

CENTRE FOR RURAL HEALTH BULLETIN

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Bereavement care network project



Project officers L-R: Greer Maine, Jessie Bynon, Dana Endelmanis and Dr Stephanie Thompson

The Centre for Rural Health (University of Tasmania) has recently been contracted by DHHS, Better Access to Palliative Care (BAPC) to work closely with palliative care service providers, volunteers, community organisations and carers to improve palliative care bereavement support care across Tasmania. The intent is to enable all members of the Tasmanian community who are experiencing grief and bereavement to be appropriately supported through the establishment of a sustainable regional bereavement care network or networks across the state.

In late 2015, a review of bereavement care services and supports was undertaken by the BAPC team. This included

widespread community consultation and research into contemporary approaches to bereavement care. This review found that there was a diverse range of individuals and organisations offering bereavement care in Tasmania, with little opportunity to connect with each other. The findings and recommendations of the review were reported this year in a publication titled "Bereavement Care in Tasmania: Current Status and Future Directions for Palliative Care."

In response to these findings, DHHS Better Access to Palliative Care, with support from the Centre for Rural Health, is working to establish Regional Bereavement Care Networks with the aims of:

- Improving co-ordination and partnerships in the delivery of bereavement care services;
- Providing shared learning and professional development opportunities;
- Raising awareness of bereavement care options in each region;
- Informing the development and implementation of state-wide bereavement care practice standards or guidelines; and
- Contributing to the development and implementation of a whole of community approach to bereavement care.

The CRH project leads A/Prof Tony Barnett, Prof Madeleine Ball, Dr Heather Bridgman, Dr Pauline Marsh have recently been

joined by four project officers: Dr Stephanie Thompson and Jessie Bynon who will be based in Hobart; Dana Endelmanis – based in the North-West and Greer Maine in the North. Project officers are currently contacting people and services with a role in bereavement care who may be interested in contributing to a network.

Funding of \$172,285 was provided by the DHHS as part of the Better Access to Palliative Care program.



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NEWS & ACTIVITIES

Dental Health Week: Engaging the community



L-R: Punya Bahl, Kevin Cripwell and Dr Rochelle Lim



Salamanca Market

Dental Health Week is the Australian Dental Association's (ADA) major annual oral health promotion event which ran from 1st - 7th August 2016. The event aims to educate Australians about the importance of maintaining good oral health in every aspect of their lives. Specifically, this year's theme was on Women and Oral health, highlighting oral health's importance in pregnancy.

The ADA dental health week included stalls in Hobart, Launceston and Devonport, with hampers, free giveaways of toothpastes and xylitol gums to the community. The Salamanca market stall was a big success,

with volunteers reporting visitors showed a huge interest in oral health. This dental health week was a success due to the active insight of Dr. Jessica Manuela, an ADA Oral health promotion committee chairperson and the team effort of the ADA committee members, volunteers and the community.

Further Information

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CRH @ UTAS Open Day



The Centre for Rural Health (CRH) participated in the UTAS open day on Sunday 7th August 2016.

It was a day full of opportunities for future students and their families to visit our campus and explore the world-class facilities and services available. The open day also provided them opportunities to talk face-to-face with lecturers, current students, graduates and course advisors who could give an insight into the wide range of interchange courses available at UTAS.

CRH staff, Drs Terry Cox, Ha Hoang and Chona Hannah represented the centre at the UTAS open day. The goal of our day was to introduce and inform prospective students and their families about the CRH. We were glad to talk to many families who were interested in what we

do. CRH is a research-focused academic unit. Unlike other departments within UTAS, we support the clinical placements of undergraduate students by maintaining a network of learning and accommodation sites across 19 rural and remote communities in Tasmania. CRH also welcome graduate research students and create a supportive, learner-friendly environment in which they can undertake their post graduate studies. By drawing on a wide range of skills and expertise, staff engage in a vigorous and diverse program of high quality rural health research that position the centre as locally relevant, nationally competitive and internationally recognised.



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Epilepsy connect launch

At any given time, as many as 1 in 100 Australians will have epilepsy. This equals more than 5000 Tasmanians, with the actual number of people affected estimated to be four times this amount.

Research has shown that people with epilepsy report increased levels of anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. In an attempt to address these issues, Dr Simone Lee initiated and developed Epilepsy Connect, based on the successful and well established Australian model for people affected by cancer.

This new and innovative telephone-based peer support service, delivered in partnership with Epilepsy Tasmania and

generously funded by the Tasmanian Community Fund, was officially launched in Hobart on Tuesday 13th September.

With Epilepsy Tasmania now managing the program, the Centre for Rural Health will continue to evaluate the service and provide training for peer-support volunteers.

To register for Epilepsy Connect phone 1300 852 853 or visit www.epilepsytasmania.org.au/epilepsy-connect-registration



Further Information

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Welcome new Practitioners

Second batch



Dr Shahrukh Khan (Shah)

An Oral health life-span research PhD candidate in University of Tasmania. His PhD under the supervision of A/Prof. Leonard Crocombe, A/Prof. Tony Barnett, Dr. Silvana Bettiol and Prof. Joerg Eberhard focuses on “*Social determinants: diet as a link between obesity and periodontitis*”. Shah is a passionate dentist, oral health researcher and social entrepreneur focused on developing a challenging research career in the field of Oral-systemic research and advanced methodology. He also has a conscious focus on mobilizing policy makers and health professionals to work on domains of social determinants of health to have a better and healthy society. He is a researcher in the “Health Practitioner Research Development” program, where he is working under the supervision of Dr. Ha Hoang on “*Prevention, detection and management of caries in children: A systematic review of clinical practice guidelines*”. In this program, Shah has developed skills of systematic search and screening of the literature, and critical appraisal via the AGREE evaluation research tool and management system.

