

A forum for rural and remote allied health clinicians

CAHE at the Country Allied Health Forum

The beautiful scenic Barossa Valley played host to the inaugural Country Allied Health Forum (CAHF) at the Novotel Barossa for 2&3 April 2009. This event also coincided with the 2009 Allied and Scientific Health Excellence Awards held on 3 April 2009.

CAHE was represented at both these events as we recognise the important and vital role of allied health practitioners in rural and remote settings. As a sponsor at CAHF, CAHE showcased several of its products through its exclusive stall.

CAHE's recently launched textbook: *Practical Tips in Finding the Evidence: An Allied Health Primer*, was a particular focus with many participants showing interest in the 'first of its kind' textbook.

Representing CAHE, staff members Dr Saravana Kumar and Lucylynn Lizarondo also conducted a workshop on evidence based practice with the primary emphasis on evidence implementation. Another CAHE staff member, Judith Lowe, presented her work on extended scope practice in physiotherapy.

This event provided opportunities for delegates to listen, participate and reflect on a range of issues impacting allied health including workforce and service delivery issues in rural and remote South Australia, with a particular focus on chronic diseases and care in the community.

The 2009 Allied and Scientific Health Excellence Awards was the ideal platform to recognise and celebrate the rich and diverse group of allied and scientific health professionals who promoted excellence and commitment to safe and quality care through innovation, collaboration and persistence.

CAHE congratulates all nominees and winners and wishes them best of luck in their future endeavours. CAHE would like to thank Tanya Lehman, Country Health SA, for inviting CAHE to be part of this inaugural event and her continued support to CAHE staff throughout the event's duration. CAHE would also like to express its gratitude to Catherine Turnbull and all staff at Allied and Scientific Health Office, Department of Health, South Australia, for their ongoing support and commitment to evidence-based practice in allied health locally and nationally.

CAHE Textbook launched by Minister for Health

The CAHE textbook: *Practical Tips in Finding the Evidence: An Allied Health Primer*, was officially launched on 26 March 2009 by the Minister for Health (SA), the Hon John Hill MP.

The CAHE textbook teaches readers to set a clinical question from a problematic clinical case, interpret the clinical question as targeted search terms, search the available library databases, classify the literature found in the search, and interpret the findings as an answer to the clinical question. This makes the book also relevant for other professions such as nursing, midwifery and medicine.

To an audience consisting of AH clinicians, educators and policy makers the Minister endorsed CAHE's textbook:

This [CAHE Textbook] book addresses a gap in the current literature base as it provides a how-to-do it which guides readers through every step. It is easy to read, and has been designed as a practical aid to assist allied health students, clinicians, managers and researchers across 12 allied and complementary health disciplines to find the evidence.



SA Health has actively recognised the importance of supporting evidence based allied health care through providing continued support for the Centre for Allied Health Evidence. CAHE plans to continue to develop textbooks specific to the field of EBP in allied health.

[To order your copy of Practical Tips in Finding the Evidence: An Allied Health Primer for only \\$22 \(p&h \\$5.95 per copy\) visit the CAHE website.](#)

Pictured L-R: Pro-Vice Chancellor Robyn McDermott, Dr Saravana Kumar, CAHE Deputy Director, the Hon John Hill MP, Minister for Health, Professor Karen Grimmer-Somers, CAHE Director, Catherine Turnbull, Chief Allied Health and Scientific Advisor, Department of Health (SA) & Professor Esther May, Head of School, Health Sciences, UniSA.

[Register online to receive CAHE updates.](#)



Implementation Science: new developments everyday

As yet another year gallops away from us with astonishing speed, Implementation Central website has been undergoing regular updates to ensure it is up to date with emerging evidence on evidence implementation and knowledge transfer. As implementation science is a relatively new field of science, each day brings new knowledge about evidence implementation and knowledge transfer and it is vitally important that this emerging knowledge is shared with key stakeholders in this field.

