

*****News from the School of Public Health and Community Medicine; Newsletter #12, September 1 2003*****

Edited by Sophie di Corpo

1. Update from the Head of School
2. From the Frontline
3. News from the Research Committee
4. Developing courses – a resource for staff
5. Using educational technology
6. Upcoming events and reports from recent ones
7. Postcards from the edge – Leah Bloomfield in the Maldives

1. Update from the Head of School

August has been challenging at numerous levels – personally and at work. Major School developments have seen the departure of Gallia Therin (Bon voyage!) and the first month of Paddy Fitzgerald (Welcome!) heading up our Administrative team. Two Centres (Culture and Health; Clinical Governance Research) plus a group of PhD students have been settled into the Ground Floor of Samuels Building. Occupational Health and Safety has received more attention in the last month than in the last year and we are busily setting up systems, procedures and policies (thank you especially to Justine Brindle j.brindle@unsw.edu.au and to Paddy Fitzgerald paddy.fitzgerald@unsw.edu.au for actively moving this forward). The University and Faculty are taking OH&S very seriously; the School is similarly committed and appreciates the work put in by members of the OH&S Level 3 Committee within the School. We will be audited on aspects of our OH&S systems in October – so this requires all our attention.

A number of new staff have joined us – welcome to new Admin staff who introduce themselves below, and Lisa Pulver-Jackson who has taken on the challenge of engaging in and building indigenous health research capacity. Given our three research priority areas : ethics, social justice and equity; health services and systems; and priority public health issues – alcohol and drugs, HIV, injuries and violence. All will be tackled with a local, national and international focus. The School research strategy is being developed under the guidance of the Research Development Committee, chaired by Liz Harris (e.harris@unsw.edu.au); we will start to raise the profile of research by holding a series of workshops to help shape and sharpen research proposals for submission over the coming months.

On September 4th we have our first Annual Research Students Retreat – nearly 30 PhD students will be presenting their plans, methods, concepts, results, or thoughts and will be engaging with a wide range of School and external experts and discussants. This will undoubtedly be one of the highlights of our annual calendar – thank you especially to Lisa Maher (l.maher@unsw.edu.au) for driving this forward so enthusiastically. We have recently completed another Annual Review cycle for our research degree students – this worked extremely well and smoothly due to the efforts of all staff who gave their time, alongside the help and guidance of Deborah DeBono and Mary Louise McLaws.

Other staff news is also of note: congratulations to **Liz Harris** for her Public Health Impact Award.... Farewell and good luck to **Stephanie Short** who will be moving to Griffith University, School of Public Health. Stephanie has made a major contribution to medical sociology and health policy research and teaching in UNSW and nationally; we wish her well in her new challenges as Professor and Head of School. Congratulations to **Mary Lou McLaws** who has been promoted to Associate Professor – demonstrating that service, teaching and research are all recognised in the promotion stakes, and not only research! Congratulations also to **Jennifer Gray** who has been appointed Conjoint Associate Professor (welcome and well done!) and last but not least, to **Dennis McDermott** who has just published a wonderful collection of poetry titled 'Dorothy's skin'. Go out and get yourself a copy for Dennis to sign!

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

2. From the Frontline

Moving and shaking – it has been a busy month at the school with new staff joining us, long-standing staff leaving us and still-standing staff moving around us...

New staff

We warmly welcome:

Paddy Fitzgerald, Executive Officer

I am very pleased to join Public Health and Community Medicine as the new School Executive Officer. I have always had an interest in working in areas which support health and community well being. I completed my Bachelor of Commerce degree at the University of Wollongong whilst working at the former Electricity Commission. I was lucky enough to be awarded a Scholarship to study full time. After completion of my degree I was appointed Finance Manager in the Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences initially supporting Professor Christine Ewan and then Professor Charles Watson as the Dean of the Faculty. The Faculty comprised Biomedical Science, Nursing, Public Health and Psychology. It was during my time working with Charles which was such a wonderful experience for me that he spoke highly of the Faculty of Medicine at UNSW and I learnt about his rat, Brain Atlas which made interesting conversation at morning tea.