Amanda Cooper

Amanda Cooper (Mandy) has recently returned to Tasmania after 27 years of working interstate mainly in Canberra and Wagga Wagga. Until recently Mandy was a partner in 5 community pharmacies in Wagga Wagga and



Yi Chao Foong

I’m Yi Chao Foong, and I originally came to Tasmania 7 years ago when I saw a picture of Frenchman’s Cap on Google images. Since then I’ve fallen in love with Tassie’s natural treasures and I can often be found bushwalking or rock-climbing somewhere in Tasmania. I also work at the Royal Hobart Hospital as a Resident Medical Officer in Respiratory Medicine when time allows. I have a strong interest in medical research and have had the pleasure of learning from a variety of researchers in different fields. Having spent some time working on the north-west coast I am also passionate about rural medicine, having seen first-hand the challenges of providing quality care in a rural setting. I look forward to my time with the Centre of Rural Health and learning from all of you with regards to rural health research. I am currently working with Dr Leonard Crocombe on the project: Dental problems as a cause of hospital admissions and emergency presentations.

employed a team of over 100 people. Mandy is still a practising Pharmacist and currently works at both Windsor Capital Chemist and Fitzpatricks Pharmacy. Mandy has an interest in health research and continual improvement and development of the pharmacy profession. Mandy is currently working at the Centre for



Sebrina Brennan

I am a Master of Social Work student at the University of Tasmania. I am currently completing my final social work placement at the Tasmanian Health Service in sub-acute aged care rehabilitation. I am a Student Representative for the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) and have been elected to the AASW Tasmanian Branch Management Committee, effective November 2016. I am also a Red Cross Emergency Services volunteer. I am passionate about furthering human rights and social justice by working in decolonising ways to achieve meaningful change with care. Some of my interests include mentoring, desistance from crime, creativity, nature and health. I am also curious about the role of social work in community development, emergency preparedness and recovery, particularly in climate change adaptation. I am currently supporting Dr Pauline Marsh as a Research Assistant with the CRH project, *Great and Good Gardening: Exploring Informal Supports in Community Gardens in Rural Tasmania*.



Stephen Hodgkinson

After working for many years as a chef I returned to study, part time over 6 years and completed a Bachelor of Health Science at UTAS. In 2014 I moved to Griffith University’s Gold Coast campus and studied my Master of Nutrition and Dietetics, graduating December 2015. As a requirement for my degree I also completed 20 weeks of professional placement in Toowoomba, Cairns and Logan, working as a dietitian. In 2016 I have started my own private practice, and now operate from Summerdale Medical Centre, West Tamar Health, Mowbray Medical and Scottsdale Doctors Surgery. I was also fortunate enough to be welcomed by the Centre for Rural Health this year in the practitioner program. My role is assisting A/Prof Tony Barnett and Dr Lyndsay Quarmby with their research investigating why allied health practitioners remain in rural Tasmania for periods greater than 5 years.

Rural Health under the Health Practitioner Research Development program on a project with Dr Simone Lee, titled “*Influences on bowel screening participation in rural Tasmania*.” Mandy now lives on a farm at Rowella with her husband Carl and has a keen interest in agriculture and food production.

Welcome new Staff (Postdoc and Senior Research Fellow)



Dr John Mond

Dr Jon Mond joined the Centre for Rural Health on October 3rd in the capacity of Senior Research Fellow. Dr Mond has Honours and Master's Degrees in Psychology and a PhD in Psychological Medicine, all from the University of Sydney, and a Master of Public Health from Harvard University. He has previously held Associate Professorships in Psychology, Sociology, Medicine and Health Sciences at various Australian Universities. To date, Dr Mond's research has focused on public health aspects of body weight, body image and eating-disordered behaviour. He has published some 130 papers in peer-reviewed journals, has been an Associate Editor for BMC Public Health since 2013 and an Associate Editor for the Journal of Mental Health since 2011. With this new appointment Jon is keen to broaden his research interests to include a focus on rural health, rural mental health in particular, while doing his best to mentor students and junior staff and ensure that their research interests are translated into research output. On a personal note, Jon is delighted to have found a way to live and work in Tasmania, having travelled extensively in the state in his younger days.



Dr Katherine Kent

Dr Katherine Kent (nee Caldwell) is a researcher interested in the field of nutrition, cognition and ageing. Specifically, Katherine is involved in research that investigates the impact of fruit flavonoids on cognitive and physical outcomes, especially in older adults with dementia. Flavonoids are natural compounds found in fruit and vegetables that have protective elements against dementia. Katherine is also interested in evaluating and improving current methods that estimate dietary flavonoid intake. Katherine's doctoral thesis provided a number of contributions to the literature surrounding flavonoids. It developed novel tools to measure flavonoid intake for application in future research. Additionally, the findings of two flavonoid intervention trials supported the indication that flavonoid, and especially anthocyanin-rich food consumption, may be beneficial for cognitive and physical outcomes in older adults with dementia.

Welcome new PhD candidate



Ali Morse

I am a Clinical Psychologist with an active interest in the area of neurodevelopmental disorders. I have completed two theses: *Deliberate Self-Harm in Adolescents* (Bachelor of Science: Honours 2009) and *Couples Coping with Breast or Gynaecological Cancers* (Masters of Clinical Psychology: 2011). In 2009 I was awarded "Best Presenter" (Sixth Annual Statewide Symposium of Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation and Development Program) and in 2011, I received The *Jim Bacon Memorial Scholarship for the Care and Treatment of Cancer*.

Prior to becoming a psychologist, I was a teacher for over two decades. For the past five years I have been working at St Virgil's College and in private practice. I particularly enjoy working with children, adolescents and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It is the work with the families that I value the most and it is rewarding to be of service to them.

