

# John Richards Initiative

**Progress Report—2007—2009**



# Our Vision

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**The John Richards Initiative has been established to lead research and innovation in rural aged care. In consultation with older people in rural communities and other stakeholders, the Initiative will undertake a program of research into rural aged care that improves well-being through:**

- **Informing innovative rural ageing policy;**
- **Exploring models of service provision for older people in rural communities that enhance their capacity to be resilient and self-determining;**
- **Developing and testing effective rural workforce planning strategies; and informing education.**

# Our Mission

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***The development and implementation of a program of research that makes a difference to the lives of a diverse range of older people living in rural communities***

The John Richards Initiative is named in honour of John Richards, 2007 recipient of the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for “service to the community of the Moira Shire, particularly as a contributor to health sector development, and to the newsagency industry through the Victorian Authorised Newsagents Association.”

John Richards, a former jackaroo, soldier and farmer, was the inaugural president of the Yarrawonga District Health Service board of management, and from there was instrumental in the establishment of the Moira Healthcare Alliance. He was President of the Alliance from 2002 to 2005.

Among numerous health and community related positions, he was also a member of the Rural and Regional Council of the Victorian Healthcare Association from 2001 to 2006. In recognition of his active community involvement he was named Yarrawonga Citizen of the Year in 2004 and received the Rural Health Volunteers Award, Hume Region, from the Department of Human Services Victoria in 2005.

John Richards’ vision to support aged care in country Victoria has been backed by a generous donation which has enabled the establishment of the Research Initiative into Aged Care in Rural and Regional Communities at the Albury-Wodonga campus of La Trobe University.

The John Richards Initiative supports projects in the community that seek to create strategic and enduring change and social benefit in nominated areas of interest.

Current interests include caring for the aged in rural and regional areas.



**Mr John Richards**

The objectives of the program are:

- To lead research and innovation related to rural aged care workforce and health delivery initiatives;
- To promote interdisciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration in developing, testing and implementing evidence based health care delivery solutions for older people in rural areas;
- To establish a leading rural centre for honours and postgraduate research training in rural aged care workforce and health delivery initiatives;
- To develop a strategic direction for the centre that:
  1. Has strong links with consumers, industry and government;
  2. Addresses Australian Government research priorities;
  3. Develops and/or strengthens international links and undertakes comparative research; and
  4. Takes account of La Trobe’s strengths, other Australian centres of research excellence in ageing and situates and brands La Trobe in a competitive and unique position.



## Director's Report

I am delighted to present the first Report from the John Richards Initiative at La Trobe University, Albury-Wodonga. I have been here for 18 months, and have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to lead such an important venture, which represents an exciting partnership between local stakeholders (through John Richards), a state department (now Department of Health (aged care)) and a regional campus of the University. In particular, I would like to add my congratulations and thanks to John Richards, who has shown incredible foresight and generosity in founding this local research initiative.

I would also like to thank my predecessors, Professor Annette Street and Dr Guin Threlkeld, for their work in getting the JRI up and running. Both continue to remain actively involved, and I value their involvement and support. I would also like to thank our JRI Reference Group members who are all active supporters of the Initiative, providing important contacts into either the local community or University research activities.

I am very pleased to report that the JRI is progressing extremely well, as can be seen in this report. The JRI is represented in local, national, and even international research projects related to improving the lives of older people in rural communities. This is an increasingly important area of research, receiving significant research grant funding and community recognition. There are many opportunities for JRI researchers to get involved, and I am particularly pleased to note the diversity and breadth of our growing research profile, which builds on the expertise of our team.

A broad but highly significant research agenda has been developed as a focus for JRI research. This covers two broad streams of research – one involving the health and well-being of older people who live in rural communities; and the other focusing on the challenges for effective delivery of health and aged care services in rural areas. Current and future projects focus on these two broad research areas.

Much of the work undertaken by JRI is in partnership with others. Significant partnerships are being developed with government and non-government agencies, some large and others smaller and more local. These include the Victorian Department of Health (aged care), local health services, local councils, and state and local non-profit organizations. Details of these projects and partnerships are outlined in this Report, and they are integral to our effectiveness here at the JRI.

The JRI has a growing staff profile, as well as a growing number of academic partnerships. Local staff members include research staff and postgraduate students. In addition, a number of academics from the University, both locally and from other campuses, are research associates of the JRI. Some of these, such as Drs Guin Threlkeld and Sue Hodgkin, are based here at Albury-Wodonga, and others, such as Professor Annette Street and Dr Jeanine Blackford, regularly come here from Melbourne. Other researchers partner with JRI staff, and outcomes from these partnerships include the development of joint research projects, presentations at seminars and community events.

We also now have four PhD students, three of which are full time. One is funded through a scholarship provided by the JRI with the other two funded by the Department of Health (aged care) (one through the Hume region, and one funded by Professor Street's project). It is excellent to see a group forming, who meet regularly to discuss issues and support each other through the process.

I am very pleased to present the report for the John Richards Initiative for 2007-09.

Jeni Warburton  
February 2010



## **JRI Reference Group**

The JRI Reference group was established soon after the launch in 2007, when key local stakeholders were identified. Dr Guin Threlkeld formed the initial group and chaired the meetings. Currently, the group meets twice a year and is chaired by Professor Warburton. Members of the group are also invited to JRI events and seminars, and are a very useful conduit into local and regional community issues.

The objective of the Reference Group is to facilitate links between the Richards Initiative and key stakeholders to provide advice to the Initiative. Functions include:

- Contributing to the development of the research agenda
- Informing the initiative about workforce development issues, including those relating to research, education and training
- Disseminating information about the research undertaken by the Initiative and providing a conduit in the wider community.