I left the University and briefly worked in the Registry at Royal Holloway, University of London. Walking to work in snow was too much for me and I escaped to the sun of Greece and Africa. The safari in Africa took me to Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania and to my pleasant surprise I have been to Arusha the home town of one of our postgraduate students. On returning from Africa I commenced working as Department Manager of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Sydney. I managed a diverse operation of staff and enjoyed getting to know our honours and PhD students and to see the academics achieve success in their research. Whilst Manager of the Department I completed my Master of Business Administration and I went on to become Finance Manager in the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, Faculty of Arts. I particularly enjoyed the work of the Archaeologists and I was intending to go on an Archaeological dig but I think my job here will now keep me very busy indeed. Work and study has kept me very busy and I am now returning to more leisurely pursuits. I enjoy bushwalking, tennis, travelling, the Arts and of course my labrador, Tawny who is a loyal friend and my pride and joy.

I would like to thank Anthony and all the staff in the School for making me feel so welcome. Whilst I am on a steep learning curve coming into a new organisation I am enjoying my role as Executive Officer. I also would like to encourage all staff as well as the staff in our Research Centres to know that I am here to provide support and or advice. I know I have not managed to meet everybody yet but will do so with time. Best Wishes to all. Paddy

Deb Miller, Administrative Assistant

I joined the University in 1998 with the Office of the Dean and have been under the umbrella of the Faculty of Medicine since then. I have been associated within the School of Medical Sciences, Department of Anatomy, Department of Physiology & Pharmacology and School of Health Service Management before the merge. I am permanently with School of Public Health and Community Medicine in the main office area and I am thrilled to be back in the School once again.

Vanessa Anderson, Administrative Assistant

For the past two years I have worked in two Legal Firms as a Legal Secretary. I have completed a Diploma in Business Administration at St Patrick's Business College and am currently studying part time at Randwick TAFE. My interests include travelling, touch football, netball and swimming. I am happy to join the School of Public Health and Community Medicine and look forward to meeting and working with everyone.

Deborah Debono, Post-graduate Research Co-ordinator Support Officer and Medical and Community Human Research Ethics Advisory Panel (Panel G) Support Officer

I began working in this position in late June, though I have been around the School over the past 8 years as a Research Assistant. I have a background in nursing and an Arts Degree (Psych Hons). I work here three days a week and confess that I love it!

So long Stephanie...

Dr Stephanie Short joined the School of Health Services Management in July 1992 but leaves us soon to head north to warmer climes and to take up the position of Professor and Head of the School of Public Health at Griffith University. A few words from colleagues and former students capture Stephanie's years with the school, university and wider community:

The School of Public Health and Community Medicine is losing one of its most distinguished academics. Our dear Stephanie Short is leaving us to take a position of great responsibility at Griffith University where, I'm very sure, she'll excel in managing their School of Public Health. I had the pleasure of knowing Stephanie as a student and as a colleague. As a student, I was always impressed by her high academic standards and her apparently easy way of stimulating the most intellectual debates on her lectures, inspiring us all to read and learn more. As a colleague, I've found in Stephanie a very sensitive and warm-hearted person. Adios, dear Stephanie, Fernando

Dr. Fernando Infante, Research Associate, Centre for General Practice Integration Studies

Stephanie Short has made an immense contribution to the Public Health Association of Australia during her period at UNSW. She was a very energetic and committed President of the NSW Branch. She has also served on the National Council and has been active in the activities of the Political Economy of Health Special Interest Group. The Queensland Branch is gaining a great PHAA member.

Peter Sainsbury, Director, Division of Population Health, Central Sydney Area Health Service, Associate Professor, School of Public Health, University of Sydney, President, Public Health Association of Australia

Apart from her academic successes, Stephanie was the Conference Convenor for the PHAA's National Conference in Sydney in 2001. This was acclaimed as one of the PHAA's most successful, and allowed delegates to explore a very wide range of public health issues. It was her enthusiasm and foresight that made this happen. She will be a distinguished Professor of Public Health at a University that has an acknowledged high standard in this complex and changing discipline.

Peter Trebilco, Visiting Fellow and Vice President (Finance) PHAA

Stephanie to me has been a teacher, colleague, and friend... as a teacher she has been an inspiration, as a colleague she built my confidence and as a friend she has always been there for me through all my trying times in Australia. Thank you for everything Stephanie!! While I am sad to see her leave UNSW I do believe our loss is a big gain for someone else. I wish Stephanie all the success in her new position.