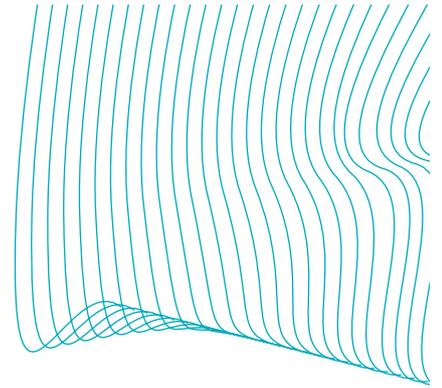
Currently I joined CRH as a PhD candidate under the supervision of A/Prof Tony Barnett, Dr Lyndsay Quarmby (CRH) and Dr Josephine Barbaro (OTARC) on Developmental Surveillance of Autism in Tasmania and specifically around the implementation of the Social Attention and Communication Surveillance (SACS-R) program. The focus of my PhD is establishing innovation and change within organisations to enable the implementation of a successful health tool into clinical practice. It is indeed exciting to be involved in research that can prospectively identify ASD in very young children across Tasmania and lead to improved outcomes for children and families.

Recovery camp team wins state Allied Health award

A multidisciplinary team led by Dr Heather Bridgman (Centre for Rural Health) involving Dr David Lees (School of Health Sciences), Ms Ally Smith (Social Work Program) and Ms Vicki Salter (Richmond Fellowship TAS) has won the 2016 Tasmanian Allied Health Professional Advancement Committee (TAHPAC) Allied Health Award, in the category of Health Promotion, for their project: "Recovery Camp Tasmania". Recovery Camp was initially funded by a 2014 Teaching Development Grant and brings together community volunteers who have a mental health condition, multidisciplinary health students and university support staff for a multi-day outdoor activity camp aimed at increasing understanding of mental health recovery and providing

interprofessional learning opportunities. The assessors noted: "Your project met all the assessment criteria and the assessors noted your project provided significant benefits to all stakeholders (clients, partners) and was multi-professional including students and volunteers; the evidence was clearly articulated showing clear objectives and the link between health promotion, community and health care providers; the project described the assessment of a new program and would have required enthusiasm and perseverance; a well presented application showing excellent initiative, broad partnerships and far reaching benefits into the future." The team have won a cash prize to put towards professional development and research dissemination.

GRADUATE RESEARCH



We are very pleased to share with you many great news and achievements of our Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students at CRH. Our HDR candidates have been progressing well with their candidatures and been very active in participating in many academic activities from presenting at conferences to publishing their research findings in prestigious journals.

Candidature progress

Great news from **Thuy Le** (PhD Candidate). Thuy has passed her thesis examination! Thuy investigated nail biting and related health issues from the perspectives of health professionals and nail biters. Thuy was supervised by **Dr Quynh Le** (former CRH senior lecturer) and Prof Gerard Gill (Deakin University). Thuy is expected to graduate in December 2016. Congratulations to Thuy and the supervisory team!

Thao Doan (PhD Candidate) has recently submitted her thesis entitled "The relationship between health literacy and social support and the self-management of health in community dwelling rural older adults – a pilot study" for examination. Thao was supervised by **A/Prof Tony Barnett**, **Dr Quynh Le** and **Dr Simone Lee**. Great effort Thao! We wish you all the best with the result.

Diana Godwin (PhD Candidate) has recently submitted her thesis in November 2016. Diana's study identified the factors that influence the rural recruitment and retention of dental practitioners. Diana is supervised by **A/Prof Len Crocombe** (CRH), **Dr Ha Hoang** (CRH) and **A/Prof Leigh Blizzard** (Menzies Research Institute).

Publications

Lucio Babo Sores (PhD Candidate) and his supervisors **A/Prof Len Crocombe** (CRH), **Dr Silvana Bettiol** (School of Medicine) and **Dr Penny Allen** (Rural Clinical School) have published two research papers based on Lucio's thesis. The first paper entitled "*Opportunities in oral health policy for Timor-Leste*" is published in the WHO South-East Asia Journal of Public Health. The second paper which investigated the association between socioeconomic status (SES) and dental caries experience in children living in Dili, is published in the Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health.

Diana Godwin and her supervisors **A/Prof Len Crocombe** (CRH), **Dr Ha Hoang** (CRH) and **A/Prof Leigh Blizzard** (Menzies Research Institute) has published three papers based on Diana's thesis. The first paper entitled "*Views of Australian dental practitioners towards rural recruitment and retention: A descriptive study*" is published in the BMC Oral Health. The second paper, "*Evidence of the effect of rural background on rural practice in Australian dental practitioners: does gender play a role?*", is published in the Australian Dental Journal. The third paper entitled "*An oversupply of dentists: what it means for the rural dental workforce*", is published in the News bulletin of the Australian Dental Association Incorporated.

Conference Presentations

Melissa Kirschbaum (PhD candidate) presented her paper entitled "Researching Perspectives about Addiction – the use of Q methodology" at the Australian and New Zealand Addiction Conference 2016 in Queensland.

Diana Godwin delivered a Lightning Talk on "Key factors that influence the Australian rural dental workforce" at the *5th Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium* in Canberra in September 2016.

Diana Godwin and **Shah Khan** (PhD candidates) participated in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition at Tasmanian Health Research Student Conference 2016 in Hobart in July 2016. Diana presented her research findings on factors influencing the Australian rural dental workforce, Shah discussed his PhD topic "Chronic Periodontitis: The hidden pandemic?"

Recognition

Dr Jackie Stuart (PhD candidate) has been awarded "Northern Queensland Primary Health Network Dentist of the Year" for her outstanding contributions to healthcare in Northern Queensland. We are so proud of you Jackie.



Rowena Mackean (PhD candidate) has presented her paper entitled "Adapting to Ageing: The Role of Peer-run Groups" at the Australian Association of Gerontology 49th annual conference in November 2016. Well done Rowena!