### **Current Members:**

Professor Jeni Warburton	John Richards Chair of Rural Aged Care Research
Mr John Richards	Founder
Professor Hal Swerissen	Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences and Pro Vice-Chancellor Regional Campuses
Professor Annette Street	Associate Dean – Research, Faculty of Health Sciences
Dr Guin Threlkeld	Director, Faculty of Health Sciences, Albury-Wodonga Campus
Professor Rhonda Nay	Director ACEBAC, La Trobe University
Professor Evan Willis	Associate Dean (Regions) Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, La Trobe University
Dr Amanda Kenny	Director, Faculty of Health Sciences, Bendigo Campus
Mr Chris Puckey	Manager, Policy & Analysis, Aged Care Branch, Department of Health
Mr Tony Dunn	Director, Health and Aged Care, Hume Region, Department of Health
Ms Donna Richards	Chief Executive Officer, Moira Healthcare Alliance
Mr Leonard Peady	Chief Executive Officer, Gateway Community Health
Ms Mary Hoodless	Upper Murray Health & Community Services
Ms Sandra Davidson	Manager Aged Psychiatry – Wangaratta Northeast Health Wangaratta
Ms Jeanette Ryan	Executive Manager Care Services, Shepparton Villages
Mr Terry Welch	Director of Clinical Services, Yarrawonga Health Service
Mr Trevor Marshall	Primary Care Manager, Alpine Health
Ms Ruth Harris	Program Manager, Support Options, Upper Murray Family Care



## Staff

### Professor Jeni Warburton

#### John Richards Chair of Rural Aged Care Research

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#### Professional involvement

Member, Executive, Victorian Australian Association of Gerontology  
Chair, Research Advisory Group, Volunteering Australia  
Member, Editorial Boards, Third Sector Review; Australian Journal on Volunteering  
Adjunct Senior Research Fellow, School of Social Work and Human Services, The University of Queensland

#### Biography

Professor Jeni Warburton is an internationally recognised researcher in ageing and social policy with an excellent record of research into issues central to the health and well-being of older people in the community. Her program of research into healthy and productive ageing has been funded by collaborative research projects with national and international partners through research grants totalling nearly \$2 million. This includes external competitive grants through the ARC and other granting schemes, and significant consultancies with all levels of government as well as the private and community sectors.

Professor Warburton moved to Victoria to lead the John Richards Initiative in September 2008. Prior to this, she was senior researcher at one of the lead Australian research centres on ageing at The University of Queensland.

Professor Warburton's research is focused on promoting ageing well in the community, and her research has had a significant impact and influence on the development of ageing policy and practice in Australia.

One of the main strands of her research program focuses on volunteering by older people. In this area, she has consulted with government and the non-profit sector, and is involved in a number of research projects. She has also published broadly in this area and has given key note addresses on the topic. In 2009, for example, Professor Warburton presented on volunteering and productive ageing at a major forum in China.

She is regularly invited to present at national and international conferences, as well as to give forums and workshops at significant government and non-government events. She has an excellent publication record in key, high calibre, international ageing and social policy journals.

Professor Warburton is also a successful supervisor of higher degree students, having supervised ten postgraduate students to completion.



## **Professor Annette Street**

### **Associate Dean (Research) Faculty of Health Sciences**

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Dr. Annette Street is a social researcher and Professor of Cancer and Palliative Care Studies at La Trobe University with an international reputation in supportive and palliative care research. She is also the Associate Dean (Research) in the Faculty of Health Sciences at La Trobe University. She provides leadership to the rural health program of the Faculty

Her research interests are primarily focused in the sociology of health and illness taking a health promoting approach to palliative and supportive care, specifically around living with cancer, end of life decision making and transitions to dying well with dignity. She is particularly interested in improving policy and services to improve the health outcomes of older rural Australians, particularly those who are indigenous or from disadvantaged circumstances. She is a member of the Board of the CRC for ATSI Health and is committed to supporting research by indigenous people.

Professor Street contributes to public policy through her membership of the government committees, consultancies and Board memberships. She provides leadership to a number of multi-disciplinary, multi-method research teams and has conducted research and consultancies in Canada, the UK, USA, China, Thailand and Sweden. She holds a Foreign Adjunct Professor position at the prestigious Karolinska Institutet in Sweden. She is widely published with over 100 current publications. She regularly reviews for a large number of journals, publishers and research funding organizations internationally.

In early 2007, Professor Annette Street was seconded to the JRI on a part-time basis to head up the unit as it searched for a permanent Chair. During this time she was instrumental in drawing together ideas that would eventuate in JRI receiving funding for springboard projects, website development and recruitment of higher degree students. Professor Street is still actively involved in the JRI, and makes regular visits to the campus to manage her current research projects, participate in JRI events, and supervise PhD students.



**Dr Guin Threlkeld**  
**Director Health Sciences**  
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**Relevant Professional Involvement**

Director and Deputy Chair of Board of Directors, Gateway Community Health

Member, Albury-Wodonga Joint Hospitals' Ethics Committee

Member, VHA Clinical Governance Benchmarking Working Party

**Biography**

Dr Guinever Threlkeld led the establishment of the JRI. In addition to her role with JRI, Dr Threlkeld is Director, Health Sciences Albury-Wodonga and Head of Social Work and Social Policy at the Albury-Wodonga Campus. Dr Threlkeld is experienced in consultancy work in the health and human services sector, with a focus on service development in North East Victoria. Her research has focused on health service development and ideologies of care. Her teaching is focussed in the areas of social policy, research methods and human service organisations. Dr Threlkeld is also the Postgraduate Coordinator of the JRI.

**Dr Pauline Savy**

**JRI Project Manager**

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**Research Project July 2009-March 2010**

Workforce mapping project: Rural public Sector Aged Residential Care facilities

**Professional involvement:**

Membership of The Australian Sociological Association

Guest Editor *Health Sociology Review*

**Biography**

Pauline has taught Social Gerontology and Sociology at La Trobe University for more than 20 years. Prior to this academic role, she worked as a nurse in geriatric and psychiatric fields and as a consultant in aged care service provision and education.

Pauline's academic interests include teaching and publishing in sociology and researching the provision of aged care in residential and community settings.



## **Ms Rachel Winterton**

### **Research Officer**

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### **Professional involvement:**

Member of the Australian Historical Association (AHA)

Member of the Australian Society of Sports History (ASSH)

### **Biography**

Rachel joined the John Richards Initiative in April 2009, and is currently working on a number of projects to do with ageing in rural communities. She was recently awarded a LTU Faculty of Health Sciences Early Career Grant for research into the meaning of place for older people living in two rural communities in North-East Victoria.

Rachel has a background in sport history and sociology, with her research addressing sport in colonial Australia. She has recently completed a PhD in social history, examining the developmental characteristics of nineteenth century competitive swimming in Melbourne, Victoria.

