

****News from the School of Public Health and Community Medicine****

Newsletter #7; February, 2003
Edited by Sophie di Corpo

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1. Update from Head of School

2003 started with a bang. The Retreat on February 6th and 7th was extremely valuable (see comments below) although it clearly had its limitations (see below!). It was one of the first opportunities for many of us to meet to discuss issues of relevance to our future strategy and direction. As the most recently 'established' school dealing with health and society, population health, and management, this was our opportunity to begin to think about what a 21st century school might look like.

We discussed the values and objectives underpinning what we do and how we do it - with global, regional, national, and local partners, and, importantly how we work with each other and with our Centres. Further feedback is being sought (email Anna Whelan) as we move towards finalising these. The Retreat also provided an opportunity to discuss the contentious issue of workload balance and career development. We have now established a Task Group (led by Tessa Ho) which will report to the School with its recommendations by the end of April. Progress has and continues to be made in setting objectives around our other activities: research degrees (we will soon be publishing a new handbook for our research degree students; we are planning an away day; we have established and are refining our annual review procedures), postgraduate coursework (we will focus on 21st century approaches to learning and teaching, strategic developments, marketing, policies, and quality control), undergraduate education (SPHCM contribution, international health, resources), and research activities (research strategy, Centre-SPHCM relationships, choice of thematic areas). We need to continue to refine our thinking and objectives concerning our global and regional health activities.

The Retreat fed in to discussions regarding the Strategic Planning Process currently underway within the School, Faculty and UNSW. The Vice Chancellor and Dean have indicated that if UNSW is to be a leading global university it will have to have greater focus; that research needs to be strengthened; that teaching excellence needs to be promoted in all spheres of our activity; that relationships with key partners within and outside the University deserve attention; and that some activities are unsustainable and will have to cease.

I will be sending an email to all members of the School to update you, solicit your views and encourage your participation. There is strong support for taking forward some version of the theme 'Reinventing health and health care': challenging ourselves to think into the future and strive for innovation and excellence in all we do. This is an historic opportunity to work with the Faculty and others in UNSW to secure and chart our future direction, and to give it a strategic and creative edge.

As always, I welcome your comments

Anthony (a.zwi@unsw.edu.au)

2. From the Frontline

It's a girl! Sally Nathan has named her daughter Charlotte Jean Saunders, born 20 January weighing in at 3000 gms (6lbs 6oz). Congratulations from us all.

Welcome back from SSP to Stephanie Short and Rick Iedema. Stephanie spent her time at the American University in Bulgaria while Rick was mostly in the UK visiting Cardiff Centre for Health Communication Research and Durham Centre for Clinical Management Development.

A reminder to all academic staff: you are invited to attend, and even say something, at the Faculty Board meetings - March 12, May 21, July 23, October 22 - 4.30 pm Council Chambers. Would be good to see more faces from the School and our associated Centres.

Upcoming conference:

5th International Conference on the Scientific Basis of Health Services,
Washington D.C. - September 20-23, 2003 - see

<http://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/sphcm.nsf/website/forstaff.conferences>

for more details and a reminder we'd like to see reports from conferences - see

<http://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/sphcm.nsf/website/forstaff.conferencereports>

you can send Karsten (k.sommer@unsw.edu.au) the text for any additions.

Next School Meeting: focus on Strategic Planning priorities
Wednesday 5 March 1-2.30pm, room 305

3. Achievements

Summer Session

As semester one starts this week, it is worth remembering that we have just completed another successful summer session that offered a range of postgrad courses for MHA, MHSM and MPH students. 5 courses were offered with 27-38 per class, totaling nearly 150 enrolments. Courses were offered by Rick Iedema, Liz Harris, Rod O'Connor, Anna Whelan, Jan Ritchie and Lisa Maher. Summer session is one of our innovative strategies to help students graduate earlier or complete courses that they might not have been able to take during semester. Congratulations to all involved, especially Karin Banna and Michele Davies - who always ensure a smooth operation. Thanks also to Christine Rousselis who formatted and coordinated the notes and all the printing.

"Reinventing Health" in Hong Kong

The Hong Kong Hospital Authority is undergoing a major reform process, clustering their hospital services into population based areas, similar to the process in NSW in the 1980-90s. Such major health reform has been unsettling for HA staff with major changes to employment practices. A number of our School staff were selected to assist in preparing senior managers to deal with the "people" issues of this change and to work more closely with HR colleagues. Three workshops "Strategic People Management" were conducted with 40 participants in each group over the past six months. Participants ranged from Cluster Chief Executives (equivalent of our Area CEOs) in the first workshop, to Hospital Chief Executives, Cluster Chief of Services (equivalent to our Medical Director of a clinical stream), General Manager Nursing, senior HR and administrative staff. An ethical framework for dealing with change was used. Each cluster group worked on an Action Project which they presented to a HA senior panel. Some of these will be worked up for publication with the HK teams involved. UNSW SPHCM worked with 120 senior HA staff to reinvent health in HK.

Contributed by: Anna Whelan, Arie Rotem, Mary-Louise McLaws.

