



# Rural Health

## GRADUATE RESEARCH NEWS

August 2008

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Issue 2



### Welcome

When I sat down to write this Graduate Research news, I wanted to share with you the wonderful achievements of our students, I thought it would be a difficult task to do as there were many things to share and I did not know which items to choose. But magically it turned out to be a very easy and interesting task. Going through all the items, I was so inspired and could not help but read them over and over again. I was so pleased and proud of the achievements and contributions to rural health graduate research and could not wait to share them with you.

Winter has gradually disappeared and spring is at our doorstep with many promising events ahead. Like blooming flowers, the rural health graduate research garden welcomes the arrival of spring with wonderful stories to share. May I warmly invite you to enjoy the flavours of our garden in this news.

### Good news from Graduate Research students

There have been so many activities and achievements. The cold winter may have dampened the land but the discourse of our Graduate Research has been as dynamic as ever.

Congratulations to **Sharon Hetherington** who has had her Tasmanian Graduate Research Scholarship upgraded to an Australian Postgraduate Award; and **Kate Squibb** who has won the Tasmanian Graduate Research Scholarship.

Warmest congratulations must go to the following members for their success and achievements:

- **Suzette Seaton** (RCS supervised student), has submitted her Master's thesis – congratulations to Suzette and her supervisors Professor **Judith Walker** and Dr **Mark Reeves**.
- **Hazel Baynes** (jointly supervised by A/Prof **Sue Kilpatrick** and Prof **Joan Abbott-Chapman** through the School of Education) has submitted her PhD thesis for examination.

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- **Shandell Elmer** has a joint paper “A Look at the Culture-Quality-Performance Link” accepted for publication in the special issue on Safety and Quality in Primary Health of the Australian Journal of Public Health in February 2008. Shandell has also had her abstract “Developing Organisational Capacity: From Quality We Learn” accepted for the First Annual Alcohol Tobacco and other Drugs Council of Tasmania Conference in Hobart: ATOD Practice, Integration and Development.
- **Kate Squibb** was invited to join the Discussion Panel entitled “Rural and Remote Diagnosis and Treatment” at the Annual Scientific Meeting of Medical and Radiation Therapy of the Australian Institute of Radiography which was held in Melbourne, 17 – 20 April, 2008. Other panel members were John Blyth from Canarvon (WA), Josephine Smylie from Taralgon (VIC), and Judy Andrews from Bendigo (VIC). The session was chaired by A/Prof Tony Smith, from the UDRH in Tamworth (University of Newcastle).
- **Sharon Hetherington** has her refereed paper “The Social and Functional Benefits of Low Intensity Physical Activity for Older People: The Efficacy of Tai Chi for Older Australian Adults” accepted for presentation at the 7th World Congress on Aging and Physical Activity in Japan on 26 – 29 July 2008.
- **Anna Spinaze** and Dr **Rosemary Cane** have abstracts for their papers, “Finding a Method: Exploring Video-cued Interviewing, for Qualitative Action Research into Rural Clinician Roles, and Identities around Chronic Disease Management” and “Black Tooth Stumps and Toothache: Signs of a Bigger Picture?”, respectively accepted at the GP and PHC Research Conference in Hobart, 4 – 6 June 2008.
- **Andrew Harris** has had his joint article entitled “West African Refugee Health in Rural Australia: Complex Cultural Factors that Influence Mental Health” published in the International Journal of Rural and Remote Health. Andrew also presented a paper entitled “The Good Neighbour: a strategy emerging from a study on African men in Tasmania” and a workshop for research communities, led by Tasmanian cross-cultural researchers on “Culture and Ethics: Towards Inclusive Research”, at the Social Inclusion and Exclusion of Culturally Diverse Communities: Strategies and Experiences conference to be held at the University of Tasmania (Launceston campus) on 1 – 2 August 2008.
- **Ha Hoang**, Master of Medical Science candidate, presented a paper entitled “Maternity Care in Rural Tasmania in the eyes of Asian migrants” at the Social Inclusion and Exclusion of Culturally Diverse Communities: Strategies and Experiences conference held at the University of Tasmania (Launceston campus) on 1-2 August 2008.
- **Peter Mulholland**, Master of Medical Science

candidate, has been accepted to present his research findings on the differences between rural and urban paramedics, at the ACAP 2008 conference in September.