## ***Administrative***

### **Mrs Fiona Jones**

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### **Biography**

Fiona has worked with La Trobe University since 1990, including 16 years with the Faculty of Law and Management. Fiona is responsible for Finance, Personnel, administration tasks for Professor Jeni Warburton



## PhD Students

### Ms Mary Taylor

#### PhD Student

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#### Professional involvement:

Membership of Australian Association Social Workers

Membership of Australian Association of Gerontology

#### Biography

Mary has worked and managed in the social work field – in schools, generalist and relationship counselling, case management and trauma.

Research interests encompass rurality, ageing, life history/narrative work and end of life issues.

#### Research Title:

##### Life Review and Advanced Care Planning in Rural Communities:

A study investigating the feasibility of an intervention linking the telling of life stories with a discussion about future advanced care planning and end of life care in rural communities with competent elderly individuals.

Supervised by: Professor Annette Street (JRI), Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Health Sciences, Dr Guinever Threlkeld (JRI), Director of Health Sciences Albury-Wodonga, and Dr Jeanine Blackford, Palliative Care Research Fellow, Faculty of Health Sciences.

### Ms Zoe O'Callaghan

#### PhD Student

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#### Biography:

- Honours thesis by research – "Hero to zero: A study of success and failure narratives of elite athletes"
- Zoe has worked in nursing, as a researcher, research assistant and a sessional lecturer and tutor in sociology and qualitative research methods for health professionals
- Research interests encompass ageing, rurality, farming, identity, storying and biography.

#### Research Title:

##### Men on the land: The identities of baby boom farmers in the border country.

A study investigating how male farmers within the first wave of baby boomers see themselves in old age

Supervised by Professor Jeni Warburton (JRI) and Dr Anne-Maree Sawyer from The School of Social Science, La Trobe University.



**Ms Fleur St Amand**

**PhD Student**

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**Biography:**

- Fleur has worked in clinical and research settings in the area of mental health.
- Research interests encompass workforce issues, work-life integration, ageing, personality and well-being.

**Research Title:**

**Necessity or Desire: The role of work for ageing workers in rural communities.**

A study investigating the factors that influence older healthcare workers future decisions around paid work in rural and regional areas.

Supervised by Professor Jeni Warburton (JRI) and Dr Sue Hodgkin, School of Social Work, Wodonga.

**Sandra Davidson**

**PhD Student (Part-time)**

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**Biography:**

- Extensive experience working in Mental Health in both clinical and management roles. Past 19 years have been in Older Persons Mental Health.
- Research interest in the mental health and wellbeing of older persons.

**Research Title:**

What is the experience of a first diagnosis of depression for people in later life, and how is this viewed in the context of the individual life story.

Supervised by Dr Guin Threlkeld (JRI), Director of Health Sciences Albury-Wodonga, and Professor Jeni Warburton (JRI).



## ***Associated Staff***

### **Dr Jeanine Blackford**

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### **Biography**

Jeanine's research career spans almost 20 years. She has conducted research in a variety of urban and rural health care settings. This includes acute care, aged care, palliative care and the community. She is one of the co-investigators in the Evaluative life review and advance care planning project conducted under the auspice of JRI. Aside from this project she is also principal investigator in a study that aims to develop trial and evaluate an Advance Care Planning model for Community Palliative Care. This is a national study with sites located in urban and rural areas of the Northern Territory, Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales.

### **Dr Sue Hodgkin**

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### **Professional involvement:**

Member of Australian Association Social Work

### **Biography**

Sue Hodgkin teaches in the School of Social Work at La Trobe University Albury-Wodonga. Prior to working for La Trobe University, Sue was a senior manager in the Department of Human Services. Sue commenced work at La Trobe University in 1997, as a lecturer in social work. During this time she completed her Masters in Social Work and her PhD. Her research interests encompass rurality, gender, lifestage and social capital.

Sue is currently involved in a number of research activities with the JRI. These include:

- **Workforce mapping project**  
Sue has been working on the Workforce Mapping Project: Rural Public Sector Aged Care Residential Care Facilities. Skilled in mixed methods research, Sue was involved in training research assistants, data collection and data analysis for the project.
- **ISP fellowship**  
Sue was awarded a Research Fellowship from La Trobe's Institute for Social Participation to work with the JRI during Semester 1 2010. Sue is currently working and reporting on a study which examines rates of social, civic and community participation for the ageing cohort.
- **Book chapter**  
In conjunction with Professor Jeni Warburton, Sue is working on a chapter for an edited book titled *Rural Social Work*. The chapter in this book specifically examines ageing and rural social work practice. It is anticipated that the book will be published in 2011.



## Marketing and Publicity

Initial marketing of the John Richards Initiative was undertaken by Dr Guin Threlkeld, who led the development of a marketing plan for the unit. The JRI has been positively promoted through the media from its launch, local television coverage on the launch, and through the provision of expert comment on relevant issues.

In 2009, La Trobe University Media Unit completed a video on the JRI which was released to the media and on the LTU website. The video is available on the news and media site and on the JRI site ([www.latrobe.edu.au/jri](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/jri)). This has generated considerable interest amongst stakeholders, and interest from the press.

We have also developed a portable pull-up unit which will assist in the marketing of JRI. This can be used in presentations and any publicity we may gain from the media. In 2010 we will develop a brochure to enable us to market ourselves throughout the local and general community.

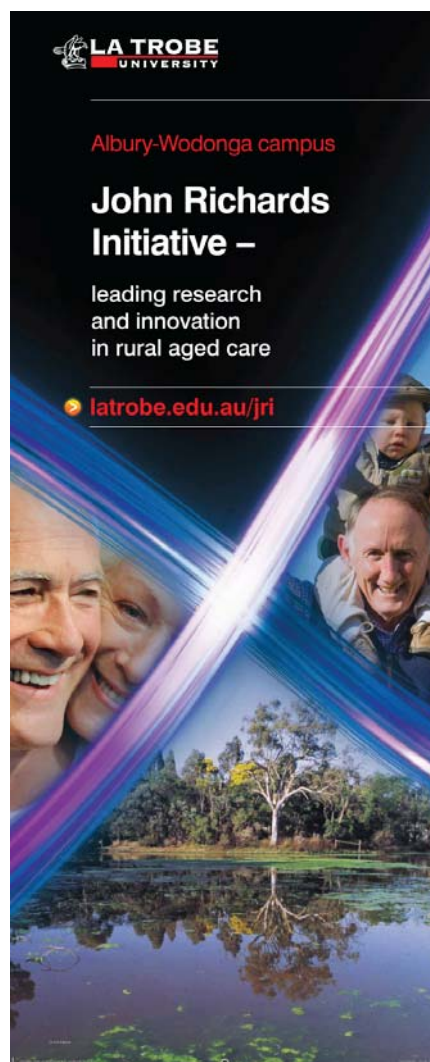
General publicity has been sought over the past 3 years at significant points, such as the launch of the Initiative and when Professor Warburton was appointed. This has resulted in a number of press articles in papers such as The Border Mail, an item in The Age professional section (on Professor Warburton's appointment), and local ABC radio interviews. The JRI video also received press attention, including an item on local Win news.

