



McCaughey Centre eNewsletter December 2008

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Director's Report

As we approach the end of the year I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank everyone associated with the McCaughey Centre for all the hard work, creativity and dedication which have led to the rapid growth and outstanding achievements of the Centre during 2008.

Since its launch just 18 months ago the McCaughey Centre, VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Community Wellbeing has become a widely respected research and policy catalyst, building and communicating a diverse body of evidence and new ideas about the foundations of community wellbeing and the sources of health inequalities. The McCaughey Centre's section of the [Melbourne School of Population Health Annual Report](#) (pages 47 – 59) and the presentation recently provided to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (available [here](#)) provide a summary of key achievements and directions.

All of the Centre's work has required and been driven by a wonderful group of staff, students, partners and supporters who bring a diverse range of expertise, experience and networks to the Centre, underpinned by our shared commitment to 'knowledge for common good'.

In recent years the Australian university sector has not been the easiest of environments within which to develop long term research and teaching programs and career paths. Investments such as that made by VicHealth in establishing and maintaining the McCaughey Centre are therefore highly valued and deeply appreciated not just by Centre staff and students but by the many community groups and organisations we work with and for.

I'd like to wish everyone associated with the Centre a safe and happy holiday season and a healthy, enjoyable and creative new year.

Professor John Wiseman,

Director,

The McCaughey Centre: VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Community Wellbeing

McCaughey Centre Project Highlights

Freedom from Violence

Family Violence Reform

The research team has recently commenced a new study that will look at the development of the Victorian Family Violence Reform Initiative, a policy framework that aims to respond more effectively to family violence in Victoria through the integration of services across the whole of government. The study will be based on a series of interviews with senior officials from Victorian Government Departments with carriage of the Family Violence Reform Initiative, and will aim to understand the enablers and barriers to policy making and policy research that crosses Ministerial portfolios and Departments. The research will focus on the risks and opportunities of integrated policy

making and policy research, and will include discussion of integration, leadership, culture, planning, resources, accountability and skills. Findings from the study will be available in the first quarter of 2009.

Social Inclusion and Connectedness/Public Health, Health Equity

Home-making: exploring processes of resettlement in Australia among migrant and refugee families with young children

In collaboration with Broadmeadows Communities for Children, Dr Deborah Warr and Dr Rosemary Mann have commenced a study to explore the processes through which families from migrant and refugee backgrounds with young children (0-5yrs) come to establish and build social connections following resettlement in Australia. The aim of the study is to explore the ways in which families from non-English speaking backgrounds and living in the City of Hume in the north-west of Melbourne become connected in neighbourhoods, through both formal links with early childhood services and through building informal links with other families, community and cultural groups. In conjunction with interview and focus groups, the study will use an innovative 'photo-elicitation' methodology to portray themes of 'home-making', belonging and community connection.

Community Needs in the Outer North Project

This project, managed by Belinda Robson and Marion Frere and funded by the Salvation Army Crossroads Youth and Family Services, is nearing completion of its first twelve months. It has involved consultations with over 70 residents from Craigieburn and Roxburgh Park as well as 30 stakeholders. It has had a dual focus on the needs of young people aged 12 to 17, and the impact of mortgage stress on families. A draft report was presented to the community for discussion on 3 December and the final report will be formally launched next year. The Salvation Army has approved further funding to continue this research project, this time in the areas of Mill Park, South Morang and Mernda/Dorreen. This will provide a wider scope for analysis of the expectations and aspirations of residents living in growth areas.

Economic Participation and Security

Asbestos Diseases Research: New Avenues in Sydney

Associate Professor Tony LaMontagne and Doctor Deborah Vallance recently hosted the Annual Scientific Meeting of the National Centre for Asbestos-Related Diseases (www.ncard.org.au/) along with a seminar entitled *Asbestos Diseases Research: New Avenues in Sydney*. This seminar was presented by Nico van Zandwijk of the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute (ADRI), the University of Sydney.



