

2003
ANNUAL REPORT

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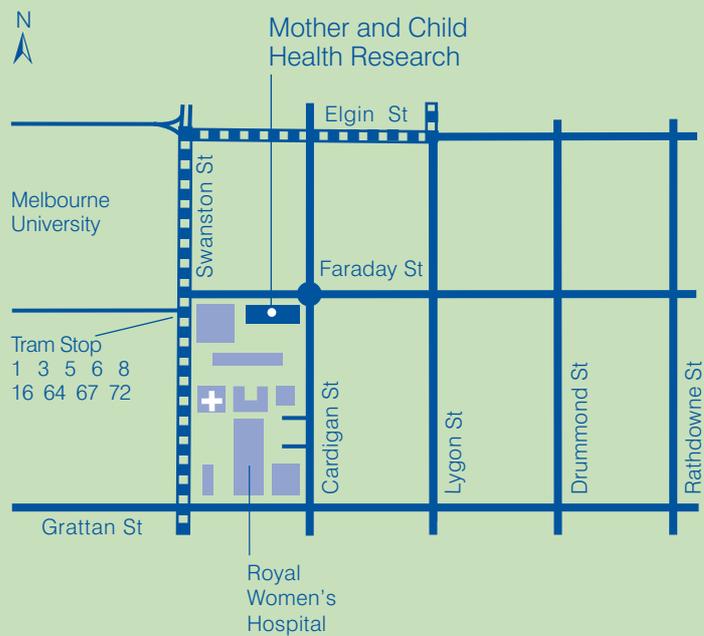
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2003 ANNUAL REPORT



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Director's report

Regular readers may have been startled by the new look of this year's Annual Report. After more than a decade of cover designs emphasising 'place' the new look is a reminder of space, connectedness and development. We hope that the transition to a simplified title and logo for the Centre will help in explaining to those hearing about it for the first time what we are about, and that regular readers and old friends will recognise the strong continuity of the research program. The Centre's website now includes some information formerly included in the Annual Report, the most important being a complete list of our earlier publications.

One highlight in 2003 was the award of NHMRC funding to Angela Taft and colleagues for the research component of a cluster-randomised trial (*MOSAIC*) offering a supportive intervention by community mothers aimed at reducing the impact of abuse and depression on mothers and their young children. This is a collaboration with the NorthWest Division of General Practice, the women's community-based health service Women's Health West, and the Department of General Practice at the University of Melbourne. This multidisciplinary collaboration builds on our previous experience with the community intervention trial *PRISM* (*Program of Resources, Information and Support for Mothers.*) *MOSAIC* is a research program within one of the national research priority areas, A Healthy Start to Life. Sometimes it seems to us as if the usual interpretation of this priority area takes late infancy as the starting point and children as the focus whereas we aim to emphasise the importance of life before birth and broaden the focus to include the health of mothers - and fathers - as crucial contributors to a healthy start.

Violence and depression, and associations of violence with adverse reproductive outcomes have become important new research themes here in the last three to four years. Angela Taft from the Centre, together with Helen McLachlan, Clinical School of Midwifery and Neonatal Nursing Studies, La Trobe University, organised a very successful seminar health professionals across Victoria to hear Professor Judith Macfarlane speak about her sustained program of work in this area in Texas, with local speakers contributing as well. Professor Jackie Campbell from Johns Hopkins University, also spoke at a meeting in June, organised by Angela Taft in conjunction with the Public Health Association of Australia. Angela Taft and Lyn Watson are collaborating with the Australian Women's Longitudinal Health Study in analyses of relevant data in the youngest cohort.

The launch of the *PRISM* project website by Rob Moodie, was an exciting event, attended by a range of people from all the 16 participating communities. The website, developed by Rhonda Small, makes available a very large proportion of the documentation of *PRISM*, as well as the resources developed for it, local initiatives undertaken in support of mothers, support for program implementation, feedback to communities, newsletters, and the materials provided to maternal and child health nurses and general practitioners within the continuing education component. Our aim was to make these materials available, and also to ensure that everyone interested had the opportunity to think about and critique *PRISM* before knowing the outcomes of the intervention. For the same reason we have published the *PRISM* protocol, including sections describing the way the project changed during its long life-span, in an open access on-line journal. That journal has a 'transparency' policy which means that the reviews of the original paper are also on-line, as is the authors' response and the final version of the paper.

RESEARCH COLLABORATION WITH HOSPITALS

The collaborative project *Evaluating practice and organisation of care at Southern Health and Sandringham (EPOCS)* was completed this year. The project had been funded by the Department of Human Services in an unusual competitive process and the final reports were launched by the Parliamentary Secretary for Health and local member for Mulgrave, who described the project reports as "taking the guesswork out of deciding what innovations are better for recent mother". The maternity enhancement strategies implemented in *EPOCS* were new approaches to antenatal preparation for the postnatal period, increased continuity of care and continuity of carer, development of in-house postnatal domiciliary services, improved breastfeeding support in hospital and implementation of evidence-based practice guidelines. *EPOCS* also included a strong Vietnamese component, using the strategies for recruitment, participation and feedback, which were pioneered in the *Mothers in a New Country (MINC)* project. Jane Yelland, Ann Krastev, Stephanie Brown and Rhonda Small were the key contributors from the Centre.

Another major collaboration, the *ANEW* project, involves the Centre (Stephanie Brown and Judith Lumley), the Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne (Kelsey Hegarty and Jane Gunn) and the Mercy Hospital for Women (Julie Collette and Della Forster) in the development of an alternative approach to 'paper-based screening' for psychosocial issues during pregnancy. It is providing midwives, shared care general practitioners, and hospital medical staff with a multifaceted innovative training program in the areas of active listening, picking up on cues and appropriate responding skills (patient centred care). This model is being evaluated before and after the training using two surveys of women attending the antenatal clinic, and measuring changes in the knowledge and skills of participating doctors and midwives. The final results of this exciting project should be available in 2004.

Stephanie Brown, Ellie McDonald and Ann Krastev are following a cohort of women from early in their first pregnancy to 18 months after birth with a focus on maternal health after birth. The *Maternal Health Study* continues to have very strong interest and support from the four participating large Melbourne hospitals. Another large and complex project, '*Early Births*', the state-wide case-control study of births before 32 weeks of pregnancy, led by Lyn Watson and Jo Rayner, which involves all maternity hospitals across Victoria, is making excellent progress, with data collection from women to be completed in 2004. In *HARP, Health and*



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Mothers' and Children's Health

recovery after operative birth, a longer-term follow-up of our earlier trial of 'debriefing after operative birth at the Royal Women's Hospital, Rhonda Small and colleagues have been successful in re-establishing contact with a large number of the women involved in the original trial. A high proportion of women in all three of these collaborative projects with hospitals have consented to review of their medical records.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE AND HEALTH POLICY

One of the Centre's major tasks is the completion of new research to inform policy and practice in maternity care, but contributions other than new primary research can be at least as important. Three relevant areas of major activity in 2003 were systematic reviews. One was a systematic review of psychosocial screening in antenatal care. A disturbing finding, given current policy and practice in Victoria, was that none of the 16 published instruments developed for antenatal screening to predict postnatal depression performed adequately as a screening tool. A second systematic review, this time of interventions to reduce maternal depression after birth, updated throughout 2003, has been able to distinguish effective intervention strategies from those for which there is no evidence at present. This work provides a solid basis for implementation, and for 'what not to do'. Catherine Chamberlain, a Public Health Fellow on placement at the Centre in 2003 with Judith Lumley, completed an update of the Cochrane Review on interventions to promote smoking cessation during pregnancy. The updated review strengthens the evidence that these interventions reduce preterm birth and low birthweight, as well as increasing the proportion of women who stop smoking in pregnancy. The most problematic issue with respect to smoking cessation in pregnancy however, is not evidence but action. The *2000 Survey of Recent Mothers* showed very disappointing implementation of smoking cessation strategies in Victorian maternity hospitals. We hope that policy changes in the last two years will show an impact on smoking in pregnancy within the planned 2006 Survey.

Philanthropic funding has made a real difference to establishing and supporting new research in the past two years. *MOSAIC* would probably not have been funded by NHMRC without the benefits of earlier philanthropic funding. Similarly, the recently established project reviewing postnatal care across Victoria would not be happening at all without the two grants from foundations,

and last year's work on very preterm birth would have been curtailed without philanthropic support.

Other highlights of 2003 were the graduation of higher degree students and awards. Beth Rankin was awarded her MAppSci (Research) for a complex pilot study of the maternal health impact of a music and movement program for mothers and babies. Sandy Campbell was awarded the Master of Applied Epidemiology (Indigenous Health) offered by the Australian National University's National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health for work including a project with the Women's Business Service at the Mildura Aboriginal Health Service. Jenny Hunt was awarded her PhD for a thesis entitled 'Trying to make a difference. Improving pregnancy outcomes, care and services for Australian Indigenous women'. Angela Taft received a New Investigator Award at the Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand Congress in Hobart, the sixth Centre staff member to have received one of these awards. Judith Lumley was selected as one of the health and medicine finalists in The Bulletin's 'Smart 100'.

Judith Lumley



Overview

The Centre for the Study of Mothers' and Children's Health was established in 1991 with a program grant from the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation and research project grants from a number of other agencies. In November 1994, the Centre became part of the Faculty of Health Sciences at La Trobe University. In 1997 the Centre affiliated with the newly established School of Public Health. Over the last thirteen years, the Centre has built a strong program of research addressing issues of major public health importance for mothers and children. In early 2004 the name of the Centre was formally changed to Mother and Child Health Research.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Mother and Child Health Research is a multidisciplinary research centre which aims to:

- undertake and interpret research on mothers' and children's health;
- contribute to policy development;
- provide advice and resources to researchers in related fields;
- be involved in postgraduate and continuing education.

RESEARCH PROGRAM

The primary research focus is in the following areas:

- Health services: pregnancy and birth
- Perinatal and child outcomes
- Cross-cultural and Indigenous issues
- Longer term health outcomes of reproduction and assisted conception.

The criteria for choosing specific research topics is that they are all major public health issues in terms of the burden of disease, the implications for women and their families and the resource implications of the condition for health services or for society as a whole.