More specific publicity has also been generated attached to events and research projects. Some of this is itemized below.

### Specific publicity for the JRI

Publicity was sought for all of our special events, such as the launch of the JRI (May 2007); Professor Warburton's arrival (September 2008); the stakeholder' forum (November 2008).

- LTU media unit have completed a video on the JRI which was released in November. It is available on the news and media site and on the JRI site. It generated interest amongst stakeholders. As a result, Jeni Warburton was interviewed on Prime News.



- Professor Warburton's research on rural ageing was selected to feature in publicity for the 2009 Australasian Association of Gerontology Conference in Canberra in late November. As a result, eleven articles were produced for local papers across the country, and two local ABC radio interviews were conducted on the research project.
- A press release on a new ARC project was released to coincide with the visit of Dr Patricia Obst from Queensland University of Technology in December 2009. As a result, an article was published in the Border Mail, and Jeni appeared on Win News.

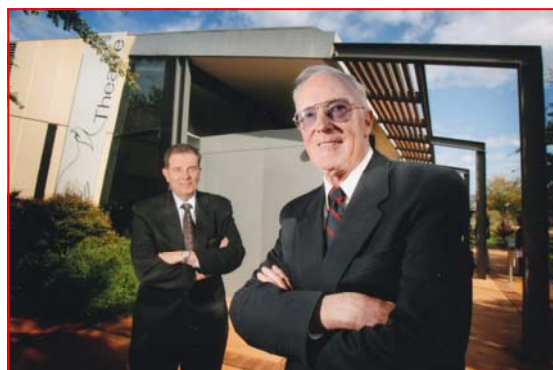


## Significant Events

### Launch of the John Richards Initiative on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2007

The JRI was launched on 16<sup>th</sup> May by The Honourable Gavin Jennings, the then State Minister for Community Services.

During his speech at the launch of the Initiative, Mr Jennings said the *John Richards Research Initiative into Aged Care in Rural Communities* would focus on what the aged care workforce in regional Victoria should look like in the future and map out what is required to deliver that workforce.



Mr Jennings noted that the research initiative was named in honour of John Richards, a former jackaroo, soldier, farmer, Victorian newsagency association executive and inaugural president of the Yarrowonga District Hospital board of management. He highlighted the vision and significance of John Richards' donation, which had been matched by contributions from the Victorian government and from La Trobe University.

### John Richards Stakeholders' Forum – November 2008

The first major forum from the John Richards Research Initiative into Aged Care in Rural Communities was held on 14 November 2008 at La Trobe University Albury-Wodonga campus. Planning for this meeting was conducted by Dr Guin Threlkeld and Professor Jeni Warburton. The proceedings of the day were introduced by Dr Guin Threlkeld, and the day's proceedings were launched by Mr John Richards, the founder of the initiative.

Professor Jeni Warburton, the Chair of the initiative, gave the keynote address. Her paper was entitled "Research into Aged Care in Rural Communities: What do we know and what do we need to know". Professor Warburton gave her vision for the development of the initiative, stating that she believed that "we need to develop a program of research that makes a difference to the lives of a diverse range of older people living in rural communities". She then went on and discussed some of the issues facing the growing numbers of people ageing in rural areas, and how this might be translated into a program of work.



Professor Warburton's keynote address was followed after morning tea by two papers addressing the research / practice and research / policy issues associated with rural health and aged care. Professor Annette Street from the JRI,

who is Professor of Cancer and Palliative Care Studies at La Trobe University gave a presentation called "The Art of the Soluble: Research from Practice". Here she outlined how research can lead to practice change, using examples from her own research program into supportive and palliative care. Mr Chris Puckey from the Department of Human Services, a co-funder of the initiative, presented on "Policy and Place: Challenges of the rural context", where he discussed the policy dimension of rural aged care.

The afternoon session comprised a series of presentations on innovation in research and the provision of services in rural aged care. Mary Taylor from the JRI gave a talk on the development of her Phd research, entitled "Research Reasoning: Life review and advanced care planning in rural communities". This was followed by Kaye Ervin from the Rural Health Academic Network, who talked about her research with the University of Melbourne, in her paper, "Care Management in Aged Care: Participation and satisfaction". Sandra Davidson from Aged Psychiatry in Wangaratta, presented a paper called "Aged Psychiatry Service: Issues and observations about ageing in NE Victoria". The final presenter was Trevor Marshall from Alpine Health who presented on "Aged Care in an MPS Environment". Both papers gave a fascinating account of some of the challenges and successes associated with the provision of health and aged care services in rural Victoria.

The day provided an excellent opportunity for discussion of current and future research options, as well as service innovation, and an opportunity for local stakeholders and researchers to mix in an open forum.



## Seminars

### **Minding muscles, meeting mates... Research and practice in healthy ageing – The health benefit of social participation in later life— Australian Association of Gerontology (Victorian Division).**

**Organisers: Robin Harvey, Charles Sturt University, Albury; and Jeni Warburton, JRI, May 2009**

This rural forum, entitled Minding Muscles, Meeting Mates ... Research and Practice in Healthy Ageing, attracted 66 participants and speakers from all over the Hume region and Northeast Victoria. Participants came from a range of services including community health services, community support agencies, hospitals and aged care residential facilities.

