

centre for
the study
of mothers'
and
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health

annual report 2002



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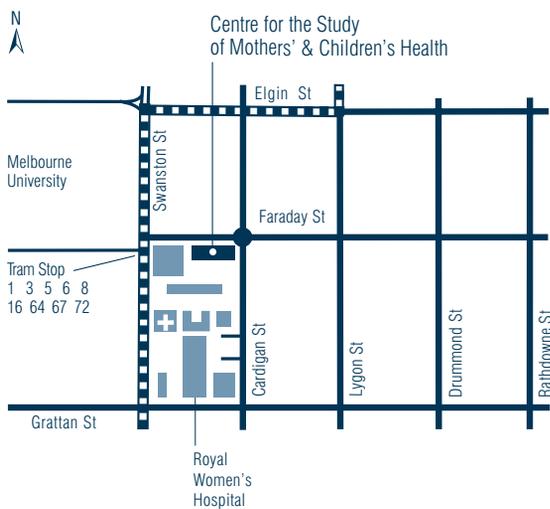
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Centre for the Study of
Mothers' and Children's Health



contents



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4 CENTRE OVERVIEW

6 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

8 CURRENT RESEARCH PROGRAM

8 HEALTH SERVICES: PREGNANCY AND BIRTH

- 8 Randomised trial of pre-pregnancy information and counselling in inner-urban Melbourne
- 8 Obstetric ultrasound: its prevalence, timing and effectiveness in the diagnosis of congenital malformations
- 8 Victorian survey of recent mothers 2000
- 8 Having a baby in Victoria 1989-2000: women's views of public and private models of care
- 9 Continuity of care: does it make a difference to women's views and experiences of care?
- 9 A new approach to supporting women in pregnancy (ANEW)
- 9 Evaluating practice and organisation of care at Southern Health and Sandringham Hospital (EPOCS)
- 10 Debriefing after operative delivery: a randomised trial
- 10 Health and recovery after operative birth project (HARP)
- 10 An exploratory study of domiciliary support during the first days following childbirth
- 11 Attachment to the breast and family attitudes towards breastfeeding (ABFAB)

11 Systematic reviews

11 Collaborative work

12 PERINATAL AND CHILD OUTCOMES

- 12 Parity, gravidity and reproductive outcomes
- 12 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
- 12 Early births – a case-control study of very preterm birth
- 12 The outcomes of first births which follow a prior pregnancy
- 13 Perinatal outcomes following treatment for cervical dysplasia

13 Systematic reviews

13 Collaborative work

13 CROSS-CULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS ISSUES

- 13 Mothers in a new country (MINC): interviews with Vietnamese, Filipino and Turkish women about maternity care and motherhood
- 13 Depression after birth: developing methods for cross-cultural assessment
- 14 Childbirth and the health of women from Southeast Asia (SEA mothers project)
- 14 A review of Congress Alukura: its current role and future directions
- 14 Maternal and child health on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands, 1984-1996
- 14 Mildura Women's Business Service evaluation project
- 15 Evaluating pregnancy care and outcomes for Australian Indigenous women

15 Collaborative work

15 LONGER TERM HEALTH OUTCOMES OF REPRODUCTION AND ASSISTED CONCEPTION

- 15 Program of resources, information and support for mothers (PRISM)
- 16 Economic and ecological evaluation of PRISM (EcoPRISM)
- 16 Guidelines for assessing postnatal problems (GAPP)
- 16 Recent mothers' views and experiences of forming social contacts, making friends and feelings of isolation
- 16 Maternal health study: a prospective cohort study of 1900 women recruited in early pregnancy
- 17 Mothers' advocates in the community (MOSAIC)
- 17 Young women, intimate partner abuse and reproductive health
- 17 Cohort study to assess the existence and size of a protective effect of prolonged breastfeeding against premenopausal breast cancer
- 17 Prevalence and prevention of mastitis in lactating women
- 18 The therapeutic effects of music and dance for women after birth
- 18 Multi-centre study of cancer after infertility and IVF

18 Collaborative work

18 OTHER COLLABORATIONS

- 18 Long-term health and psychosocial effects of hormone treatment to reduce the adult height of tall girls
- 18 Multilevel studies of health and place
- 18 Development of clinical/field based performance tests for ankle injuries

19 CENTRE STAFF AND STUDENTS

24 REFERENCE GROUPS

25 CENTRE COMMITTEES

26 PUBLICATIONS

26 Articles in refereed journals

30 Reviews

30 Books

30 Book chapters

31 Annotations, commentaries, editorials and other invited contributions to refereed journals

31 Other contributions to refereed journals

32 Reports and pamphlets 2002

32 CD Rom

32 Conference papers 2002

32 Conference abstracts 2002

34 EDUCATION

34 Short course in reproductive and perinatal epidemiology

34 Workshops on the design and conduct of randomised trials in reproductive medicine

34 Postgraduate student seminars

34 Seminars at the Centre

35 Methods seminars

35 Journal club

35 Undergraduate/postgraduate teaching

35 Talks and lectures

37 PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY

37 Advocacy and dissemination activities

37 Advocacy workshops

38 OTHER ACTIVITIES

40 NEW GRANTS AND AWARDS IN 2002

41 FUNDS 2002



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 twelve years, the Centre has built a strong program of research addressing issues of major public health importance for mothers and children.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Centre 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 of the Centre 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 Centre 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 the Centre's work 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, Julie Costello, Felice Rocca, Vicki Wyatt

