadian Institute for Health Research in 2009.

All of these grants and awards are testimony to the hard work of all our team. The time investment and that intellectual
Promise of Things to Come:
WA Team led by SPH takes honours in first NHMRC Partnership Project Round

A collaborative WA team, including SPH researchers, David Preen, Rachael Moorin, Max Bulsara (now Notre Dame) and D’Arcy Holman, has secured a NHMRC Partnership Project grant, entitled ‘A Partnership Intervention Trial to Redress Treatment Delay and Improve Outcomes in Rural Cancer Patients’. The grant is worth around $2 million, with funding from the NHMRC of $1.2 million combined with generous matching cash contributions from the Cancer Council of WA’s Crawford Rural Cancer Research Initiative, the WA Cancer and Palliative Care Network and the WA Department of Health, all of which are known as the ‘partner agencies’.

Improving the poor outcomes in Australian cancer patients living in rural and remote areas is a national priority, but there is as yet insufficient evidence on how the problem is best tackled. In this project, partner agencies that deliver cancer services in non-metropolitan WA will team up with experienced researchers from SPH, the UWA School of Primary, Aboriginal and Rural Health Care and their academic collaborators to develop a ‘best prospects’ package of interventions targeting the community, medical and other health practitioners and patients with cancer in the bush; and to evaluate the effectiveness of the package using a rigorously designed randomised controlled trial.

NHMRC partnership projects are a new concept that brings research, policy, service and community agencies together into a team, breaking down the ‘them and us’ thinking that has sometimes existed in the past. The main focus of the scheme is to support intervention research and evaluations concerning the delivery and outcomes of health services. NHMRC’s partnership concept is exciting because it signals a new direction in the research funding environment and one that SPH, armed with its new strategic plan, should be well equipped to engage.

The key to positioning SPH to win more partnership grants in the future is to nurture strong ties with prospective industry partners and also other academic groups with complementary skills to throw into the mix of skills and resources. It is especially important that the partner agencies see the research topic as one that is important enough to them to invest substantial matching funds, because in the first round the NHMRC required a matching commitment that approached a 1:1 ratio. Securing this level of buy in from industry partners combined with a multidisciplinary and well-credential research team appear to be the two key factors for success.

Against these criteria, SPH can be proud of its first successful NHMRC Partnership Project application. Not only was the grant one of the largest in the country, but the strength of the application was acknowledged by the selection panel’s primary spokesperson scoring it with the perfect 7/7 and the final assessment report stating that “The team is to be congratulated on an exemplary proposal for a partnership grant scheme.” We should build on this success in future rounds of the scheme and the time to start preparing through interactions with likely industry partners is now.

D’Arcy Holman

...effort that goes into writing grants is huge. To everyone who contributed - no matter how large or small - a huge thank you. Particular thanks to Dick Saarloos who took the lead on the Life Course project, Gina Wood who had a huge role to play in thinking through the logistics for the RESIDE II grant, and to Lisa Bayly who did such a fabulous job in weaving us through the grant submission process - attending to every detail, following up with all the investigators to collate all of their contributions (in a firm, but nice way J) and successfully finalizing our submissions.

A great team effort - well rewarded. Thank you to everyone. Champagne and nibbles are duly provided.

Now for the hard work - A strategic planning meeting will be held in November to work out how we will get all the work done!

Billie Giles-Corti
Achievements and Awards in SPH

Student Publication Award

Hayley Christian
First author of peer-reviewed article in journal with highest quality by a postgraduate student

Hayley Christian (nee Cutt)


APA Scholarships

The SPH students who were successful in gaining PhD scholarships in the recent APA/UPA round were as follows:

Sarah Ward (supervisor Lyle Palmer)
Sonia El-Zaemey (supervisor Jane Heyworth)
Sheridan Howard (supervisor David Preen)
Edwards, Nicole (supervisor Billie Giles-Corti).

Congratulations to all!

Teaching Internships 2010

Louise Schreuders and Sandra Louise

Please join me in congratulating Louise Shreuders and Sandra Louise who are both successful recipients of teaching internships in the School for 2010. This competitive scheme encourages doctoral research students to develop teaching skills in their fields.

We welcome Louise and Sandra to the teaching team and we look forward to working with them.

Hackett Scholarship

Jen Girschik

Congratulations to Jen Girschik, a Health Science graduate, who has been awarded a Hackett Scholarship for her PhD studies - this is a very prestigious PhD Scholarship award the Scholarships Committee to the top-ranked applicants in the annual application round. These scholarships provide a stipend of $30,000 pa plus a travel allowance of up to $5,000.

Jen will undertake a study on: Sleep duration, disturbances and quality as risk factors for breast cancer and will be supervised by Prof Lin Fritschi (WAIMR) and Assoc Prof Jane Heyworth.

Teaching and Learning Grant

Jane Heyworth, Rosemary Saunders et al.

A team including Jane and Rosemary have been awarded a T & L grant of $20,000 for their application on “Implementing Interprofessional Learning in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (FMDHS)”.

The team is led by Sandra Carr (Education Centre) and includes Sue Miller (Education Centre), Pam Nicol (SPACH), Paula Johnson (SMP), Laurie Foley (Pod Med), Jane Heyworth (HealthSc), Paul Ichim (Dentistry), Denese Playford (RCS) and Rosemary Saunders (MNursingSc).

Summary: When health professionals are working well in inter-professional teams, health care has been shown to be safer, more effective, more patient-centred and more sustainable. Interprofessional Education (IPE) that enhances interprofessional practice is high on the agenda of state and federal health agencies. The Faculty has recently formed an interest group that is exploring ways to embed IPE into curricula. The group is currently drafting a curriculum framework for Interprofessional (IPL) in the FMDHS; revising graduate learning outcomes for the MBBS, Dental, Podiatry, Health Science and Nursing courses, and looking to implement a range of IPL learning experiences for the Faculty’s students in both current and future courses.

This grant application aims to support the actions of the interest group by assisting in the completion of two projects:

1. Develop and pilot IPL scenarios focused on building capacity of senior students from across the Faculty to work in interprofessional teams through the use of simulation.
2. Support a senior student overseas elective with students from different disciplines across the faculty.
Awards

Paula Hooper
Paula Hooper received a $2500 UWA Convocation Travel Award to enable her to travel to Canada and the USA for the 3rd International Physical Activity Conference and the Congress on New Urbanism in May 2010. While in the UK visiting family, she will also be visiting Cambridge University to find out more about the iConnect project. The iConnect (Impact of Constructing Non-motorised Networks and Evaluating Changes in Travel) study aims to measure and evaluate the changes in travel, physical activity and carbon emissions, which is an ambitious UK-wide project that will transform local travel in 79 communities.

