

News from the School of Public Health and Community Medicine

Newsletter #17; June 2004

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July edition deadline 2 July all items to k.forde@unsw.edu.au

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1. Research student retreat
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Just a reminder that the School's 2nd Annual Postgraduate Research Student Retreat is on Friday 25th June at the Little Bay Conference Centre. For catering purposes, please forward your RSVP via email to: reception-sphcm@unsw.edu.au indicating whether you will be staying for lunch and/or drinks/finger food.

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2. Staff achievements
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Professor Jeanette Ward has been appointed as a Councillor, Australasian Faculty of Public Health medicine. Jeanette has also been invited to join the Getting Research Into Policy and Practice (GRIPP) Committee of NSW Health and the Institute for Health Research. Anthony Zwi co-chairs this Committee with Dr Greg Stewart, the Chief Health Officer of NSW Health.

Professor Robyn Richmond recently graduated with a Master in Higher Education. She has been studying for the Masters since second session 1999, completing 1-3 subjects each year. Robyn says that the reason for doing the MHEd is that she wanted to learn about a range of alternative forms of teaching, learning, assessing and course designing in order to apply this knowledge to the new medical program. The topic of her major project was: "Implementing a tobacco curriculum globally". In this project she addressed the paucity of teaching programs and materials to teach about tobacco in medical schools. The aims were to: (1) determine the use of the tobacco curriculum that we had developed and implemented at the UNSW globally; (2) identify the factors associated with successful implementation of the curriculum; (3) describe the barriers to implementation experienced by medical schools; and (4) develop a model of implementation of the tobacco curriculum. This research facilitated the development of a 6-point model of the process of implementation of the tobacco curriculum that Robyn applied to the experience of implementing the tobacco curriculum into China.

Sophie di Corpo will take part in the Innovative Teaching and Educational Technology Fellowship (ITET 5) Scheme (some people will do anything to get out of editing the school newsletter). This scheme is designed to enable staff from different faculties to work together as a group on an intensive program to increase their knowledge of best practice in learning and teaching, further develop skills in educational technology and work on a special online project, with a view to passing these skills on to the faculty and wider university community. The focus of ITET 5 will be exploration of the use of WebCT Vista as a Learning Management System to potentially replace WebCT CE. This includes taking part in a program of workshops on the Guidelines on Learning that Inform Teaching at UNSW (<http://www.guidelinesonlearning.unsw.edu.au/>) with a view to application of the Guidelines in

the Vista supported course. ITET5 will run over the whole of Session 2, 2004 so Sophie will be unavailable for comment, or anything else for that matter, during this time.

Anthony Zwi has been asked to serve an additional term (2004 - 2006) as a Member on the Committee on Social, Economic and Behavioural Research of the Strategic Research Steering Committee (STR-SC) of the UNICEF/UNDP World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR).

Lisa Maher presented numerous papers at the recent International Harm Reduction Conference in Melbourne; Anton Clifford presented a poster; and Robyn Richmond presented two papers and a poster

3. Media monitor

Associate professor Mary-Louise McLaws was quoted in the Sunday Telegraph regarding needle stick injuries in the May 23, 2004 issue. This news item has now been added to the SPHCM website -

<http://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/sphcm.nsf/news-weblink/9F000A704B?OpenDocument>

Mary-Lou was also quoted on the same subject in the Health and Science section of the Sydney Morning Herald.

If you are quoted in the media please let the newsletter editor and/or Karsten (k.sommer@unsw.edu.au) know and links can be placed on the website. This can help lift the public profile of the school.

4. School website

To give you some indication of the importance of the School's website in communicating with existing and potential students, the following figures relate to the six months to December 2003.

Visitors:

Total Visits: 60,526 (56% increase from previous report)
Unique Visitors: 19,327 (63% increase from previous report)
Average per Day: 327 (208% increase from previous report)
Average Visit Length: 00:12:43 mins (36% decrease from previous report)
International Visits: 49% (9% decrease from previous report)
Visits of Unknown Origin: 26% (same as previous report)
Visits from Australia: 20% (5% increase from previous report)

Most visited areas:

1. Programs & Courses (same as previous report)
2. For Students (same as previous report)
3. Course Information - GENM0703

Most downloaded files:

1. S1 2004 PostGrad External Timetable - 1082 times
2. Health and Safety in Family Day Care - 1075 times
3. 2003 Postgraduate Handbook - 956 times
4. S2 2003 PostGrad External Timetable - 727 times
5. X1 2004 PostGrad External Timetable - 677 times (new entry)

Christine Rousselis does a great job making School publications look professional as well as giving them a consistent layout. The following School Templates can now be downloaded from the Web.