Congratulations also to

Stephanie Short, appointed to chair the NH&MRC Population Health Career Development Award Panel for 2003. The membership of the Ranking Panel is: Dr Stephanie Short, Chair (UNSW), Professor Brian Oldenberg (QUT) and Professor John McNeil (Monash University). There will be a special seminar on the NH&MRC Career Development Awards on March 6th at 6pm in Room 305. All welcome.

David Cooper, founding Director of NCHECR, made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO)

Jim Lawson, Emeritus Professor in our School, made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM)

Martha Lourey Bird who for the 7th year in a row is teaching 300 students (this is the maximum number taken and is consistently booked out) in the General Education subject "Concepts of Physical Fitness and Health". Martha lectures all 4 sessions and Gunilla Rupp coordinates all the tutoring. Gallia Therin, to quote Martha, "is a blessing when it comes to overall assistance". It is a mammoth task but the students love it, indeed many say it is life changing. To find out more about Martha's course see: <http://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/sphcm.nsf/coursesug/genm0703>

Anthony Zwi who received from The Nuffield Trust \$50,000 for Grant Entitled "Never too late to learn: capturing lessons from re-establishing health systems in countries emerging from conflict".

Anthony Zwi who has been invited to sit on the NH&MRC Research Fellowships Peer Review Advisory Committee for 2003.

Anna Whelan who has been invited to join the Editorial Board of the international journal, Ethnicity and Health.

Tessa Ho who has won not one, not two, but three grants to support first year teaching. Tremendous achievement. Details are found at <http://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/sphcm.nsf/website/Prog&Courses.ourteaching.awards>

2002 student prize winners

The 2 / 5 Australian General Hospital Association Prize: Catherine Hayter
The 2 / 5 Australian General Hospital Association Prize: Samantha Fraser-Bell
The 2 / 5 Australian General Hospital Association Prize in Health Services Management (Nursing): John Adrian Lepold
The Australian College of Health Service Executives Prize: Mark Gerard Zacka
The Australian Medical Association Prize for General Practice: Ainhi Ha
The Department of Health, Rural General Practice Prize: Peter Flynn, Ju-Lee Doi, Neil Sharma
The Georgouras Prize in Dermatology: Ainhi Ha
The Hunt and Hunt Health Law I Prize: Louise Zelia Kershaw
The John Hirshman Prize in Community Health / Public Health: Elizabeth Ford-Conroy
The John Hirshman International Health Prize: Nicholas James Woods
The School of Health Services Management Staff Prize: Shui Ning Rebecca Chan

4. Views on the School Retreat

To view the photos see the next page.

The School Retreat – 6 & 7 February 2003



The setting



The speakers



The presenter



The players



Food for thought



The competition

Competition:

To whom do these legs belong? Bonus points if you are able to name shade of nail polish.

We canvassed a number of staff who attended the retreat for their views on what went on and found:

Highlights:

- Anthony encouraging us to see ourselves as the "newest School of Public Health on the block" and most exciting, someone added
- The Dean - as always a persuasive speaker!
- Enjoying lunch with people not met before
- The venue - what a fab spot - sleep over next time?

Low points:

- Schedule of retreat meant not everyone could attend, especially general staff
- Domination of the discussion by particular individuals
- Need to receive the agenda and papers earlier
- Lack of relevance to general staff
- Not given enough opportunity to learn about what other people actually do in the School, what the school does as a whole and thus gain a deeper understanding of the School and its staff, roles and responsibilities to then move forward - for the benefit of the students

Revelations:

- There are people in the School who want to challenge the status quo
- be conceptual leaders
- embrace theory
- paradigm bust and reinvent health.

5. Biomedical library new book orders and more

Jill Denholm has asked for suggestions on books, videos and new serial titles that you consider should be held by the library (they also accept student recommendations). You can order books by either going to the library website <http://www.library.unsw.edu.au/~biomed/Tour.html> - request for book purchase is one of the options listed on this page, or by contacting via email Jitka Vilimovsky, j.vilimovsky@unsw.edu.au . Jitka is responsible for collection development in the Biomedical Library – Jill should be contacted re journal selection and management.

Jill has also requested you email Jitka or send her the details of the recommended books you would like ordered for your course. Include the number of students, the course code and whether or not you require the book to be placed in closed reserve.

A reminder that the biomedical library will also scan articles or link to full text articles for your online course. See Jill about this. They will also include web sites you suggest on our subject guides <http://www.library.unsw.edu.au/~biomed/subjectlst.html>

6. News from the Rural Health Unit

Rural High Schools Medicine Career Week

The need to increase the number of rural students who are enrolled in a medicine program is being addressed by the Rural Health Unit. 36 students were selected from Year 11 and 12 from rural and remote high schools in NSW to attend the Rural High Schools Medicine Career Week in January. We coordinated the week in collaboration with the University of Newcastle and the University of Sydney. The overall aim of the week was to motivate rural students to gain entry into a medicine program. The workshop exposed students to city and university life, increased their confidence and knowledge of the medicine programs offered and positively influenced their interest in studying medicine. Morgan Kent of