Professor van Zandwijk spoke about the research program of the ADRI, discussing epidemiology and prevention, the establishment of a tissue bank, molecular biological aspects of Malignant Mesothelioma, new drug development and plans for a more efficient structure of health care around patients with Malignant Mesothelioma.

Healthy and Sustainable Environments

Climate Transformations

Climate Transformations is an initiative of the McCaughey Centre that aims to build knowledge about the actions needed to prevent dangerous climate change in ways that are just, democratic, healthy and sustainable. Its initial focus is on:

- engaging diverse communities and organisations in informed discussion about climate change challenges and choices;
- understanding and communicating the social, economic and ecological impacts of climate change, particularly on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities and population groups;
- imagining and communicating alternative social, economic and ecological futures, particularly at local and regional levels; and
- designing, supporting and evaluating the practical social, economic and ecological transformations needed to prevent dangerous climate change, focusing particularly on transformations at local and regional levels.

Climate Change and Community Engagement

This report, recently completed for the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development, provides an overview of challenges and opportunities in relation to engaging communities in responding to climate change.

Liveable and Just

The *Liveable and Just* project is aimed at improving the capacity of local governments to respond to climate change in ways which are healthy, just and sustainable. The project has been commissioned by the Victorian Local Sustainability Accord Advisory Committee to improve understanding of the social impacts of climate change and the nature and extent of the implications for the Local Government sector.

Through a process of dialogue within the local government sector this project will:

- improve the understanding of the social impacts of climate change;
- identify the potential roles of Local Government in addressing the social impacts of climate change;
- investigate potential impacts, including changing demand for and issues related to the community services provided by Local Government; and
- identify and facilitate actions for Local Government to respond to the social impacts of climate change.

The Regeneration Project: Innovation in Local Food, Energy, Water and Transport systems

This project, being developed in collaboration with the Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab, will provide a focus for exploring and learning about the many emerging experiments in new approaches to local food, energy, water and transport systems.

The project will lead to a range of briefing papers, forums and workshops in 2009. An international conference on the potential of Distributed Systems to strengthen sustainability, resilience and community wellbeing is being planned for April 2010.

Emerging Places/New Directions

Dr Rosemary Mann and the Medical Anthropology Reading Group (MARG) recently hosted the seminar *Emerging Places: Connecting communities, art and environment*. Associate Professor Lyndal Jones (Director of Creative Media, RMIT University) explored concepts of sustainability through a focus on the Avoca Project (<http://www.avocaproject.org>), a long-term collaborative project engaging local community, national and international artists, scholars and climate change experts. Demonstrating the power of 'poetic indicators' in sustainability projects, Lyndal highlighted the experiences of Sustainable Seattle in developing meaningful local indicators (<http://www.sustainableseattle.org>). Dr Emily Potter (ARC Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Architecture, Building and Planning, University of Melbourne) also called for poetic work - the realm of story-telling, performance, art and design - to address the challenges of environmental sustainability. Encouraging a move beyond the instrumentalism of the techno-sciences, Emily discussed the spatial history and place-making work of artist Paul Carter as speculative experiments in poetic practice.

Greener Houses, Growing Greener Neighbourhoods

As partners in the Greener Houses, Growing Greener Neighbourhoods project, Dr Deborah Warr and Dr Rosemary Mann are evaluating the community education and community engagement component of the project. Greener Houses will operate across five neighbourhood houses in metropolitan Melbourne to showcase the range of options for households to incorporate eco-friendly living solutions in their homes. Project partners include Burnley, Watsonia and Allwood Neighbourhood Houses, Jika Jika Community Centre, Creeds Farm Living and learning centre, LGA and State Government representatives, Moreland Energy Foundation, Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action and RMIT University.

Cochrane Public Health Review Group

Cochrane Colloquium – Freiburg, Germany

Every year the Cochrane Collaboration hosts a Colloquium – a chance for editors, authors, consumers, researchers and entity staff to come together to share ideas, build collaborations and develop methods for conducting systematic reviews. This year's meeting was held in Freiburg, a small University town close to the Black Forest in Germany. The Colloquium was the first attended by the Public Health Review Group since our registration in April 2008. A number of our editors, authors and entity staff attended.