Course Guide Template
PowerPoint Templates
School Logos
School Letterhead
School Seminar Templates

The address is:

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

5. Career opportunities

· Harkness Fellowships 2005-06

These Fellowships provide an opportunity for mid-career health policy researchers and practitioners from the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand, to spend up to 12 months in the United States conducting a policy-oriented research study, working with leading U.S. health policy experts, and gaining an in-depth knowledge of the U.S. health care system. Under a new partnership between The Commonwealth Fund and The Health Foundation, the program includes two additional U.K. fellowships targeted at health care practitioners and supported by The Health Foundation.

Applicants must demonstrate a strong interest in health policy issues and propose a research study that falls within the scope of The Commonwealth Fund's national program areas. Among the issues the Fund addresses are improving health insurance coverage and access and improving the quality of health care services.

The deadline for receipt of applications is September 1, 2004. Each fellowship will provide up to \$US95,000 (about \$A135,000) in support, which includes round trip airfare to the United States, a monthly living allowance, travel to seminars and policy briefings, project-related travel and other research expenses, tuition for related academic courses, health insurance, and U.S. taxes. In addition, a family supplement is available to fellows accompanied by a spouse and/or children.

To obtain further information about the Fellowship program, including a List of Suggested Projects, please see The Commonwealth Fund's webpage at <http://www.cmf.org>

· Primary Care Liaison Officer

A full time position for a Primary Care Liaison Officer has become available at the Australian Society for HIV Medicine in Sydney. Application kits are available from the ASHM website: <http://www.ashm.org.au>

6. Upcoming events

The Annual Conference of the Association for Health Professional Education will be held in Adelaide from Thursday June 24th - Sunday June 27th, at the Holiday Inn on Hindley St.

The theme this year is 'Maintaining Momentum: Anticipating, Innovating, Facilitating, Participating, and Evaluating'. Keynote speakers include Prof. Gordon Page (from British Columbia, Canada), Prof. Fran Baum (from Adelaide) and Assoc. Prof. Ian Anderson (from Melbourne).

Further information is available on the SPHCM website at:
<http://sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/sphcm.nsf/website/forstaff.conferences>

7. After hours

A film that health and spiritual care professionals have found highly valuable is Allan King's "Dying at Grace". There are two screenings planned for Monday June 14 at 10 am and Wednesday June 16 at 6pm at the Dendy Opera Quays Cinema.

Another film that should appeal to health care professionals is "Supersize Me" – a documentary about an American who decides to really embrace today's modern lifestyle – eating at McDonald's and getting no exercise. He eats McDonald's exclusively for 30 days, takes the Supersize option when prompted by the McDonald's staff and tries to walk as little as possible. The end result is a gain of 25lbs in weight and a lot of disapproving looks from his vegan girlfriend. Just to show the impact this documentary can have, at the session I attended three teenage boys got up half way through the screening went to the theater's candy bar and came back with about 1 litre of coke each!

8. Helen Haines report's from Sweden

In January this year when most UNSW students were enjoying the summer holidays, I was lucky enough to don my long johns, woolly hat and mittens and head over to the University of Uppsala, Sweden as an exchange student. Uppsala is forty minutes north of Stockholm and is the oldest university in Scandinavia, being founded in the 14th century. There are around 40,000 students.

As part of my Master of Public Health at UNSW, I took an elective in International Health at the Department of Women's and Children's Health lead by some great researchers in Professors Lars Åke Perrson Gunilla Lindmark and Dr. Pia Olsson. Sweden of course is well known for the large contribution it makes to international health and humanitarian assistance and I benefited enormously from spending the Spring semester with leaders in this field. Strange as it was to be studying tropical medicine when it is minus 15 outside, the Swedes brought the realities of public health in low income countries to life through project work, films, guest lecturers and seminars.

While in Sweden I was keen to explore the public health system particularly relating to maternity care which is my professional interest. I undertook several field trips to local midwifery clinics and hospitals and found some models of care which I believe could well be adapted to the Australian context. Again I met some leaders in this field and was inspired to undertake some joint work with them on my return to Australia.

My situation was a little different from most other exchange students in that I was accompanied by my husband and three children. Our kids went to international school in Uppsala where they joined classes with children from all over the world. We have all loved the Swedish lifestyle and made the most of opportunities to ice skate on the frozen lakes, ski the wonderful forest trails and even tried our hand at some dog sledding north of the Arctic Circle. While I cannot honestly recommend pickled herring I can recommend a trip to a Scandinavian winter – you will receive a warm welcome.

Studying abroad has been a fantastic opportunity for me both professionally and socially. I have made some wonderful contacts in my field of midwifery and forged what I think will be life long friendships. There are many similarities between our two countries and some profound differences – I have learnt from both.