The Centre has a strong interest in health services research, and is building on observational studies to design and implement intervention studies in hospitals, primary care and community settings. This involves working with health service managers, caregivers, community organisations and local councils to implement and evaluate interventions. Techniques of evaluation include health outcome assessment and process and impact measures, making use of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

A major focus of a number of projects is on the maternal sequelae of reproductive events, in particular antecedents of preterm birth and physical and psychological disorders initiated or aggravated by pregnancy, labour or birth. Studies addressing these issues include use of routinely collected data and record linkage, observational surveys and interview studies, cohort studies and randomised trials with long-term follow-up of participants.

Another focus of work undertaken at the Centre is on the health and childbearing experience of Indigenous women and women of non-English speaking backgrounds, and the development of culturally relevant research methods and approaches.

STAFF

The Centre brings together a team of researchers with qualifications and experience in: epidemiology, women's health policy, psychology, education, historical and social research, health economics, biomedical research, statistics, consumer advocacy, medicine, nursing and midwifery.

Director Judith Lumley

Administrative staff Tracey Carpenter (until August 2003), Felice Rocca (until May 2003), Paul Toomey, Vicki Wyatt, Robert Yearsley

Research staff Stephanie Brown, Fiona Bruinsma, Mary-Ann Darcy, Ann Harley, Penelope Jones, Michelle Kealy, Ann Krastev, Ellie McDonald, Creina Mitchell, Priscilla Pyett, Jo Rayner, Rhonda Small, Angela Taft, Lyn Watson, Jane Yelland

Research assistants and project support staff

Meg Chesterman, Maggie Flood, Kasey Gibson, Anne Harbison, Michelle Kingston, Rowena Morris, Simone Quinton, Bree Rankin, Bonnie Simons, Martine Spaul, Stephanie Lenko, Liesje Toomey, Sally von Bibra, Hannah Woolhouse

Research associates Catherine Chamberlain (Victorian Public Health Fellow), Lisa Donohue, Helen McLachlan, Dick Sloman, Alison Venn

PhD and Doctor of Public Health students Lisa Amir, Sue Armstrong, Mary-Ann Darcy, Della Forster, Jenny Hunt, Michelle Kealy, Dick Sloman, Jo Rayner, Lyn Watson, Jane Yelland,

Masters students Sandy Campbell, Katrina Stevenson

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Mother and Child Health Research is involved in a number of collaborative projects with other institutions in Victoria and around Australia and overseas. Several staff are contributors to the Cochrane Collaboration.

EDUCATION

The Centre is also involved in postgraduate, continuing and in-service education and offers practical training for researchers, through involvement in workshops and other activities. A five-day Short Course in Perinatal and Reproductive Epidemiology, and two-day workshop on the Design of Perinatal Trials are offered annually. For enquiries regarding either of these courses, or about postgraduate research, please contact Rhonda Small (Postgraduate Co-ordinator) on (03) 8341 8500.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The relationship between research and policy development in the field of mothers' and children's health is of major concern to Centre staff. A range of strategies is employed to contribute to improved policy development in this field: publications; submissions; membership of committees; arranging seminars, courses and conferences; public speaking engagements; provision of advice to government and other bodies.

PUBLICATIONS

In addition to academic publications, the Centre produces its own newsletter twice a year. The Annual Report is published each year in April/May. If you would like to be included on our mailing list, please contact us on (03) 8341 8500.

Current research program

HEALTH SERVICES: PREGNANCY AND BIRTH

Randomised trial of pre-pregnancy information and counselling in inner-urban Melbourne

Judith Lumley and Lisa Donohue

This trial was designed to measure the impact on birthweight of a pre-pregnancy intervention at home with women who had one child. The intervention included structured advice on strategies for improving maternal health prior to pregnancy. Women receiving the intervention and those in the 'standard care' arm had a discussion about the woman's previous pregnancy and birth, including responses to women's own concerns.

FUNDING NHMRC Public Health Research and Development Committee project grant 1991-94

STATUS literature review updated, analysis completed, paper in preparation [ISRCTN 20165116]

Obstetric ultrasound: its prevalence, timing and effectiveness in the diagnosis of congenital malformations

Judith Lumley in collaboration with Robin Bell, NHMRC Centre for Clinical Research Excellence in Women's Health, former collaborators Judith Yates and Christopher Kohlenberg (both deceased)

This study compared the timing, mode and effectiveness of prenatal diagnosis for a predefined group of potentially diagnosable malformations, across Victoria in 1991-1992 and 2000. The major resource for the 2000 study was the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection, including the Birth Defects Register.

FUNDING Victorian Health Promotion foundation 1990-1992, subsequently core funding

STATUS three papers published, data entry for 2000 completed, literature review updated, paper in preparation

Victorian survey of recent mothers 2000

Stephanie Brown, Fiona Bruinsma, Mary-Ann Darcy and Judith Lumley

The Victorian survey of recent mothers 2000 was commissioned by the Victorian Department of Human Services to inform the continuing development of the Maternity Services Program. The survey was mailed to all Victorian women who gave birth in two weeks in September 1999. 1616 women took part in the survey, a response fraction of 67%.

Three reports based on the study findings were launched by the Minister for Health, the Hon John Thwaites in November, 2001. Copies of these reports are available from the Centre. Two papers based on the study findings were accepted for publication this year. Both compare findings from the 2000 survey with the findings of the two earlier state-wide surveys conducted in 1989 and 1994; one paper focuses on women's views of public and private models of care, and the other on the impact of shorter postnatal length of stay.

FUNDING Victorian Department of Human Services 1999-2001

STATUS final report to DHS submitted June 2001, three reports published, two papers published, two papers in press, one paper submitted, one paper in preparation

Continuity of care: does it make a difference to women's views and experiences of care?

Mary-Ann Darcy, Stephanie Brown and Fiona Bruinsma

Preliminary analysis of data from the Victorian survey of recent mothers 2000 showed wide variation in the extent to which women in different models of maternity care saw the same caregiver antenatally, and more importantly, the extent to which they felt the caregivers got to know them and remembered them and their progress from one visit to the next. Women's overall rating of antenatal care was strongly associated with these two measures of continuity.

Mary-Ann Darcy is undertaking further analysis of the 2000 survey adjusting for social and reproductive characteristics, model of care, and specific aspects of care such as waiting times.

FUNDING core grant 2002, Australian Postgraduate Award (MAD)

STATUS data analysis, paper in preparation

A new approach to supporting women in pregnancy (ANEW)

Kelsey Hegarty, Jane Gunn, Cate Nagle and Belinda Clarke, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne; Della Forster, Julie Collette and Susan Nicolson, Mercy Hospital for Women; Stephanie Brown and Judith Lumley

Implementation of psychosocial risk assessment has brought to light a number of practical problems, including: the inclusion of very diverse risk factors and outcomes such as, violence from an intimate partner, depression, lack of social support and serious mental illness under the umbrella of psychosocial risk; the reluctance of many women to disclose risk factors and fears about future events; and the reluctance of staff providing maternity care to ask women directly about difficult psychosocial issues. The result has been the development of psychosocial risk assessment tools and the implementation of antenatal screening. This project seeks to implement and evaluate an alternative approach to screening.

The study uses a pre-test/post-test design to evaluate a multifaceted educational intervention which aims to increase care providers' active listening skills and ability to pick up on cues in consultations; provide support to enable care providers to offer non-directive, problem solving counselling during routine antenatal care; and ensure that care providers have access to up to date evidence regarding the prevalence and management of common psychosocial issues for pregnant women.

The educational intervention was conducted from August to December 2002 with 24 midwives and nine medical staff participating. 584 women took part in the baseline survey, a response fraction of 76%. One fifth of women (22.3%) scored above the cut-off score indicating probable clinical depression on the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (≥ 13). 16.4% of women had experiencing emotional, physical or combined abuse from their partners during pregnancy (Composite Abuse Scale ≥ 3). Recruitment to the women's outcome survey finished in October 2003.

FUNDING Victorian Department of Human Services 2001-2004

STATUS educational intervention complete; analysis of baseline survey and recruitment to the outcome survey completed, analysis of outcome survey in progress

Evaluating practice and organisation of care at Southern Health and Sandringham Hospital (EPOCS)

Jane Yelland, Ann Krastev, Stephanie Brown, Judith Lumley and Rhonda Small in collaboration with Mary Anne Biro, Southern Health

In considering the evidence regarding best clinical practice and the recognised problems with traditional public maternity care, Southern Health (formerly Southern Health Care Network) implemented a new approach to maternity care over 1999/2001. The new maternity enhancement initiatives included the promotion of greater continuity of midwife care during labour, birth and the time in hospital following the birth; postnatal planning with women during pregnancy; and assisting medical staff and midwives to consider evidence in the provision of care.

The EPOCS study examined the outcomes of these new initiatives in terms of women's experiences of care. Adopting a 'before and after' study design, the evaluation incorporated two large postal surveys of recent mothers – the baseline in 1999 (1256 women) and the post-implementation survey in 2001 (1050 women). In addition to the surveys, 75 women who were born in Vietnam participated in home interviews.

Process evaluation involving telephone interviews with 107 women who had recently given birth at one of the four hospitals and interviews with managers, midwives and medical practitioners (n=25) was conducted over 2000/01. Feedback to staff about the process and progress of implementation of the initiatives resulted in several modifications to the maternity enhancement strategies, prior to the second survey. Monitoring of hospital readmissions and casualty attendances of mothers and infants was also undertaken.

The final reports of the evaluation were launched at Southern Health by the Parliamentary Secretary for Health and State Member for Mulgrave, Daniel Andrews, in April 2003. Many of the findings have applicability for other maternity units and, together with results of previous studies, are now instrumental in driving the maternity policy agenda at the State Government level.

FUNDING Victorian Department of Human Services, Maternity Services Enhancement Quality Improvement Funding, 1999-2002, Australian Postgraduate Award (JY)

STATUS three final reports published, one paper published, one paper submitted, one paper in preparation, writing up doctoral thesis (JY)

Debriefing after operative delivery: a randomised trial

Rhonda Small, Judith Lumley, Anne Potter, Lisa Donohue and Ulla Waldenström, Karolinska Institute, Sweden

This project arose from the finding in the 1989 Victorian survey of recent mothers of an association between operative birth (elective and emergency caesarean section, forceps or vacuum extraction) and maternal depression 8-9 months after birth. This finding is supported by a number of prospective studies.

The trial evaluated the effectiveness of midwifery-led debriefing as a strategy for reducing the prevalence of maternal depression at six months after birth in women who had experienced a caesarean section or had a birth assisted by forceps or vacuum extraction.

