



School of Health Sciences



Photo courtesy of Darren Grattidge

GRADUATE RESEARCH NEWS

December 2014

1

Issue 2

With our great pride and excitement, we would like to extend our warmest congratulations to **Alexandra King** and **Daniel Terry** who have successfully completed their PhD study.

- Alexandra's thesis entitled "*Food security and insecurity in older adults: A phenomenological ethnographic study*", applies perspectives from phenomenological ethnography to fulfil the research aim – to explore experiences of food, meals, and eating among community-dwelling rural older adults, in order to develop deeper understandings of food security and insecurity in older adults. Alexandra's supervisors were **Dr Peter Orpin**, **Ms Kim Boyer** and **Dr Jess Woodroffe**.
- Daniel conducted a study on "*Health and wellbeing of international medical graduates (IMGs): Acculturation into the Tasmanian rural and remote context*". His research utilised mixed methods approach to examine the experiences and challenges of IMGs living and working in rural and remote areas of Tasmania. The study showed that while IMGs adapted well to rural Tasmania, it also identified emerging discourses and important factors such as further training and employment which impacted their desire to stay. Daniel was supervised by **Dr Quynh Lê** and **Dr Ha Hoang**.

Both Alexandra and Daniel will graduate in December 2014. Congratulations to Alexandra, Daniel and their supervision team.

On publication and research networking matters, congratulations to the following achievers:

- **Esther Ashworth-Briggs**, recently presented a paper at the Australian Health & Medical Research Congress in Melbourne entitled, '*Imbalance between MMPs and TIMPs in aqueous humour from primary open angle glaucoma patients due to increased levels of TIMP1, TIMP2 and TIMP4*'.

Welcome

The long-awaited December is now here with us. This last month of the year symbolises a wonderful blend of creativity, vitality, and enthusiasm, not only existing on the land but more noticeably in our graduate research garden, where research seeds have emerged into significance. Our students have spread their wings to fly proudly and higher over the research seasons.

Let's enjoy their stories in this newsletter.

Good news from our students

Summer is smiling at our doorstep signalling many promising events ahead. Like blooming flowers, the rural health graduate research welcomes the arrival of summer and wants to share with you the fruitful stories of our students' activities and achievements.

- **Sara Asteljoki** (PhD Candidate) presented her PhD research Factors that influence resilience in children whose parents are members of the Australian Defence Force at the 2014 Australasian Military Medicine Association Conference in Sydney in October.
- **Briony Campbell** (PhD Candidate) received a Tasmanian AAG Branch bursary to attend the Australian Association of Gerontology National Conference held in Adelaide in November. She also presented a poster entitled "*Transition to emergency department from residential aged care*" at the 13th National Conference of Emerging Researchers in Ageing, also in Adelaide in November.
- **Thao Doan** (PhD Candidate) had her abstract entitled "*The relationship between health literacy, social support and the self-management of community dwelling rural older adults*" accepted for oral presentation at the 15th International Academic Conference, 14-17 April 2015, Rome.
- **Kelly Edwards** (PhD Candidate), School of Health Sciences nursing BN and first class Hons graduate, 2013, is the recipient of a University Medal in 2014. Kelly is currently an APA recipient and PhD candidate. She presented her Hons research this year at an international conference and a manuscript from the study has just been accepted for publication in *Contemporary Nurse*. Kelly was supervised by **Prof Kim Walker** and **Dr Jed Duff** at the Darlinghurst Campus.
- **Diana Godwin** (PhD Candidate) had her joint paper entitled "*Dental practitioner rural work movements: A systematic review*" published in the *Rural and Remote Health*, Volume 14, Issue 3, Online.
- **Laura Keith** and **Esther Ashworth Briggs**, PhD students working under the supervision of Dr Tony Cook, were both chief investigators on a successful grant application to the Clifford Craig Medical Research Trust for \$78,100. The study is titled, '*Towards a patient-specific stem cell model of the blinding eye disease glaucoma.*' Chief Investigators are **Dr Tony Cook**, **Dr Alex Hewitt**, **Dr Alice Pebay**, **Laura Keith** and **Esther Ashworth Briggs**.
- **Laura Keith** (PhD Candidate) also recently presented a poster at the joint meeting of the Australasian Society for Stem Cell Research and the International Society for Cellular Therapies in Lorne, Victoria entitled, "*Directing the differentiation of human pluripotent stem cells towards the glaucoma-affected trabecular*



meshwork cell lineage."