Gunnedah summed the week up, "I never expected this would be so helpful. We have all learnt a great deal about colleges, uni, the medicine course and study. Thanks for being a great influence." see

<http://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/sphcm.nsf/News-WPlisting>
<http://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/sphcm.nsf/b1b929b47d6c2bc7ca256bb10078acd0/ca256b27001799fbca256cc4007a237b?OpenDocument>

Rural Student Entry Scheme to Medicine 2003

Approximately 40 rural students were selected into the Medicine program for 2003 through the Rural Student Entry Scheme and through General Entry. The Rural Student Entry Scheme is a separate entry scheme for students who are classified as rural - location of the family home in a rural area (RRMA 3 - 7) in Australia during all of the students' 6 (5 in some states) high school years. For more information on the RSES selection process you can visit the Rural Health Unit web site <http://rural.med.unsw.edu.au>

Pre-Med Program for Indigenous students

This year four Indigenous students participated in the Pre Medicine Program (PMP) for Indigenous Students. PMP is a 4 week program that forms part of the selection process for Indigenous students wishing to study medicine at UNSW. During the program students study anatomy, biology, biochemistry, histology and complete an Indigenous Health research project. The Indigenous Health Unit works in conjunction with the Aboriginal Educational program to provide Indigenous students with an alternative to the faculty selection process and provide students with academic and personal support in the lead up to University – see <http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/rhu.nsf/website/home.Indigenous>

Justine Brindle

7. International Health Activities

Inaugural International Health Seminar

Decentralisation of Decision-making in Ghana - A Brave New World, presenters Augustine Asante and Anthony Zwi, Tuesday 25 March 12-1pm, room 241 Samuels, contact Tessa Ho (tessa.ho@unsw.edu.au).

International Health Meetings

The first of a series of quarterly International Health Meetings is scheduled for Tuesday 11 March from 1.00 - 3.00pm in room 214, Samuels Building. The meetings are designed to provide a forum for staff who are interested in International Health and would like to be involved in shaping the School's direction in that area. Topics to be covered in the first meeting are current developments and activities; directions for the future - a global health approach; and communications networks for keeping staff, current and past students informed of our activities. Anyone interested in attending should contact Deborah Raphael (d.raphael@unsw.edu.au) or Jenny Bolger (j.bolger@unsw.edu.au) on extension 2510.

8. Postcards from the edge - Manchester, UK Mark and Liz Harris

See the next page.

Postcard from Manchester February 2003



National Primary Care Research and Development Centre

<http://www.npcrdc.man.ac.uk>

We are based at the National Primary Care Research and Development Centre at Manchester University. The Centre is funded by the Ministry of Health on a 7 year cycle and focuses primarily on health services research.

It has 3 thematic areas of research:

1. Variations in health and the provision of care.

A central feature of this work has been the National Database of Primary Care Groups and Trusts which links national datasets containing information on population characteristics and health outcomes with information on health and social care provision for the period 1991 onwards. (www.primary-care-db.org.uk).

2. Primary care organisations:

governance, workforce and partnerships
Over the past 4 years, the Tracker Study, a large scale annual survey of Primary Care Groups and Trusts (PCG/Ts), has described all aspects of the work of these organisations including governance arrangements, budgets, information management and technology, workforce management, and partnerships.

3. Quality in health care.

This includes research into access and effectiveness. The access work has centred on developing new models of care provision which better fit lay

methods of decision making and self-care actions. A large scale study of English general practice – QUASAR – showed that there was considerable variation in the quality of general practice care, and that different types of practice performed better with regard to different aspects of care. The center is currently evaluating the impact of changes to NHS on quality of care for patients with chronic disease, the influence of practice culture on quality and the feasibility and impact of releasing performance data on practices to the public.

What we are doing at NCP CRD

Our own goals for our time here are to learn from the work of the Centre and explore opportunities for collaboration especially in relation to:-

- Inequalities in access to quality primary health care
- The link between practice organisation and culture and quality of care
- The link between organisation and management of PCTs or Divisions and their quality of care for chronic diseases.
- Development of indicators for quality of care in primary health care.

We also hope to do some writing while we are here.

Some of our work outside the Centre

Our planned work outside the center includes:

- Visits to senior GPs involved with Primary Care Trusts
- Visits to other Universities – Edinburgh, Liverpool, Nottingham
- Conferences in UK and Europe
 - Conference on Health Impact Assessments in Birmingham
 - Conference on Global Standards in Medical Education for Better Health Care in Denmark

UK and Ireland Conference Health Impact Assessment in Birmingham: February 5 – 6, 2003

There has been significant progress in undertaking health impact assessments and developing their methodology. This will inform our work in NSW.

A number of interesting issues are emerging such as whether health impact assessments are a scientific or a political tool.

The influence of health impact assessments are now being demonstrated. For example health impact assessments on large airport redevelopments have resulted in increased employment opportunities for local residents and reduced air pollution through the development of alternate transport links to the airport.

Some photos:

View from our flat one morning



The Peak district at sunset



View from our desk