The morning session of the program, headed by keynote speaker, Professor Nicola Lautenschlager (Professor & Chair of Psychiatry of Old Age; Head of the Academic Unit for Psychiatry of Old Age; The University of Melbourne Department of Psychiatry; Director, St. Vincent's Aged Psychiatry Service (SVAPS), and Professor Jeni Warburton (John Richards Chair of Rural Aged Care Research, John Richards Initiative, La Trobe University), focussed on two key aspects of healthy ageing, physical activity and social participation. The afternoon session provided an opportunity to showcase five innovative practice programs from the region highlighting the links between

### **Spaces of ageing; an Australian Study. Presented by Dr Maree Petersen, School of Social Work and Human Services, University of Queensland at the John Richards Initiative, Wodonga, May 2009**

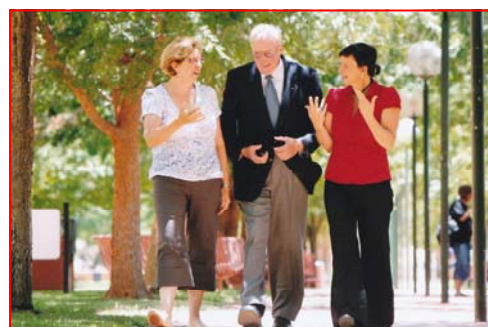
This presentation drew our attention to the spatial aspects of older people's living environments, particularly in relation to large residential complexes. Within Australia, along the coastal belt and on the outskirts of our cities, large residential complexes specifically built for older people are commonplace. This industry has effectively doubled in size since 1990, and is expected to double again within the next seventeen years. The complexes are typically made up of retirement villas as well as care facilities, all within a gated 'village'. While most older people choose to live at home, when we think of specialised housing for older people in Australia we tend to think of these large segregated spaces where only older people live.



Findings from this study undertaken in Brisbane, Australia suggest that if we are to address inclusive housing for older people we need to look at the assumptions behind the building of large residential complexes. This presentation reported findings from interviews exploring the working knowledge, views and assumptions of developers, designers, and planners responsible for the construction of residential complexes

### **Valuing volunteers as a response to the rural skills crisis. Presented by Dr Patricia Obst, School of Psychology and Counselling, QUT for the John Richards Initiative, Wodonga, December 2009.**

Recently, Dr Obst and Professor Warburton have joined forces with the Queensland Department of Communities which has resulted in a successful ARC Linkage grant, involving working with regional areas in both Queensland and Victoria. Dr Obst described the project methodology and expected outcomes from this new and innovative study.



This project addressed two key challenges facing contemporary Australia: skills shortages in rural areas and the new ageing cohort's desire for meaningful, productive engagement and enhanced wellbeing.

The research will develop a theoretically derived model of retired/semi-retired professionals' incentives to contribute as episodic volunteers to the social and economic development of rural Australia. The model will be trialled and evaluated across the two states (Qld and Vic).

It is hoped that small rural councils can utilise this model to develop projects and incentives that will encourage retirees with professional skills to assist with specific projects to enhance their sustainability.



## Research Projects

### ***The Practice of Prostate Care Nursing***

**Funding:** Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia  
**Project Staff:** Professor Annette Street, Associate Dean, LTU Faculty of Health Sciences; Elizabeth Watt, Lecturer Division of Nursing and Midwifery La Trobe University (Bundoora Campus); Coordinator, Prostate Nursing Care Program; Jane Downing, Research Officer, JRI

#### **Project Overview**

The Senate Select Committee on Men's Health released in late May (2009), that "the Commonwealth Government expedite funding for the provision of specialist prostate care nurses, particularly in rural and regional Australia" (p 57). There has been little work published on this new and emerging specialisation in nursing practice.

A major objective of this project was to explore the role and scope of practice of nurses working with men who have prostate cancer in Australia, in particular those working in rural and regional contexts. A questionnaire was developed and mailed to nurses who had participated in prostate care education programs or were on a mailing list for urology nurses.

Data were gathered that described their demographic characteristics, educational background and continuing education, current role description, workplace characteristics, nature and scope of practice. A subset of respondents were also interviewed to further explore their role and scope of practice and to collect paradigm stories from their practice that illustrate their day to day practice.

As a consequence of the information obtained in the survey and interviews, a second objective was to develop an on-line resource for nurses caring for men with prostate cancer. This has particular relevance for nurses requiring continuing education in rural Australia.

### ***Developing a collaborative approach to ageing well in the community***

**Funding:** Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant in conjunction with Queensland Department of Communities, Gold Coast City Council, Ipswich City Council  
**Project Staff:** Professor Jeni Warburton, Dr Michael Cuthill (UQ), Professor Helen Bartlett (now Monash University). Project Officer Jo-Anne Everingham (UQ); PhD student Andrea Petriwskyj (UQ)  
**Time frame** 2006-09

This is an ARC Linkage project led by Professor Warburton and based in Queensland. The project aimed to develop and implement a model of local collaboration to respond to national policy goals concerned with the community's capacity to age well. The model has been developed through an action research project based in two contrasting local communities, with the intention of exploring factors critical for the sustainability of such collaborative partnerships. This project is now drawing to a close, and has resulted in the production of eight papers, as well as presentations at conferences and policy forums, in this important policy area.

This ARC project has also supported a PhD student, Andrea Petriwskyj, who has completed and submitted her PhD, with Jeni Warburton as her principal supervisor (December 2009). Andrea's topic area complemented the main project, and explored older people's willingness to be involved in local governance, specifically local council activities. Andrea has also produced some significant outcomes from her study, including academic publications, conference presentations, as well as several student awards, including the COTA policy prize in 2008.



## ***Life review and advance care planning in rural communities***

**Funding:** Department of Human Services  
**Project Staff:** Professor Annette Street, Associate Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Dr Guin Threlkeld, Director, Health Sciences, Albury-Wodonga Campus, and Dr Jeanine Blackford, Palliative Care Research Fellow, Faculty of Health Sciences. Mary Taylor, JRI PhD Student



This project is designed to develop and test an innovative intervention that integrates Evaluative Life Review and Advance Care Planning for older people in rural communities. Life reviews in various forms are increasingly used with older people to capture their key values, achievements, experiences, lifestyle, community contributions and social relationships. Evaluative Life Reviews can act as a starting point for elderly people living in small rural communities to explore their future hopes and their plans for end of life care and record these in an advance care plan.

Advance Care Planning (ACP) is a strategy that enables individuals to express their future wishes in a values-driven discussion about options related to medical treatment, desired place and manner of death, along with a decision for a substitute decision-maker in case the person is no longer able to explain their choices.