Seema Sharif, Population Health Officer, Multicultural Health Unit, South East Health

Stephanie Short is one of those very special academics who gives generously to her colleagues as well as to her own career. Her willingness to contribute to NTEU activities is just one example of this generosity, but one with which I am most familiar. Her departure from UNSW will mean the loss of one of the union's most effective activists: her wisdom, tact, intelligence and broad perspective will be sorely missed. Rae Frances, Academic Representative on UNSW Council (former president UNSW Branch, NTEU)

I feel very privileged to have had Stephanie as Supervisor for my Final Project. She is so inspiring and a fantastic role model. I think Griffith University is a very lucky to have her.

Bronwyn Scott, Data Analyst HACC, PADP & ABI Primary Health and Community Care Branch

Stephanie's "sociological imagination" (to quote a legendary sociologist) has been a great support to me in my work with the SouthEast Sydney Area Health Service in developing strategies to improve the quality use of medicines. I will miss that, but her new position is richly deserved.

Professor Andrea Mant, QUM Advisor, SESAHS

Location, location, location

A note from **Karin Banna**

Many of you may have seen lots of furniture walking past your door in the last couple of weeks and you may be wondering why!

There have been a number of moves in the School and one of them is the move of postgraduate coursework administration to rooms 234, 235 and 236 on Level 2. This move provides us with the opportunity to work more closely together. Let me introduce you to our team and what we do:

Tessalonica Ho - Administrative Assistant

Tessalonica is our first point of call for students who visit. She also manages assignments and class lists, and liaises with Christine Rousselis to send out course notes for courses across all postgraduate coursework programs. Tessalonica assists students with a whole range of issues and queries. She works closely with other members of the postgrad administrative team. She is also now managing our library of major projects which has moved down with us.

Sonal Bhalla - Administrator, Health Management Programs

Sonal administers MHA, MHSM and GradCertHSM programs from initial application, enrolment, progression and graduation and also administers the Hong Kong School.

Dianne Montgomerie - Administrator, Public Health Programs

Administration of our Public Health programs from initial application, enrolment, progression, major projects, cross-institutional enrolment and graduation.

Di and Sonal work closely together in planning and integrating administrative processes such as timetabling, ordering of texts, room bookings, entering of results, production and distribution of information for students and solving student queries and problems.

Christine Rousselis - Publications Coordinator

We are now also located near Christine Rousselis who manages preparation and production of course notes as part of her many responsibilities in the IT team!

Karin Banna - Postgraduate Coursework Administrator

My focus is to ensure that our team works smoothly and also to work closely with Alan Hodgkinson on developing systems and procedures that develop our programs. For example: proposals for new or revised courses/programs, liaison with Faculty about fees, handbooks, statistics, ensuring that we comply with university-wide requirements and also administration of Clinical Education and Geriatric Medicine programs and General Education courses.

You are welcome to visit us at our new location!

And from **Michelle Davies**

With the recent departure of Gallia Therin and Jenny Heeks, a new position was created within the School to take on the Undergraduate Administration load that Gallia and Jenny carried so wonderfully. Those are pretty big boots to fill, but hopefully I'll get there one day!

Basically, I'm here to help with all student administrative matters related to our undergraduate teaching. At the moment, my primary focus is our 4th Year Population and Community Health Term and 5th Year

Geriatrics/General Practice/Subspecialties Term, as well as preparation for the introduction of the New Medicine Program in 2004, which will be loads of fun I'm sure! So for the time being, my role is a mixture of new and old challenges which is quite exciting!

Along with the Postgrad Team, I too have moved... I am now located on Level 3, Room 323, feel free to visit!

Hey great and well done to:

Mary-Louise McLaws – who, as Anthony mentioned, has been promoted to Associate Professor

Liz Harris: who received the Public Health Association NSW Public Health Impact Award for 2003 at the annual general meeting. This was particularly in recognition for her work on the NSW Health Equity Statement and Primary Health Policy, co-chairing of the PHC network for the Health Inequalities Collaboration, co-authoring of the NHMRC guidelines on including equity in evidence based guideline development and work on Health Impact Assessment in Australia.

See attached for photo which shows Liz receiving the award from Jim Hyde, NSW PHA president on Thursday 7th August 2003.



Update on Occupational Health & Safety

Anthony has approved placement of the draft OHS Management responsibility statement and the draft Hazard and Incident Reporting procedure on our website under school policies and procedures. Staff have until the the end of the first week of September to provide feedback to Paddy Fitzgerald regarding these documents as we need to institute them as School Policy before the upcoming OHS audit. The Audit date for the SPHCM has been extended but not yet finalised, we are looking at around the 9th October.

THANKYOU!!