One of the significant changes to the website has been the “Resources” section. As the website evolved it became clear that the resources section needs to be better organised with additional content including:

Clearinghouses	Repositories for guidelines	
Appraisal tools	Critical appraisal tools for guidelines	
Implementation	Tools to aid in implementation	
Websites	Specific websites aimed at implementation and knowledge transfer	
Journals	A range of journals categorised based on the relevance for implementation, physiotherapy and chiropractic	
Lectures	PowerPoint slides and pod casts of lectures on implementation and knowledge transfer (<i>webpage currently under construction</i>)	
Blogs	A regular update on key issues pertinent to evidence implementation and the Fellowship (<i>webpage currently under construction</i>)	

Another change to the website is the addition of “upcoming events”. This has been created to feature conferences or events where I have been invited to present about evidence implementation and knowledge transfer. An overview of the conference, including location and dates are provided, along with the link to the conference’s website. In recent times, in most instances, after the completion of the conference, presentations from the conferences are hosted on these websites for wider dissemination. Therefore, these websites can be a useful portal to access up to date information on a range of topics.

I urge you to visit the updated website and provide me with any feedback. To aid in this process, the updated website features a “feedback form”. As this website has been created to facilitate access to evidence implementation and knowledge transfer resources for all stakeholders, your feedback is important and will drive future updates. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Visit Dr Saravana Kumar’s website: www.implementationcentral.com

Glaucoma: national guidelines delivered

April marked CAHE’s delivery of the draft *National Guidelines for the Detection, Diagnosis, Management and Prevention of Glaucoma* to the National Health and Medical Research Centre (NHMRC).

The guidelines were developed using the sound evidence base established from CAHE’s systematic review produced in September 2008 on the detection, diagnosis, management and prevention of glaucoma. The guidelines are a comprehensive guide to the evidence surrounding the diagnosis and treatment of both open and closed forms of glaucoma.

Importantly, the guidelines are notable for their team orientated approach. This ensures best practice is described in a manner that can be

applied by all members of a multidisciplinary team involved in the care of patients with a complex disorder such as glaucoma. The guidelines have been rigorously developed to provide a five level evidence coding system using the NHMRC’s ‘strength of body of evidence matrix’, ensuring each best practice recommendation has a unique evidence base.

The recommendations were developed in close collaboration with the NHMRC and a working committee of renowned experts in the field. The next step for the draft is to undergo public consultation and feedback throughout May and June 2009. It is planned that a final draft will be ratified by the NHMRC later in the year, along with a short summary for key user groups.

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What is CAHE's Allied Health News in Review?

The CAHE *Allied Health News in Review* (AHNR) initiative addresses allied health issues raised in the national and international media. The focus of this initiative is to inform and educate all health care stakeholders, and interested consumers, about the quality of research underpinning news articles. Readers are encouraged to contribute in the identification of relevant news reports.

Allied Health News in Review is a topical address of some of the issues facing today's audiences where there is saturation of information, which can often be misleading, biased or technically inaccurate.

Research evidence which is published in journals or articles should be peer reviewed to help control potential biases and improve the quality and accuracy of published information. News articles frequently report on health related information and strengthen their claims by providing links or references to research evidence. The CAHE AHNR process endeavours to provide a peer review process for some of the more popular health topics which circulate the mainstream media.



How is a CAHE AHNR developed? AHNR reports are developed in a four step process

1. Topics which are related to allied health and that are regularly reported or discussed in the media are recorded by CAHE staff
2. Established health and general news websites are searched for articles or other presentations which report specifically on these health topics. Newspapers, television and radio programs are also monitored for any article or report related to the topic of interest. News articles which directly refer to or reference research evidence are selected.
3. The research evidence which is referred to or referenced by the news report is then sourced by the CAHE staff member, by following online links to the journal where it was published, or by searching manually through established library databases. If the evidence which is used by the news article to support its claims does not exist or cannot be found, this becomes an important part of the CAHE news in review story.
4. Finally, the Allied Health News in Review report is written. This reported is based on the original research article. Links are provided at the top of the News in Review report so that the reader can easily access both the news report and its underlying research evidence.

Search engines such as Google and Yahoo are a legitimate source of general information for many people. Unfortunately, much of the information uncovered by searching the internet for health-related topics is not subject to the peer review process and is therefore potentially biased and inaccurate. It is our intention that by providing an objective appraisal of the research evidence which underpins the claims of health-related news reports, we can help to improve the validity and reliability of this information.