Summer is the perfect time to celebrate these great achievements of our HDR candidates. Their work has been contributing to 'Better Health' for everyone.



Further Information

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PROJECTS

Shedding light on Aboriginal men's health in rural Tasmania

Recent collaboration between the Centre for Rural Health (CRH) and the Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation (CHAC) has resulted in a new study that explored the health concerns of Aboriginal men in a rural Tasmanian community and the benefits of men's shed participation.

Men's sheds have emerged as a relatively new part of the cultural landscape with close to 50 sheds in Tasmania and 1000 sheds throughout Australia and New Zealand. The 'shed movement' has also made inroads into the UK, Europe and North America. On any given week there are thousands of men

of Aboriginal community development. The project proceeded with full ethics approval and community endorsement from CHAC's Board, CEO and Elder. CHAC supported the study at multiple levels and maintained oversight to ensure the study aligned with their community health aspirations.

in terms of 'poor, OK or managing'. However, these men described various circumstances that resulted in being socially disconnected and marginalised that in turn led to issues with anxiety, depression and/or a loss of hope. For these men, social and emotional well-being emerged as their priority health concern.



participating in a range of social and workshop shed activities on a regular basis. Interestingly, men's sheds are often established by women to get their partners out of the house and engaged in a variety of retirement activities. However, research has yet to fully explore how Aboriginal men engage in men's sheds.

The project was designed with a methodology

The study was built on the contributions of 13 Aboriginal men and community stakeholders. The majority of men were from 60-70 years of age. They spoke stoically of dealing with multiple chronic health issues including diabetes, heart and kidney diseases, prostate issues and cancer. They regularly downplayed the impact of these conditions as part of 'normal ageing' and rated their physical health

The shed was seen as an important site to get together with other men while participating in various activities such as making outdoor furniture, woodwork, playing cards, or 'having a bit of a yarn'. However, these activities were seen as 'a sideline' to the real value of the shed – of Aboriginal men getting together in a culturally safe environment. These men feel better about themselves in the company of other men. Shed participation has therapeutic value because men are more socially connected and physically active. A typical day at the shed may start with lighting the fire, having a cuppa and renovating furniture while discussing diabetes, diet, depression, medication and football. The informal shed environment provides the conditions in which to lessen the stigma and normalise conversations about men's health, medications and care plans. As such, the project sheds light on Aboriginal men, masculinities and health in a community shed environment.



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Identifying factors that constrain and enable the use of rural health teaching sites for clinical placements

The CRH is affiliated with and provides support to students undertaking placement at 16 Rural Health Teaching Sites across Tasmania. Analysis of the utilisation of these rural teaching sites (2010-2015) revealed variations in their use and that utilisation was notably lower in some than others. Having identified variations in placement activity we sought to identify the reasons.



Nubeena Rural Health teaching site - Kitchen area

Rural health is an identified area of health workforce shortage and there is an urgent need to recruit health professionals to rural areas. Rural placements are known to effect students' graduate destination and career path, motivating a drive by the Commonwealth Government to expose more students to rural practice. This exploratory study identifies the factors that constrain and enable the use of rural health services for clinical placements, from the perspectives of rural health service stakeholders and professional experience placement (PEP) coordinators in the University of Tasmania Faculty of Health.

Six rural health services associated with the University's Centre for Rural Health (CRH) Teaching Sites have participated in the study. Data has been collected by means of semi-structured interviews with health service staff (n=15) and clinical PEP coordinators (n=6). At the time of going to press, the interviews are being transcribed

and concurrently, thematically analysed.

Preliminary analysis suggests the key constraints for rural placement providers are:

- Lean staffing profile and reliance on part time staff
- Lack of time and staff qualified to supervise students
- Limited and inconsistent learning opportunities available.

From the Faculty perspective, the key constraints of rural placement appear to be:

- Students' need to accomplish unit learning objectives
- Curricula requirements
- Semester formalities and University calendar
- Concurrent unit requirements
- Faculty history has tended to prioritise

hospital-based acute care.

For placement providers, the factors that enable rural placements are:

- The value of students, being exposed to new ideas and ways of doing things
- Having a solid relationship with the University
- Feeling comfortable with the communication around placements
- Having staff committed and confident to supervise students and support student learning on top of their normal workload

From the perspective of placement coordinators, the enablers are:

- Agencies providing a welcoming and supportive learning environment where they go out of their way to make the most of the learning opportunities available
- Students' have access to one-on-one support and supervision
- Students get a broad range of experiences

Most health services could identify ways to strengthen and enrich the placement experience provided at their agency. They all indicated that they could expand their capacity to take students for placement by having them placed over more weeks of the year but were reluctant to accommodate more students at one time (especially without external support). Two providers referred to the success of a previous approach and suggested placements could be expanded by the University providing a clinical facilitator and reconceptualising placement to include other health professionals and services in the area.

Overall, the findings suggest that the placement of students in a rural health care facility is dependent on the dynamic interplay between a range of factors broadly related to: the student, the clinical facility/ learning environment, and the curriculum/ course of study. These findings bridge a gap in local knowledge about what attracts or detracts from students undertaking placements in rural settings and will inform placement planning and decision-making.

Project team: Dr Merylin Cross, Associate Professor Tony Barnett, Dr Pauline Marsh, Dr Terry Cox and Ms Rosy Green, Primary Health Care Practitioner Scholar.



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Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training Program: Rural Student Placement Expansion Project

The University of Tasmania has been successful in receiving additional funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health (DoH) for a project to expand rural professional experience placements (PEP) for a three-year period 2016 to 2018. The project targets domestic students in specific disciplines for rural and remote professional experience placements (PEP).