- **Alexandra King** (PhD Candidate) presented a paper at the 47th Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) National Conference, to be held in Adelaide from Wednesday 26 to Friday 28 November 2014. Alexandra's paper will detail the key findings from her PhD research and is titled "Food security and insecurity in older adults: A phenomenological ethnographic study".
- **Carey Mather** (PhD Candidate) presented two papers at the recent Health Informatics Conference. The papers were titled: "*Usability of a virtual community of practice for workforce development of clinical supervisors*" and "*Mobile learning: A workforce development strategy for nurse supervisors.*"
- **Peter Santangelo** (PhD Candidate), received the "Runner Up" award at the 40th ACMHN International Mental Health Nursing Conference in October. Peter presented his PhD Research at the Conference and aside from the plaque Peter also received \$500. This is a highly competitive award. The conference was attended by more than 600 participants from around the globe.
- **Jackie Stuart** (PhD Candidate) had her joint paper "*Utilisation of oral health services provided by non-dental health practitioners in developed countries: A review of the literature*", published in the *Community Dental Health journal* pp. 1-10. doi:10.1922/CDH_3465Hoang10
- **Daniel Terry** (PhD Candidate) had his joint paper entitled "*Social capital among migrating doctors: The 'Bridge' over troubled water*", published in the *Journal of Health Organization and management*, Volume 28, Issues 3, pp. 315-326.
- **Melissa Terry** (Masters Candidate) and Daniel Terry (PhD candidate) had their book chapter entitled "*The globalisation of health care and health care professional acculturation*" published in "*Acculturation psychology, processes and global perspectives*" edited by Jack Merton, Nova Science Publishers.
- **Lorraine Walker** (PhD Candidate) had presented her paper entitled "*Interprofessional education: An overview of the rural context*" at the NIPNET Conference in Stockholm, Sweden, 2-3 October 2014. Lorraine also spent a day at the University of Western Scotland to look at their Simulation centre in the context of Inter-professional Learning (IPL) and at Leicester with experts in IPL.
- **Joanne Yeoh** (PhD Candidate) has her abstract entitled "*Food security of migrants in a regional area of Australia: A qualitative study*" accepted for oral presentation at the 15th International Academic Conference, 14-17 April 2015, Rome, Italy. Joanne also had a paper entitled "*Challenges of food security for migrants living in a regional area of Australia: Food availability, accessibility and affordability*" published in the *Journal of Food Security*, Volume 2, Issue 3, pp. 72-78.

- **Emma Zadow** (PhD student working under the supervision of **Dr James Fell, Dr Cecilia Shing** and **Dr Murray Adams**) was awarded a \$2000 grant from the Sports Medicine Australia Research Foundation in November 2014. The funding will be used to investigate one of Emma's research questions, "Does time of day influence pacing selection in a 4 km Time trial?" in which we will examine if the time of day has any influence upon a cyclist's pacing strategy selection. She will determine these effects through the examination of performance, physiological and perceptual based measures in a controlled setting over five time points (conducted over separate days).

Yes, a journey of a thousand miles starts with each single step. You are definitely not alone in your journey. We are with you on each of your step.

Our students at the 2014 Graduate Research Conference Sharing Excellence in Research (SEiR)

SEiR conference held on 5 – 6 September 2014 in Hobart, provided a good opportunity for U Tas graduate research students to share their research in progress, to know more about research development locally and nationally, and to network with other researchers, including their peers.

Some of our graduate research students travelled to Hobart together with their supervisors to take part in this year's SEiR:

- **Briony Campbell** presented on her work exploring the communication processes involved in transition of people from residential aged care to the emergency department via ambulance.
- **Shep Chidarikire** was one of the finalists in the three-minute thesis. Shep did an excellent job of representing the School.
- **Thao Doan's** research aimed to examine the relationship between health literacy, social support and the self-management of community dwelling rural older adults. The preliminary results indicated high level of social support and social network for the participants. Education attainments and ages were potential predictors for health literacy level.
- **Gillian Scrymgeour** presented a poster on her developing an ecological understanding of healthcare disaster performance of residential based nurses: revealing the invisible.
- **Melissa Terry** presented her preliminary findings on the effects of music on women with postnatal depression (PND) from a health care perspective. Melissa's study aimed to determine what role music may play in the health and wellbeing of people with PND.