We used the Cochrane Colloquium as an opportunity to raise the profile of the Public Health Review Group in Germany. Jodie and Rebecca worked closely with our colleague Julia Kreis (who is based in Germany) and ran a one-day workshop on Conducting Reviews of Public Health Interventions.

The workshop was fully subscribed and we had 26 participants. The group agreed to establish an interest group to continue to build interest in systematic reviews in Germany.



Training for the US Centres for Disease Control, Atlanta: Conducting Reviews of Public Health Interventions

Rebecca Armstrong and Laurie Anderson (one of our Cochrane Public Health Review Group Editors) ran two 2-day short courses at the US Centres for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, USA in November 2008. Participants were primarily from the global health area although other program area staff attended. The courses were a great success with more than 30

participants attending. Many hope to go on and conduct Cochrane Reviews in their program work areas. Another two courses will be run in December and Prof Elizabeth Waters will visit Atlanta in early February to meet with Senior Executive staff at CDC to further strengthen our collaborative activities.

Working with the evidence: a research-practice approach

While there is increasing pressure across all levels of government to use research evidence to inform decision-making, very little is known about strategies that may facilitate this process. The National Health and Medical Research Council has acknowledged this challenge in supporting a three year study entitled, *A cluster randomised controlled trial to address the effectiveness of knowledge translation strategies for obesity prevention*.

Conducted by the University of Melbourne in collaboration with a team of leading social and public health researchers, this initiative seeks to work with Victorian local governments to identify and implement strategies that support the use of research evidence in decision-making processes in the context of obesity prevention (e.g. environmental design, food zoning, physical activity and healthy eating initiatives).

The first component of the project, a state-wide survey, is now underway. Every council is encouraged to be involved. The survey seeks to explore the different types of evidence used by local governments to inform planning, policy and practice, with a focus on public health decision-making. Public health has been broadly defined as a set of actions and policies developed and delivered across sectors and settings to improve health outcomes.

These themes will be explored further in a subsequent intervention. Local governments who participate in the state-wide survey will be invited to take part in this component of the project in early 2009.

This is the first study of its kind in Australia and it is supported in principle by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) and the Public Health Branch, Victorian Department of Human Services. The project aim and implementation plan have been discussed with the Municipal Association of Victoria. This important and exciting study promises to stimulate the exchange of ideas between all involved.

Should you have any queries about the project, please do not hesitate to contact Rebecca Armstrong, via email: armr@unimelb.edu.au.

The CO-OPS Collaboration: Collaboration of Community-Based Obesity Prevention Sites

The CO-OPS Collaboration is an initiative being led by a collaborative group from WHO Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention at Deakin University, the McCaughey Centre,

and Sydney University, with the support of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. With a focus on rigorous evaluation, it seeks to:

- Identify and analyse the lessons learnt from a range of community-based projects designed to prevent unhealthy weight gain, mainly in children and adolescents;
- Identify the elements that make community-based projects successful; and
- Share the knowledge gained with other communities.

We (Elizabeth Waters, Rebecca Conning and Rebecca Armstrong) have been engaged to develop evidence summaries in collaboration with community-based obesity prevention sites from across Australia. At the CO-OPS national workshop in late October 2008, Liz Waters and Rebecca Conning presented on evidence use, synthesis and generation, including the chief principles of systematic searching and critical appraisal. Three sites have been selected for liaison in regard to crafting answerable research questions and testing the resulting evidence summaries. Readers interested in linking into this process are invited to contact Rebecca Conning via email: rconning@unimelb.edu.au.

Cochrane Incentive Scheme

The Cochrane Public Health Group (CPHG) has been successful in leveraging funding to support the production of the review, *Flexible working conditions for improving employee health and well being*. Clare Bambra, from Durham University, will receive £5,000 from the UK Department of Health to support her and her team to complete this very important review within one year. Co-ordinating Editors of all Cochrane Review Groups based within and outside of the the UK, were invited to nominate up to three reviews or review updates that they considered important and for which they considered the award of an incentive payment would lead to completion of work at a significantly earlier time. Tony LaMontagne is playing an advisory role in the development of the protocol for this review.