On behalf of the School Mary-Louise and Deborah would like to thank Jan Ritchie, Deborah Black, Arie Rotem, Maree Teesson, Anthony Zwi, Lisa Maher, Andrew Grulich, John Kaldor, Ros Sorensen, Tessa Ho, Rick Iedema, Kevin Forde, Anna Whelan, Jim Lawson and Adrian Bauman for acting as Panel Members for the Annual Reviews held in August.

We are hoping that all academic staff will be able to participate as Panel members at some stage to spread the load. Suggestions of appropriate experts to sit on the Annual Review Panels will be very welcome.

3. News from the Research Committee

We will be having an NHMRC Breifing Meeting from 12-3 on 2nd September at the Centre for General Practice Integration Studies. The Head of the UNSW Research Office, James Walsh, will speak on general opportunities for research with NHMRC and ARC. Prof Jeanette Ward and Prof Sally Redman will address specific areas including project grants and career development awards.

Out of this meeting we hope to identify people who would like to develop a proposal for submission for funding in 2004. We are limiting the session to 20 people mainly because of space but also because we would like to provide substantial support for those wanting to develop proposals. RSVP to Jacqui.Miller@unsw.edu.au

4. Developing courses – a resource for staff

If you are about to embark on new course development or re-development of an existing course, the Professional Education Group (PEG) of the school would like to hear from you. PEG is currently reviewing the resource it developed earlier this year to help academic staff think through issues in course design. Please give some thought as to what you would require by way of support for your course re/development – both in terms of content covered and mode of delivery - some ideas so far have included a series of workshops for course developers to target some fundamental aspects of course design such as writing learning outcomes and designing assessment, a written self-instructional package with a guide to the most pertinent literature, a combination of the these - please let us know what your needs and/or ideas are in this area – to do so contact Sophie on behalf of PEG, s.dicorpo@unsw.edu.au

5. Using educational technology for teaching and learning

If you are considering, or indeed already, using educational technology for your teaching and learning, such as audio, video, Web, CDs or WebCT, you may be pleased to know there is soon to be a draft policy from the school's Educational Technology Committee (ETC) which outlines a set of procedures and resources to support these, see:

<http://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/sphcm.nsf/website/forstaff.policies&procedures>

The ETC will be seeking feedback on this draft document so the policy can be finalised as soon as possible. The draft will be posted on the website next week - to comment on this policy, you can use the discussion area in WebCT or contact Sophie or Karsten directly s.dicorpo@unsw.edu.au, k.sommer@unsw.edu.au

6. Upcoming events and reports from recent ones

Postgraduate Student Retreat

Plans have been finalised for the inaugural SPCHM Postgraduate Research Student Retreat to be held next Thursday, 4 September at the Little Bay Conference Centre. The printed program and book of abstracts showcases the impressive array of research being undertaken by our students. The program consists of eight sessions of papers organised into two concurrent streams around the following themes: Health Promotion, Culture and Health, Clinical Decision making, Health Inequalities, Health Services, HIV and Hepatitis C and Women's and Children's Health. Students in each session will present their work and be provided with individual feedback from expert discussants. A series of policy and practice roundtables are planned for the late afternoon on the following topics: "How to Manage Your Supervisor", "How to Write and Publish as You Go" and "Making the Review Process Work for You". The day will culminate in a dinner and prize giving ceremony with Professor Sally Redman from The Institute for Health Research. All faculty and research students are strongly encouraged to attend and if you have not already done so, please indicate your attendance to Deborah Debono (d.debono@unsw.edu.au) asap.

UNSW Expo

The UNSW Expo will be held on the 6th September from 9am-5pm and is a great opportunity for you to bring along your family and friends, see: <http://www.med.unsw.edu.au/expo/home.htm>
The Expo will feature a wide range of exhibits and entertainment demonstrating the diversity of the Uni as well as Courses and Careers Day in the Roundhouse. Staff and students are available to discuss the programs offered at UNSW, student advisers are also on hand to talk to students about the program they are currently enrolled in. There is an amazing program for the day that ranges from walking through the mouth of a human body at the entry to the Wallace Wurth to plastering an arm or taking a personality test. During the day the Faculty offers a series of lectures where our own **Martha Lourey Bird** will be talking about 'Exercise the good medicine' - for more information on the lecture series please visit the following web site <http://www.med.unsw.edu.au/expo/lecture.htm>

Justine Brindle in the Rural Health Unit will be hosting a 2 day workshop for rural high school students interested in medicine as a career. Thirty Year 11 students have been selected from regional and remote high schools to visit the faculty of medicine for interactive talks, a visit to POW, engage in a scenario based session and learn more about the new medicine program. The high school students will have a rural medical student buddy to accompany them to the Expo. They will be shown around the Faculty of Medicine and UNSW. It will give the students the opportunity to ask lots of questions or voice any concerns they may have in relation to coming to UNSW to study.