Gavin McCormack
Dr Gavin McCormack was successful in obtaining a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Fellowship during the October 2008 competition. He was also awarded a Bisby Fellowship prize for being a top rank candidate within this competition. The prize is in honour of Dr. Mark Bisby for his commitment to CIHR and the health research community. The fellowship will allow Gavin to continue his postdoctoral training which will involve research examining the influence of individual and area level socioeconomic status on the relationship between the built environment and neighbourhood-specific physical activity among adults. This research is part of a larger CIHR-funded project known as EcoEUFORIA (Economic Evaluation of using Urban Form to Increase Activity) which is being undertaken in Calgary, Alberta (Canada) and will: 1) examine the relationship between the built environment and physical activity; 2) evaluate the costs associated with creating walkable neighbourhoods; 3) determine the effect that changes to the built environment might have on physical activity and health services use; and 4) compare the cost-effectiveness of creating environments supportive of physical activity relative to other forms of health promotion. Professor Alan Shiell is principal investigator of EcoEUFORIA and Gavin’s postdoctoral supervisor.

Ryan Falconer
Dr Ryan Falconer was awarded the Sinclair, Knight Merz John Winton Medal for Technical Excellence and Innovation for a chapter co authored with Professor Billie Giles-Corti titled ‘Smart development: designing the built environment for improved access and health outcomes’ published in a recent CSIRO book Transitions: pathways towards sustainable urban development in Australia based on some of his PhD work with RESIDE. Ryan worked on the RESIDE project from 2005-2008 and was awarded his PhD last year from Murdoch University.

Governor of WA named first patron of C_BEH

The UWA Centre for the Built Environment and Health Advisory Board enthusiastically and unanimously supported the appointment of the Governor, Dr Ken Michael AC, as the inaugural patron of the Centre.

The Governor has a long standing history of understanding urban projects and the impact of the built environment through his former roles as Commissioner of the Main Roads Department and as a long serving member of the WA Planning Commission.

He also has a very close affinity with the University having served as its Chancellor prior to his appointment as Governor of Western Australia in 2006.

‘The Advisory Board members were keen to approach the Governor about being Patron of the Centre because of his knowledge of the role of the built environment and his appreciation of the emerging health issues confronting contemporary societies’ said Evan Jones, Chair of the Centre’s Advisory Board.
Changing of the guard
Busselton Health Study – Graham Maier leaves, Kashif Mukhtar arrives

The Busselton Health Study (BHS) has an impressive collection of health data accumulated from over 15 surveys of Busselton residents commencing in 1966. The BHS group in the School of Population Health is responsible for maintaining and enhancing the database, supporting ongoing data gathering activities from new surveys and further laboratory analyses of stored specimens, and generally facilitating and supporting research analyses of the accumulated data by researchers who have been given access and approval by the Busselton Population Medical Research Foundation.

Graham Maier has been the BHS Database Manager since February 2007. Graham came with excellent qualifications and many years of experience in information systems management and database design and development and, although there is a lot of history and complexity to the BHS data collection and the manner it is used, he settled into the role very quickly and smoothly and performed the role very effectively, with the required level of attention to detail, and had a mature and professional manner in all his dealings with the myriad of people involved in the BHS. Graham has decided to leave this part-time position to pursue other interests and Thursday 26 November will be his last day. Please join me in thanking Graham for his contributions to the BHS program and School and wishing him well with his new pursuits.

Kashif Mukhtar, who has worked in the School before, joined the BHS group on 16 November as Database Manager. Kashif has postgraduate qualifications in IT and Computer Science and is currently enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Public Health. He brings many years of experience in design, development and maintenance of database and other information systems to this role and we are extremely pleased to have recruited him to this important position. Please join me in welcoming Kashif back to the School.

Matthew Knuiman

Introducing new Master of Nursing Science academic team members

On behalf of the School I am pleased to advise you of the following staff who are joining the Master of Nursing Science academic team, Natarla Brooks, Olivia Hill and Louise Schreuders

Natarla has joined the School last week and will be working in a combined role of Assistant Professor and Practitioner Scholar.

Olivia has been undertaking the Practitioner Scholar role for the Master of Nursing Science course in semester 2, 2009 and she will be taking on a new role of Assistant Professor (part-time) in 2010.

Louise Schreuders has been successful in obtaining a UWA Teaching Internship position and will be undertaking this role in the Clinical Nursing Skills 2 unit and also continuing with her PhD studies in 2010.

Please join me in welcoming Natarla, Olivia and Louise to their roles in the Master of Nursing Science program in the School and please introduce yourself, say hello to them and make them feel welcome. (Natarla is in office G.06, Olivia in G.04 and Louise in G.08A of the Clifton St building.)

Rosemary Saunders
A strategic plan for an organisation confirms the reasons for the existence of the organisation and describes its vision for change over the short and medium term. The plan helps to guide strategic development of the organisation if it is thoughtfully developed and is embraced and adopted by all members of the organisation. As identified in the 2007 Review of the School, the School is in many respects at a crossroads, needing fresh new directions in research, an enhanced community and industry engagement, and the whole university is on the verge of fundamental reform of its course structures. Now, more than ever, is a strategic plan with a strong and articulated vision needed to guide the School through the next 5 to 10 years.

As you know, last year the school executive decided that development of a plan should be the responsibility of the whole school and that the primary development role be undertaken by a group that is broadly representative of those likely to inherit the stewardship of the school in the future. This group was known as the Strategic Planning Drafting Group (SPDG) and their brief was to gather and analyse information from a broad range of sources to develop candidate directions for change, conduct consultations within and outside the school, and draft a new plan for 2009-2013. The SPDG was convened in September 2008 by Professor D’Arcy Holman, comprised a group of about 20 staff, was and asked to complete its brief by June 2009. It is a testament to the dedication and commitment of the SPDG that the task assigned to the SPDG was completed successfully and on time. The convener of the SPDG delivered the Strategic Plan 2009 entitled “Partnerships that make a difference” to me on behalf of the SDPG.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone who participated in the development of the Plan especially D’Arcy and the members of the SPDG, all the staff and students who participated in the workshops at which candidate strategic initiatives were debated and votes cast, and the Consumer and Community Advisory Council.

The Plan represents about 8 months of effort by a very large number of people and I congratulate the whole school on a very successful outcome. The School Finance and Strategic Planning Committee considered the plan represented a succinct and clear vision for change and has endorsed the plan.

The development of this Plan signals the beginning of the change process. We must now embrace the task of implementing this plan and bringing about the visionary changes embodied in the plan that will make us a stronger and more relevant academic population health organisation.

A number of structures within the School, such as the Finance and Strategic Planning Committee, Research Committee, Teaching committees, and the Consumer and Community Advisory Council have been asked to put forward ideas on how we can achieve these changes over the next 5 years. I ask you all, individually and in groups, to actively participate in this change process.
SPH in the Media

Anaesthetists pen winning books

Two Professors of Anaesthesia at The University of Western Australia have won prestigious first prizes in the ‘Anaesthesia’ and ‘Basis of Medicine’ categories of the British Medical Association Book Awards.

Emeritus Professor Teik Oh’s book, Oh’s Intensive Care Manual, provides practical, concise information on all aspects of intensive care and enables the user to manage a patient in an ICU setting effectively without having to refer to large text/reference works or specialised monographs. This full-colour, revised and updated edition reflects the best and most current practice from leading centres in Australia, the UK and Western Europe.