The CPHG also supported the recently successful application by Northern Ireland author, Janice Christie, for a Cochrane Fellowship to support her in undertaking the review, *Workplace organisational interventions for preventing adult obesity*.

PhD Students

Sidney Myer Health Scholarship

The McCaughey Centre would like to congratulate Karen Block, who was awarded a Sidney Myer Health Scholarship to support her whilst she undertakes a PhD with the Centre. Karen's project, entitled *Refugee Youth, Social Inclusion and Health* relates to the UCan2 project. The research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the issues impacting on social inclusion for newly-arrived adolescent refugees in Australia, and to inform policy and program development relating to service provision for this at-risk population. The project is to be conducted in collaboration with the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (Foundation House).

Tessa Keegel's Completion Seminar

Tessa Keegel's PhD completion seminar took place on Wednesday 19 November at the McCaughey Centre. Tessa delivered an engaging presentation of her research into the participation of precariously employed workers in occupational health and safety. More information about the seminar can be found in the [flyer](#).

Completed Thesis: Naomi Priest

Naomi Priest has recently submitted her PhD thesis titled 'Aboriginal perspectives of health, development and wellbeing in early childhood'. This was supervised by Professor Elizabeth Waters and Dr Elise Davis from the McCaughey Centre, and by Dr Tamara Mackean from the Centre of Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health, University of WA, and President, Australian Indigenous Doctors Association.

Knowledge Transfer & Translation

Seminars and Events

Past events

Child-centred Methodologies in Qualitative Research

Associate Professor Colin MacDougall, of Flinders University in South Australia, recently attended the McCaughey Centre to present a seminar on theoretical frameworks for child-centred research. Colin's background first as a child psychologist then as a public health researcher has contributed to his development of research methodologies that respect and engage children, aiming to ensure that children's voices are heard in relation to health and social issues that affect them.

Presentations

Deborah Vallance, invited speaker on "Prevention: Psychosocial risks at work", **D Vallance, AD LaMontagne, T Keegel**, Australian Licensed Aircraft Engineers Association, National Health and Safety training, Melbourne, 20 November, 2008.

Deborah Vallance, invited speaker on "Psychosocial Risks at Work", **D Vallance, AD LaMontagne, T Keegel**, Gippsland Trades and Labour Council, Stress Forum, Morwell, 29 October 2008.

Deborah Vallance, invited speaker on "Psychosocial Risks at Work", **D Vallance, AD LaMontagne, T Keegel**, Victorian Trades Hall Council, Return to Work Forum, Melbourne, 28 August, 2008.

Armstrong R. Health Services Research and the Cochrane Public Health Review Group. Invited presentation. 3rd Singapore Public Health and Occupational Medicine Conference. Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre, 16th and 17th September, 2008.

Waters E, Campbell K, Brown T, **Prosser L, Armstrong R**, Gao GY, Summerbell C. (2008) Effective Interventions for Obesity Prevention in Adolescence: Where to from here? 7th Annual Australian and New Zealand Adolescent Health Conference, November 5-7th, Melbourne, Australia.

Armstrong R and **Waters E**. Beyond synthesis: developing a research program on knowledge translation and exchange. Poster presented at the 16th Cochrane Colloquium. 3-7 October 2008, Freiburg, Germany.

Waters E and **Conning R** Evidence Use, Synthesis and Generation. Invited presentation. National CO-OPS Workshop. The Royce Hotel, Melbourne, 30-31 October 2008.

Waters E, Doyle J, Armstrong R, Willenberg L, Weightman A. The Cochrane Public Health Review Group: collaborating to address the evidence needs of low- and middle-income countries. Poster presented at the Global Ministerial Forum on Research for Health. 17-19 November 2008, Bamako, Mali.

Waters E, Conning R and Rice C *Knowledge Translation Plan June/July 2009*. Invited presentation. National CO-OPS Workshop. The Royce Hotel, Melbourne, 30-31 October 2008.