The Australian Health Care Summit 2003 – Jan Ritchie

August 17, 2003, saw quite a few School staff arriving at Old Parliament House in Canberra to participate in the three-day Australian Health Care Summit, 2003. These were Jeffrey Braithwaite and Ros Sorenson representing the Centre for Clinical Governance Research, Liz Harris invited for her equity expertise, Helen Lapsley for her economic analysis of prevention, Sylvia Jacobson for her work with divisions of general practice and I, representing the Australian Health Promotion Association. The Summit was set up as a direct result of the Commonwealth Government's refusal to discuss health care reform in the Health Care Agreements which have been scheduled to be signed by August 31, 2003. Since April 2002, there had been a great deal of discussion around nine major areas of reform, but these ideas and concepts were not integrated or entertained in the proposal put forth by Senator Kay Patterson, Commonwealth Minister for Health, to the state health ministers. When it became obvious that reform had dropped off the agenda, Professor John Dwyer of our Faculty, in his role as Head of the National Public Health Clinicians Taskforce, initiated an action group in June this year that eventually formed the

Australian Health Reform Alliance to host a national health summit with its purpose being to redefine the principles behind the national health system.

The Summit was planned to draw public and political attention to the need to get a broad national reform agenda back on track and to identify and address other gaps in the original nine point reform process. The major theme of the Summit was: 'What sort of national health system do Australians want, need and support? And can we afford it?' For a detailed summary of the summit see <http://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/sphcm.nsf/website/forstaff.conferencereports>

7. Postcard from the Edge – Leah Bloomfield from the Maldives

38 splash, 39 gurgle, 40 splutter. I've finished my laps and will soon slump into a poolside chair, G&T in hand, to watch the sun dip below the blazing horizon. The end of another tough day in the Maldives. Well that's one version. There's another version. I'm here doing curriculum development work with the Faculty of Health Sciences. "Work! Yeah, right" you say and I will acknowledge that this is scarcely a hardship post. I will also protest that I actually do work but you won't believe me. Your images will be of tropical island paradise, swaying coconut palms, fine white sands, jewel blue sea, world-class scuba diving. And you'd be right. Tourism has visibly enriched the country, or at least the capital, and the changes are extraordinary enough for the Maldives to no longer be classified as one of the least developed nations.

Five years ago, on my first visit, tiny Male' was a maze of coral-walled compounds, each with their jumble of single-room family dwellings. The tallest building was the Friday mosque. The dirt lanes and roads, crowded with pedestrians and bicycles, turned to mud puddles in the rain. The island was divided neatly into four by the only two paved roads. Now Male' is a giant demolition and construction site. Another cubist-style, trendily coloured, multi-storey, glass and concrete apartment building goes up every few weeks. The graceful traditional court-yarded buildings like the Indian Embassy are completely surrounded. All streets are paved (although they still flood very readily); the cyclists have graduated to motor scooters, sedans and 4WD. These are the ultimate status symbol on these narrow, crowded streets where the extreme flatness is relieved only by the new speed humps and where walking at a reasonable pace will take you around the perimeter of the island in less than one hour.

Some people are doing very well indeed. Gift shops, fashion boutiques, electronics and white goods stores line the main streets, yet you don't need to look very far to find real hardship and poverty in those dark over-crowded compounds. And the prosperity of the capital has hardly reached the outer islands where people still live more or less a subsistence lifestyle.

I count myself lucky to be involved in this (my second) "capacity-building" aid project. I've been coming here long enough to see the old Institute of Health Sciences become the more prestigious Faculty of Health Sciences (of which PhD candidate Husna Razee is the former Dean). I've had the pleasure of watching the staff gain the skills and confidence to make the extensive curriculum changes required by the new Maldives Accreditation Board and the College of Higher Education. I now know some teachers well enough to be invited home to glimpse extended family home life, a welcome interruption to the anonymity of living in a hotel. I've learned how to order my favourite "short eats" in Dhivehi – this always brings a laugh. And it's personally rewarding to be a part of an aid project that is actually making a long-term difference.