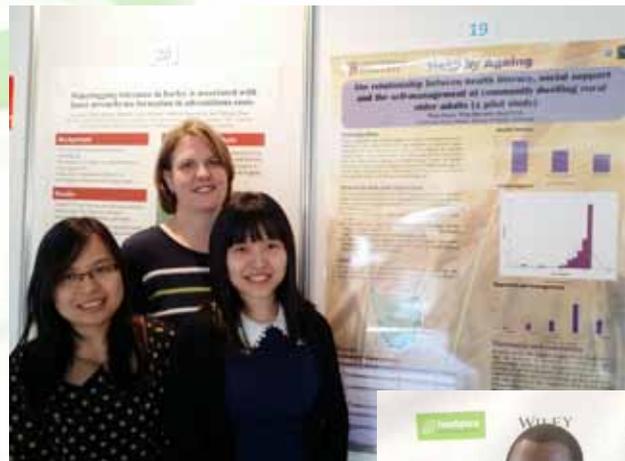
- **Lorraine Walker** had oral presentation on her thesis topic "Inter-professional education: An overview of the rural context." In her talk, Lorraine provided an overview of the literature on inter-professional education and learning in the rural context and how inter-professional education opportunities could be formalised, optimised and supported to promote students; preparedness for inter-professional practice.
- **Joanne Yeoh** presented the qualitative findings of her research on food security of migrants in Tasmania. Her research aimed to investigate migrants' perceptions and experiences on food security in Tasmania.

For the students, participating in this year's SEiR conference was very productive in terms of research and collaborative spirit. The trip to Hobart metaphorically reflects well their research journey: inspiring, constructive, productive, and happy together, sharing and caring. Here are their feedback comments:

"It was a great experience! I enjoyed it very much, educationally and socially, great thanks to SEiR organisers and our Centre for Rural Health for giving me this wonderful opportunity." (TD)

"It was enlightening! What an inspiring experience for me to attend SEiR with my friends and supervisors." (JY)

"Yes, I feel that a journey outward is a journey inward." (MT)



From left to right: Thao Doan, Joanne Yeoh, Melissa Terry, and Shep Chidarikire at the 2014 SEiR Conference, Hobart



Welcome Vibeke Høgh from Denmark

In mid-November we welcomed Vibeke Høgh, a visiting PhD Candidate from Aalborg University Hospital. Vibeke is a registered cardiac nurse and PhD student, employed at the Department of Cardiology at Aalborg University Hospital, and enrolled at the Doctoral School of Medicine, Biomedical Science and Technology, Faculty of Medicine, Aalborg University in the Northern Region of Denmark. In her PhD studies she is a member of the Aalborg Atrial Fibrillation Study Group, consisting of seven PhD students and an international senior expert advisory board, performing multidisciplinary research on atrial fibrillation.

Vibeke is spending six months at the University of Tasmania whilst undertaking the final analysis and writing up her dissertation. Her PhD study is focusing on the patient perspective of living with atrial fibrillation, quality of life and perception of health.



From right to left: Vibeke and her Husband Brian and daughter Julie

Alexandra King to be awarded her PhD (Rural Health) in December 2014

Alexandra King submitted her PhD thesis for examination in June 2014 and she has completed all requirements for her degree to the satisfaction of the Dean of Graduate Studies. She will be awarded a Doctor of Philosophy (Rural Health) degree at a Graduation Ceremony in Hobart in December 2014.

Alexandra's thesis is entitled "*Food Security and Insecurity in Older Adults: A Phenomenological Ethnographic Study*". The research was funded by an Elite Scholarship from the University of Tasmania.

Alexandra applied philosophical perspectives to explore implicit meanings in older adults' experiences of food, meals, and eating, and then considered their significance for deeper understandings of food security and insecurity in older adults. Repeated in-depth interviews, walking interviews and observation were conducted in the home environments of 21 community-dwelling older adults aged between 72 and 90 years old, in rural Tasmania.



