

Australia's 7th National Allied Health Conference in Hobart

CAHE staff head off to Tasmania to discuss what's new in AH research

CAHE representatives Mathew Prior and Leah Jeffries recently attended the 7th National Allied Health Conference in fresh and sunny Hobart. The conference attracted a wide range of allied health clinicians, managers, policy advisors and educators, with attendance figures over 300.

A number of emerging themes were addressed, including national (and international) collaboration, integration of skills, knowledge and evidence, workforce issues, workforce restructuring (extended scope practice, assistants), allied health service initiatives, clinical governance, interdisciplinary clinical education, IT initiatives and allied health in ambulatory care.

Mat and Leah gave two presentations – 'The Outcomes Calculator' and 'Support Workers in Community Rehabilitation: Evidence from a Systematic Review of the Literature', and held a workshop on 'Evidence Based Practice' on the final day of the conference.

CAHE also presented a poster on "Evidence Based Practice and On-line Education: The New Frontier".

The conference provided CAHE with a great deal of networking opportunities, and Mat and Leah soon discovered just how much interest there really is in learning more about Evidence Based Practice!



Journal Club baton passes hands

The exciting CAHE Journal Club initiative is on the move and is being well received amongst stakeholders during a successful series of pilot studies. Matt Sutton, original coordinator of the Journal Clubs is also on the move, moving to a secondment for 6 months on an exciting early risk detection program. More about this in later newsletters. He has passed the JC baton to CAHE Director Professor Karen Grimmer-Somers, who is passionate about the potential for growth in allied health interaction and communication that is the outcome of these unique and productive clubs. Other CAHE staff will also be involved in JC initiatives.

Whilst Matt's future holds some exciting AH developments he was regretful that it meant finishing his current work with the clubs. He stated

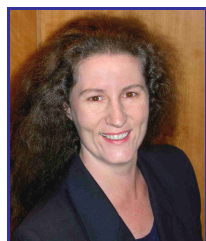
I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped develop Journal Club, particularly Catherine Turnbull, Karen and Saravana Kumar, as well as all those presently running clubs across the state.

As regular readers would be aware, the operating clubs are in a variety of settings, and encompass a range of Allied Health disciplines and geographical regions. Over the next five months, we will be visiting each Journal Club and featuring them in the CAHE newsletter. Next month will feature the Noarlunga General Hospital Allied Health Journal Club. This is part of the ongoing evaluation process we are undertaking to gain a greater understanding of the needs of clinicians in developing their own Journal Clubs, as well as sharing experiences from various clinical environments with readers of the CAHE newsletter. We are very much looking forward to hearing JC members' thoughts and experiences so far!

If you would like any further information on Journal Clubs, please email Karen Grimmer-Somers (Karen.Grimmer-Somers@unisa.edu.au).



CAHE on the move! CAHE director Professor Karen Grimmer-Somers has been on the move to Manila, South Africa and New Zealand, taking CAHE's research tools and methodologies to the international arena. CAHE's goal is to make allied health best practice an international standard and to pro-actively assist research teams globally. We'll be introducing you to CAHE's international evidence translation groups and keeping you up to date on their individual projects and progress over the coming months with a bi-monthly newsletter feature on the exciting work these groups are undertaking.



July & August 2007 Bulletin from Dept of Health (SA) Principal Allied Health Advisor Catherine Turnbull

Allied health in Australia: issues and ideas

Well, I'm sitting here waiting for inspiration, well clarity of thought at least (as I have so much to write about) ... I now completely understand writers' block – that awful feeling of having to write something to a deadline! As a health advisor I thought I was used to having to produce a report, briefing or ministerial reply at the drop of a hat but creative writing is quite another animal. So let's see how we go...

The Australian National Allied Health Conference held last month in Tasmania was a showcase of allied health's development of evidence (as reported by others in this newsletter). Great presentations and good discussion but sadly there was little attempt to grapple with the great debate of 'what is allied health?' The Services for Remote and Rural Allied Health (SARRAH) gave a great paper on their research findings but there was not really the opportunity to discuss and dissect this critical question.

As public allied health struggles with the staffing shortages expected within the next decade new emerging roles are becoming established – allied health assistants, podiatric surgeons, lifestyle advisors just to name a few. Where do they all fit, how do they relate to the existing allied health professions? What is a flexible enough system to embrace the emerging roles without diluting the established disciplines? It is really what we want or should we change the way the current courses function to increase the available workforce? Such challenging questions affected by complex state/commonwealth and health/education relations.

I am hoping that there is the opportunity to chew through this at the World Congress of Health Professions being held in Perth, Western Australia in March 2008. Certainly the National Allied Health Advisor's Committee (consisting of all the state and territory health department allied health advisors/chief officers) is continuing to address this question as it commences work aligned with the Australian Health Workforce Principal Committee's seven health workforce goals: supply, distribution, culture, partnerships, role redesign, policy and planning through *evidence* and collaboration.

Yes, *evidence* is clearly embedded in this national Health Minister's committee's strategic work that will have a major influence on changes within the Australian health system over the next few years...

Well, I am amazed at the way the words, with reasonable clarity, have just fallen onto the page and I hope that it has whetted your appetite for more on the great debate in upcoming editions (do email me catherine.turnbull@health.sa.gov.au if you have a particular view that you would like the National Allied Health Advisor's Committee to consider).

To receive CAHE updates, please register online at www.unisa.edu.au/cahe

CONTACTS

www.unisa.com.au/cahe

karen.grimmer@unisa.edu.au

Telephone (08) 8302 2769

Facsimile (08) 8302 2766

University of South Australia
GPO Box 2471
Adelaide SA 5001
Australia

CRICOS provider number:
00121B



University of
South Australia

CAHE

Centre for Allied
Health Evidence

a collaborating centre of



THE JOANNA BRIGGS INSTITUTE