L-R: A/Prof Annette Marlowe (Director of PEP); Ms. Helen Zournazis (Manager of Rural PEP Expansion Program; and Ms Sarah Jordan (Project Officer)

While existing infrastructure to support quality professional experience placements is present within the Faculty, this project has the potential to positively contribute to the state of Tasmania, and in particular address future health workforce need. The first phase of this project has been in developing a project plan and a framework to identify organisational and student support requirements to assist in the expansion of student placements and subsequent rollout of activities consistent with the project purpose and objectives.

At present, the Centre for Rural Health has been actively engaged in increasing

accommodation support for students by leasing additional houses. Furthermore, staff have been employed to progress the project.

In order to identify the potential capacity of organisations to facilitate quality rural student PEP experiences, both Sarah and Helen have been actively consulting with healthcare colleagues and seeking opportunities for providing models of support. As the North West region hosts the largest number of students undertaking rural PEPs, and potential thereof, a Lead Facilitator will be employed to engage with key stakeholders in addressing the project objectives. Specifically,

in providing teaching and learning support, coordination of placements, and development and implementation of support models and interprofessional learning opportunities.

Melissa Holman has joined the team as executive officer.



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Dementia awareness in an Aboriginal community

Researchers at the Centre for Rural Health and the Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre have been recently awarded a small University of Tasmania 'Better Health Research Theme' grant to conduct a study that addresses Tasmanian Aboriginal people's understandings of dementia.

The project is also supported with funding from Wicking. The purpose of the place-based project is to establish a collaborative environment in which Aboriginal people from a rural Tasmanian community

are respected and supported to share their perceptions of dementia and dementia care.

The project aims to empower Aboriginal people with an increased awareness of dementia

and examine the community's access to dementia education and care resources. The community will be primary beneficiaries of the project. Health professionals and multiple aged care, health, research and policy stakeholders will also benefit with a greater insight into Aboriginal understandings of dementia and culturally appropriate dementia care in Tasmania. The project researchers include Drs Terry Cox and Ha Hoang (CRH) and Lyn Goldberg from Wicking; under the guidance and advice of local Aboriginal community leaders. The project will start in 2017.

“The project aims to empower Aboriginal people with an increased awareness of dementia



Further Information

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Burnie accommodation kitchen

Rural accommodation receives funding boost

The Centre for Rural Health (CRH) has welcomed additional funds which will allow it to expand and improve its rural accommodation network.

Rental properties in Burnie, Huonville, New Norfolk and Perth will begin to be available to students from late October onwards. Negotiations are currently underway with the Department of Health and Human Services to refurbish accommodation at the Beaconsfield District Health Service.

Student Support Officer, Karla Peek, is excited about the developments. "Demand for accommodation in the north-west of the state has always been high, which is why we jumped at the chance of acquiring a property in Burnie. We're meeting a real need here because the alternatives are expensive and the lack of accommodation is a disincentive to many students. So far this year, we've provided financial assistance to more than 90 nursing and allied health students undertaking placements in Burnie. Money helps, but accommodation is better!"

The number of students going to Huonville and New Norfolk is growing as well, although most of the students commute from Hobart. It is hoped that the availability of accommodation will attract students from the north of the state, while



Burnie accommodation lounge room

accommodation in Perth and Beaconsfield may entice students from the south to undertake placements in the Tamar Valley and surrounds. "We're now seeing students request placements at Latrobe because we have excellent accommodation facilities close to the hospital. We're keeping our fingers crossed that the 'Latrobe' effect transfers to smaller communities," Ms Peek said.

Funds have also been set aside to refurbish two of the CRH's older properties. Houses on Flinders Island and at George Town will have new bathrooms and kitchens which should enhance their amenity considerably. In addition, a 'furniture audit' has been conducted at all properties and there are plans to replace ageing stock. "Our houses are in great locations – they're close to health facilities as well as local shops and

services – but some of them are tired, they need a little TLC," Ms Peek said. "A new kitchen or a new dining suite can make all the difference." She anticipates the works will be completed towards the end of the year.

The funds have been made available through the Australian Government's Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training Student Expansion Project.

Further Information



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GRANTS / RESEARCH

Prospective identification of ASD in infants and toddlers: Social Attention and Communication Surveillance



I-R: Dominica Kelly (Director, Early Years Child Health and Parenting Service), Jacky Richards (Child Health Nurse - King Island) and Dr Lyndsay Quarmby (CRH)

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) are among the three most common developmental disabilities affecting children, with current prevalence rates at 1-2% of the population. The average age of diagnosis is 4.1 years in Australia (including Tasmania). Although it is a lifelong disorder, early intervention through early diagnosis provides the best opportunity to support improved developmental outcomes.

The Centre for Rural Health is partnering with the Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC), La Trobe University, the Autism Cooperative Research Centre and Child health and Parenting Service (CHaPS), Department of Health and Human Services to deliver a two year state-wide project monitoring infant and toddlers social attention and communication development to prospectively identify infants and toddlers (12-24 months) 'at risk' of an Autism

Spectrum Disorder during their routine universal child health assessments.

The project team across all partnering organisations include Dr Lyndsay Quarmby and Prof. Tony Barnett (CRH), Dr Josephine Barbaro, Assoc. Prof Cheryl Dissanayake and Dr Lauren Hollier (OTARC), Ms Dominica Kelly and Ms Jane Grose (Department of Health and Human Services). This project forms part of a larger body of work that is being undertaken by OTARC, La Trobe University in Victoria over the last 10 years.

This study has been endorsed through the Tasmanian Government Autism Advisory Panel. The Centre for Rural Health, University of Tasmania has received an Autism CRC grant totalling \$177 232 and we welcome PhD candidate Ali Morse to the project who was the successful recipient of the Autism CRC scholarship. The focus of her research will draw on implementation science to explore how change can be effectively implemented and supported to achieve the best outcomes for children and their families.