Clinical Associate Professor Richard Riley edited the book, Manual of Simulation in Healthcare. Published by Oxford University Press, it is a guide for medical educators grappling with the problem of rapidly acquiring the skills and techniques required to implement simulation into established curricula.

Simulation is a relatively new way of teaching health professionals at all levels, allowing students to practise diagnosis, medical management and behavioural approaches in the care of acutely ill patients in a controlled environment.

Associate Professor Riley was instrumental in the development and operation of a purpose-built medical simulation and skills centre – the Centre for Anaesthesia Skills and Medical Simulation – at UWA’s Clinical Training and Education Centre.

For more information, follow these links: http://www.bma.org.uk/library_medline/2009bookcompetitionwinners.jsp?pag#Anaesthesia

New chapter for the Busselton Health Study

MEDIA ALERT Monday, December 7, 2009

A new chapter in one of the longest running epidemiological research programs in the world was announced on December 9.

Western Australian Health Minister Dr Kim Hames, in conjunction with the Busselton Population Medical Research Foundation Inc, will announce the new four-year study at an event at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

The internationally respected Busselton Health Study commenced in Busselton in 1966 at the instigation of a visionary local general practitioner, Dr Kevin Cullen. With the support of The University of Western Australia, volunteer health specialists and the co-operation of virtually the entire Busselton community, the initial study was the basis for an ongoing series of surveys. These surveys have established

News snippets

The Pacific Basin Consortium for Environment & Health’s 13th International Conference was held in Perth on 20th-22nd November 2009. Peter Franklin was on the Organising committee for this successful conference and Jane Heyworth was a key note speaker in the Water session as was Phil Weinstein.
A new career path

If current predictions are to become a reality, the desperate shortage of nurses in Australia is likely to worsen as the population grows and ages.

The government has put a number of measures in place to combat this, such as increasing undergraduate university places and cash incentives for former nurses to return to the workforce. Employers and nursing bodies are also doing their part by offering lifestyle incentives, including flexible hours, and scholarships.

Now universities have joined the fight. Their solution: postgraduate study.

Earlier this year, the University of Western Australia launched its master of nursing science (entry-to-practice), which allows people to switch career paths without having to do another undergraduate degree.

Accredited by the Nurses and Midwives Board of WA, at completion of the course graduates will be eligible to apply for registration as a nurse in Western Australia.

It offers another avenue into nursing, says Professor Judith Finn, chair in nursing research in the School of Population Health, which is conducting the course in partnership with Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

"Historically anyone with a degree who wanted to be a nurse would have to go back and do another bachelor's degree. This offers people an opportunity to get a master's degree as well as registration as a nurse," she says.

The curriculum has been modelled on the Melbourne University master of nursing science, which is now in its second year of running.

"Talking to Melbourne University, they have graduates from science but also from humanities, business, and accounting (undertaking the nursing degree)," Finn says. "There is sometimes a misconception that you have to have a science undergraduate degree but they have actually found a better indicator is how well the students did in their undergraduate degree, not what they did."

The first cohort of students was made up of 29 men and women from fields as varied as psychology, business, education and biomedical science, and with an average age of 35.

The two-year full-time degree is quite intensive and comprehensive. There are clinical placements in the summer and winter university breaks. There are 800 hours of clinical practice, which is the requirement of the Nurses and Midwives Board of WA.

Most of the clinical practice, including general, medical, surgical, acute care and aged care nursing, would be at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

"It is something we see as a plus because most of the other university nursing courses are traditionally practised in lots of different hospitals and students don't get a sense of belonging to any particular organisation," Finn says.

There had been an increasing recognition that the range of nursing experiences could be gained in a single hospital, which gave the students a more consolidated clinical training, says Finn.

However, students would need to go to Princess Margaret Hospital or Fremantle Hospital for child health placement and to Graylands Hospital for their mental health placement. They would also have three weeks of rural training, which would be run by the School of Primary, Aboriginal and Rural Health Care.

Financial burden has often been cited as a reason why people don't enter into postgraduate study. Alleviating this, 50 federally-supported nursing places have been awarded to UWA for this course so students can pursue the degree without having to pay fees up front.

The places are along similar lines to HECS places, in that students repay the fees at the end of the degree, once they start earning a wage.

The master of nursing science degree follows two other degrees introduced by the School of Population Health last year. They are postgraduate degrees for nurses - the master of public health (nursing), a specialised coursework program within the master of public health, and the research-based master of nursing research, which includes a research thesis and core units in research methods.

Historically anyone with a degree who wanted to be a nurse would have to go back and do another bachelor's degree.

This offers people an opportunity to get a master's degree as well as registration as a nurse.
Having a say in health

Young adults who have been traced by medical researchers over the past 20 years since they were in truth have had their say about the future use of the large database of information they have provided.

Organisers of the internationally acclaimed Raine Study at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research recently held a workshop for 20 of the participants, now aged between 17 and 29, in which they asked them to review their health priorities.

Since 1989, one of the biggest and most comprehensive of its kind, the study has gathered an extensive database on demographic, developmental, psychological, physical and many other factors that the lives of almost 5000 WA children and their families.

"The database has become a unique source of information for identifying and testing theories about the complex causes of health and disease and has led to pivotal advances in areas such as the role of maternal health, breastfeeding and good nutrition on behaviour and mental wellbeing as well as underpinning research into childhood allergy and obesity.

"Showing amazing insight, the "Raine Kids" as they like to be known, outlined with fines for future research, including mental health — particularly depression and anxiety — addiction, fertility and the influence of genetics.

"Institute director Fiona Stanley said all of the young people had plenty to say, many unexpected.

"Ask the kids and you get really good answers," Professor Stanley said.

They (study participants) did not shy away from knowing what their genetic profiles indicated the risk of future disease.

"It was a unique experience — they are not at all concerned that we have their DNA information — they want it to be used for the good such as finding out how genes and environmental interaction can be prevented or treated against disease.

"They were happy to have this information used even if it would not be helpful to them — but they wanted to know the results in ways that they could understand.

"Institute consumer advocate Anne McLean, who organised the workshop, said the young people, who came from widely varied socioeconomic backgrounds, coincidentally expressed the same mental health concerns identified by experienced public health researchers.

"We were blown away by it — they were very articulate and very thoughtful," Ms McLean said.

"They have no stake to lose about what is important to them and it is not all about sex, drugs and rock and roll.

"They wanted research done on why they are the way they are.

By far their greatest concern was about mental health and factors that contributed to developing it.

"They asked, "Why do two kids from the same family, with the same genetic makeup and environment, choose different pathways in relation to drugs, alcohol, smoking," Ms McLean said.

"They wanted to know whom some of them had had addictions and cravings — and what they thought affected their "behavioral" health on their chances.

"Predicting future fertility was one of the key issues at the Raine Study included the second generation of Raine kids, who were not yet having become parents.

"Talking about individual cyberbullying were more of a concern, but participants said.

"However, interestingly despite an awareness of these vulnerabilities some children had embraced technology and said they preferred face-to-face contact with researchers when being followed up.

"Having been reassured all their lives, participants were keen to see new information they had identified about findings from the study and about themselves, if it would be used to improve their personal health and wellbeing.