The trial was conducted at the Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne from March 1996 until October 1998 and 1041 women were recruited. Women randomised to the debriefing intervention were provided with the opportunity during their postnatal hospital stay of talking with a midwife about their labour, birth and post-delivery events and experiences. All women participating in the trial (both intervention and control arms) received a leaflet about practical sources of help after giving birth.

Health outcomes for all women were assessed at six months postpartum via a postal questionnaire. Women completed the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale and the SF-36, a self-report health status measure. They were also asked questions relating to pregnancy, labour and birth and the postnatal stay, as well as about aspects of life with a baby in the first six months postpartum. The response to the postal questionnaire was

exceptionally high, with 88.1% of trial participants returning completed questionnaires.

Briefly, the trial found that:

- a midwife-led debriefing session for women following an operative birth did not reduce subsequent maternal depression, improve overall maternal health status, or increase satisfaction with postpartum care;
- the trend in all of the measures of psychological well-being was for women in the debriefing arm of the trial to fare worse, though on only one measure was the difference significant.

The trial thus provides no evidence to support the introduction of routine debriefing of women following an operative birth in order to improve maternal emotional health.

During 2003 Lisa Donohue has continued writing up her PhD on the content of the debriefing sessions and women's views of their hospital care.

FUNDING Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services, Research and Development Advisory Committee grant 1995-1998

STATUS one paper published, further data analysis ongoing, doctoral thesis in preparation (LD)

Health and recovery after operative birth project (HARP)

Rhonda Small and Judith Lumley in collaboration with Elina Hemminki, STAKES (Institute for Health and Welfare) Finland, Les Reti, Royal Women's Hospital, Jane Gunn, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne, and Lisa Donohue

The aims of this project are to contribute to the current debate about the benefits of elective caesarean section compared with vaginal birth for healthy women at term by following up a large cohort of women, all of whom had an assisted delivery, to provide a more complete and a longer term comparison of the maternal health sequelae. It will identify health problems and symptoms after caesarean delivery; assess recovery from the new health problems which followed the earlier birth and identify new health problems after any subsequent birth; measure general health status; investigate reasons for non-disclosure of the problems to primary care practitioners; identify the extent of advice, referral, investigations, and treatment; measure voluntary and involuntary infertility since the birth; and describe early fetal losses and complications of subsequent pregnancies.

The study has several components:

- a postal questionnaire to all women in the cohort sent 4-6 years after the index birth;
- a review of health information records for the index birth and all subsequent births for all participants who provide written consent in responding to the postal questionnaire; and
- a qualitative sub-study exploring women's experiences of health and recovery following Caesarean birth (see next entry).

During 2003 data from the 534 returned postal surveys mailed to women in 2002 were coded and entered ready for analysis.

Requests to review health information records at the 36 hospitals where women had subsequently given birth were submitted for those participants who had provided their consent (>70%). Data abstraction processes were piloted and the data collection form refined, with the main review of records to take place in the first half of 2004.

FUNDING NHMRC project grant 2001-2003/4

STATUS analysis of postal surveys, health information record review underway

Women's health and recovery after caesarean section – a sub study of the health and recovery after operative birth project (HARP)

Michelle Kealy, Rhonda Small and Jeanne Daly, School of Public Health, La Trobe University

This qualitative study commenced in September 2002 with the appointment of PhD candidate Michelle Kealy. The aim of the study is to explore the short and longer-term health outcomes for women after caesarean section. A mapping of the caesarean section literature has been undertaken to establish the focus of research in the last forty years. Very little is known about women's experiences of recovery and longer-term health after caesarean section. Data collection commenced in December after the development of a theme list and interview piloting. In depth semi-structured interviews are ongoing with an emphasis on enabling participants to tell their story of health and recovery as they choose.

FUNDING NHMRC project grant 2001-2003/4

STATUS data collection

Attachment to the breast and family attitudes towards breastfeeding (ABFAB)

Judith Lumley, Della Forster, Helen McLachlan and Lisa Amir in collaboration with Christine Beanland, Nurses Board Victoria; Dianne Earl, Kaye Dyson and Heather Harris, Royal Women's Hospital; Roger Short, Department of Perinatal Medicine, Royal Women's Hospital; and Ulla Waldenström, Karolinska Institute, Sweden

Many factors have been shown to influence women's decision to breastfeed and how long they choose to breastfeed their babies. These include practical skills, such as attachment of the baby to the breast, and attitudes of the woman and her family towards breastfeeding. ABFAB tested whether breastfeeding education in the middle of pregnancy focusing on these factors, increased breastfeeding duration.

Women having their first baby, who were booked into the Royal Women's Hospital (RWH) were invited to participate and enrolled in the project in mid-pregnancy (approximately 18 weeks). Women were randomly allocated to one of three groups: a control group or one of two interventions - an antenatal breastfeeding class focused on practical aspects of breastfeeding and two antenatal breastfeeding classes that explored family attitudes to breastfeeding. Classes took place between weeks 20-25 of pregnancy. All women had access to the standard childbirth education at the RWH.

981 women (327 in each group) were enrolled in the study between May 1999 and August 2001. Data were collected by questionnaire at recruitment, at interview in hospital after the birth and by telephone interview 6 months later.

Approximately two-thirds of women recruited to the trial attended the class they were booked into. Attendance at the 'practical skills' class was 66% (similar to attendance at standard childbirth education classes at the RWH) and the 'attitudes' class had 58% attendance for class one and 40% for class two.

FUNDING NHMRC project grant 1998-2000, RWH scholarship 2002 (DF), VicHealth scholarship 2003-2005 (DF)

STATUS trial completed, one paper published, one accepted and one in preparation, secondary analysis underway, writing up doctoral thesis (DF) [ISRCTN 21556494]

Postnatal hospital care in Victoria: a review (PinC)

Della Forster, Judith Lumley, Jo Rayner, Jane Yelland and Helen McLachlan, Clinical School of Midwifery and Neonatal Nursing Studies, La Trobe University

A decade of Victorian research has found low levels of satisfaction with the hospital stay following birth. Of the three stages of maternity care, the area which women are most likely to be critical of is postnatal hospital care. Little is known about how hospital postnatal services are organised, what guides care provision and how maternity units approach maternal health issues, including breastfeeding support and early responses to postnatal depression.

The review, to be conducted in 2004, will include two major stages of data collection: a survey of all public maternity hospitals in Victoria regarding current guidelines and procedures governing care, followed by detailed interviews with managers and care providers.

We envisage that the state-wide review of in-hospital postnatal care will provide valuable information on the way postnatal services are provided in Victoria and a comprehensive picture of maternity hospitals' responses to maternal health issues, and in turn assist in our understanding of new possibilities for service delivery that will inform an intervention to improve care.

FUNDING The William Buckland Foundation Grant 2003/4; Telstra Foundation Community Development Fund Grant 2004

STATUS planning and development, ethics approval obtained

Mothers' advocates in the community (MOSAIC)

Angela Taft, Ann Harley, Rhonda Small, Judith Lumley and Lyn Watson, in collaboration with Kelsey Hegarty, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne and Melissa Afentoulis and Alfina Sinatra, Women's Health West

MOSAIC is a community intervention trial to reduce or prevent partner violence and depression among women pregnant or with children under five. It also aims to strengthen women's health and well-being and attachment to their children by offering women who are at risk of being abused, who are identified by their GPs, support from trained mentor mothers for up to a year after recruitment. Mentor mothers are trusted community women with additional support and training about domestic violence and parenting support. The project draws from evidence that home visiting can enhance mothers' and children's health and that partner abuse can be reduced if it is directly addressed in peer support strategies which continue well after childbirth. The research team acknowledges the continued support of Women's Health West.

MOSAIC coordinator, Ann Harley, is based with Women's Health West and has successfully commenced the recruitment of volunteer mentor mothers in the western region. A pilot intervention is currently underway in the Westgate GP Division. Funding for the research arm of intervention was successfully sought from the National Health and Medical Research Council in 2003 and further funding for the full intervention to commence in July 2004 is currently being sought.

FUNDING Telstra Community Development Fund 2003-2004, NHMRC project grant 2004-2006

STATUS pilot study, planning, seeking further funding

SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS

Interventions to facilitate smoking cessation in pregnancy

Judith Lumley in collaboration with Sandy Oliver, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, Laura Oakley, Centre for Research in Primary and Community Care, University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom and Catherine Chamberlain, Public Health Fellow, Victorian Department of Human Services

This Cochrane Review was updated in 2003, and now includes 66 trials contributing to the formal overview, as well as six cluster-randomised trials. There is a significant reduction in preterm birth and low birthweight in the intervention arm of the trials which measured perinatal outcomes. New findings come from three trials of nicotine replacement therapy and two trials combining social support with rewards.

FUNDING core grant (JL), Victorian Department of Human Services (CC)

STATUS review update to be published in the Cochrane Library 2004, Issue 2

COLLABORATIVE WORK

Consumer information group on pregnancy and childbirth - Folate supplementation information

Robin Bell, Shaun Brennecke, Max Watson, Department of Perinatal Medicine, Royal Women's Hospital, Nacia Burford, Public Health Branch, Victorian Department of Human Services, Jane Halliday, Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit, Victorian Department of Human Services, and Murdoch Childrens Institute, and Lyn Watson

FUNDING Department of Human Services, Victoria

STATUS study completed, five papers published

PERINATAL AND CHILD OUTCOMES

Parity, gravidity and perinatal outcomes

Judith Lumley, Lyn Watson and Creina Mitchell in collaboration with the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit and Niels Becker, National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University

The relative risk of preterm birth in a first birth is increased by prior pregnancy losses, with equivalent effects on perinatal mortality and operative birth. The study is designed to follow these patterns through subsequent births, to link sibships, and to compare the outcomes from sibship analyses with those from aggregating all first, second, third or fourth births.

