



CAHE: Review of 2005 & the outlook for 2006

It is with anticipation that CAHE staff commenced 2006. Last year was a time of consolidation of staffing expertise, and identification of opportunities to spread the word about allied health evidence based practice. The relationship between the philosophy and practice of the evidence underpinning allied health service delivery continues to challenge CAHE staff, particularly in the specific construction of systematic reviews which will add to the decision-making and the knowledge-base of clinicians. To this end 2006 will see the completion of two surveys of attitudes to uptake of evidence, in allied health professions.



The survey of physiotherapists which commenced in 2005 will be completed and a survey of acupuncturists will be undertaken by an honours student in the Division of Health Science Honours Program (Norman Stomski). The collaborative link between CAHE and JBI provides ongoing support to CAHE staff for the construction of clear search strategies and protocols upon which systematic reviews are based. CAHE staff are grateful to JBI staff (in particular Dr Rick Wiechula) who has provided hours of guidance regarding search protocol construction. In 2005, Dr Saravana Kumar completed the JBI Train the Trainer requirements and Mr Peter Lekkas completed the systematic reviewing training workshop, which now provides CAHE with a solid basis for undertaking well credentialed systematic reviews in 2006. As a result of this assistance received from JBI, CAHE staff produced during the latter part of 2005 a number of systematic reviews for publication by JBI and other peer-reviewed journals.

Saravana has been working with Dr Caroline Smith to produce three systematic reviews which are currently under final peer review for JBI publication. Saravana has also been working with other staff members to produce systematic reviews under review with a range of international journals (Peter Lekkas, Trish Neumann, Susan Hillier, Yamini Deenalayadan, Karen Grimmer, Steve Milanese, Leah Nyland) on diverse subjects such as discharge planning, physiotherapy management of incontinence, the management of clumsy children, cervical spine mobilisation and manipulation for headache, adolescent spinal health, and clinical education models).

Leah Nyland leads CAHE activities to produce evidence summaries for the JBI Clinical Information Service. Leah's work was featured in a 2005 newsletter. She anticipates, with help from other CAHE staff, writing 100 summaries by mid 2006!!!! Leah presented on the CIS process to allied health masters coursework students in January 2006 at UniSA, and in so doing spread the word for evidence-summaries and their role in determining best practice. Leah also continues with a project funded by the Directors of Allied Health Group in 2004, on an audit of stroke patient records to identify the role of allied health clinicians in planning for discharge of stroke patients to the community. A major achievement for 2006 was the awarding of the contract with New Zealand Accident Compensation Commission to develop clinical guidelines for the diagnosis and management forearm pain. This is an intensive 18 month program of literature review and synthesis. Peter Lekkas is the senior project officer on this work, assisted by Dr Nicola Massy-Westropp, Yamini Deenalayadan and Leah Nyland. A feature of this work will be the use of a Delphi approach to develop consensus opinion where there is low level unconvincing evidence, or no available evidence. This aspect of the work will be lead by Dr Saravana Kumar.

Peter and Karen recently returned from Wellington NZ after the first meeting of the guidelines development team. The NZ project is being conducted in collaboration with researchers at Massey University, NZ whose tasks are the management of the guideline development team. The input of this team is integral to ensuring that stakeholder views are incorporated into the guidelines. CAHE researchers commenced a range of industry consultancies in 2005, some of which have been completed and others have continued into 2006, and produced opportunities for further work. These consultancies produce valuable income for CAHE as well as providing rich opportunities to expand CAHE knowledge and skills in a range of allied health areas. These consultancies also pave the way for educating consumers and other stakeholders about the mechanics of evidence-synthesis, in particular establishing viable research questions. Saravana Kumar will commence teaching evidence-based theory and practice into the Division of Health Sciences undergraduate program in early 2006, opening up a direct conduit between allied health training programs and best practice allied health evidence-theory. CAHE staff trust that newsletter readers have commenced 2006 in good health and with enthusiasm. CAHE staff and Squiggly, who continues without much persuasion as the centre mascot in 2006, look forward to sharing their activities with readers throughout the year.



www.unisa.edu.au/cahe

University of South Australia School of Health Sciences City East Campus
GPO Box 2471 Adelaide SA 5001 T: 08 8302 7699 E. Karen.Grimmer@unisa.edu.au

If you would like to receive CAHE updates please register on-line at www.unisa.edu.au/cahe

child health & education support services



chess: Dept of Education & Children's Services new (research) services!

On 29 November last year, DECS Chief Executive, Mr Steve Marshall launched the five year commitment by the following organisations:

- Department of Health
- Department of Families and Communities
- Department of Education and Children's Services
- Children's Care and Education Forum (a coalition of all childcare services).

The 250 guests attending the launch were invited to return in November 2006 to review the progress of the interagency action plan underpinning this agreement, and to contribute to future planning.

The agreement commits to supporting the DECS *child health and education services (chess)*. There are five **chess** services:

- Information
- Training
- Research
- Service pathways
- Education services.



This new agreement has already lead to new opportunities for services to support children's learning, health and wellbeing. It will have immediate benefit for children and families managing physical or psychological health care needs - and identify priorities for research to inform this work.

The **chess** research agenda builds on some significant success in translating research into practice, in particular the adolescent spinal health collaboration (a major collaborative project with CAHE and the University of South Australia, visit www.unisa.edu.au/cahe for more project information) and the *beyondblue* Schools Research Initiative, which is currently informing the

DECS mental health policy developments.

Another research focus is Developmental Coordination Disorder and CAHE's Dr Susan Hillier presented at the **chess** launch an overview of the research partnerships being led by DECS and Professor Michael Sawyer (Children, Youth and Women's Health Service).

Debra Kay, Manager Interagency Health Care, Department of Education and Children's Services, has worked closely with the Centre for Allied Health Evidence since its inception in late 2002. Deb has a strong interest in introducing and employing evidence-based research findings into the DECS policies and programs. Speaking with Deb about the **chess** initiative she stated:

"Young people, families and staff deserve access to the benefits of the knowledge derived from quality research: this has become a prevailing influence behind the ideology of chess."

The *child health and education support services (chess)* Research Partnerships aim to:

- Identify priority areas for research to improve services for child and student health, learning and wellbeing
- Help make this research happen
- Use the research findings to improve services to students, children and their families and communities.

For more information you can visit www.chess.sa.edu.au and click on the research "star".

If you are considering research that relates to child and adolescent health, learning and wellbeing, view the DECS research protocols (www.decs.sa.gov.au/research) or email Deb Kay (kay.deb@saugov.sa.gov.au).



The Squiggly Theory: Take the heat lying down!

The very hot days over the 2005 - 2006 summer have provided Squiggly with the opportunity to test out the evidence theories of sports participation in hot weather. In line with the CAHE synthesis of guidelines relating to sports participation in the heat, Squiggly regularly changed the times of practice and competition from the middle of the day to early morning or early evening. He could often be found at these times on the assault course on the family pergola; whilst during the hot hours of the day was found resting, usually in direct line of fans or air conditioner.

In this way he also acclimatised to being able to undertake the highly physical bursts of activity required to chase family members or ensure appropriate access to cat food containers. Squiggly ensured adequate hydration by sampling any drink of any sort as available, including fish tank water and bath water. Squiggly hopes that readers also survived the heat using sensible clinical applications of the evidence. He looks forward to sharing his views on evidence application throughout 2006. Squiggly has expanded his evidence-based interests to AFL tipping in 2006 where his algorithms for determining the winners will provide interesting challenges.

www.unisa.edu.au/cahe