"They did not shy away from hearing if their genetic profiles indicated the risk of future disease.

"If personal information was available, they would want to know so they could prepare themselves for the onset of diseases, depression or whatever and wouldn't like to think the Raine Study was withholding information," Ms McLean said.

"Now on the eve of the study's 25th birthday, it is prepared to continue it as long as possible, so the retention of the young participants, all of whom were initially "volunteers" to be research subjects by their pregnant mothers, is vital.

"Some took an innovative scheme for participation, combined with more regular feedback about themselves, which was in strong motivators to their participation.

"Beginning in 1989, when just 13 weeks pregnant, the Raine kids and mothers signed on to the study, designed and conducted by child health researchers at King Edward Memorial Hospital and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research.

"The mothers had regular ultrasound scans to monitor fetal development throughout their pregnancies. As these babies grew into toddlers and then children, they have been repeatedly measured, weighed, tested and studied to build a picture of how parents, siblings, and other children's and the twin years affect health and development.

"Researchers followed them through the childhood and adolescence and the genes that are vital for their upbringing.

"Further follow-ups of both parents and the children were done when children were aged 8, 10, 14 and 17, or more recently, at 17.

"Starting with almost 5000 participants, the study has collected 3500 — a very high drop-off rate.

"The success of the work has instilled plans to set up a subgroup to develop a new generation of health and wellbeing in young people who is vital for their upbringing.ז

Health + Medicine is supported by a grant from Healthway, the WA Health Promotion Foundation, to improve public health, and the Government of Western Australia through the Department of Health, for the provision of public health information. The Telethon Institute for Child Health Research is supported by funding from the WA Health Promotion Foundation through Healthway, and the Australian Medical Research Council, Australia Resilience and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research.
NEW CHAIR APPOINTED TO WA ROAD SAFETY COUNCIL

A public health specialist who is internationally recognised for his expertise will be the new independent Chair of the WA Road Safety Council.

Professor D'Arcy Holman will take up the position with the council in November – he is currently Chair in Public Health at the University of Western Australia's School of Population Health.

WA Road Safety Minister, Rob Johnson, says Professor Holman will help drive the state's "Towards Zero" road safety strategy.

Mr Johnson says road trauma places a huge burden on the community. He says for every death there are about 15 serious injuries which cost about $2.4 billion a year, not to mention the ongoing emotional stress.

Professor Holman will succeed Grant Dorrington who has guided the council since it was established.

Mr Dorrington took on the position at a time when WA's annual road fatality rate was 14.1 deaths per 100,000 people. Last year, the rate was 9.62 deaths per 100,000 people.

"Clearly there is much more work to be done, but road safety is a journey for the entire community and I am confident Professor Holman is the best person to help us meet the challenges ahead," Minister Johnson says.
Why our playgrounds are no fun for children

ELEA POWNALL

...
Not just man’s best friend

BECOMING a dog owner can be good for your health, new research says.

The research, from The University of Western Australia, examined the relationship between dog acquisition and recreational walking and showed that those who acquired a dog increased their recreational walking to a significant 31 minutes per week.

Those with no dog only undertook 12 minutes of recreational walking per week.

Author of the study, Dr Hayley Christian says the reason for the increase is through the provision of motivation and social support for walking that comes with acquiring a dog.

“To put it simply, dogs want to be walked, need to be walked and provide company when being walked,” Dr Christian said.

The research also showed that the increase in overall walking was greater than the increase in recreational walking in the neighbourhood.

Thus it is possible that new dog owners also increased their time spent walking for recreation outside their neighbourhood. For example, walking at a dog beach as well as transport-related walking, for example, walking to the local shops with their dog.

Long-term commitment of dog ownership also showed a significant role in assisting owners to maintain their walking behaviour.

“Currently over half of all adults in Australia do not meet the recommended level of physical activity necessary for health benefit,” Dr Christian said.

“Considering 40 per cent of households own a dog, and with research suggesting dog owners are more physically active than non owners, owning a dog can be significantly beneficial for health and physical activity,” Dr Christian said.

Research showed that dog acquisition was associated with working and having children at home. Those who changed from single to couple marital status were also more likely to acquire a dog.
Heart Foundation feature: Meet Professor Billie Giles-Corti

Professor Billie Giles-Corti is the Director of the Centre for the Built Environment and Health at the School of Population Health, The University of Western Australia. The Centre’s mission is to undertake policy-relevant research that builds capacity and influences planning and urban design policy and practice to create healthy and sustainable communities.

What are some of the interesting projects you have got coming up?

We have recently attracted funding from the Western Australian Health Promotion Foundation, Healthway, for two big new projects. One will examine the built environment across the life course from children through to older adults, and will involve a collaboration with the Department of Health WA, as well as our main industry partner, the Department of Planning. The second grant is an extension of our longitudinal study, RESIDE. This will involve a 6-8 year follow-up of people who are building homes in new housing developments, some of which have been designed according to the Liveable Neighbourhoods Guidelines. This study is quite unique because it involves a large group of people who have moved neighbourhoods and who live in new neighbourhoods that are constantly evolving.

Five years from now, what will be the unique contribution of your Centre?

The vision for our Centre is to work in partnership with a wide range of industry partners outside of the health sector, to help solve urban planning problems to create healthy and sustainable communities. By 2056, it is estimated that Australia’s population will grow to 35 million. The Federal Government is now commencing a debate about the need for a National Urban Policy to ensure that Australia is prepared for this population growth. How do we grow our population and house Australians in healthy and sustainable communities? This involves thinking about how to achieve environmental, community and social sustainability, yet at the same avoiding unintended consequences. As we move to higher densities to enable more of us to live closer to shops and services including public transport, how should we build density in order to maximise positive outcomes and minimise harm? What needs to be built between those buildings to produce the best result? The vision for our Centre is to provide evidence that can contribute to this debate, informs good decision-making and minimises unintended consequences.

In relation to Built Environment Research, what are the unanswered questions for the future?

There is growing evidence that walkable neighbourhoods increase walking for transport. Walkable neighbourhoods have connected street networks, higher density development and mixed use planning. There are a number of questions that remain answered:

1. Does walkability work for all population groups or does it differ across the life course?
2. What environmental factors best predict walking for recreation?
3. What are the thresholds required to maximise outcomes and minimise harm. For example, how much density, how much mixed use, how much green space is required etc?

In terms of research translation, what is the relevance of your research to policy and practice? And how do we better ensure the pick-up of these?

We hope our research is very relevant. The way we try to ensure that our research is relevant is that we work closely with policy-makers and practitioners to ensure that it is. The Centre has an Advisory Board which is made up of our key stakeholders. In addition, we work closely with a wide range of practitioners and policymakers who have input into our research. This is the best way of ensuring that research is translated – work in partnership with the people who have the potential to translate the research into policy and practice. It takes time, but is the best way of doing ‘policy-relevant’ research.

With your key role in the built environment and health, do you practice what you preach (walk, cycle etc)?
I'm certainly not perfect (I'm embarrassed to admit). However, most weekends, I try to cycle to the supermarket and fill my bicycle panniers with my grocery shopping. When I travel to the city on the weekend I travel by train. I try to cycle to work two days per week — it takes almost the same amount of time as driving anyway (not sure why I don't do it everyday!).