LaMontagne T. Invited speaker on "Participation at work: The role of psychosocial working conditions." 5th AUSTRALASIAN OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM, La Trobe University, Melbourne, 12-14 November 2008.

LaMontagne, T. Invited speaker on "Occupational cancer: current status & future directions." Work Safe Week 2008, Melbourne, 27-31 October 2008.

Robson B. 'Family, Community and Place', Australian Association of Social Workers Conference, November, Sydney.

TASA Conference

'Re-Imagining Sociology' was the theme of the annual conference of The Australian Sociological Association (TASA) that was recently hosted by the University of Melbourne this year, from 2nd to the 5th December. Sociologists at the University are dispersed across many schools and departments and they came together to put on a terrific conference that attracted record delegates from across Australia and overseas. Plenary speakers included Professor Barbara Misztal from the University of Leicester, Professor Ghassan Hage and Professor Pip Patterson. Journalist, comedienne and writer Catherine Deveny was an entertaining guest speaker at one of the conference's special events. Deborah Warr was on the organising committee for the conference which featured a number of presentations from colleagues working at the McCaughey Centre.

Presentations included:

'What happened to our beautiful dream? Finding a place amongst the stigma', presented by **Rosemary Mann**.

'What's wrong with being poor? Tracing the sources of neighbourhood stigmatisation', presented by **Deborah Warr**.

'Family, community and place in Craigieburn and Roxburgh Park' presented by **Belinda Robson**.

Involving citizens/communities in measuring and fostering well-being and progress: towards new concepts and tools

Sue West was recently invited to speak at *Involving citizens/communities in measuring and fostering well-being and progress: towards new concepts and tools*, a seminar hosted by the Social Cohesion Development Division of the Council of Europe, the OECD and the Independent Province of Trento, Italy from 27 – 28 November 2008, in Strasbourg, France. Sue describes her experiences in France below.

The purpose of the seminar was to explore international examples of community indicator development achieved through citizen engagement initiatives. There were two presentations from Australia included myself talking about CIV and its intermediary role with Victorian local governments and John Smith from Darebin Council, Victoria talking about their citizen engagement activity with Australian indigenous and CALD communities. Other presenters of note included:

Massimo Salvadori Prof Emeritus, University of Turin, Italy 'The idea of progress: Wellbeing for all as an objective of society's progress.'

Enrico Giovanini, Chief Statistician, Global Project: Measuring the Progress of Societies', OECD, France. Opening and closing address.

Gilda Farrell, head of the Social Cohesion Division, Directorate General III, Council of Europe, France. Opening and closing address.

Mary Pat MacKinnon, Director Ascentum and Senior Fellow, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, university of Ottawa, Canada. 'Experiences from Canada of deliberative democracy and indicator development.'

Susan Brutshey, Applied Survey Research, USA. 'Moving from data to action with the participation of citizens.'

I was also invited to participate in a meeting of an international working group charged with the task of developing a handbook on involving citizens and communities in measuring and fostering well-being and progress. The working group met the day following the seminar and was the group's third meeting. The full day meeting considered the goals and content of the handbook as well as good practice case examples for inclusion. I have subsequently been invited to join the working group which meets again in Strasbourg, France in March 2009.



Details of the seminar are available on line at:

http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/socialpolicies/platform/seminar/default2008_en.asp.

Publications

Journal articles

Newly accepted

Priest N., Waters E., Armstrong R., Friel S., Valentine N. Engaging Policy Makers in Action on Socially Determined Health Inequalities. *Evidence and Policy* Accepted October 2008. In press.

Armstrong R, Clark R, Murphy S and Waters E. Strategies to support knowledge translation and exchange. *Australasian Epidemiologist* December 2008 Vol. 15.3, 24 – 27. In press.

Priest N, Mackean T, Waters E, Davis E & Riggs E. A systematic review of Australian Indigenous child health, development and wellbeing epidemiological data: Is the right research being done? *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, In press, accepted November 2008.

Bandyopadhyay M, Daly J, **Riggs E, and Williamson L** (2008) 'Ethical review and the assessment of research proposals using qualitative research methods', *Monash Bioethics Review* vol. 27, no. 2. In press.