FUNDING core grant 1994, Department of Health (England and Wales) 1995-1996, NHMRC project grant 2001-2003

STATUS one paper published, three in preparation, record-linkage planning and development underway

Termination of pregnancy in Australia: a descriptive analysis of trends over time and associations in the young women's cohort of Women's Health Australia

Angela Taft and Judith Lumley

Using the data from the 1996 and 2000 surveys of the young women's cohorts from the Australian Longitudinal Women's Health Study (Women's Health Australia) this analysis aims to:

- Provide descriptive summary statistics for the population of young women who had one or more terminations, including socio-demographic characteristics, area of residence/location, and use of contraception, comparing them within age strata with women who have not had a termination (i), and those who have not had any pregnancy (ii).
- Analyse the associations of pregnancy termination with use of licit and illicit drugs and women's satisfaction with, and access to, appropriate health services.
- Examine the changes in reported terminations from the 1996 to the 2000 survey, and describe their relationship to other pregnancy outcomes in the same time period, for the whole young women's cohort.
- If the number of women who have ≥ 1 termination and/or ≥ 1 miscarriage, prior to a first birth is large enough, describe the association of prior pregnancy losses (termination and miscarriage), with gestational age in the first birth.
- Compare the reported rate of terminations in these surveys with age-specific rates from 1996 to 2000 collected through the mandatory reporting systems in South Australia and the Northern Territory, both of whom produce annual reports.
- Compare the pattern of reported pregnancies (all outcomes) in the Young Women's cohort with data on young women in the same age groups in the three *Victorian surveys of recent mothers* (1989, 1994, 2000).

FUNDING La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences grant 2002

STATUS analysis underway

Early Births – a case-control study of very preterm birth

Lyn Watson, Judith Lumley, Jo Rayner, Mary-Ann Darcy, Sally von Bibra, Rowena Morris, Stephanie Lenko, Simone Quinton, Meg Chesterman, Anne Harbison, and Kasey Gibson in collaboration with David Henderson-Smart, Director, Centre for Perinatal Health Services Research and James King, Chair, Consultative Council on Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity

This study aims to describe the social and demographic associations of very preterm birth in singletons and twins in Victoria; to describe the clinical subtypes of very preterm birth in both singletons and twins in Victoria; and to provide preliminary information on the contributions of exposure to violence, infertility and infertility treatment and neighbourhood level factors to very preterm birth in Victoria. The cases are mothers of babies born between 20 and 32 weeks gestation and their characteristics will be compared with those of the control mothers selected from the Victorian population whose babies are born at 37 weeks gestation or later. Data collection includes a semi-structured interview, either face-to-face or by telephone, and medical record data extraction.

Recruitment continued throughout 2003 and by 31 January 2004, 3,108 women had been identified as eligible for the study and 1,388 had been interviewed. Recruitment will cease at the end of April 2004.

FUNDING NHMRC project grant 2001-2003, SIDS & Kids Victoria 2003-2004 and La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences Research Enhancement Grant 2003, Telstra Community Development Fund 2003

STATUS recruitment and data collection, one paper in preparation

Perinatal outcomes following treatment for cervical dysplasia

Fiona Bruinsm and Judith Lumley in collaboration with Michael Quinn, Gynaecological Oncologist, Royal Women's Hospital

The aim of this project is to measure preterm birth, perinatal death and low birthweight in births to women who were referred to the Dysplasia Clinic at the Royal Women's Hospital from 1980-2000 after a diagnosis of biopsy-proven precancerous changes of the cervix, and to compare their risk of these outcomes with the risks in the whole Victorian population. The study is a retrospective cohort study in which records from the Dysplasia Clinic are linked to birth records in the Victorian Data Collection for the years 1983-2002. The analysis of the linked data files will take into account other risk factors for preterm birth present in the birth data (e.g. maternal age at birth, country of birth, parity, gravidity, socio-economic status) as well as the severity of the cervical lesions, the extent of treatment required and the treatment modality. The research question is whether current and recent treatment modalities are associated with adverse perinatal outcomes.

FUNDING NHMRC project grant 2003-2004

STATUS data preparation, record-linkage



Analysis of the course of labour following induction in uncomplicated first births

Mary-Ann Darcy, Stephanie Brown, Rhonda Small and James King, Chair, Consultative Council on Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity

Induction of labour is a valuable intervention that has the potential to improve outcomes for both mothers and babies when used in pregnancies that have become dangerous to continue. However, there is some evidence to suggest that its use is increasing, and that it is used fairly often in pregnancies with no apparent indication for induction.

These changes prompted the following research questions:

- Are there differences between spontaneous and induced labours in nulliparous Victorian women admitted as public patients with uncomplicated pregnancies, with regard to events during labour and birth, and in the condition of the baby at birth?
- Does this differ for private patients, for older women, between hospitals that have high rates of induction and those that have low rates of induction, between rural and metropolitan hospitals?
- To what extent are other factors associated with induction of labour influencing outcomes?

Data collected by the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit will be used to investigate these questions. The initial analysis will include all births in 2000-2002 to women 20-34 years old, free of obstetric or medical complications, giving birth at term (37-40 weeks), with a singleton pregnancy, a cephalic presentation (head first) and a baby not small for gestational age.

In addition to descriptive analysis, structural equation modelling will be used to look at the strength of the effects of the intervention variables simultaneously on all of the outcomes of interest i.e. epidural use, method of birth, perineal damage, condition of the baby at birth, and the paths by which these effects come about. The analyses will be repeated on births to women admitted as private patients, and to older women, as well as looking at the environment in which the birth occurs, for example units with relatively high or low rates of induction, or in a rural or metropolitan location.

FUNDING Australian Postgraduate Award (MAD)
STATUS analysis in progress

An exploration of parent-daughter relationships and depression in adulthood within the social context of treating tall stature in adolescent girls over three generations.

Jo Rayner and Judith Lumley in collaboration with Alison Venn, Menzies Centre for Population Health, University of Tasmania and Jill Astbury, Key Centre for Women's Health in Society, University of Melbourne.

This project aims to examine whether the experiences of being a tall adolescent have contributed to an increased risk of low self-esteem and poor body image in girls assessed or treated for tall stature as adolescents. We hope to measure the association between problematising and medicalising of tall stature in adolescent girls and the increase risk of psychological distress in adulthood.

FUNDING none
STATUS literature review for doctoral thesis continuing (JR)

SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS

Risk scoring systems for preventing preterm birth

Lyn Watson, Mary-Ann Darcy, Jo Rayner in collaboration with Shelley Rowlands, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Royal Women's Hospital

The concept of using risk-scoring systems in maternity care is quite appealing. If they could be shown to predict poor outcomes more accurately than clinical judgement, their use would enable targeted interventions to be applied. Many such instruments have been developed and used over the years, but most have not been evaluated. In addition, knowing that an individual is at higher-than-average risk for a particular outcome is not helpful if no effective intervention exists. We plan to review the evidence regarding the use of such systems in predicting and preventing preterm birth.

FUNDING none
STATUS protocol submitted

COLLABORATIVE WORK

Interventions to reduce or eliminate violence and promote the physical and psychosocial well-being of women who experience intimate partner abuse: a systematic review

Jean Ramsey, Gene Feder and Yvonne Carter, Department of General Practice and Primary Care, Barts and the London; Leslie Davidson, Department of Population and Family Health, Joseph Mailman, School of Public Health, Columbia University; Kelsey Hegarty, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne; Alison Warburton, Centre for Women's Mental Health Research, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences, Manchester University and Angela Taft

FUNDING UK National Health Service
STATUS protocol being finalised

Prenatal diagnosis questionnaire study

Jane Halliday, Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit, Victorian Department of Human Services, and Murdoch Childrens Research Institute, Royal Children's Hospital; Robin Bell, Department of Perinatal Medicine, Royal Women's Hospital; Pranee Liamputtong Rice, School of Public Health, La Trobe University and Lyn Watson
STATUS project completed, two papers published, one in press

CROSS-CULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Depression after birth: developing methods for cross-cultural assessment

Rhonda Small and Judith Lumley

This project extended the work undertaken in the *Mothers in a new country study (MINC)* assessing the mental health of Vietnamese, Filipino and Turkish women 6-7 months after the birth of a baby. Assessing mental health issues in cross-cultural contexts has not been well developed methodologically and there continues to be a need for research that evaluates different approaches to such assessment. The project compared the findings of three different strategies for assessing the mental health and emotional well-being of the 318 women who participated in the *MINC* study: reports from the women obtained during the home based interview which included several questions regarding mental health and emotional well-being and the results obtained on two standardised instruments: the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale and the SF-36 health questionnaire, both used in translation.

FUNDING Australian Rotary Health Research Fund 1996
STATUS project completed, two papers published in 2003

Childbirth and the health of women from Southeast Asia (SEA mothers project)

Lyn Watson in collaboration with Pranee Liamputtong Rice, School of Public Health, La Trobe University

This study has two complementary arms: one an epidemiological study and the other an ethnographic study. The epidemiological study aims to investigate the obstetric characteristics and outcomes of mothers born in Asia, incorporating an overall assessment of all Asian-born women, and detailed attention to individual countries in the region. It will use data from the Perinatal Data Collection from 1982 to 1995, extending analysis conducted in a previous study.

The ethnographic study is aimed at developing further the research on childbearing, childrearing and cultural beliefs and practices among Southeast Asian-born women already completed for Thai women. About 30 women born in each of Vietnam, Cambodia or Laos are being interviewed in their homes and in their own language according to a theme list. Similarities and diversities both within and between the groups will enable increased understanding and possible policy development around awareness of the individual health service needs of women during pregnancy, childbirth and postnatal care.

FUNDING NHMRC project grant 1996-99, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation project grant 1996-99

STATUS (i) epidemiological study – paper in preparation; (ii) ethnographic study – two reports written, two papers published, two in preparation

Maternal and child health on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands, 1984-1996

Dick Sloman and Judith Lumley

There are substantial differences in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women and children. Aboriginal women have a much higher proportion of low birthweight babies and much higher perinatal mortality rates. Aboriginal children have high rates of infectious diseases in early life, faltering growth in infancy following weaning, and high rates of hospitalisation. Over the last 20 years there have been improvements in some of these outcomes but most still remain substantially higher than comparable measures for non-Aborigines.

This research project involves reviewing the medical records of Aboriginal mothers and children from the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands. The main aims of the study are to examine the obstetric care of women living in this area who had babies between 1984 and 1996 (375 mothers and 700 births), and the subsequent care of these children in relation to their immunisations, growth, major illnesses and hospital admissions. This includes examining whether the introduction of protocols of care approximately half way through the study period has been associated with changes in outcomes.

A report on the pilot phase of the project (using a 20% sample of the study group) was submitted to Nganampa Health Council in late 1996. The remaining 60% of the data collection was undertaken in 1997 and 1998, and data analysis and writing up is well underway.