Finally, I swim and walk at the beach three times weekly — what a beautiful environment (I wish I lived close enough to walk)! I live near beautiful Kings Park which is a huge natural bushland that provides me with access to a beautiful restorative environment in which I can walk or run — I try to do this once at least once a week. I'm very privileged and am spoilt for choice for optimal environments in which I can be active, and I live close to high quality and frequent public transport and lots of shops and services. The fact that I don't walk or cycle more, makes me realise that it's not just the environment that influences people: policies that make it easier to use alternatives to driving and harder to drive; my own attitude to making the time and getting organised to use alternatives, and social norms that frown on me for using my car, are also all important to bring about change.

If you could successfully advocate for Governments to do two things to advance physical activity in Australia, what would they be?

1. Create more accessible neighbourhoods: i.e., access to shops, services and public transport, footpaths, cycle paths with limited exposure to traffic, and traffic present being slowed down.

2. Comprehensive interventions targeting people, places and opportunities for people to be active together.

http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/Professional_Information/Lifestyle_Risk/Physical_Activity/AusPAnet/ausPAnet_Article_Commentary_3/Pages/default.aspx

Be active 09

be active ‘09 combined the 2009 Australian Conference of Science and Medicine in Sport, the Seventh National Physical Activity Conference and the Sixth National Sports Injury Prevention Conference. It was held in October this year in Brisbane (fondly known as Bris-Vegas) and the conference brought together key researchers and practitioners of all facets of these fields — from elite sports performance to community participation in physical activity and their impact on individual and public health.
Children’s book targets health in the Kimberley

An endemic health condition, scabies, affects up to 70 per cent of pre-school aged children in remote Indigenous communities and is the subject of a new children’s picture book to be launched at Cable Beach Primary School on December 14.

The book was developed by Courtney Hodder, a health science student from The University of Western Australia.

Courtney worked with WoundsWest as part of her final year industry practicum to develop the illustrated book and an interactive CD for children aged five to eight years that simplifies the lifecycle, signs and symptoms, spread, management and prevention of scabies.

Scabies is a serious public health problem that is transmitted by direct contact with infected persons and clothing. It is found in endemic proportions in many remote Indigenous communities with a prevalence rate of up to 50 per cent in children and 25 per cent in adults. Crusted scabies, a rare infestation by Sarcoptes scabiei, has a 50 per cent mortality rate at five years.

Courtney Hodder said she chose the project because she thought it could make a difference by stopping the cycle of scabies in remote communities.

“The Boab Tree was chosen as one of the central characters of the children’s book because of its uniqueness to the Kimberley Region. Likewise, football was chosen because of its popularity. We thought children would relate well to these themes,” she said.

The project was initiated by WoundsWest, a collaborative partnership between WA Health, Curtin University and Silver Chain which aims to improve wound assessment, prevention and management across Western Australia.

WoundsWest Education Project Officer Juliet Keaton said the overall aim of the book is to improve the quality of life in Indigenous communities. “It is hoped over time the effect of the book will be to reduce the stigma of scabies by educating kids to recognise that they have scabies and how simple it is to be free of scabies,” she said.

The book has been illustrated by Cable Beach Primary School students and the characters on the interactive CD have been voiced by members of the year two class. David Wirrpanda, who has written the book foreword, acknowledges scabies as a condition that can lead to long-term illness, which affects a person for life. Communities, he says, need to work together to get rid of scabies.

The book and CD is to be distributed to all primary schools in the Kimberley. The interactive CD is expected to be available for download from the WoundsWest website in the new year.
Graduates choose WA Health

The Department of Health's 2009 Graduate Development Program began in February with ten graduate officers embarking on their careers with WA Health.

This year's graduates have qualifications in a range of disciplines, including Health Science, Commerce, Behavioural Science, Psychology and Health Promotion. The graduates will complete a series of rotations through different areas throughout WA Health. Last year's graduates celebrated the completion of the 2008 program at a ceremony held in February. Of the nine graduates who began the program last year, seven are continuing their careers with WA Health while the remaining two graduates are taking time off to travel and pursue further study. Director General Dr Peter Flett congratulated last year's graduates and acknowledged the importance of the program in the development of leadership skills. "Developing leadership at all levels of the health system for the future is vital to the long-term success of WA Health," Dr Flett said. "WA Health's Graduate Development Program is going a long way towards developing that leadership potential."

For more information about the 2010 WA Health Graduate Development Program,
Visit www.graduate.health.wa.gov.au

Student Project Snapshots

In response to this finding Maggie drafted a submission for the Town of Port Hedland to Healthway for funding to develop a new project addressing the lack of signage. Maggie also submitted an article to the Australian Journal of Health Promotion.

Yandara Thavara and Liron Murphy (photo bottom left) are fourth year CU physiotherapy students who spent 3 weeks at CUCHH in Geraldton. Their project explored access to cardiac rehabilitation (CR) by Aboriginal clients in Geraldton and was co-supervised by GRAMS and WACHS Midwest physiotherapy. A major barrier found related to limited communication between tertiary services in Perth and local services. This finding will inform future strategies to increase uptake of CR services in Geraldton. The outcomes of Maggie, Liron and Yandara's self-directed projects demonstrate the value of rural student placements not only to local communities but to students personal and professional development.
C_BEH honours their Honours students

The Centre for Built Environment and Health hosted the two SPH Honours students in 2009; Rudey Pillay and Ruth Young. It is sometimes said that honours can be more demanding and intense than a PhD – in barely 8 months Ruth and Rudey designed their studies, got on top of the relevant literature, developed survey tools from scratch, collected and analysed data (not without its logistic challenges!), taught themselves new statistical methods, churned out chapters, and pulled it all together in some snazzy presentations and two substantial research dissertations. Throughout all of this, and even when sleep deprived or data frustrated, they displayed great enthusiasm for their projects and were a pleasure to supervise and host.

In terms of what lies ahead for our intrepid honours students, Ruth was successful in securing a highly sought after graduate position with the Department of Treasury and Finance commencing in January, and Rudey, undaunted by honours, has applied for an APA scholarship to undertake a PhD!

Here is a snapshot of their two projects:

**Rascal Study – Rudey Pillay**

This project was undertaken by Rudey Pillay under the supervision of Dr Lisa Wood and Ms Karen Villanueva. Rudey’s project examined cost and access as potential barriers to physical activity participation in recreational centre settings, among children aged 6-12 years within WA, and was supervised by Lisa Wood and Karen Villanueva.

The prevalence of overweight and obesity have been increasing among Australian adults and children, with those from low SES areas over-represented. Sedentary and inactive lifestyles are related public health priorities. Physical activity opportunities provided by recreational and sporting centres have grown in popularity, in part due to the emphasis on fun and social participation, more so than competition and winning. However, too date there has been little research examining issues of access and affordability of recreational centre activities particularly for children. This study explored recreational centre availability and the participation costs for common team sports, and examined differences between SES groups and geographical location.