Community volunteers will be trained to conduct the Evaluative Life Review /Advance Care Planning process. Interviews, surveys and tracking audits will be used to evaluate the benefit to older rural citizens, volunteer training and support needs, and explore cost benefits of the process. The project was designed to develop and test a community-based process that draws on local volunteer and professional resources to create a program of community-based Advance Care Planning that is cost-effective, transferable and sustainable.

## ***Eden in Oz Project***

**Funding:** Tallangatta Health Service  
**Project Staff:** Professor Jeni Warburton; Project Officer, Maree Petersen  
**Time frame** 2009

The JRI worked in partnership with Tallangatta Health Service to develop a research agenda aimed at exploring the application of the Eden in Oz model in a rural setting. Maree Petersen (Professor Warburton's PhD student from the University of Queensland) undertook some exploratory research into the Eden model and how it operates at Tallangatta.

This study involved (1) a short review of the Eden Alternative, the principles and its implementation; (2) interviews with Tallangatta staff to discuss implementation of the model; (3) production of a short report with recommendations for future research. A paper was also written from the findings, which was accepted for publication by the *Australasian Journal on Ageing*.



*We would like to acknowledge that some photographs on  
Pages 2, 12, 13, and 15  
Are courtesy of the Border Mail*

## **Workforce Mapping Project: Rural Public Sector Aged Residential Care Facilities**

<b>Funding:</b>	<b>Department of Human Services (Aged Care)</b>	
<b>Project Staff:</b>	<b>Team leaders</b>	<b>Professor Jeni Warburton, Dr Sue Hodgkin</b>
	<b>Project Manager:</b>	<b>Dr Pauline Savy</b>
	<b>Project Officers:</b>	<b>Ms Judith Ireland, Ms Jane Downing, Ms Jay McGough, Ms Louise Kaye-Smith</b>
<b>Time frame</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	

This DHS funded project responds to the current and projected workforce issues affecting care delivery in high care public sector residential aged care services (PSRACS) in rural Victoria aged care services. These issues relate to difficulties in recruiting and retaining appropriately skilled staff to provide quality care of residents in high care PSRACS. In broad terms, the project set out to explore, document and profile the activities currently undertaken by the care workforce within a sample of PSRACS located in rural Victoria. Specifically, it will provide the Department of Human Services with aggregate data about existing workforce roles and associated resident care activities to assist strategic workforce planning. It will also provide site-specific data to each of the sites under study for the purpose of planning responses to local workforce issues. A major report is currently being produced for the Department.

## ***Models of social inclusion for carers in rural areas***

<b>Funding:</b>	<b>annecto – the people network</b>
<b>Project Staff:</b>	<b>Professor Jeni Warburton, Ms Rachel Winterton</b>
<b>Time frame</b>	<b>2009-10</b>

A partnership has been formed with *annecto-the people network*, a not-for profit organization targeted at increasing social inclusion in older people, carers and people with a disability. In order to better assist annecto in providing services to rural older carers, the JRI was commissioned to complete a literature review evaluating models of care for isolated older rural carers. This comprehensive literature review identified the importance of social inclusion for rural older carers, explored barriers to social inclusion for this specific group, and identified a number of risk factors for social isolation.

As a result of this initial research, the JRI has been invited to partner with annecto on a large federal Department of Health and Aging project targeting the development of a nationally based healthy lifestyle program for rural older carers. It is anticipated that should this application be successful, the JRI will play a role in both developing the program and in evaluating its success and applicability.

## ***Professionals providing skills as volunteers in rural areas***

<b>Funding:</b>	<b>ARC Linkage Grant with Queensland University of Technology and Queensland Department of Communities</b>
<b>Project Staff:</b>	<b>Dr Patricia Obst, Associate Professor Katy White, Professor Jeni Warburton, Dr Nancy Spencer</b>
<b>Time frame</b>	<b>2009-12</b>

This is an ARC funded Linkage project in partnership with the Queensland Department of Communities, which has been developed in response to the rural skills crisis. The project aims to develop a theoretically derived model of retired professionals' motivations to contribute as episodic volunteers to the social and economic development of rural Australia. Model development will be undertaken by a PhD student, under supervision of the three researchers. Once developed, the model will then be trialled and evaluated across two states, Queensland and Victoria, working with local councils to develop projects and incentives to encourage retirees with professional skills to assist with specific projects and enhance their sustainability.



## ***The meaning of place to older people in rural communities***

**Funding:** 2010 La Trobe University Faculty Research Grant – Early Career Researcher

**Project Staff:** Ms Rachel Winterton,  
Professor Jeni Warburton



This study is designed to explore the advantages and disadvantages of rural living for older people, and specifically how they perceive their quality of life in rural communities. This is a critical area of research as rural areas comprise a large proportion of older people, both those who age in place and those who have in-migrated on retirement. This study will help build our understanding of these issues and particularly how older people manage rural disadvantage. As such, the study will provide important knowledge for future service provision and interventions.

This is a multi-staged project, replicating the methodology of a rural study from the UK. The first phase of this project was initially funded by the JRI. Two further applications were made to philanthropic trusts for funding (Wicking Trust; National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre) but both were unfortunately unsuccessful.

## ***Hume Region DHS PhD scholarship***

**Funding Project Time frame** Hume region Department of Human Services Support for a PhD scholarship 2009-12

The Hume regional office of Department of Human Services provided funding for a full time PhD scholarship at the John Richards Initiative. Mr Tony Dunn from the aged care area participated in the process of student selection when two scholarships were advertised through the JRI (one funded by DHS and one funded by the JRI). The two students selected for full-time study reflected the research profile of the JRI – one interested in ageing in rural communities (Zoe O’Callaghan), and the other in the health and aged care workforce (Fleur St Armand). Both students commenced at the Initiative in September 2009, and are progressing well through their candidature.

## ***Non-metropolitan General Practitioners’ Experience of Change: demography, scope of practice, inter-professional practice and work-life balance***

**Project staff Time frame** Dr Guin Threlkeld 2009-10

Two key challenges for the provision of accessible and equitable health services for rural residents are the recruitment and retention of the medical workforce and the preparation of this workforce for the changing nature and context of practice. An earlier study of non-metropolitan GPs undertaken by Guin Threlkeld identified a key attraction of non-metropolitan work was the wide scope of General Practice in this setting, including the opportunity for procedural work. Conversely, those who were attracted by this aspect of rural practice were less drawn to work with older patients and chronic illness. This workforce orientation is concerning in light of the ageing of the non-metropolitan population. These issues will be explored in depth in the current study. Findings will be significant for primary health policy, workforce recruitment and retention strategies, and training of General Practitioners.