Congratulations to the following students for their progress:

- **Rosemary Cane, Deb Carnes, Chona Hannah, Diep Thi-Le, Sharon Hetherington** and **Lorraine Smith's** preliminary research plans have been approved.
- **Glenn Aslin, Rosemary Cane, and Chona Hannah's** ethics applications have been approved.

Last but not least, I wish to congratulate Dr **Lisa Dalton** who has completed her PhD award, and graduated on 16th August. At the UDRH Graduate Research program, we celebrate your success and wish you well in the future. Your achievement will open many pathways for the rest of your career and we look forward to working with you in the UDRH in general, and graduate research program specifically. Our warmest congratulations go to Dr **Lisa Dalton** and her supervisors, Drs **Rosalind Bull, Erica Bell** and **Peter Orpin**.

## The June Graduate Research Symposium 2008

An important aspect of the Graduate Research Symposium is to share research in progress with other candidates and supervisors and to have a chance to interact informally.

The first 2008 Collaborative Graduate Research Symposium between the University Department of Rural Health (UDRH), Rural Clinical School, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Human Life Sciences, and School of Medicine, took place on 27th June 2008, and went very well. It was held at the School of Nursing and Midwifery (Newnham Campus) with over 37 participants from these Schools.

A/Prof Tony Smith, from the UDRH in Tamworth (University of Newcastle), was the keynote speaker. He shared his reflection on a PhD study journey with our students.

Ten students from the above schools individually presented their research in progress. Their presentations covered a wide range of topics and involved different research approaches. Our rural health students (Susan Johns, Sharon Hetherington, Anna Spinaze, Deb Carnes and Fiona Jones) conducted their presentations competently and impressively.

A special feature of this conference was the provocation on “Research Higher Degrees: earning your stripes or contributing to the field?”. It was skilfully led by A/Professors Denise Fassett, Rosalind Bull and Dominic Geraghty.

The success of the June Symposium is the solid foundation for the 2nd Graduate Research Symposium in November 2008, in Hobart, which will be led by the UDRH. It will be an inspiring time for participants to

share up-to-date research in progress, and the arrival of beautiful spring on the land.

## Postcard from Japan

This is the postcard from Sharon Hetherington, PhD student, who had her refereed paper accepted for presentation at the 7th World Congress on Aging and Physical Activity which was held at the University of Tsukuba, Japan from 26 – 29 July 2008.

“We exited the arrivals terminal at Narita Airport at 8pm into 30 degree heat and 80% humidity. A far cry from the half a degree we had left at Launceston Airport that morning. After an overnight stay at the Narita Travelodge we were on our way by bus to Tsukuba, about 80km to the north. The bus trip took us through some lovely countryside and with speed limited to 50km/hr most of the way we had ample time to take in the hectares of rice paddies, low rise tile roofed homes and the abundance of water that a tropical latitude affords.

Tsukuba too is a fairly low rise city of 200,000 people; the tallest buildings being the city’s hotels at around 10 stories -not at all what I was expecting of Japan. On arrival we were ably assisted by locals to find our hotel, one lady abandoned her cash register, walked us out of the store and down to the intersection where she pointed left and said ‘hotel there’. This helpfulness was a feature of our time away. As our Mt Fuji tour guide told us later ‘the best way to get assistance in Japan is to stand on a corner with a map, looking lost and foreign. It worked for us time and again, within minutes someone would approach and ask ‘can I help you?’ or ‘where would you like to go to?’



Sharon Hetherington at Tsukuba, Japan

The conference kicked off the following day (Saturday) and was a wonderful opportunity to listen to key note addresses and presentations from researchers in my area of interest, ageing and physical activity. My presentation went well and was warmly received with some good questions and comments afterwards. However, the highlight of my time in Tsukuba was the opportunity to talk to and socialise with other researchers in the area. I have come away from the conference recharged and inspired with worldwide contacts who all share my passion for promoting healthy ageing.

After the conference closed on Tuesday morning we went exploring at the Tsukuba Space Complex from where Japan’s satellite and space exploration program is staged. I had a chance to carry out mock experiments in a full size replica of the Japanese section of the International Space

Station, very cool. On Wednesday we caught the train down to Tokyo for a two week holiday, but we’d need a much bigger newsletter to retell that adventure.”

## The November Collaborative Graduate Research Symposium

There will be two special events in November this year:

- Spring with its blooming flowers and sunlight throughout Tasmania
- The Collaborative Graduate Research Symposium with its intellectual and social inspiration in Hobart.