FUNDING General Practice Evaluation Program Research Fellowship, Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, 1994-1998

STATUS data analysis and writing up doctoral thesis (DS)

Women's Business Service Evaluation Project

Sandy Campbell, Stephanie Brown and Jill Guthrie, National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University

The Mildura Women's Business Service is a women's health program based at the premises of the Mildura Aboriginal Co-operative. It was established in May 2000 with recurrent funding from the statewide Victorian Maternity Services Program. This project involved face to face interviews with 25 women who had used the service for maternity care. Staff at the Mildura Aboriginal Health Service, grandmothers from the Aboriginal community, local doctors, and hospital midwives were also interviewed about

the establishment and operation of the service. The project was commissioned by the Mildura Aboriginal Co-operative, and funded by the Division of Acute Health at the Victorian Department of Human Services.

FUNDING Victorian Department of Human Services 2002-2003

STATUS Masters thesis awarded (SC), report for Mildura Aboriginal Co-operative and Victorian Department of Human Services completed, paper submitted

Evaluating pregnancy care and outcomes for Australian Indigenous women

Jenny Hunt and Judith Lumley

This project used a range of approaches to evaluate outcomes, care and services provided for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in pregnancy. Specific sub-projects were:

- reviews of the content and approaches of past research about pregnancy issues for Indigenous women, including a critical analysis of how 'race' is conceptualised in this body of work
- reviews of research evidence and Australian recommendations about routine antenatal care
- a critical evaluation of antenatal care received by Darwin women
- an examination of the views of providers of care to Indigenous women
- a collaborative evaluation of Gumilebyirra, a Darwin Aboriginal community controlled women's health service

The main work on this project in 2003 was the finalising of Jenny Hunt's PhD thesis, which was submitted for examination in March 2003. Jenny's thesis was passed and her PhD was awarded in October 2003. Work on preparing reports and papers for publication is ongoing.

FUNDING National Health and Medical Research Council Aboriginal Health Research Training Scholarship 1999-March 2003

STATUS projects completed, PhD awarded (JH), writing reports and papers for publication

COLLABORATIVE WORK

Migration and reproductive health research collaboration

Anita Gagnon, School of Nursing, McGill University and Rhonda Small

FUNDING International Opportunity Development Grant, Canadian Institutes of Health Research

STATUS Exchange visits planned; one collaborative program grant application submitted

LONGER TERM HEALTH OUTCOMES OF REPRODUCTION AND ASSISTED CONCEPTION

Program of resources, information and support for mothers (PRISM)

Judith Lumley, Rhonda Small, Stephanie Brown, Creina Mitchell and Lyn Watson in collaboration with Jane Gunn, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne and Penny Hawe, Department of Community Health Sciences, University of Calgary, Canada

PRISM is a community intervention trial in 16 municipalities across Victoria which aims to improve the physical and emotional health of women following childbirth via an integrated program of primary care and community based strategies.

The trial completed its sixth year in 2003. We are grateful for the ongoing commitment to the study of all sixteen participating municipalities across Victoria. Highlights for the year included:

- Development of the PRISM project website – www.latrobe.edu.au/csmch/prism – which was launched by Rob Moodie, CEO of VicHealth in June
- Completion of the two year follow-up data collection, with the last of some 19,000 questionnaires mailed to women in August 2003
- Publication of the trial protocol on Biomed Central

- Data analysis of the primary maternal health outcomes at six months after birth and drafting of the primary outcomes paper for submission.

It is hoped that the findings will be available in mid 2004.

FUNDING La Trobe University and Victorian Department of Human Services Collaborative Industry grant 1997, NHMRC project grants 1997-99, 1999-01 and 2002-04, Victorian Department of Human Services program implementation grants 1998-2000, VicHealth grants for program resources and implementation 1998-2000, Felton Bequest grant 1998, Sidney Myer Fund grant 1999, *beyondblue* grant 2002 and participating municipalities' contributions to program implementation and data collection 1998-2003

STATUS outcome data collection completed, one paper published, one in press, and two submitted

Recent mothers' views and experiences of forming social contacts, making friends and feelings of isolation

Katrina Stevenson and Rhonda Small

This study arose in the City of Bayside (one of the participating *PRISM* areas) out of a scarcity of local recent mothers' perspectives on the factors that have personally hindered or enabled them to feel supported and to meet people since having their baby. It also aimed to investigate the types of supports that have, or could have, assisted recent mothers to feel less socially isolated. It is anticipated that information from the study will be useful for service providers, local businesses and the wider community to ensure new developments and existing services are supportive and inclusive of the views of local recent mothers. The study recruited a sample of 50 mothers, with approximately 50% of the sample participating in structured interviews and the other 50% participating in semi-structured focus groups. The sample of mothers was obtained from open sessions and group sessions at maternal and child health centres and from local mothers' groups.

FUNDING none

STATUS writing up of MPH minor thesis (KS)

The experience of postnatal depression in a rural Australian community

Sue Armstrong and Rhonda Small

Rural women face special issues in access to health services. This project will provide information about the needs of women living in a rural sub-region of Victoria who have been affected by postnatal depression. A multi-method approach will be used. The first phase will consist of examining the practice of a universal screening program for postnatal depression, using the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS), which has been operating in this rural shire for the last seven years. Whilst use of the EPDS has been widely advocated for community populations to assist with early detection of postnatal depression there has been little evaluation of such approaches. The second stage will consist of interviews with key service providers, GPs and maternal and child health nurses who have been involved in this program and will seek to uncover their views about the benefits and dis-benefits of the current system and help to identify service gaps. Finally, a series of in-depth interviews will be conducted with women affected by postnatal depression to discover more about pathways into and out of postnatal depression and determine their views of the screening process.

FUNDING none

STATUS seeking involvement of local health service providers, planning, ethics approval obtained

Maternal health study: a prospective cohort study of 1900 women recruited in early pregnancy

Stephanie Brown, Judith Lumley, Ann Krastev, Ellie McDonald and Lyn Watson in collaboration with Chris Bessell, Angliss Hospital; Shaun Brennecke and Peter Wein, Department of Perinatal Medicine, University of Melbourne, Royal Women's Hospital; Robert Burrows, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Monash University; Jane Gunn, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne; and Creina Mitchell, School of Nursing, La Trobe University

This study aims to:

- investigate the incidence and natural history (onset, severity and duration) of maternal physical health problems (back pain, urinary and anal incontinence, perineal pain, sexual problems, haemorrhoids and depression) among primiparous women following childbirth;
- explore the contribution of obstetric risk factors – in particular method of delivery, length of labour, duration of pushing, degree of perineal trauma, infant birthweight to postpartum health problems;
- investigate reasons for non-disclosure of these health problems, and for the limited use of primary and specialist health services for specific morbidities taking into consideration the influence of social, cultural and economic factors.

Recruitment of women in early pregnancy commenced in April 2003 at five collaborating hospitals. Follow-up will continue for the first 18 months after childbirth using a combination of self-administered questionnaires and telephone interviews to maximise disclosure of health problems in pregnancy and at follow-up. Data on pregnancy and birth events will be obtained by medical record review (with women's written consent) according to a prespecified protocol.

This year we piloted the baseline study instruments (written questionnaire and telephone interview), and questionnaires to be completed at three and six months postpartum. By late January 2004, 403 women had enrolled in the study, and 281 had completed the telephone follow-up at 30 weeks gestation. 95% of participants have given permission for us to abstract data from their hospital medical record. We are grateful to staff at collaborating hospitals for their assistance with recruitment and tracking of the cohort.

FUNDING VicHealth/Human Services Victoria Public Health Research Fellowship 2001-2005 (SB); NHMRC project grant 2002-2006

STATUS recruitment and follow-up of the cohort ongoing

Violence against young Australian women and reproductive health

Angela Taft and Lyn Watson in collaboration with Christina Lee, Women's Health Australia, University of Newcastle

This study analysed data from the 1996 and 2000 younger women's cohort of the Women's Health Australia longitudinal study. The project investigated the impact of violence and abuse (mainly but not only by intimate partners) on young women's health, particularly their reproductive health, over time. Using linked data analysis and multinomial logistic regression, the study compared the sociodemographic characteristics, reproductive and general health, social support, aspirations, use of health services and satisfaction with GP care of young Australian women reporting violence with those not reporting it. It also examined the differences between women leaving violence behind them, remaining the same or finding themselves in violent new relationships. The final report was submitted to Office for the Status of Women in September 2003. A brochure summarising the main findings was released early in 2004 and is available on the OSW website.

FUNDING Office for the Status of Women 2003

STATUS project complete, report submitted, brochure published

Prevalence and prevention of mastitis in lactating women

Lisa Amir and Judith Lumley in collaboration with Suzanne Garland, Women's and Children's Health

Mastitis is a common problem during lactation; approximately 20% of women experience at least one episode. The first part of the study is a breastfeeding survey of women giving birth in the Family Birth Centre (FBC) and Frances Perry House (FPH, private patients). One hundred and twenty-eight women were recruited from the FBC and 202 from FPH. The second part of the project is a trial to prevent mastitis: ROBI – Reduction of Breast Infection. As very few women with cracked nipples were identified, recruitment ceased in late 2002.

A third project, a case-control study investigating possible risk factors for mastitis began in August 2002. *CAMEO, Cases of Mastitis: Evaluating Occurrences*, involves women attending the Royal Women's Hospital, Mercy Hospital for Women and maternal and child health centres in Moreland, Darebin, Melbourne and Port Phillip. The main research question is "Are women with mastitis more likely to be nasal carriers of *S. aureus* than other breastfeeding women?"