Further Information

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Research team I-R: Dr Katreena Scott (University of Toronto - holding the project report), Ms Nell Kuilenburg, Dr Romy Winter, Professor Ken Walsh, Dr Peter Lucas and Dr Clarissa Hughes (School of Health Sciences, CRH - UTAS)

Dads for Kids

UTAS team continues to work towards Safer communities.

A successful partnership between the Salvation Army (Tasmania) and the University of Tasmania is able to continue its work to reduce domestic violence and promote positive fathering, thanks to a "Building Safe Communities for Women" grant from the Australian Government's *Department of Social Services*.

"We were so pleased to hear that our DSS application was successful. Our Men's Education project identified the 'next steps' that are required to raise awareness of the effects of exposure to violence on children, and ultimately reduce family violence in Tasmania. This funding means we can make a practical contribution to this field, through the development and trialling of a training package", said project spokesperson Dr Peter Lucas.

One of the early tasks of the project will be to establish a Community of Practice (composed of representatives of organisations working with men, fathers and families and other relevant stakeholders) to ensure the relevance of the work to local communities. Mr Don McCrae from the Salvation Army will assist the community of practice to provide input into a training module and other resources designed to help break the inter-generational cycle of family violence.

Project outputs will include content for television commercials, web-based services and social media. These will form a suite of offerings that can be flexibly combined and delivered to different audiences in different settings – with a focus on innovative yet evidence-based design.



Further Information

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An interprofessional learning (IPL) opportunity for multidisciplinary health students and staff



IPL student workshop

Cross faculty staff have been implementing a range of interprofessional activities for health students at the Newham Campus, supported by a teaching and development grant.

Led by Dr Heather Bridgman (Centre for Rural Health), and involving a team from health sciences, medicine and psychology, the project consisted of three phases: 1) a pre-workshop regarding IPL for academic staff; 2) a preparatory IPL workshop for health students focused on the topic of chronic pain, and 3) a student led chronic pain group program for community participants. The aims of this project were to improve the understanding of ways to incorporate IPL into the curriculum, create greater student awareness regarding multidisciplinary collaboration for a clinical condition such as chronic pain, and contribute to sustaining the growth and development of IPL across the faculty.

The student focussed IPL workshop was held in August 2016. Thirty students attended across a range of health professions including psychology, nursing, pharmacy, medicine, health sciences and exercise physiology. The

workshop was facilitated by members of the project team and health students completed a number of dynamic interdisciplinary group activities focus around the topic of chronic pain and IPL. A range of measures were taken before and after the workshop to gather data regarding student's attitudes and general confidence relating to different aspects of interprofessional learning. Feedback from students about the workshop was very positive and confidence levels were noted to increase across the range of IPL variables measured.



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The aims of this project were to improve the understanding of ways to incorporate IPL into the curriculum and create greater student awareness regarding multidisciplinary collaboration for a clinical condition such as chronic pain

Kentish learning plan (phase2)

The Centre for Rural Health in partnership with the Faculty of Education and the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment was successful in receiving further funding from the Kentish Council to assist with the implementation of the Kentish Community Learning Plan (CLP).

The Centre for Rural Health in partnership with the Faculty of Education and the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment was successful in receiving further funding from the Kentish Council to assist with the implementation of the Kentish Community Learning Plan (CLP). The project is part of an on-going collaboration with the Kentish Council to develop place based responses to pressing socioeconomic challenges. Residents of the Kentish LGA in a recently completed community health needs mapping project identified low levels of educational

attainment and limited opportunities to engage in life-long learning opportunities as two priority issues requiring attention.

In response the Kentish Council commissioned the Centre for Rural Health and its University partners to develop a Community Learning Plan. Community Learning Plans have been utilised in many national and international communities to solidify and generate life-long learning opportunities with the aim of growing the community's socioeconomic wellbeing. Having developed the Plan, the project team received further funding to

undertake further work to support the council in the implementation of the Plan within the community. Stage 2 of the Kentish CLP project had the following aims:

- Increase awareness of the benefits of the Kentish CLP to the broader Kentish community;
- Provide opportunity for broader community input into the implementation of the plan;
- Improve linkages between business and industry and community learning through the implementation of key

CLP strategies, and;

- Design a reward and recognition framework to recognise learning achievements at an individual and community level.

A number of community engagement activities including interviews and focus groups with stakeholder groups have been employed to assist with achieving the objectives. The second stage, or implementation phase, of the project is due for completion at the end of 2016.



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Headspace evaluation project



Mrs Jozie de Deuge
(Research Assistant)

headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation which provides early intervention mental health services for 12-25 year olds. Since its development in 2006, there are now more than 90 headspace centres across Australia. It is designed to act as a 'one stop shop' for youth services and covers four core areas: mental health, physical health, work and study and alcohol and other drug services.

The headspace service in Launceston is delivered through Cornerstone Youth Services (CYS) and through The Link in Hobart. All headspace centres are funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, with funds being distributed through Primary Health Tasmania.

The University Centre for Rural Health (CRH) has been funded \$48,000 by headspace Hobart and to evaluate the program in both the North and South. The program involves three phases: (1) the development of a framework and

specifications for the evaluation, (2) a pilot, and (3) the program evaluation.

The first phase has involved an extensive literature review, the development of an appropriate evaluation framework, development of an audit tool and identification of key stakeholders. The headspace team have been engaged throughout this process to ensure the evaluation framework reflects the mission of the program and the realities of the service delivery.

The second phase of the project will

involve the implementation and piloting of the evaluation audit tool with service provider agencies as well as referral agencies, and the collection and collation of baseline information. Aligning feedback about the program with pilot outcomes, allows the survey tool to be revised.

The final phase involves evaluating the headspace program utilising the audit tool and presenting the findings.

Findings from this evaluation will help to inform North and South headspace of the efficiency of their programs and provide insight into potential ways for improving clinical pathways and services.