Alexandra King (PhD Graduate)

The research reveals that food security in older adults is deeply informed by their personal identities and senses of themselves; relationships with other human beings; the meaningful places in which they live; and the flow of time in their lives. It also reveals older adults who are highly engaged in the world, and working to achieve and maintain their food security and ontological security. These findings provoke questions about the welfare and care-oriented perspectives of prevailing food-related discourses, policies and programs directed towards older adults; and they open up possibilities for new food security initiatives which better acknowledge older adults' resilience and agency.

Alexandra is grateful to her supervisors, **Dr Peter Orpin**, **Dr Jess Woodroffe** and **Ms Kim Boyer**, who were extraordinarily dedicated and supportive throughout the three-year research period. She would also like to acknowledge the older adults in the study – all of whom participated with considerable patience, generosity and good humour.

New achievement in a new horizon

Daniel Terry's graduate research journey has ended with wonderful news that he is pleased to share with us. His PhD thesis was marked by professors in Medicine and they all passed the thesis with encouraging comments such as:

- *The candidate should be congratulated on writing and presenting a high quality thesis that is logically presented, well written and sound in the use of the methodology and research questions posed.*
- *I am going to keep this thesis on my shelf and refer*

chapter 5 to any of my future students who need to use a qualitative framework to answer a question.

- I think it is an interesting thesis that encapsulates the issues facing International Medical Graduates (IMGs) and adds to what is known about the challenges not only of IMGs but of rural medicine.*

Daniel is very research-active and has achieved substantially for the last four years studying and working at the Centre for Rural Health, School of Health Sciences. His research publications are substantial in terms of quality (e.g., published article in the Medical Journal of Australia) and quantity (25 publications in four years studying Masters and PhD degrees and working in different research grants). Daniel is currently working with a research team at the University of Melbourne on many projects that are centred on chronic ill health. He enjoys the new research environment and is highly valued by his research team there. In addition to his day-to-day research activities, he is the lead researcher on a project that collaboratively works with an international team that focuses on addressing health workforce issues. With the newly earned PhD award and research active achievements, Daniel is expected to be appointed Lecturer level B at the University of Melbourne in early 2015. He expresses his appreciation to friends and colleagues at the Centre for Rural Health for their friendship, support and encouragement.

Warmest congratulations and best wishes to Daniel. (Note: Daniel's postcard is included in this newsletter).

Postcard from different horizons

University of Melbourne – Daniel Terry

Finally my journey has happily ended...

When I was sitting down on a chair waiting for my turn for the job interview at the University of Melbourne, many thoughts and feelings danced chaotically in my mind and heart and I wished that they could leave me alone so that I could focus on how to handle the interview which could make or break my academic dream. It was also those quiet moments which gently kindled my fond memories of the wonderful time at the Centre of Rural Health which has made what I was, in good preparation for a new academic pathway.

Now, sitting here calmly in my office, I could not wait to write this postcard to express my deep gratitude to everyone in the Centre of Rural Health for their support, care and encouragement during my lived experience on the Launceston campus. I dearly missed the happy faces of other fellow students when they greeted me in the morning. I remembered fondly the casual but most productive meetings with Quynh and Ha, my supervisors. How could I forget our symposium multicultural nights when we enjoyed so much our own singing, dancing and yummy foods. Special thanks to

little Thao, Joanne, Chona, and particularly Tony with his happy smiles and caring gestures for all of us at the Symposium.

I hope to have a chance to catch up with you again and to have a chance to talk about our wonderful experiences at the Centre of Rural Health.



Glory in a new horizon: Daniel Terry (PhD Graduate), Melissa Terry (Masters Candidate) and their children in Melbourne :)

Shanghai University – Maria Yue

First of all, warmest greetings from Shanghai.

It is cold here in Shanghai, but my heart is warmed up at the thought of my time at the Centre of Rural Health as a PhD student three years ago.