Latest Allied Health New in Review articles on the CAHE website:

[AHNR Edition 14: The effects of acupuncture on pain management](#)

'Acupuncture treatment for pain: systematic review of randomised clinical trials with acupuncture, placebo acupuncture, and no acupuncture groups' Reported on-line, at [virtual medical centre](#) on 11th of March 2009: . The findings suggest that acupuncture has only a small pain relieving effect when compared to placebo acupuncture.

[AHNR Edition 13: Does eating less help weight loss?](#)

Comparison of weight-loss diets with different compositions of fat, protein, and carbohydrates'. Reported by Serena Gordon for US News and World Report, February 25, 2009: <http://health.usnews.com>. The findings support the premises that irrespective of the diet you choose, eating less will result in short-term weight loss.



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Journal Clubs take off around the country

In 2007, CAHE in collaboration with the South Australian Department of Health organised face to face journal clubs (JC) across South Australia to educate and support allied health practitioners to keep themselves informed with the current best evidence.

This initiative started with three multi-disciplinary groups and one group each for physiotherapy, OT and speech pathology. After only three months of regular meetings, JC members have expressed their satisfaction with the program. Moreover, after the formation of the pilot groups, the interest for setting up journal clubs from other allied health departments remarkably increased.

CAHE now conducts annual workshops to ensure that each of the journal clubs has facilitators who are fully equipped with knowledge and understanding of how to run a club. At present, there are 20 JCs across South Australia, involving specialised fields in physiotherapy, occupational therapy and social work. With the growing number of journal clubs, the collection of critically appraised papers on a wide range of topics freely accessible in the CAHE website continues to increase. For a complete list of critical appraisal summaries, please refer to <http://www.unisa.edu.au/cahe/CAHEJC/CAPS.asp>

The formation of these face to face JCs has triggered the interest of clinicians who are professionally or geographically isolated for an online JC. This will facilitate formation of a 'virtual' forum for discussion of scientific literature. As a response to this, a "server site" was created followed by calls for expression of interest through Country Allied Health SA. Primarily responding to this call were podiatrists, physiotherapists and a multidisciplinary team interested in chronic disease management.

As with the face to face JCs, training was provided to all the members of the JC via CAHE online JC resources. After the training, members of the online JC engage in a virtual forum where exchange of information regarding quality of evidence and implications for practice takes place. This online journal club is due for evaluation to determine its utility, ease of use and overall user satisfaction.

As a result of this initiative, two articles were written and later accepted for publication in the International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation and Journal of Allied Health respectively.

1. Lizarondo L, Kumar S, Grimmer-Somers K. Supporting allied health practitioners in evidence-based practice: a case report. International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation 2009; 16(4):2-12
2. Lizarondo L, Grimmer-Somers K. Online Journal clubs: An innovative approach to achieving evidence-based practice. Journal of Allied Health 2009 (In press)

CAHE research referenced in *Reuters Health*, and around the globe!

Reuters Health produces a daily Medical News report based on prominent journal publications from around the world. News reports included on Reuters Health feature primary and secondary research findings from medical and allied health journals, as well as agency statements, press releases, changes to legislation and information from medical meetings.



Reuters Health is recognised as a key resource for disseminating research findings to clinicians, patients and other consumers.

Recently CAHE researchers completed and published in *Sports Medicine, Arthroscopy, Rehabilitation, Therapy & Technology* 2009, 1:5 (31 Mar 2009):

A systematic review of the literature on the effectiveness of exercise therapy for groin pain in athletes.

Authors: Zuzana Machotka (pict left), Saravana Kumar and Luke G Perraton

In April 2009 this research was cited by Reuters Health News, New York, in their online article: [Exercise therapy best way to treat groin pain](#). Since Reuters introduced this research it has now been referenced in a number of articles and websites around the world:

ABC news: <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory?id=7346110>

qualityhealth.com: <http://www.qualityhealth.com/news/exercise-therapy-best-way-treat-groin-pain-14010>

netscape.com: <http://channels.isp.netscape.com/news/story.jsp?floc=ne-health-12-13&idq=ff/story/0002%2F20090415%2F1813889916.htm&sc=rohts>

In California http://www.stlukes-sf.com/health/healthinfo/reutershome_top.cfm?fx=article&id=48386

medicalhealth.co <http://medicalhealth.blog.co.in/2009/04/16/exercise-therapy-best-way-to-treat-groin-pain/>

Register online to receive CAHE updates.

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