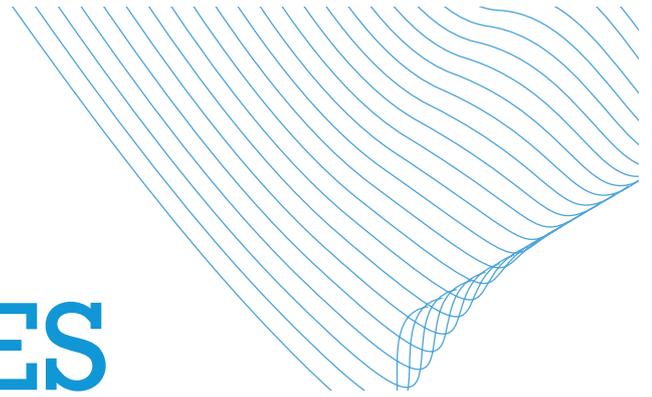
The project team consist of Dr Heather Bridgman, A/Prof Tony Barnett, Dr Pauline Marsh and Mrs Jozie de Deuge.



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EVENTS /AND/ CONFERENCES



The Rural Art Roadshow: Promoting Positive Mental Health in Rural Communities

Building on the success of the 2015 show, the Rural Art Roadshow 2016 is a collaboration between Wellways and the University of Tasmania Centre for Rural Health.

Selected works from the Minds Do Matter, 'Mental Health Begins with Me' Wellways exhibition has been showcased across the six rural communities of Scottsdale, Georgetown, Fingal, Sheffield, Smithton and Dunalloy in November and December 2016.

The Rural Art Roadshow encourages rural communities to talk about mental illness in a safe and supportive forum and work towards reducing stigma. Results of the 2015 Rural Art Roadshow survey found that the majority of community members agreed that the show was helpful to their understanding of mental health; was a welcome addition to their community activities; was something they believed would help promote conversations about mental health; should be repeated; might lessen the stigma of mental health and was something that they would encourage others to see.

All artworks on display were submitted to MI Fellowship's Minds do Matter, 'Mental Health begins with Me,' art exhibition by Tasmanian community members. All artists have been affected by mental illness in some way. The benefits of art for mental health are widely known. Art provides a safe way to express emotions and to build a new identity not based on mental illness. Participating artists have been invited to attend the opening nights in each location and talk with community members about their art. Artists were invited to participate in a follow up interview about the meaning of

their participation in the show. Community member were encouraged to tell others about the Rural Art Roadshow, start a conversation about mental illness and support those in the community affected by mental illness.



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SARRAH Conference

Stuart Auckland presented a paper "Sustaining rural communities - a case study of the benefits of charity retail outlets in rural Tasmania" at the 2016 SARRAH National Conference held at Port Lincoln, South Australia between 27th – 29th October. The presentation was based on findings from a study, funded by the St Vincent De Paul Society (Vinnies), which Stuart and his colleague's Dr Jess Woodroffe and Dr Alexandra King undertook in 2015.

The study, the first of its kind in Tasmania, involved surveying customers at each of the Vinnies 34 Tasmanian retail outlets about their perceptions of the value of the retail outlets for them as individuals and their community. The study found that the Vinnies retail outlets are overwhelmingly viewed as having broader social and economic benefits to the residents of host communities. In particular, these benefits were more evident in smaller communities where outlets were valued for providing a space for social interaction, making affordable goods to people on low incomes and building the capacity of communities. The report provided a number of recommendations on how charity retail outlets can capitalise on the study findings towards enhancing the well-being of host communities.



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Highlights of the Australian Rural Health Education Network (ARHEN) meeting

First day – “Social Sunday” program (Cultural Tour)

This year's ARHEN face-to-face meeting was held at the University of South Australia, Department of Rural Health Whyalla campus from 18th-20th September. The event kicked off with a “Social Sunday” and Welcome to country program. This program showcasing a cultural tour in the Flinders Rangers; included visits to the Arkaroo Art Site, Wilpena Station, Sacred Canyon art site, Stokes Lookout with a traditional dreamtime story of Ikara Wilpena Pound Formation. It was a long day tour as we travelled 10 hours in total (from 9am-7pm) but it was a once in a lifetime experience. The beauty of each place is beyond compare. We saw Aboriginal art dated at over 5000 years. It was great to know the spiritual and cultural value of the Aboriginal land.

Second day – ARHEN Board and staff member face-to-face meeting

The day began with a welcome breakfast and formal opening remarks from the host UDRH **A/Prof Martin Jones**. Each network has their own agenda to discuss. I was in the Executive officers network headed by our **Chair Leeanne Coonan**. We tackled three objectives: 1) performance evaluation as an EO network for the last 12 months; 2) discuss

relevant issues to be raised to the Board; 3) identify and discuss the contents that need to be reported for the Network presentation.

The EO's were privileged to be invited to join the ARHEN Board in the afternoon and to present the issues that they had identified relevant to their job and to each UDRH and particularly to the new funding agreement. The EO's have identified five key areas:

1) graduate tracking system (to suggest a nationwide tracking); 2) Re-Rural origin (totally dependent on parent university); 3) research plan template (need a formal template from DoH); 4) underspend of the AH funding; and lastly 5) timing of payment (delay of cash flow). The issues raised were positively accepted by the Board.

The social dinner on Monday night showcased the Eyre Peninsulas finest produce along with local entertainment and a special guest speaker of the night; Assistant Minister for Rural Health Dr David Gillespie.

Third day - Presentation by network group

Each network was given 10-15 minutes for their presentation. The five network groups presented on the day encompassed

the Mental health team, Pharmacy group, Aboriginal staff alliance, Student support network and the EO's. The network presentations included an overview of the last 12 months, key achievements, pressure points, and moving forward.