FUNDING NHMRC Public Health scholarship 2000-2003 (LA); Medical Research Foundation for Women and Babies; flucloxacillin capsules supplied by CSL Ltd
STATUS stage one and two - analysis, stage three – recruiting

COLLABORATIVE WORK

Antenatal screening and intervention to reduce postnatal depression

Marie-Paule Austin, Liaison Psychiatry, Randwick Hospitals, NSW and Judith Lumley

FUNDING Australian Rotary Health Research Fund 2001, 2002
STATUS systematic review completed, piloting of intervention, two papers published, one in press

Women's Emotional Well-being study (WEB)

Kelsey Hegarty, Jane Gunn, Nancy Carabella, Department of General Practice and Public Health, University of Melbourne and Rhonda Small and Angela Taft

STATUS paper published

OTHER COLLABORATIONS

Long-term health and psychosocial effects of hormone treatment to reduce the adult height of tall girls

Alison Venn, Menzies Centre for Population Health Research, University of Tasmania; Judith Lumley, Priscilla Pyett, Fiona Bruinsma, Penelope Jones, Jo Rayner and Lyn Watson in collaboration with George Werther, Centre for Hormone Research, Royal Children's Hospital; George Patton, Centre for Adolescent Health, University of Melbourne; and Chris Bayly, Royal Women's Hospital

This study aims to examine the long-term health and psychosocial effects of oestrogen treatment to reduce the adult height of tall girls. Treatment with synthetic oestrogens to reduce the adult height of tall girls has been available in Australia and elsewhere since the 1950s, though it has been uncommon in recent years. To date, studies of treated tall girls have described occasional short-term side-effects of treatment including menstrual irregularities, nausea, weight gain, limb pains, thrombosis and ovarian cysts. The relatively young age and small numbers of women in the follow-up studies reported to date mean that little is known about long-term outcomes for women, particularly with respect to reproductive health.

The cohort is made up of a group of 1,432 women who were treated or assessed for treatment by Australian paediatric endocrinologists from the late 1950s through to 1993. 1,243 (87%) of the eligible cohort were traced and 846 (68%) completed questionnaires. The questionnaires used both quantitative and

qualitative research methods to examine a range of health outcomes including reproductive health, mental health, general health status and satisfaction with the outcome of treatment. Analysis of fertility outcomes showed that treated women were more likely to have had a lower rate of conception and a history of infertility than untreated women.

FUNDING NHRMC consultancy contract 2000-2003
STATUS one paper submitted, three papers in preparation

Multilevel studies of health and place

Angela Taft in collaboration with Anne Kavanagh, Australian Research Centre for Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University

A proliferation of multilevel studies of health and place has appeared over the last few years, using poorly conceptualised measures. Such measures will not increase our understanding of what contribution place may make independently to health. This substudy of Anne Kavanagh's major research project on Health and Place incorporates a systematic review of the literature from 1995-2002 in order to develop a database of such studies.

FUNDING La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences grant 2002
STATUS review completed

The Diamond Consortium

Angela Taft, Judith Lumley, Rhonda Small and Stephanie Brown are participating in this consortium, which is led by Jane Gunn, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne

The *DIAMOND* consortium brings together a multidisciplinary team with expertise in complex primary care and mental health research and evaluation across the lifecycle, clinical expertise, and links to other service providers, to build mental health research and service capacity in Victoria. The focus is on the management that occurs within primary care and the interface between that care, the community and the public and private mental health services. The *DIAMOND* consortium involves consumers (Health Issues Centre, Relationships Australia, Surfcoast Life Activity Club); practitioners (general practitioners, nursing, community health, primary mental health team, a specialist mental health service The Bouverie Centre, Divisions of General Practice); policy makers (community health policy) and researchers (universities and centres of excellence) across rural and metropolitan settings.

FUNDING *beyondblue* 2004
STATUS ongoing

REFERENCE GROUPS

Eight of the Centre's projects have reference groups comprising people with expertise in areas related to the topic of research. Each reference group acts in an advisory capacity to the research team, contributing ideas and advice at all stages of the research process although responsibility for the conduct of the research, its analysis and publication rests with the researchers. Working with reference groups is an important way of receiving valuable input from a wide range of service providers, consumers and researchers and a way of facilitating discussion of our research aims and findings in practice settings. We thank the members of our reference groups for their contribution over the last year.

See web site www.latrobe.edu.au/csmch for a list of reference groups and current members.

Centre staff and students

STAFF

Stephanie Brown BA (Hons), PhD



Stephanie worked in women's health policy and consumer advocacy before joining the Centre in 1991. She has had a major role in the three state-wide *Victorian surveys of recent mothers*. Her research interests include women's views of maternity care and maternal health after childbirth. She was awarded a VicHealth Public Health Research Fellowship in 2001.

Penelope Jones RN, ICU, GradDipEpid



Penny has a background in general and intensive care nursing and attained a Graduate Diploma in Epidemiology in 1991. Penny joined the Centre in January 1997 working in the *Cancer after infertility and IVF*, and the *Tall girls* studies. In September 2003 she rejoined The Alfred Hospital in the Infectious Diseases Unit.

Fiona Bruinsma BBSc, GradDipAppPsych, MAppSc(Research)



During Fiona's 10 years at the Centre she has worked on a variety of studies including: prevalence of obstetric ultrasound; cancer after infertility and IVF, and women's experiences of maternity care in Victoria. During 2003 she continued to co-ordinate the *Tall girls study* and commenced a study of pregnancy outcomes after cervical dysplasia.

Michelle Kealy RN, RM, MPHIC



Michelle joined the Centre in September 2002. She works part-time as a research assistant with the *HARP* team and is also undertaking a PhD exploring women's health and recovery after caesarean birth, as part of the NHMRC funded *HARP* project.

Tracey Carpenter



Tracey joined the Centre's administrative team as personal assistant to the director in May 2000. At the Centre she contributed to the re-organisation of data systems in the administration area and became the part-time IT support person. In August 2003 she left to become Professor Vivian Lin's PA at the Bundoora Campus.

Ann Krastev RN, BNursing, GradDipMid, GradDipAppSci(Stats)



Ann worked as a nurse for a number of years before gaining her Graduate Diploma in Midwifery in 1995. Ann joined the Centre in 1999 to work on an evaluation of a Melbourne based maternity service and since March 2003 has been joint project coordinator of the *Maternal health study*.

Mary-Ann Darcy RN, RM, DipAppSc, BEd, GradDipSoc (Social Survey and Research Techniques)



Mary-Ann has worked in health research for the last 10 years after a background in midwifery, and maternal and child health. She is a doctoral student at the Centre, using data from the Perinatal Data Collection Unit to look at induction of labour in uncomplicated pregnancies, and concurrently developing her skills in biostatistics.

Judith Lumley MA, MBBS, PhD, GradDipChildDev, FAFPHM, FFPH(UK)



Judith Lumley is an epidemiologist and public health physician, with long-standing research interests in reproductive and perinatal health and health services. She developed and then managed the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection (1981-1994), chaired the Victorian Ministerial Review of Birthing Services (1988-90), and apart from 18 months as director of the National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit, University of Oxford has been director of the Centre since it began.

Ann Harley BA, DipT, GradDipStW



Ann is experienced in teaching, qualitative research, counseling, parent education and home based parent support. She joined the *MOSAIC* team in 2003 as the coordinator of the intervention arm of the project. Ann also continues to work on other collaborative projects.

Ellie McDonald BAppSci (Hons)



Ellie completed a Bachelor of Applied Science (Hons), majoring in psychology and psychophysiology at Swinburne University in 1997. She worked as a data manager at the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners four years prior to joining the Centre in August 2002 as joint project co-ordinator for the *Maternal health study*.

Creina Mitchell BAppSc, GradDipComp, MPH



Creina has a background in nursing, midwifery, and maternal and child health. She joined the Centre in 1997 and since March 1999 has worked as data manager for the *PRISM* project. In early 2003, she commenced a position as Lecturer in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, La Trobe University and is currently undertaking a professional doctorate in public health.

Priscilla Pyett BA (Hons), DHSc



A postdoctoral fellow at the University of Melbourne, Priscilla is a chief investigator on the *Tall girls* project and has recently been awarded a VicHealth Public Health Research Fellowship to develop sustainable Aboriginal health research practice.

Jo-Anne Rayner RN, BNursing, GradDipWomHlth, MWHlth



After 18 years of clinical nursing Jo completed a Bachelor of Nursing at RMIT in 1992. Following research positions at the University of Melbourne, Jo joined the Centre in 2000 as part of the *Tall girls* research team. She has coordinated the *Early births* study since 2001 and commenced her PhD in Public Health in 2003.

Felice Rocca BA (Hons)



Felice commenced at the Centre in 1998 as executive officer after many years in Commonwealth departments and universities. In May 2003, after many happy years at the Centre, Felice took up a senior administration position at the University of Melbourne.

Rhonda Small BA, DipEd, GradDipLib, GradDipEpid, PhD



Rhonda worked initially in education, welfare and librarianship before moving into public health research. She has worked at the Centre since 1991. Her research interests include women's views and experiences of maternity care, cross-cultural issues in perinatal research,

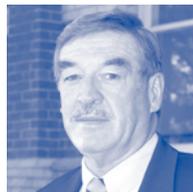
maternal depression and women's health and recovery following operative birth.

Angela Taft BA, DipEd, MPH, PhD



Angela's major research focus is the public health response to violence against women and children and reproductive health. She is currently principal investigator on the *MOSAIC* project. She is an honorary fellow of the Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne and national co-convenor of the PHAA's Women's Health Special Interest Group.

Paul Toomey Dip Acctg (NSW) Dip Mgmt (NSW)



After completing graduate and post-graduate studies in accounting and management while on a cadetship with the Commonwealth public service in Sydney, Paul's move to Melbourne to take up a management role in a national finance corporation led to professional advisory services career with a number of corporations and associations.

Lyn Watson BSc, MSc



Lyn has been the statistician at the Centre since 1992 and is involved in many Centre projects. The *Early births* study is her primary focus and also the subject of her PhD candidature. Other Centre projects include *PRISM* and *EcoPRISM*, the *Multi-centre study of cancer after infertility*, and overseeing the Centre's IT support.

Vicki Wyatt SEN, AdvCert in Office Admin



Vicki worked as a state enrolled nurse in the area of drug and alcohol rehabilitation before moving to office administration. She has worked within various health and educational organisations including Women's Health in the North and La Trobe University's Centre for the Study of Sexually Transmissible Diseases. She joined the Centre in 1997 as administrative officer.

Robert Yearsley Info Tech Dip Cert IV



In October 2001 Robert joined the staff as the Centre's information technology officer. Robert has undertaken formal studies in robotics, artificial intelligence, computer systems engineering, and computer applications development and has extensive professional IT experience in both private enterprise and local government.

Jane Yelland RN, BAppSc



Jane joined the Centre in 1991 following her involvement in the Victorian Ministerial Review of Birthing Services. For the past five years she has coordinated the *EPOCS* study. Currently she is a chief investigator on the state-wide review of postnatal hospital care, and is simultaneously writing up her PhD.



