

## CAPABILITY STATEMENT

# Health Promotion

Jan Ritchie & Anne Bunde-Birouste

The School of Public Health and Community Medicine has a strong commitment to the promotion of health through many facets of its work. Health promotion is seen as an essential part of public health/population health policy and practice and as such, is integrated into most of the teaching, research and service programs of the School.

Specific health promotion activity is undertaken in the following areas:

- **Teaching**  
Within the postgraduate educational programs offered by the School, *Health Promotion* is a core course for the Masters Degree in Public Health, and relevant complementary courses include *Influencing Health Beliefs and Health Behaviours*, *Community Development*, and *The Social Determinants of Health* among others. In addition, School staff members are contributing health promotion perspectives to the newly developing undergraduate medical curriculum which commences in 2004. Health promotion workshops, seminars and short courses on discrete aspects of the topic are offered when required. An example of the latter is a newly developed short course which will run in Session 2, 2003 on the topic of *Globalisation, development and health promotion: putting evidence into practice*.
- **Research**  
Health promotion research at the School focuses on two facets of the study of health promotion. The first approaches from a behavioural epidemiology view in researching risk factors, health and disease determinants, and trends in lifestyle behaviour patterns through quantitative research methods. The second focuses on studies that investigate community development approaches, socio-ecological contexts and policy changes for health. Here qualitative research methods and participatory action research techniques are particular strengths.
- **Service**  
The School works closely with government departments at federal, state and local levels, with non-government organisations such as the Cancer Council and the National Heart Foundation, and with community organisations and patient action groups. Staff members actively contribute to health promotion projects in countries in the Asia Pacific region.
- **Partnerships**  
Increasingly, partnerships are being developed with other groups to better promote health. The School works very closely with UNSW centres to achieve its goals. Close working relationships exist with the Centre for Equity and Primary Health Care, the Centre for Culture and Health, the National Centre for HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, the Centre for HIV Social Research, the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre and the Institute of Environmental Studies.

The ***Alliance in International Health Promotion*** is a recent collaboration between the School and the Australian International Health Institute (AIHI). The Alliance aims to foster the involvement of the above-mentioned groups from UNSW with external agencies such as Australian Centre for Health Promotion as well as international partners. It will operate under an annual program of work and while each component will have its specific outcomes, many will be interrelated and provide a cohesive overall strategy for international health promotion in resource-poor settings.

Specific aims of the Alliance are to:

- develop international health promotion training in partnership with collaborating institutions in resource poor settings;
- apply health promotion principles and practice in health and conflict situations (preventing violence, conflict, promoting peace and contributing to peacebuilding);
- develop initiatives in support of mental health promotion in resource poor settings;
- contribute to leadership development in international health promotion; and
- contribute to the evidence base for health promotion practice through research and publications.

In addition to the above specific aims, the Alliance plans to engage in global, regional and local partnerships in health promotion program development, capacity building and development assistance in mental health promotion, tobacco control, HIV/AIDS, non communicable diseases, and immunisation. An emerging area of interest is the promotion of health through peace-building and post-conflict resolution.

For further information contact:

Jan Ritchie, email [J.Ritchie@unsw.edu.au](mailto:J.Ritchie@unsw.edu.au)

Anne Bunde-Birouste email [ab.birouste@unsw.edu.au](mailto:ab.birouste@unsw.edu.au)