Fraser, C. and **Warr, D.** Challenging roles: insights into issues for men caring for family members with mental illness. *American Journal of Men's Health* (available from doi: 10.1177/1557988307311353). In press.

Published

Wiseman J, Nolan T. Climate Transformation: the next revolution in public health? *Journal of Public Health* October 2008, 1 – 2.

Robson B. From Mental Hygiene to Community Mental Health: Psychiatrists and Victorian Public Administration from the 1940s to 1990s. *Provenance: The Journal of the Public Record Office Victoria*, September 2008, No 7.

Fritze J, Blashki GA, Burke S, **Wiseman J**. Hope, despair and transformation: Climate change and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems* 2008, Vol 2 No 13.

Morgan H, Turley, R, Kavanagh J, **Armstrong R** and Weightman A. Developing a specialized register for the Public Health Review Group. *Journal of Public Health* 2008; 30 (4): 508-9.

Green J, **Williamson L**, Eisenbruch M, Renzaho A, **Waters E** and Oberklaid F (2008) Families, Communities and Culture: Health Promotion with Newly-Arrived African Communities in Victoria. Prepared for Public Health Unit, Department of Human Services, Victoria Government.

Green J, Renzaho A, Eisenbruch M, **Williamson L**, **Waters E**, LoBianco J and Oberklaid F (2008) Literature Review Culturally Competent Health Literacy in Newly Arrived African Communities. Prepared for Public Health Unit, Department of Human Services, Victoria Government.

Professional & organisational contribution

International Editorial Board for Perspectives in Public Health

Professor Elizabeth Waters has recently accepted an invitation to join the International Editorial Board for Perspectives in Public Health, the new journal from the Royal Society for Public Health.

The Family Violence Inter-Disciplinary Steering Committee

Dr Marion Frere was recently part of a team awarded funding through the University of Melbourne's Office of the Provost to establish an inter-disciplinary steering committee for family violence research across the University. The Committee aims to bring together researchers from different disciplines and backgrounds to aid in effective knowledge transfer to policymakers and practitioners working across a range of fields.

Job Vacancies at the McCaughey Centre

Research Fellow: Child Public Health

We are seeking an enthusiastic and skilled Research Fellow to coordinate final data collection for fun 'n healthy in Moreland!, an innovative randomised controlled trial of a school community-based child health promotion and obesity prevention intervention study. The Research Fellow will need to be highly organised to manage the coordination, collection, data management and data cleaning of a complex range of quantitative measures. Experience with large quantitative or mixed method studies and working with children and schools will be highly regarded. This is a part time role (0.9EFT) with some flexibility around school holidays if required.

A copy of the position description is available at <http://jobs.unimelb.edu.au/jobDetails.asp?sJobIDs=517878&IWorkTypeID=&LocationID=&CategoryID=&PayScaleID=&stp=AW&sLanguage=en>

Applications and enquiries to Lisa Gibbs, 0439 393 917, lgibbs@unimelb.edu.au

Closing Date: 14/01/08

Research Fellow: Public Health Evidence

The McCaughey Centre is seeking an enthusiastic and experienced Research Fellow to coordinate and participate in priority Cochrane systematic reviews and contribute more broadly to the activities of the Cochrane Public Health Review Group. The successful applicant will demonstrate expertise and experience in understanding the principles of public health and processes involved in evidence-informed public health practice. Public health evidence is a key area of work for the McCaughey Centre, and this is an opportunity to take up an exciting position with a talented and dedicated team of researchers.

Whilst the position is initially 0.4 FTE over a 12 month period there is some possibility of its being extended into the future, conditional upon additional funding being secured. The position will be based at Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth), 15-31 Pelham Street, Melbourne.

Further information and a copy of the position description can be found at <http://jobs.unimelb.edu.au/jobDetails.asp?sJobIDs=519235&IWorkTypeID=&LocationID=&CategoryID=&PayScaleID=&stp=AW&sLanguage=en>

Closing Date: 14/01/08



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