RESEARCH ASSISTANTS AND PROJECT SUPPORT STAFF

Meg Chesterman RN

Meg joined the *Early births study* team in April 2002. She also works as a clinical nurse specialist in anaesthetics and post anaesthetic care. Meg has previously worked in research at the University of Melbourne.

Maggie Flood RN, RM, Sterilisation Infection Control Cert, GradCert Health Sciences (Clinical Data Management), DipArts (Professional Writing & Editing)

In 1995, after 16 years nursing work, Maggie began an inspiring career change to research. She joined the Centre in 2000, working on coding of the *Victorian survey of recent mothers* and now does data management work as a member of the *HARP* team.

Kasey Gibson AdvDip AppSc(Myotherapy)

Kasey graduated from RMIT in 2001 and in addition to her own practice she provides part-time administrative support for the *Early births study*.

Anne Harbison RN, RM

Anne is a registered nurse and midwife who joined the *Early births study* team when the study commenced in 2000. In addition to this Anne works in palliative care with the Peter MacCallum Hospital in the home program.

Michelle Kingston BA

Michelle graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in 2001, obtaining a double major in psychology and cultural studies. In 2002 she joined the Centre working on the *Tall girls* and *HARP* studies. In 2003 she commenced a research assistant position at Monash University.

Stephanie Lenko GradDipOccHlthPrac

Stephanie joined the *Early births study* team in April 2003. She has a professional background in midwifery and 17 years in Occupational Health and Safety.

Rowena Morris RN, NICUCert

Rowena joined the *Early births study* team in 2003. She has a professional background in neonatal and paediatric intensive care of more than 10 years, and several years experience as a medical editor and writer for Adis Science Press, Hong Kong.

Simone Quinton RN, RM, Lactation Consultant

Simone, a midwife, works as a clinical nurse specialist in special care nursery. She joined the *Early births study* in April 2002.

Bree Rankin

Bree joined the *EcoPRISM* research team in 1999 as a research assistant. She is also involved in health state valuation research with Lisa Gold. In 2003 Bree completed a Bachelor of Commerce, leaving in August to go travelling in Africa and India.

Bonnie Simons BA (Hons), DipComServ(CD), DipPrivSecPrac, DipVET

Bonnie's association with the Centre began in 1991 as a freelance transcriber, a task which she still undertakes when required. From 2001-2003 Bonnie worked with the *PRISM* team undertaking questionnaire coding. While no longer working at the Centre, Bonnie continues to work in the area of women's health research.

Martine Spaul

Since joining the Centre in mid 2001 Martine has spent the majority of her time working on the *PRISM* project in the areas of data processing and data management. For the later part of 2003 Martine has also had the opportunity to work on other projects based at the Centre including the *Maternal health study* and *Early births study*.

Liesje Toomey BA, BSc (Hons)

Liesje joined the Centre in 2001 as a data assistant for *PRISM* while completing her undergraduate studies. She now works at the Centre as a research assistant on the *HARP* project.

Sally von Bibra RN, RM

Sally completed her contract with the *ABFAB* project in 2001 and has been involved with the *Early births study* since it commenced. Prior to coming to the Centre she worked for four years as a clinical trials coordinator for The Macfarlane Burnet Institute. She became an accredited vaccinator in 1999, and manages a student health program at Melbourne University.

Hannah Woolhouse

Hannah joined the Centre in April 1999 and has since worked mainly with the *PRISM* project. She has combined part-time work at the Centre with a Bachelor of Arts, and in 2003 she completed her honours year in psychology.

RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

Catherine Chamberlain MPH, RN, RM, Public Health Fellow, Victorian Public Health Training Scheme, Department of Human Services

Previous experience includes maternity service midwifery care and management in Melbourne and the Kimberley region, WA; Royal Flying Doctors Service nursing in the Goldfields region, WA; relief work in Somalia, South Sudan, and Democratic Republic of Congo, Africa; ICU nursing in Alice Springs, NT.

Lisa Donohue GradDipWmHlth, DipAppSc (CHN), MCHN, RM, RN

Lisa is a midwife with a background in women's health, community nursing and maternal and child health. From 1996 to 1999, she worked on the randomised trial of debriefing after an operative delivery as a research midwife and is completing her doctoral thesis at the Key Centre for Women's Health.

Helen McLachlan RN, BN, GradDipAdvNurs(Mid), MNursStud, PhD

Helen has a background in nursing and midwifery. She joined the staff at the Centre in 1999 and was the joint project co-ordinator of the *ABFAB* breastfeeding randomised trial until November 2002. She is currently a lecturer in midwifery in the Clinical School of Midwifery and Neonatal Nursing Studies, La Trobe University, and was awarded her PhD in 2002.

Dick Sloman MBBS, GradDipEpid, FRACGP

Dick came to the Centre in 1995 to work on a project about Aboriginal obstetric and child health in remote communities in north-west South Australia. He is currently working at the Victorian (Melbourne) and Njernda (Echuca) Aboriginal Health Services and in 2003, co-ordinated the GP registrar Aboriginal health training for the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.

Alison Venn BSc (Hons), PhD, GradDipEpid

Alison was a member of staff at the Centre from 1991-1999 and is now Deputy Director at the Menzies Centre for Population Health Research in Hobart. She continues to have strong collaborative links with staff at the Centre and holds the position of adjunct senior lecturer in the School of Public Health at La Trobe University.

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

In 2003, there were eleven students completing postgraduate studies at the Centre. Six are currently members of staff and/or research associates of the Centre and the other six are listed below.

Lisa Amir MBBS, MMed (Wom Hlth), IBCLC

Lisa is a medical graduate and an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant. She is enrolled part-time in a PhD on the topic of mastitis, supervised by Judith Lumley.

Sue Armstrong DipSocStud, BSW, MSW

Sue is a social worker, currently working in the area of counselling services. Sue is studying part-time for a PhD, supervised by Rhonda Small. Her PhD will examine the experience of rural women affected by postnatal depression.

Sandy Campbell RN, RM, MAE (IH)

Sandy was based at the Centre for two years while she completed the Master of Applied Epidemiology (Indigenous Health) offered by the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health at the Australian National University. She was jointly supervised by Stephanie Brown and Jill Guthrie (NCEPH), and has recently taken up an appointment at James Cook University.

Della Forster RN, RM, DipAppSci, BHealthSci, MMid

Della has been a midwife since 1989. She joined the Centre in April 1999 as joint project co-ordinator of the *ABFAB* trial. Della is enrolled in a PhD, focusing on the *ABFAB* trial. She works part-time as a midwifery consultant at the Mercy Hospital for Women.

Jenny Hunt MBBS MPH, FAFPHM, PhD

Jenny has worked mainly in Aboriginal health since 1991, in Sydney, Darwin and Alice Springs. Between February 1999 and March 2003, she undertook PhD studies at the Centre supervised by Judith Lumley, evaluating pregnancy care and outcomes for Australian Indigenous women.

Katrina Stevenson BAppSci (Health Promotion), DipEd (Secondary)

Katrina has particular interests in health promotion, women's health and nutrition. She works at Manningham Community Health Service. Katrina is completing her Masters in Public Health at LaTrobe, supervised by Rhonda Small and explores the experiences of recent mothers in relation to social contacts, making friends and feelings of isolation.



Michelle Kealy, Lisa Amir and Della Forster

Publications 2003

For all publications prior to 2003 see website www.latrobe.edu.au/csmch for details.

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SHORT COURSE IN REPRODUCTIVE AND PERINATAL EPIDEMIOLOGY

Twenty-three participants took part in the 2003 Short Course in Reproductive and Perinatal Epidemiology at Mother and Child Health Research from 20-24th June, and ten also completed the half-day introduction to epidemiology and biostatistics for perinatal research, held on 19th June.

As in past years, the course participants came from a variety of professional and academic backgrounds and included nurses, midwives, public health trainees, an obstetrician, a neonatologist, Master of Public Health students, staff from state health departments and public health and perinatal researchers. Most Australian states were represented and two participants came from New Zealand. This diversity of backgrounds and experience contributed significantly to productive and lively discussions, both in the lectures and particularly during the small group critical appraisal and problem-solving sessions.

In 2004 the course will again run over five days, preceded by a half-day epidemiology and biostatistics workshop. The dates for the course are 29 July to 2 August, 2003. For further information regarding the program please contact Judith Lumley by email at j.lumley@latrobe.edu.au or by phone on (03) 8341 8500. To register please contact Vicki Wyatt at csnich@latrobe.edu.au or by phone on (03) 8341 8500.

Course co-ordinators: In 2003, Stephanie Brown and Rhonda Small

Centre presenters: Stephanie Brown, Fiona Bruinsma, Judith Lumley, Helen McLachlan, Rhonda Small, Lyn Watson, Jane Yelland

Invited presenters: Robert Burrows, Jane Gunn, Jane Halliday, Merilyn Riley, Caz Nickson, Jeremy Oats, Julia Shelley

Critical appraisal and problem solving workshop facilitators: Lisa Amir, Stephanie Brown, Fiona Bruinsma, Mary-Ann Darcy, Della Forster, Penny Jones, Ann Krastev, Judith Lumley, Jo Rayner, Rhonda Small, Lyn Watson, Jane Yelland

Administrative support: Tracey Carpenter, Felice Rocca, Paul Toomey, Vicki Wyatt

WORKSHOPS ON THE DESIGN AND CONDUCT OF PERINATAL TRIALS

Mother and Child Health Research regularly conducts workshops to provide practical training in the conduct of randomised trials in the perinatal field. The next workshop is scheduled for 3 – 4 December 2004. Participants work in small groups to develop and present a protocol for a proposed randomised trial. Interspersed with these group sessions, there are formal presentations by Professor Judith Lumley covering aspects of trial design and management. There is also opportunity to use the Cochrane Library of Systematic Reviews and to use computer packages for the estimation of sample size and power. The workshop is suitable for all those interested in designing or carrying out a randomised trial, regardless of prior experience. Past participants have included clinicians, midwives and nurses, public health researchers in the perinatal field, research scientists and postgraduate students.