The RASCAL study was administered through an online survey; a data collection method that has advantages and disadvantages as Rudey can testify! Key findings will be disseminated to recreational centres in WA and are also of relevance to local government and sport and recreation agencies. A summary of research findings will also be made available on the C_BEH website.

**Lean on Me Project – Ruth Young**

This study explored the relationships and social support networks formed within two playgroups in Perth, Western Australia and was supervised by Lisa Wood and Sarah French. Playgroups are common in Australia but their benefits are often under-recognised or focus mainly on the benefits for children. The Lean on Me playgroup project was unique as it looked at the kinds of benefits adults get out of attending playgroups. The project aimed to understand the overall support functions generated by playgroups, recognising that parenting young children can be a challenging and sometimes isolated time.

The project entailed qualitative interviews and a survey, and social network analysis was used as a novel way to examine the nature of relationships and support networks within a playgroup setting.

The honours project was made possible through an existing partnership that the Centre had with the South Lake Ottey Family and Neighbourhood Centre (the research setting for the Connected Communities Study funded by Healthway). Key research findings have been disseminated back to the relevant stakeholders and playgroup representatives in a user friendly pamphlet developed by Ruth. A summary of findings is available from C_BEH.
Summer School report

It’s been a huge Summer School event for those involved - over 200 students in 10 classes over 4 weeks! Admin will be celebrating at the end of the week so feel free to come by and celebrate with us!

Student scholarships

Hannah Barrington, 4th year BhithSc / BCom student was successful in winning a very competitive ANU summer research scholarship. She will be working on ‘Capacity development in Australia and the Asia-Pacific for the control of emerging infectious diseases’

BHSc Prac Student makes international impact

It’s always fantastic to hear of the many and varied achievements of our students undertaking their health industry practicum. Arriving on our desks recently was an email from a student’s supervisor with the title “WE WON”. This was particularly exciting as the email was from a supervisor in the USA.

Laura Halim, one of our final year Bachelor of Health Science Students undertook her Health Industry Practicum at Harborview Medical Centre, in Seattle. Laura was involved in the Community House Calls programs at the Department of Interpreter Services at Harborview. These programs work to address health inequities among CaLD and refugee communities in King County. One specific project that is run by Community House Calls on which Laura worked - the Somali Women’s Wellness Program - was entered into the 2009 Cooperative Spirit Award of the Seattle Metropolitan Credit Union, the video submission for which was Laura’s responsibility. This awards program attracts entrants from all over King County. Much to the delight of Bria Chakovsky-Lewy, Laura’s supervisor, the Wellness Program won the Cooperative Spirit Shoestring Award. To quote from Bria’s email, “We’ve been awarded $500, our first successful grant!” The prize money will be put to good use to sustain the Wellness Program.

Once again, Bachelor of Health Science Graduates make a difference globally!

Colleen Fisher & Ania Stasinska
Dr Hayley Christian had the honour of being awarded a MARS Fellowship, sponsored by Waltham, to attend the 18th Annual International Society for Anthrozoology and 1st Human-Animal Interaction conference in Kansas USA from 20 – 25 October 2009.

On October 23, as part of the program, there was a special one day dog research symposium titled Research meets practice: Human-animal interaction in obesity across the lifespan. This symposium was shaped by the work that Hayley had undertaken on her PhD on the relationship between dog ownership and physical activity.

An eclectic field of keynote presenters covered topics such as dog walking and physical activity, dog walking as physical activity for older adults, innovative physical activity programs and obesity in children and included renowned Australian expert Professor Adrian Bauman who spoke about the epidemiology of dog walking for fitness and health.

This emerging and exciting field of research studies provided Hayley with a wonderful opportunity to meet a number of international experts and help shape some future collaborations for her post-doctoral work within the Centre. Kansas was a surprising find …. a relatively small (by US standards), beautiful and walk friendly city!

All kinds of delegates attended the Kansas conference!
Visitor to C_BEH
Dr Hannah Badland

During September 2009, Dr Hannah Badland, a post-doctoral research fellow, visited the Centre for the Built Environment and Health (C_BEH) from the Centre for Physical Activity and Nutrition Research (CPAN), Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. CPAN is a multi-disciplinary research team that focuses on investigating the health impacts of nutrition, physical activity and exercise, obesity, and other lifestyle-related diseases across the lifespan.

Hannah’s research expertise lies in investigating the relationship between physical activity and the built environment, with a primary focus of understanding and promoting walking and cycling as modes of transport from a public health perspective. She has much experience in self-report and objective physical activity, travel, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) measures. Currently, Hannah is the New Zealand-based project manager and an investigator for an eight-country international physical activity and built environment study, and is also involved in national and international studies that track travel behaviour, assess air pollution exposure via transport mode, and evaluate the effectiveness of school and work travel plans.

Hannah visited C_BEH to exchange information, ideas and also to explore the potential for longer term research collaborations. Coming from a physical activity background, she has particular interest in working with GIS and GPS to characterise the features of built environments that may promote or deter active transport, and she hopes to work with C_BEH researchers on the rich data they are currently collecting on the city of Perth and its environs. During her three week stay, Hannah wrote a paper with the C-BEH team. If only we could all be that productive!

2009 ISBNPA CONFERENCE

We attended the 2009 International Society for Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity (ISBNPA) Annual Conference held in Cascais, Portugal in June. Cascais (pronounced “Cash – Kysh”) is located about half an hour from Lisbon City.

As a conference city, it was absolutely amazing with beautiful warm weather every day, great food and friendly people. The conference was held at the Miragem Hotel, a five-star venue boasting not only great facilities for a conference but a gorgeous swimming pool overlooking the beach.

Over 600 delegates attended a combination of symposiums, free papers and pre-conference workshops. There was an increasing focus on new technologies to provide more accurate measurement of nutrition and physical activity behaviours – a good sign that the field is progressing. Before the conference officially started, we assisted Professor Billie Giles-Corti and
Dr Frank Van Lenthe (from Erasmus Medical Centre, Rotterdam) with facilitating a pre-conference workshop on conceptualising and measuring the built environment correlates of physical activity. Our workshop was the most popular of the four pre-conference workshops with 28 attendees from a range of different countries. Hosting the workshop was a great opportunity to meet other delegates before the formal conference proceedings commenced.

We also presented papers from our PhD research during the main program. The papers explored perceptions of safety and walking (Sarah) and children’s independent mobility in the neighbourhood (Karen). We received good feedback and interest for both papers as well as lots of questions during question time!

The University of Western Australia, and in particular the School of Population Health, was well represented with Professor Fiona Bull also giving an excellent keynote presentation on international perspectives on population-based approaches to physical activity; and Professor Billie Giles-Corti acting as discussant for a symposium and presenting a free paper on the relationship of walkability and active transport to school. The presentations provided a wonderful forum to meet and network with researchers in similar areas in New Zealand, the UK and other parts of Australia, and to discuss future collaborations.

Overall, the conference was well organised and worth attending. It provided a good opportunity to learn a teeny bit of Portuguese, catch-up with familiar faces and meet new ones too! After the conference, we both enjoyed a few weeks exploring Portugal, Paris, Italy, Spain, London and the Greek Islands… definitely a nice way to experience a European summer!