Yes, we are very pleased to share with you the announcement of the 2nd Collaborative Graduate Research Symposium in 2008 to be held at the Dechaineux Theatre, located at the School of Art in Hunter Street, Hobart, on 13th November. Apart from social informal interaction, it will include presentations from PhD and Research Masters students from the University Department of Rural Health, Rural Clinical School, School of Nursing and Midwifery, School of Human Life Sciences and the Launceston Clinical School.

Students are warmly invited to attend and present your work-in-progress or completed work at this symposium. Supervisors are encouraged to join the symposium as your support and feedback are important to the students. It is a good opportunity to share our graduate research journey and together celebrate the end of a hardworking year.

Details of the Symposium and registration form are available on the Rural Health Graduate Research web site at: <http://www.ruralhealth.utas.edu.au/gr/support-program.php>

Please register your attendance by Monday 13th October, 2008 by Fax: 6324 4040 or email: Natalie.Edwards@utas.edu.au.

Enquiries: Natalie Edwards, Tel: 6324 4048.

Please return your response at your earliest convenience, so we can prepare well for your attendance.

## Presentation Skill workshop

The main purpose of this idea is to support students to develop and enhance their skills to present their research at the November Collaborative Graduate Research Symposium, as well as future conference presentations. After the successful session last year,

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A/Prof Dominic Geraghty kindly offers our graduate students a workshop on presentation skills. This workshop is scheduled on 5th November via videoconferencing link, hosted at the Anne O'Byrne Centre to different UTAS sites. Please check event calendar to register your attendance.

## Ha Hoang and her creativity

August should be remembered as the month of wonderful creativity and productivity for many people, particularly for our Masters student Ha Hoang.

On a cold winter Friday morning in August, Ha warmed up the academic atmosphere of the first day of the Conference Social Inclusion and Exclusion of Culturally Diverse Communities: Strategies and Experiences with her impressive presentation on the topic childbirth experience of Asian migrants in rural areas. Three days later, Ha gave birth to a healthy son, Tommy at the Launceston General Hospital. Associate Professor Sue Kilpatrick welcomed the

news with a beautiful bouquet of flowers for Ha.



Ha Hoang and Tommy

The arrival of baby Tommy has brought more energy and inspiration to Ha and she is determined to complete her thesis in September, to celebrate the first month of spring and the end of a productive Masters journey.

Warmest congratulations to Ha and her family.

## Graduate Research administrative support

**Yvette Massey**, our Graduate Research Executive Officer, will temporarily move to the UDRH Projects Coordinator role for the next 12 months, commencing on Monday 11 August. During this time, **Natalie Edwards** will fill Yvette Massey's role as Graduate Research Assistant starting on 11 August. Natalie will work on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (full-days) each week.

The Rural Health Graduate Research support contact from 11 August 2008 for the next 12 months is as below:

### Natalie Edwards

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Natalie Edwards

We would like to take this opportunity to wish Yvette well with her new position and welcome Natalie to the new role with the Rural Health Graduate Research program.

## Event calendar

- Planning Your Postdoctoral Research: 1 – 2 pm, 28th August, videoconferencing link conducted by Dr Tracey Dickson.
- UTAS Postgraduate Research Conference on Sharing Excellence in Research: 5th September – University Centre, Sandy Bay campus (register online at: <http://www.tuu.com.au/tupa>).
- Developing Interview Skills: 10:30 – 1pm, 4th September, Launceston, conducted by Dr Peter Orpin.
- Cultural Interference in Conducting Research, conducted by A/Prof Peg Levine. Date, time and location are to be advised.
- Conducting Focus Group, conducted by Dr Emily Hansen. Date, time and location are to be advised.
- Developing Questionnaire and Survey: 10:30 – 12:30pm, 24 October, conducted by Dr Quynh Lê and A/Prof Sue Kilpatrick.
- Presentation Skills: 10:30 – 12:30 pm, 5th November, videoconferencing link, conducted by A/Prof Dominic Geraghty.
- The 2nd 2008 Collaborative Graduate Research Symposium: 13th November, 2008, Dechaineux Theatre, School of Art in Hunter Street, Hobart.

In a Tasmanian winter, the sun rises in the morning and sometimes quietly disappears when the sky is cloudy. However it is a different fascinating picture in our Rural Health Graduate Research discourse, the sky is constantly blue and the sunlight is always here to stay. In this inspiring spirit, we hope you enjoy reading our Graduate Research News.

Till the next issue, best wishes and take care.

Dr Quynh Lê and Natalie Edwards