## ***Other grant applications***

### ***Meals on Wheels:***

#### ***Building towards a new social experiment for our times***

**Funding:** ARC Linkage Grant / National Meals on Wheels Association  
**Project Staff:** Jointly: Associate Professor Melanie Oppenheimer (UNE),  
Professor Jeni Warburton (JRI)  
**Status:** currently under review (submitted November 2009)

This project is a partnership between two researchers and a key non-profit organization, Meals on Wheels, which is integral to enabling frail older Australians and those with disabilities to remain in their own homes. This project aims to address the need for MoW to address its reliance on traditional volunteer models so that it can continue to deliver this critical service. The project draws on both national and international examples in order to analyse volunteer business models and develop a responsive and sustainable plan for the future.



#### ***At the heart of the community: Developing an effective practice model to recruit and retain older volunteers***

**Funding:** NSW Dept of Ageing Disability and Home Care  
**Project Staff:** Professor Jeni Warburton; Associate Professor Melanie Oppenheimer (UNE)  
Professor Jeni Warburton, John Richards Chair  
**Status:** currently under review (submitted December 2009)

In response to a call for 2 year research projects exploring participation by older people as volunteers in the non-profit sector, this application is a partnership between two researchers and Meals on Wheels New South Wales. The aim of the project is to work together to explore, build and evaluate a model of best practice recruitment and retention that will best meet the needs of older volunteers within the community services sector.



## Publications, Seminars and Conference Presentations

### Publications

**Petersen, M.** and **Warburton, J.** (in press). "The Eden model: Innovation in Australian aged care?" *Australasian Journal on Ageing* (accepted December 2009).

**Warburton, J.** (2010). "Volunteering as a productive ageing activity: Evidence from Australia". *China Journal of Social Work* special issue on Productive Aging and China: Perspectives from East Asia and Abroad (Guest editors: Nancy Morrow-Howell and Ada C. Muir) (in press).

**Warburton, J.** and Jeppsson-Grassman, E. (2009). "Variations in voluntary association involvement by seniors across different social welfare regimes". *International Journal of Social Welfare* (Published Online: Sep 14 2009 DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-2397.2009.00691.x).

Lui, C., Everingham, J., **Warburton, J.**, Cuthill, M. and Bartlett, H. (2009) 'What Makes a Community Age-Friendly: A Review of International Literature' *Australasian Journal on Ageing*. 28 (3): 116-121.

Everingham J., Petriwskyj, A., **Warburton, J.**, Cuthill M. and Bartlett H. (2009). *Information Provision for an Age-Friendly Community*, Ageing International, 2009, DOI 10.1007/s12126-009-9036-5

Lui, C-W., **Warburton, J.** and Bartlett, H.,(2009). "Doing good and feeling good: The experiences of older volunteers in a University research registry." *Educational Gerontology* 35: 553-569.

**Warburton, J.**, Bartlett, H. and Rao, Visala (2009). Ageing and cultural diversity: Policy and practice issues. *Australian Social Work* 62(2): 168-185.

**Warburton, J.** and McDonald, C. (2009). The Challenges of the New Institutional Environment: Older Volunteers in the Contemporary Non-profit Sector in Australia. *Ageing and Society* 29: 823-840.

**Warburton, J.**, Carroll, M., Bartlett, H. and Kendig, H. (2009). "Involving older people in community-based research: Developing a guiding framework for researchers and community organizations". *Australasian Journal of Ageing* 28(1), 41-45.

Peel, N. and **Warburton, J.** (2009). Using senior volunteers as peer educators: What is the evidence of effectiveness in falls prevention? *Australian Journal on Ageing* 28(1): 7-11.

Gooch, M. and **Warburton, J.** (2009). Building resilience in community-based NRM groups: An Australian case study. *Society and Natural Resources* 22 (2): 158-171.

Crombie, A., Disler, P., **Threlkeld, G.** (2009) Ageing in Rural Areas, in Nay, R. Garratt, S. (eds) *Older People: Issues and Innovations in Care*. Sydney, Churchill Livingstone.



## Reports

**Warburton, J, Petersen, M.** Report to Tallangatta Health Service. The Eden in Oz model of care: Staff perceptions of change. JRI Report. August 2009.

**Warburton, J., Winterton, R.** Report to annecto, The People's Network, Mildura. Social inclusion and caring in rural areas: A Literature Review. JRI Report. November 2009.

## Invited Presentations

**Warburton, J.** 2009. Productive ageing and volunteering. Presentation to a symposium on Productive Ageing at Shandong University in Jinan, China, July. This was an invited international symposium with participants from US, Australia, China and other Asian countries. A book and a special issue of the Chinese Journal of Social Work are being published as a result of this meeting.

**Warburton, J.** 2009. Healthy ageing and the social participation of older people. Invited keynote address. Aged and Community Tristate Conference, Albury, March. This was followed up by an article in Insite, the industry journal for aged care.

**Warburton, J.** 2008. Volunteering and ageing: Pathways into social inclusion in later life. Invited presentation. Social Capital and Volunteering in Modern Ageing Cities, Hong Kong, 15-17 December. This has led to some important partnerships with Asian researchers.

**Warburton, J.** 2008. Volunteer issues in regional and rural communities. Invited presentation. Workshop for NSW Minister for Volunteering. Coffs Harbour, NSW, September.

## Conference Presentations

**Warburton, J. and Winterton, R.** 2009. Quality of life, ageing and disadvantage in rural Victoria. Australian Association of Gerontology Conference, Canberra, November.

**Winterton, R. and Warburton, J.** 2009. The experience of ageing well in rural Victoria: the importance of place, in a special session on Non metropolitan ageing: People and places, Australian Geographers' Conference, Cairns, September.

**Warburton, J.** 2009. Prof Warburton chaired an international symposium on age friendly communities at the International Assoc of Geriatrics and Gerontology Conference in Paris, July; plus presented a poster at the conference on building collaborations in ageing.