By Karen Villanueva and Sarah Foster

Travels

Seen in Africa

A zebra crossing...
How to keep your coolth...

And proof that cats will sit wherever they like (cat owners will be familiar with this behaviour)
Thanks to Louise Stewart for the virtual safari.
The Consumer and Community Advisory Council update

Comings and Goings

The Council has continued to meet in 2009 and during that time we have both farewelled members and welcomed new members.

The year started with the sad loss of our inaugural chairperson Kathie McLure. Kathie’s ongoing contribution to the work of the Council has been missed. Barbara Daniels, who has been involved since the Council was established in 2006, has very capably stepped into the role of interim Chairperson.

In June, Hilary Rumley finished her term as a community member on the Council. Hilary has made a very lively contribution to the Council. Hilary has also made a very valuable contribution as a steering panel member to research being conducted in the School on catastrophic injury. Liz Buckton from the Cancer Council WA also finished her time on the Council. We thank you both for your contribution.

New members who have recently joined the Council are:

- Cheryl Rugdee (Health Consumers’ Council)
- Anne Cordingley (SCGH Community Advisory Committee)
- Anne Atkinson (WA Dept of Health Ethics Committee)
- Sandy McKeirnan (Cancer Council WA)

Lorraine Powell and Ian Hill have also been reappointed for a second term to the Council.

We welcome you all and look forward to working closely with you all in the coming years.

Strategic Planning

During 2009 the council was fortunate to be involved in the development of the School’s Strategic Plan. This started earlier in the year when the community member of the Council took part in prioritising the goals for the Strategic Plan. Consumer and community participation was prioritised as one of the Strategic Initiatives for the next five years. The Council met in October with several senior teaching and research staff to put forward ideas on implementing this initiative. The meeting generated many great ideas which will be incorporated into planning for next year.

2010 Grant Applications

If you are submitting grant applications in 2010 please remember that the Council has community members with a wide range of skills and interests that may be helpful in developing your plans for consumer and community participation.

Please contact Anne McKenzie (consumer advocate) if you would like to make contact with Council members.

Consumers have a say about medication safety

The seniors’ consumer panel has been providing advice on medication safety and chronic illness to researchers working on two NHMRC funded projects being led by D’Arcy Holman and Jon Emery (General Practice). The consumer panel has met 12 times with Jon Emery, Caroline Bulsara and Anne McKenzie to discuss the many and varied issues that have been raised during the life of the projects.

(Photo top R: Anne Cordingley, Liz Geelhoed and Vicky Gray)
(Photo bottom R: Matthew Kniumann, Barbara Daniels)
D’Arcy Holman has also hosted a series of integrative workshops where consumer, researchers and other health professionals have discussed the research findings. (Picture above - left to right back row: Jon Emery, Bill Morris, Mike Watteau, Thankam Abraham, Dorothy Broun-Barton, Hope Alexander, Ruth Kershaw, Anne McKenzie. Left to right front row: Beth Solich, Caroline Bulsara, Beatrice Hitt, Ellen Dzienisz)

The unexpected ‘by-products’ of consumer participation

During ongoing discussions and meetings with the consumer panel a serious safety and quality issue has been highlighted, that is, medicines being dispensed with non-specific dosing instructions such as ‘Take as directed by the Dr’ or ‘No specific instructions check with Dr if unsure’ and the use of Latin acronyms such as ‘BD’.

The consumer panel (and many other health consumers) feel it is easy to forget instructions given by the Doctor during a consultation where many issues will be discussed. The consumer panel also consider that non-specific dosing instructions on medicines are a major safety and quality issue that has the potential to contribute to seniors being hospitalised for an adverse medicine event.

In August a consumer panel member, Hope Alexander and Anne McKenzie were interviewed by Norman Swan on Radio National’s Science program to highlight the issues. Consumers and health professional from around Australia mad contact about this ongoing issue which had been raised many times but no changes to this practice had been implemented. (Picture R – left to right Hope Alexander, Norman Swan, Anne McKenzie).

In December, the consumer panel and researchers met with key stakeholders from government and professional bodies to discuss strategies to raise this issue with their peak bodies. It is the intention of the consumer panel that this issue will take a national focus and eventually lead to the practice of non-specific dosing instructions on medicines being considered as poor practice and eventually ceased.

We would like to sincerely thank the Panel and the Health Consumers’ Council staff for their contribution and ongoing commitment to the research projects:

Mrs Thankam Abraham
Ms Hope Alexander
Dorothy Broun-Barton
Mrs Ellen Dzienisz
Ms Beatrice Hitt
Mrs Ruth Kershaw
Mr Bill Morris
Mrs Beth Solich
Mr Bill Solich
Mr Mike Watteau
HSA News

This year has been another busy one for the UWA Health Science Alumni!

In July we held our second lecture series event A Conversation with Rob Bransby (Managing Director HBF Health Funds) in conjunction with our first AGM. Rob spoke to the audience about his varied career path which led to his role at HBF. He also opened the floor for debate around the big issues facing HBF and the Private Health Insurance industry in today’s challenging environment. (Including answering the very important question of what he did to Ted!)

During the AGM four new members were elected to join the Committee for the 2009/10 term. Welcome to Adrian Koh (2008), Kendall Hutchinson (2008), Lara McDonald (2004) and Sam Gray (2008).

In August the HSA assisted the Health Science Society with recruiting industry representative and key note speakers to come along to the Careers Breakfast held at the Parmelia Hilton, in 2009 the key note addresses were delivered by Dr Tarun Weeramanthri (Executive Director, Public Health Division, WA Health) and Dr Jo Clarkson (Director, Health Promotion, The Western Australian Health Promotion Foundation). The Breakfast was a great success with 33 industry representatives from approximately 20 different organisations. The feedback received from the representatives was very positive and they enjoyed meeting so many of the undergraduate students. Comments included “I thoroughly enjoyed the event and meeting up with Health Science students. They are certainly a very bright and interested group” and “Great opportunity to meet students loved every minute of it and met some wonderful future employees” . If there is someone in the industry that you believe the students would benefit meeting or if they would like to meet some of the undergraduate students (think potential Practicum students or employees) please send us an email to hsa@sph.uwa.edu.au.

During the year the HSA put together a team for a quiz night run during WA Sexual Health Week by HepatitisWA and the Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Program (Department of Health), it was interesting to see the two teams come at almost polar opposite ends of the winners list! The Steak & Bowling night held at Rosemount Bowls was also lots of fun for those who attended!

To cap off another busy year the Committee held Christmas Drinks for the Health Science graduates and friends at The Garden in Leederville in early December. With almost 50 attendees this has been one of our most popular events to date. The evening provided an opportunity to catch up with old classmates and also make some new networks.
Since the launch of the Health Science Alumni in April 2008 we have grown to over 70 members and have worked hard to organise both social and professional development events as well as promote employment opportunities, courses and seminars. If there is anything you would like to promote through this network please contact us on hsa@sph.uwa.edu.au. We have a few new ideas for 2010 so watch this space!