After my graduation, I immediately got a post-doctoral position at the University of Beijing. I felt so privileged to have my initial employment at this prestigious university. I enjoyed working here a great deal but I felt rather homesick of my family in Shanghai. Luckily at the beginning of this year, I was offered a position of Associate Professor at Shanghai University. Some students still feel 'strange' to address me as 'professor' as we do not look so much different in age. But, I enjoyed the new status anyway :)

I must say it is impossible for me to have all these

achievements without the solid foundation that I gained from my graduate research years at the Centre of Rural Health. Please send my heartfelt appreciation to Quynh, Rosa, Tony, Ha, Chona, Daniel, Little Thao, Joanne and Kim. I miss you all!



Maria Yue and her son

Conference reflection and simulation visit – Lorraine Walker

NIPNET Conference, Sweden

The Nordic Interprofessional Network (NIPNET) Conference was held in October at Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm. Professor Liz Anderson (University of Leicester) who co-designed the Leicester Model of Interprofessional Education was a keynote speaker. She highlighted experiences and challenges related to preparing future professionals for interprofessional collaborative practice. Emeritus Professor Hugh Barr, arguably a ‘founding father’ of interprofessional education also attended. He spoke on current interprofessional work and the role of the NIPNET group.



NIPNET conference dinner: Left to right Synnøve Almas (NIPNET Denmark), Lorraine Walker (UTAS), Professor Liz Anderson (University of Leicester)

Program themes included interprofessional education wards, challenges in interprofessional learning, interprofessional simulation and interprofessional education in primary care and clinical training. There were interprofessional education workshops and a dedicated research session. I presented a paper, “*Interprofessional Education: The Rural Context*” which provided an overview of the development of rural interprofessional activities, including the RIPPER project from the Centre for Rural Health at UTAS.

Visit to University of Western Scotland: Simulation overview

Before the NIPNET Conference I spent time at several universities in the UK including the School of Health Nursing and Midwifery at the University of Western Scotland. The Head of School, Heather Simpson and Dr Lorraine Duers had done some benchmarking with the UTAS School of Health Sciences earlier this year. They created a program for me that included a tour of the facilities and laboratories and being involved in simulation in the dementia unit and hi-fidelity lab. Various laboratories were run simultaneously and students rotated through each of these over the day. The labs included hi-fidelity, advanced life support and computer-based case learning. Activities in the hi-fidelity lab centred on students being introduced to the features of the mannequins and how to use the equipment so they could run sessions supported and overseen by the lecturer.

Dental practitioners in the bush – Diana Godwin

Diana, a Centre for Rural Health PhD student, is researching Australian dental practitioners, both rural and urban asking about their work location decisions and their views about rural work. She is supervised by A/Prof Leonard Crocombe, Dr Ha Hoang and A/Prof Erica Bell. She recently presented as a guest speaker to Rural Health Workforce Australia (RHWA) staff on her PhD topic. RHWA administer the Dental Relocation Infrastructure Support Scheme which grants money to dentists who are willing to move to a more regional area from where they are currently located to practice.

Diana explained that recruitment is not the issue; breed enough fear and worry in people about not being able to find work in their chosen field and you will easily make them desperate enough to work anywhere, it is retention that is the problem. Recently graduated dental graduates are getting desperate enough to accept any job they can find, especially if they want to increase their knowledge and develop their clinical skills. But they do not stay long-term in rural areas. During her recent telephone interviews one dentist said,

“This is very hard, because the recent graduates come for experience. They get experience, then they leave.”

This churn of more experienced dentists for lesser experienced ones causes problems in rural areas where oral health is the poorest and the number of dental practitioners the lowest.



Diana Godwin (PhD Candidate) presented at the 2014 Rural Health Workforce Australia conference

She said, "The work movement decisions of dental practitioners are extremely complex. However, the big issue is retention of dental practitioners. The most important factors which influenced retention were personal factors particularly lifestyle and family. This included good local schools, partners' employment was an important factor for women, and enjoying the lifestyle and community involvement."

Sharing the PhD research with the ABC – Dana Lis

UTAS Health Science researchers have recently completed the first double blind trial of the effects of gluten-free diets in non-coeliac endurance athletes. As an extension of previous findings (that 40% of non-coeliac endurance athletes adhere to a gluten-free diet, at least half of the time),

Dana Lis and Drs Cecilia Shing, Kiran Ahuja, James Fell and Trent Stellingwerff (Canadian Sport Institute) have investigated the effects this diet on performance and several key performance parameters including; gastrointestinal health, inflammation, intestinal injury and overall wellbeing.