**Warburton, J. and Jeppsson-Grassman, E.** 2008. A Comparative analysis of volunteering across different welfare regimes. International Third Sector Research Conference, Barcelona, Spain, July.



## Other University Activities

- Jeni Warburton is a member of expert panel on the UK-led international project, led by Catherine Hensessy and Norah Keating, entitled *Grey and Pleasant Land?: An Interdisciplinary Exploration of the Connectivity of Older People in Rural Civic Society*
- Jeni Warburton is a member of the Executive of the Institute of Social Participation at La Trobe University.
- Jeni Warburton presented a seminar at La Trobe University in Bundoora for the Institute of Social Participation on volunteering, social participation and health, on 10 December, 2009.
- Rachel Winterton was a presentation judge at the 2009 ERA (Emerging Researchers in Ageing) Conference at Monash University on October 2009.
- Jeni Warburton presented to the national ERA (postgraduate students in ageing) forum via Access Grid facility in Melbourne on September 2009. Her presentation was on "Guidelines for working with older people".
- Jeni Warburton is part of the VURRN Victorian Universities Rural Research Network, meeting with the group at Bendigo in September 2009.
- As a result of participation in VURRN, Jeni has participated in two applications for workshops to the Victorian Centre for Climate Change Adaptation Research in November 2009. She is part of a successful team bid to explore Climate change and health in the regions, led by Dr Darryn McEvoy at RMIT. The workshop will be held in mid 2010.
- Guin Threlkeld has represented the JRI on Campus, Faculty and University committees.



## Research Development

- Faculty of Health Sciences Research Forums. These were first instigated by Dr Guin Threlkeld and then by Professor Jeni Warburton over 2008 and 2009. The forums were held monthly with staff and postgraduate students from the Faculty of Health Sciences presenting on research and scholarly debate. The intention of the forums was to encourage and promote research within the faculty.
- The PhD student group meets monthly to discuss issues associated with their study, and to provide a supportive environment for postgraduate research. This group is led by Professor Warburton.



## Community Roles / External Activities

- Jeni Warburton is a member of Project Reference Group for the DHS project *Study on consumer perspectives on potential workforce changes*
- Jeni Warburton chairs the research advisory group at Volunteering Australia, which is organising a student day at the national conference in 2010.
- Jeni Warburton was interviewed about social isolation for an article in Australian Ageing Agenda, February 2010.
- Jeni Warburton was an invited panel member at the 2009 AGM of Age Concern Albury in November 2009.
- Jeni Warburton attended the Brotherhood of St Laurence planning session on ageing research, policy and practice in December 2009.
- Jeni Warburton and Pauline Savy presented the preliminary findings of their workforce project to the sector at a DHS Quality Improvement Seminar held in November 2009 in Moonee Valley Melbourne.
- Jeni Warburton presented at the regional conference for HACC funded care workers in October 2009 at Lake Hume Resort. Her presentation was on myths and stereotypes of ageing.
- John Richards met with Noelene Brown, Commissioner for Ageing, as part of the Moira Shire involvement in Seniors' Week, August 2009.
- Jeni Warburton produced an article called "Retirees find meaning in life through volunteering" for the publication, *The Retiree*, 2009.
- Jeni Warburton was interviewed for the InSite magazine (Feb/March 2009) for an article entitled "Be active, be alive".
- Jeni Warburton attended a discussion on late life learning at Albury Age Concern, March 2009.
- Jeni Warburton gave a presentation on the JRI to the local Older People's Platform of the Upper Hume Primary Care Partnership, March 2009.
- Jeni Warburton participated in a forum discussion on ageing on local ABC radio for International Day of Older Persons, 2009.
- Guin Threlkeld presented to the Social Work Interest Groups in Wangaratta and Albury-Wodonga, 2008.
- Guin Threlkeld presented to the Older People's Platform of the Central Hume Primary Care Partnership, Benalla, October 2007.
- Annette Street presented at the 14th Ministerial Rural and Regional Health Forum, Milawa, November 2007.



## Projections for 2010

### Future research projects

Three research applications have been submitted and are currently being reviewed. All represent significant opportunities for the JRI and are important to our mission. These projects include:

- The development of our partnership with annecto, who have submitted a large federal Department of Health and Aging project application looking to develop a national healthy lifestyle program for rural older carers. The JRI is partnering with annecto in this work.
- ARC Linkage research proposal with national Meals on Wheels to look at volunteer business models within this iconic non-profit organization.
- A proposal to NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care for a two-year research project in partnership with Meals on Wheels NSW to build and evaluate a new approach to seniors' volunteering.

Other projects are also currently under discussion or development. These include:

- An ARC Linkage grant application in partnership with Victorian Dept of Planning and Community Development, National Seniors Association, and 4 local Victorian councils / health alliances. This project is being led by Professor Jeni Warburton (with Professor John Martin of Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities, LTU, Bendigo; and Ms Fiona McKenzie from the spatial analysis team in Victorian government). This project is called "Rapidly growing grey: Local governance responses to ageing well in rural Victoria".



## Future events

JRI staff are scheduled to present at conferences and seminars in 2010 and beyond. Rachel Winterton will be presenting on rural disadvantage at the AAG Rural Conference in Ballina in April. Jeni Warburton has been invited to visit Sweden in May on an information exchange about ageing in rural communities. She has been asked to give a number of presentations on this topic, and to build a research partnership between Sweden and Victoria.

Fiona McKenzie from the spatial analysis team in the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development is giving a seminar at the JRI in March 2010 on the impact of climate change on the community at Lake Boga.

The JRI is part of a Victorian initiative led by Dr Darryn McEvoy at RMIT to run a Victorian Centre for Climate Change Adaptation Research workshop on "Climate change and health in the regions". Jeni Warburton will lead the session on the impact of climate change on older people.

A number of JRI research papers are under review. These include a review article on "Does place matter? Reviewing the experience of disadvantage for rural older populations" (Rachel Winterton and Jeni Warburton); articles on social inclusion and ageing, collaborative processes relating to community ageing, and mature workers. Professor Jeni Warburton and Dr Sue Hodgkin are preparing a commissioned book chapter on social work in ageing in rural communities.

## Future students

New postgraduate students are being attracted to the JRI, with one new student starting in March to look at the impact of climate change on ageing farmers.





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