Best wishes for the festivus!
Ania Stasinska

HSA Careers Breakfast:
Social Club 2009 in Pictures

- Multicultural Lunch
  - $70 raised for Balmalti Children's Home in India

- $200 raised

- Melbourne Cup Lunch

- RSPCA Cupcake Day

- SPH Footy Tipping

- Carry a Can to Work!

- Food Bank
Cancer Council
$410 raised

Easter BBQ

Health Ball

Dog Food for Shenton Park Dogs' Refuge

Raffle for Stirling Women's Centre

SPH Wishing Tree
Over 65 gifts donated to the Salvation Army

Walking Group
Fridays 4pm
Pop Goss - SPH Christmas Lunch - TODAY!!!!

Due to the popularity of last year’s Christmas festivities, this year we will be holding the SPH Christmas Lunch at the UniClub again.

We will be presenting our wishing tree gifts to the Good Sammies representative at 12.15pm, as she is unable to stay for lunch. We’re aiming to have everyone seated and merry by 12.00pm.

It’s been a while, so in case you’ve forgotten, SPH Christmas Lunch looks a little like this:
Medical Afflictions

OF THE

Cartoon World

Parkinson’s Disease  Anorexia  Amphetamine Addiction

A.D.D.  Gigantism  Senile Agitation  Narcolepsy

Sexual Addiction  Violent Mood Swings  Napoleon Complex  Severe Lisp
New People

Introducing SuperKal

Gavin and Elizabeth become the proud parents of a very special baby boy, Kalel.

Congratulations to Elizabeth and Gavin...and keep up the great work, Super Kal.

After Elizabeth’s membranes ruptured a month ago, low fetal growth, 4 hospital admissions, 18 days of hospitalisation, 12 days of confinement at home, 6 visits to the emergency department, bleeding, 3 days of contractions (not BH), 2 hours of labour, half an hour of ‘pushing’ (with NO pain relief),... Kalel was born. Good work, Elizabeth! Elizabeth was discharged after only one night and is fit and well.

Weighing in at 1.495 kg, Kalel claimed the top spot in the Neonatal ICU. Then learnt to breathe in a day, and moved to Nursery 2 in his Fortress of Solitude. Since then, he has doubled his birth weight and he and his parents are doing very well.

Then:

and now:
Introducing Vala

Kristjana Einarsdóttir’s daughter, Vala, was born on Monday 26th October.
Congratulations to Alison Griffith

Dear Friends,

We’ve returned as Mr and Mrs Smith! It’s been a fantastic few weeks and I really don’t think it’s stopped since you gave me such a lovely send off back in the middle of September. Thank you very much for great lunch that you organised for me leaving SPH, the beautiful and plentiful food, the great company and the merry cheer. Thank you also for your kind presents, the pretty champagne flutes, candle and candle holder. The lovely album you also gave to us is eagerly awaiting some photos and hopefully it won’t have too long to wait! Thanks too for the lovely cards and thoughtful messages you sent.

The wedding, lead-up and post celebrations all went in a flash, but we have so many happy memories. I’m attaching a few photos here to give you a flavour of the Wedding Day. It may be best not to look too closely at number two... just kidding, they all received a special lesson on how to sit correctly wearing a kilt!! From the Monday before the wedding until we left for Glasgow to fly to Croatia for our honeymoon on the Sunday, the festivities didn’t stop. With all the Aussies arriving (34 in total!!) there was much sightseeing, kilt fitting, ceilidh dance practising and of course whisky tasting to be done. I don’t think my mum’s kettle sat idle for a minute that whole week- thought you’d be impressed by that Georgie ;-) The locals were absolutely charmed by the Aussies and vice versa, so by the time the wedding arrived everybody felt like they’d known each other forever! Dan and I were so thrilled and we really did have the happiest of days.

Hope all is well with you and you are enjoying the warmer weather, quite different to when we left before the wedding.

Very best wishes,

Alison (Smith!)

Ps I hope I haven’t missed anyone off the list, please pass on if you think I have. My new-old email is alison_griffith@hotmail.com
**Joke du jour**

The big bad Wolf said “I’ll huff and I’ll puff and I’ll blow your house down.”

The little piggy said “Get lost or I’ll sneeze on you...”

**Website du jour**

http://www.cracked.com/article_15670_p2.html

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dslU3B0W3TMs&feature=player_embedded#t=126

**Youtube du jour**

http://www.boingboing.net/2009/11/30/surprised-kitten-is.html

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sxqz7-CGlc4

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**In this comic:**

A man is hugged by a bacterium.

**Bacteria are too small to see with the human eye.**
Konrad Jamrozik was a very prominent person in the history of public health at UWA and there are many of us who know him as friend and/or colleague. Sadly, Konrad has been diagnosed with advanced sarcoma and is seriously ill.

Konrad commenced his medical training in Adelaide and completed it in Hobart in 1978 before going to Oxford to do a doctorate on GPs and smoking cessation advice. He then spent a year or so in PNG before returning to Australia and taking up a post as Research Fellow in Clinical Epidemiology at UWA joining people like Michael Hobbs, Judith Straton, Bruce Armstrong, and Fiona Stanley who led the academic Public Health Unit which was part of the Department of Medicine at that time. He was at UWA from 1984 to 2000 and during that time rose from Research Fellow/Lecturer to Professor. During his time at UWA he was a leader in the education of medical students (he designed and conducted a trial of problem-based learning for medical students) and public health students (he taught a number of epidemiology-type units in the postgraduate program) and had broad research interests in epidemiology, health promotion and public health. He was a leader of the cardiovascular epidemiology group within the Department/School and was passionate about smoking control (he is a self-described part-time activist but full-time advocate for tobacco control) and cycling amongst other things.

He left UWA in 2000 to take up the Chair in Primary Care Epidemiology at Imperial College, London, then came back to Australia in 2004 as Professor of Evidence-based Health Care at the University of Queensland and then in 2007 completed the circle with his move back to Adelaide to be Head of School of Population Health and Clinical Practice at the University of Adelaide.

Konrad’s talents, passion and achievements are well known and admired both nationally and internationally. He has held many important and influential positions in tobacco control including Chair of the Australian Council of Smoking and Health and Chair of the National Heart Foundation’s Tobacco Control Committee and has made numerous submissions and contributions on tobacco control that have influenced policy, practice and legislation. His 30 years of anti-smoking efforts were recently recognised by the award of the Nigel Gray Medal at the 2009 Oceania Tobacco Control Conference and he also won the PHAA (WA) President’s Award for 2009.

Konrad lives in North Adelaide with his wife Lesley and their 2-year-old twins. He is currently undergoing treatment and pain management for his sarcoma. The UWA School of Public Health has sent best wishes and a basket of goodies to his home to let him and his family know we are thinking of him during this difficult time. The School has also submitted a proposal to formally recognise his contributions to postgraduate public health education at UWA through a MPH student prize in his name.
Holiday advice:
Take some recreation leave over summer!

Now, as our HOS said at the whole of School meeting, go out and do something healthy and fun.

- Re-discover your family and friends
- Do something relaxing or exciting