ABC covered the research nationally



Dana Lis (PhD Candidate)

just a few weeks ago. The episode can be found at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-10-19/gluten-free-does-not-improve-athletes-performance/5825000>

Success at the Health Informatics Conference in Melbourne

The Health Informatics Society of Australia annual conference was held in Melbourne in August, 2014. It brings together a diverse community at the intersection of healthcare and technology. This year Carey Mather, who commenced her PhD earlier this year, was nominated for two awards at the annual conference.

From an International field of nominations, Carey was awarded the Joan Edgecumbe scholarship to honour the continued service and passion to the health informatics sector. Joan Edgecumbe is one of HISA's founding members and over HISA's 20 year history has occupied the role of Executive Officer, committee member and Board member, until her retirement in 2011. The Joan Edgecumbe Professional Development Scholarship is designed to encourage undergraduate, graduate certificate, diploma, masters and PhD students who demonstrate commitment and promise in the field of health informatics.

Carey was also nominated for The Branko Cesnik Award which recognises the best submitted academic/scientific papers for HISA's annual Health Informatics Conference. Submissions were double-blind peer reviewed as per the Health Informatics Conference review guidelines. In each award category the five (5) papers with the highest scores from the HIC review process were shortlisted for further assessment based on presentation. The top five (5) authors had their presentation reviewed by a member the Branko Cesnik Awards Committee. Over the 4 day conference more than 120 papers were presented. Nominee presentations were reviewed and presentation scores contributed to 25% of the authors overall score and 75% was based on their submitted paper.



From left to right: Joan Edgecumbe, Carey Mather (PhD Candidate) and Dr Liz Cummings

Writing retreat with traditional food and cultural training

We (Thao Doan and Joanne Yeoh) recently participated in a “*Writing and traditional food and cultural training workshop*” organised by the Centre for Rural Health (CRH) at Larapuna, Eddystone Point, Bay of Fires from 23 – 25 November 2014.



Thao Doan and Joanne Yeoh (PhD Candidates) at the Writing Retreat, Bay of Fires from 23– 25 Nov 2014.

It was an uncanny experience for Asian girls like us. We started screaming in the car when we first saw the extremely chubby, slow and adorable wombat crawling on the lawn of the houses. Yes, we did enjoy the marvellous accommodation surrounding

with wonderful nature. We were so glad to be included in such a group of researchers who were willing to take adventures and had a passion for research. Apart from the prolific sessions for writing and abetting each other in doing publications, we had other valuable activities such as beach walking, enjoying sunrise and sunset and cooking. We had an unforgettable experience about cultural food, particularly Indigenous food supply. The retreat ended with a beautiful Asian dinner and humorous stories. It was hard to say goodbye to the place where we enjoyed a great deal and learned so many things. One of the best things we found in this three-day writing retreat was ‘yummy foods for thought’.

Concluding thought

John Locke, one of the Enlightenment Age’s most influential thinkers, once expressed his view about the theory of mind: “There is frequently more to be learned from the unexpected questions of a student than the discourses of men.”

Our graduate research students have explored several new developments in their research journey. Apart from the unexpected questions that they have inspired many of us, their well-considered questions have opened insightful windows on promising research results, as proudly shown in this newsletter.



from **Quynh, Liz and Murray**

Contacts



Dr Quynh Lê
Graduate Research Coordinator
E: Quynh.Le@utas.edu.au
T: (03) 6324 4053

Centre for Rural Health
School of Health Sciences,
Locked Bag 1372, Launceston,
TAS 7250

URL: www.utas.edu.au/rural-health



Dr Murray Adams
Graduate Research Coordinator
E: Murray.Adams@utas.edu.au
T: (03) 6324 5483

School of Health Sciences,
Locked Bag 1320, Launceston,
TAS 7250

URL: www.utas.edu.au/human-life-sciences



Dr Liz Cummings
Graduate Research Coordinator
E: Elizabeth.Cummings@utas.edu.au
T: (03) 6226 4689

School of Health Sciences
Private Bag 135, Hobart,
TAS 7001

URL: www.utas.edu.au/nursing