POSTGRADUATE STUDENT SEMINARS

At the Centre we have a diverse group of postgraduate students with backgrounds in general practice, midwifery, community health, maternal and child health, social work and women's health. This

year Jenny Hunt was awarded a PhD for her thesis focusing on evaluation of pregnancy care and outcomes for Australian Indigenous women and Sue Armstrong commenced a doctoral degree. The postgraduate group meets every three to four weeks throughout the year to discuss aspects of their research and relevant methodological issues. This year we have had lively debate about the usefulness (or otherwise) of significance tests, the difference between effect modifiers and mediating factors and why it might be important to think about them, and the 'life changing experience' of embarking on qualitative research.

Postgraduate co-ordinator in 2003: Stephanie Brown

For inquiries in 2004 regarding postgraduate research at Mother and Child Health Research please contact the postgraduate co-ordinator, Rhonda Small at r.small@latrobe.edu.au or by phone on (03) 8341 8542.

SEMINARS AT MOTHER AND CHILD HEALTH RESEARCH

The Mother and Child Health Research Seminar Program is held every 4th Wednesday of the month from 12.30-1.30pm excluding holiday periods. We would like to thank people who contributed during 2003. The standard of presentations was excellent and provided staff, students and guests with an opportunity to learn about research happening both at Mother and Child Health Research and at other institutions. Special thanks to Penny Jones who co-ordinated the program in 2003. If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive the Seminar Program, please contact Vicki Wyatt on 8341 8500 or **see website www.latrobe.edu.au/csmch for more detail.**

METHODS SEMINARS

The series of Methods Seminars held monthly during 2003 was organised jointly by the Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics Unit and the Centre. The series provided discussion about issues in design, conduct or analysis raised during the projects being undertaken by members of the participating research groups.

JOURNAL CLUB

Journal club is held monthly, and provides an opportunity to review, critique and discuss two journal articles per month. Staff and students participate by presenting one paper for journal club during the year on a rostered basis.

Journal club convenors: Della Forster, Helen McLachlan

UNDERGRADUATE/POSTGRADUATE TEACHING

Senior research staff at Mother and Child Health Research contribute to undergraduate and postgraduate teaching at La Trobe and other universities.

See web site www.latrobe.edu.au/csmch for more detail.

TALKS AND LECTURES

Mother and Child Health Research staff place a high priority on disseminating research findings to consumers, clinicians, and policy makers and contributing to teaching at an undergraduate and postgraduate level. In 2003 staff gave over 40 talks and lectures to a variety of audiences.

See web site www.latrobe.edu.au/csmch for more detail.

Public health advocacy

ADVOCACY AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

In addition to publishing results of research in refereed journals, Mother and Child Health Research staff undertake a range of activities to foster the widest possible debate and discussion of research findings. Advocacy and dissemination strategies include: active participation and presentation of results at conferences, holding forums and briefings to discuss study results, giving talks and lectures, responding to media enquiries, and presentation of results in a range of formats, including pamphlets and reports. A brief summary of advocacy activities relating to two projects is given below.

Responding to intimate partner violence against women: a one-day symposium on opportunities and challenges facing health professional organisations and governments

In order to maximise advocacy opportunities provided by the visit of international advocate Professor Jacquelyn Campbell, Angela Taft organised a one-day symposium targeted to national health policymakers in the childbirth, mental health, drug and alcohol and general practitioner services. Funds to support the symposium were generously provided by Partnerships against Domestic Violence (Federal Office of the Status of the Women), VicHealth, RANZCOG, the NSW Attorney General's Department Violence against Women unit and PHAA (Vic branch). The one-day symposium was well attended by 70 policymakers from around Australia and the resulting presentations were placed on the Public Health Association of Australia's website www.phaa.net.au

PRISM Website

The PRISM project website, (www.latrobe.edu.au/csmch/prism) was launched by Dr Rob Moodie, CEO of VicHealth, on 12 June 2003. Attending the launch were key local participants in the intervention and comparison municipalities from across Victoria, public health researchers and practitioners, representatives from community and women's health, divisions of general practice and local government, representatives from relevant divisions of the Department of Human Services, and funding bodies.

Our purpose in creating the website was to enable wide dissemination of information about the conduct of PRISM - from details about the rationale, the aims, the implementation and the process evaluation of this large community intervention trial - prior to our primary study outcomes being published in 2004. This dissemination strategy was pursued so that those interested in the implementation and evaluation of health and social interventions could read about, and critique, what actually happened in PRISM in advance of the study findings. The website will also be a major tool in disseminating the study results to the whole community when they become available during 2004.

Advocacy Workshops

The monthly advocacy workshops continue to be an integral part of Mother and Child Health research activities. These workshops provide a regular opportunity for informing ourselves of the broader social and political context of health policy and service development and developing the understanding and skills to draw out where appropriate, the relevant policy and service implications of our research findings. We would like to thank the speakers who contributed to our program in 2003.

See web site www.latrobe.edu.au/csmch for more detail.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

See web site www.latrobe.edu.au/csmch for more detail.

Conferences and Workshops Attended

In 2003, staff attended a variety of National and International Conferences that covered a broad range of topics including ethics, methodology, public health, women's health, perinatal and pregnancy issues, migration, or policy.

Committees 2003

Staff members at Mother and Child Health Research are involved in numerous special interest group, University, Governmental and international committees, where they can offer specialised expertise and commentary in the areas of perinatal, maternal and child health, research methodology and ethics.

Assessing Research Grants

Canadian Institutes for Health Research (JL)
Cancer Council of Australia (FB)
Health Research Council of New Zealand (AT)
Healthway (JL)
La Trobe University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty Grants (SB)
National Health and Medical Research Council Project Grants (AT, JL, LA, LW, SB)
Women's and Children's Hospital Research Foundation, Adelaide (JL)
World Health Organization, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, Training in Human Reproduction (DF)

Membership of Editorial Boards

Birth, Editorial Board (JL)
Journal of Human Lactation (LA)
Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology, International Advisory Board (JL)
The Lancet, International Advisory Board (JL)
Midwifery (SB)

Reviewing Papers

Australian and New Zealand Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (JY)
Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health (AT, DF, FB, JY, JH, JR, LA, LW, MAD, MK, RS, SB)
Australian Family Physician (LA)
Australian Journal of Primary Health Care (AT)
British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (JL, SB)
Health Promotion Journal of Australia (DF, FB, HMCL)
International Journal of Nursing Practice (HMCL)
Journal of Human Lactation (LA)
Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynaecology (RS, SB)
Medical Journal of Australia (LW)
Midwifery (SB)
Obstetrics and Gynaecology (JL, SB)
Birth (JL)
Birth Defects Research Part A [Clinical and molecular teratology] (JL)
British Medical Journal (JL)
Human Reproduction (JL)
New England Journal of Medicine (JL)
Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology (JL)
Social Science and Medicine (SB)
The Lancet (JL)
Women against Violence (AT)

Thesis examination

Advanced Medical Science, University of Melbourne (SB)
Masters in Clinical Psychology, University of Western Sydney (RS)
PhD University of Adelaide (JL)

New grants and awards in 2003

NEW GRANTS

Victorian Department of Human Services

A new approach to supporting women in pregnancy (ANEW)

Kelsey Hegarty, Jane Gunn, Stephanie Brown, Judith Lumley, Julie Collette, Della Forster

2002-2003 \$75,000

VicHealth

Launch of the PRISM website

Rhonda Small, Judith Lumley, Stephanie Brown, Lyn Watson

2003: \$6,040

The William Buckland Foundation

A review of postnatal hospital care in Victoria

Jane Yelland, Della Forster, Helen McLachlan

2003-2004: \$65,078

Telstra Community Development Fund

A review of postnatal hospital care in Victoria

Jane Yelland, Della Forster, Helen McLachlan

2004: \$50,000

National Health and Medical Research Council

MOSAIC: MOtherS' Advocates In the Community randomised community intervention trial

Angela Taft, Rhonda Small, Kelsey Hegarty, Judith Lumley

2004-2006: \$423,500

Victorian Community Council Against Violence

Resources for Health Professionals - Development and delivery of CPD activity for General Practitioners

Angela Taft, Kelsey Hegarty

2004: \$4470

Canadian Institutes of Health Research International Opportunity Development Grant

Anita Gagnon, Rhonda Small

2004: \$22,125 [CAN]

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand New Investigator Award (AT)

Vera Scantlebury Brown Memorial Scholarship (MAD)

AEA - Australian Epidemiological Association Student Award (MAD)

PHAA - Public Health Association of Australia Mental Health Travel Award (MK)

Funds 2003

Funds were received from the following sources totalling: 1,522,339

Contributions from granting bodies are gratefully acknowledged

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

Program Grant	300,000
Public Health Research Fellowship (Dr S Brown)	100,000
Breastfeeding education scholarship (D Forster)	19,659
PRISM Website	6,040
Responding to violence against women: June Symposium	5,000

La Trobe University - Faculty of Health Sciences

Management and postgraduate student supervision	139,620
Centre activities including courses, workshops, reports sales etc.	26,410
Faculty Research Grant: Termination of pregnancy in Australia	8,942
Faculty Enhancement Grant: Very pre-term birth case control study	4,536
Postgraduate support grants	1,500

National Health & Medical Research Council

Maternal Health Study	187,233
Early Births: case control study	135,621
PRISM: Program of Resources, Information and Support for Mothers	118,270
HARP: Health and recovery after operative delivery project	65,621
Pregnancy outcomes following treatment for Cervical Dysplasia	40,100
Long term effects of hormone administration on tall girls	30,000
Parity, gravidity and reproductive outcome	25,000

Department of Education, Science & Technology

Research Infrastructure Block Grant	145,098
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Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet - Office For the Status of Women

Violence against women & reproductive health	36,333
Responding to violence against women: June Symposium	5,000

Department of Human Services, Victoria

ANEW: A new approach to supporting women in pregnancy	12,000
Mildura Womens' Business Service Evaluation	1,000

Telstra Foundation

MOSAIC: Mothers' Advocates in the Community	40,000
Early Births: case control study	36,000

SIDS & Kids Foundation

Early Births: case control study	10,265
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Public Health Association of Australia Inc.

Editing: Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health	9,091
Responding to violence against women: June Symposium	1,000

Southern Health

EPOCS: Evaluating practice & organisation of care – Southern Health and Sandringham Hospital	10,000
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Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Gynaecologists

Responding to violence against women: June Symposium	1,000
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NSW Attorney General

Responding to violence against women: June Symposium	1,000
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Victorian Community Council against Violence

Responding to violence against women: June Symposium	1,000
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Revenue is also derived from time to time by individual consultancies carried out on behalf of the centre.