Network presentations showcased the fantastic work achieved for the last 12 months. It was great to actually hear how each network works together. Normally the ARHEN f2f meetings are within each network. This time, it was more open and collaborative because all networks were gathered together in one room aside from their usual network meeting.

A big thank you to **A/Prof Martin Jones** and the Whyalla team, including **Hayley Colyer, Nola Doran, and Jess Law** for their sponsorship and organisation. The meeting brought positive outcomes which imply “business is successful if you find leisure in it”.

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Papua New Guinea



Dr Len Crocombe (in the middle) with the University of PNG postgraduate dentistry students

A/Prof Len Crocombe regularly travels to Papua New Guinea (PNG) where he has an honorary professorship, as the external examiner of final year University of PNG and postgraduate dentistry

students. He is also the Patron of the PNG Dental Association. Both oral health and systemic health is poor in PNG, e.g. PNG has the highest incidence of oral cancer in the world. Many villages

are in remote areas that make it difficult for people to access health and dental services.

A/Prof Crocombe, along with Drs Mahmood Siddiqi and Gilbert Kamae recently had a research paper titled Oral Health in Papua New Guinea accepted for a special issue of Nature India. In the paper a population oral health and minimal intervention dentistry approach was recommended. At the Dental Specialty Conference in September in Alotau, Milne Bay he presented on Zero Invasion Dentistry in PNG. Delegates were excited about having a treatment that is able to halt dental caries in its tracks and could see it being used by village health workers.

Due to student unrest and the subsequent shooting of some students by PNG police, the University of PNG was closed

for some time this year. This meant that only two postgraduate students were examined in October, both of whom passed. The whole university year now has to start in October and be finished by the end of February. A/Prof Crocombe expects that he will need to return at that time to examine the final year students.

There is a lot of interest at the University for PNG-based research that will improve oral health and A/Prof Crocombe expects to be playing a large role in encouraging such research.

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Rural and remote mental health conference



L-R: Dr Heather Bridgman (Launceston TAS), Liz Martin (Broken Hill, NSW), Chantel Crinquand (Geraldton WA) Fiona Little (Tamworth NSW)

Dr Heather Bridgman (Mental Health Academic, CRH) presented a poster at the 2016 Rural and Remote Mental Health Symposium in Kingscliff NSW titled: "Student Perspectives of Recovery Camp Tasmania: An Experiential Learning Opportunity for Students of Health Disciplines and Mental Health Consumers". The conference brought together clinical practitioners, academics, service providers and mental health experts to deliberate and discuss Rural Mental Health issues confronting Australia. The conference was a good balance of research and practical strategies for enhancing mental health care in rural and remote

areas. A major focus was on the Primary Health transition commissioning services to provide mental health services. An excellent outcome was networking and meeting Tasmanian representatives from Rural Alive and Well (RAW), the Men's Shed organisation and practitioners from rural Tasmania.

Prior to the conference Heather attended an annual Mental Health Academic (MHA) meeting consisting of nine MHAs from University Departments of Rural Health Australia wide. During this meeting we discussed rural mental health collaborations around student mental health placements, assessment of competencies and suicide prevention strategies. The meeting also focused on the role of the MHAs in relation to changes in Primary Health Australia wide. This meeting was an excellent opportunity to engage with and learn from other MHAs and to foster and maintain research collaborations.



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American Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine conference



Diplomat Resort & Spa Hollywood (Venue of the conference)

Dr Lyndsay Quarmby recently attended the American Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine conference in Hollywood, Florida to present some of the findings from a NHMRC funded partnership project titled Cerebral Palsy Check Up: Providing the best service at the best time being led by the Australian Catholic University. Lyndsay presented on one of the aims of the study namely the evaluation of supports and barriers perceived by allied health practitioners over time to implement standardised routine clinical assessment for children aged 3-18 years with Cerebral Palsy.

International Congress on Palliative Care, Montreal, Canada



Dr Pauline Marsh at the International Congress on Palliative Care, Montreal, Canada

In mid-October I was fortunate to attend the International Congress on Palliative Care in the beautiful city of Montreal. Run by the McGill University, this conference has grown from humble local beginnings to be an enormous gathering of 1600 delegates from over 60 countries. I was attracted to the Congress because it takes a very broad approach to palliative

care, and this was the case again in 2016. For example, topics covered included breakthroughs in clinical treatments, an art therapy bereavement project for children and prevention strategies to limit the occurrence of significant grief. It was a celebration of innovative caring strategies, firmly based in evidence and research. It was overwhelmingly positive- an affirmation of the incredible work that is being done in this space by both academics, clinicians and community members.

Of particular interest to me, as a social researcher, was the one-day research intensive day. There was a half-day session dedicated to Participatory Research (PR) which was very informative, and extremely encouraging, especially given this is the research paradigm that has guided my recent work in the Okines Community Garden. The message was that PR is highly suitable for

end-of-life research, and has the potential to generate rich data and empower participants – carers, people with life-limiting illness, and those bereaved as well.

I presented the findings from the Walking Each Other Home project. I was part of a panel in the "Compassionate Communities" section on the third day of the four-day Congress, and the audience were warm and interested. I also attended the morning tai chi and yoga sessions – in the interest of self-care!

Following the Congress, I visited the Trent Centre for Aging and Society, part of the Trent University in the nearby city of Peterborough. I presented a lunchtime seminar to an audience of geography, nursing and sociology academics as well as community members who were working in the areas of palliative and bereavement care. I met some fascinating people and made some great

connections that will hopefully lead to future collaborations between the Centre and the CRH.

This trip was timely. The CRH is currently involved in a number of research projects related to palliative care: The Bereavement Care Networks project; Great and Good Gardening project; Dignity supported Gardening; and Living, Loving and Dying on the Tasman Peninsula. If you would like more information about any of these projects, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

This travel was part-funded by the School of Health Sciences Conference Fund.



Further Information

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