Research staff Stephanie Brown, Fiona Bruinsma, Mary-Ann Darcy, Lisa Gold, Penelope Jones, Michelle Kealy, Ann Krastev, Ellie McDonald, Helen McLachlan, Creina Mitchell, Priscilla Pyett, Joanne Rayner, Therese Riley, Rhonda Small, Angela Taft, Lyn Watson, Robert Yearsley, Jane Yelland

Research assistants and project support staff Kathryn Brown-Yung, Tuyet Cao, Maggie Flood, Alex Gartrell, Anne Harbison, Michelle Kingston, Glenda McDonald, Suong Nguyen, Bernadette Pound, Bree Rankin, Bonnie Simons, Martine Spaul, Liesje Toomey, Sally von Bibra, Hannah Woolhouse

Research Associates Lisa Donahue, Dick Sloman, Penny Smithers (Public Health Trainee), Alison Venn

PhD and Doctor of Public Health students Lisa Amir, Mary-Ann Darcy, Della Forster, Jenny Hunt, Michelle Kealy, Gaylene McKay, Dick Sloman, Jane Yelland

Masters students Sandy Campbell, Beth Rankin, Katrina Stevenson, Hua Xu

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

The Centre 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 and Conduct of Randomised Trials* are offered annually. For enquiries regarding either of these courses, or about postgraduate research at the Centre, please contact Stephanie Brown (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 the Centre. 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. If you would like to be included on our mailing list, please contact the Centre on (03) 8341 8500.



director's report

At this year's Annual General Meeting of VicHealth, which celebrated the 15th anniversary of its foundation the importance of the evidence base for health promotion and illness prevention was strongly emphasised by a number of the invited speakers, prompting our review of the Centre's year to start with contributions to this important and often overlooked task.

Stephanie Brown, Rhonda Small and Ann Krastev, in association with Peter Davis and Brenda Faber from the Royal Women's Hospital, completed a Cochrane Review of the evidence from randomised trials about the safety of early postnatal hospital discharge. The most striking finding was the lack of evidence and the relatively poor quality of the trials, despite the need for reliable information on a policy which affects more than 60,000 women each year in Victoria. In this instance, evidence from the trials can be supplemented by information from the three *Victorian surveys of recent mothers* carried out by the Centre. These identify marked increases in early discharge from 1989 to 1999 but also show that early discharge is not associated with any adverse effects on either breastfeeding or maternal depression.

An update of the Cochrane Review on interventions to promote smoking cessation during pregnancy includes stronger evidence of the effectiveness of these interventions in reducing low birthweight and preterm birth. Other more surprising findings from the >60 trials now included is that the theory about the importance of 'stages of change' for quitting may not be applicable to quitting in pregnancy, that primary care givers such as midwives may not be the most appropriate people to provide smoking cessation interventions, and that tangible 'rewards' for quitting may be being underused as a strategy. This review is also a collaborative one, involving four Universities, the others being, the Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London (Sandy Oliver), the Centre for Research in Primary and Community Care, University of Hertfordshire (Laura Oakley) and the Centre for Community Child Health, University of Melbourne (Elizabeth Waters). As in the case of early discharge the systematic review findings can be supplemented by data from the *Victorian survey of recent mothers 2000* which asked women specific questions about what advice and assistance they had received during pregnancy about smoking cessation. There is a large gap between the best evidence and current practice.

The third area of research synthesis where we have been active this year is highly relevant to current policy and practice in Australia since it is about the state of the evidence on methods for preventing or reducing depression after birth. The first part of the project looked at whether depression after birth could be predicted by screening in the antenatal period. The depressing finding was that none of the published antenatal screening instruments performed adequately as a screening tool (J142). In addition, a systematic review of interventions to reduce maternal depression after birth was unable to identify any effective

interventions implemented in pregnancy or labour. Among the diverse universal interventions, potentially applicable to all women after birth, only one was effective and that one would be very difficult to implement within the current Australian health care system. Postnatal counselling interventions with women who were depressed were effective, across a variety of modalities, implemented by a variety of practitioners (in press). This work is also a collaboration, involving Dr Marie-Paule Austin of the Mood Disorders Unit, Black Dog Institute, at the University of New South Wales.

Allied to that project is an important collaboration between the Centre, the Department of General Practice at the University of Melbourne and the Mercy Hospital for Women. The collaboration has developed an alternative approach to 'paper-based screening' for responding to psychosocial issues during pregnancy. The *ANEW* project is providing midwives, shared care general practitioners, and hospital medical staff with a multifaceted innovative training programme 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 a survey of women attending the antenatal clinic, and by measuring changes in the knowledge and skills of participating doctors and midwives.

Two projects at the other end of the research cycle from intervention studies and research synthesis are seeking more detailed information about causal factors: one in relation to extremely preterm birth, the other in relation to maternal health problems after birth. Both are funded by NHMRC. *Early births*, the case-control study of births before 32 weeks of pregnancy, took a long time to gain the necessary approvals from hospitals across Victoria but is now working well. A poster describing the problems associated with seeking approval from multiple hospital Human Research Ethics Committees after it had been approved by the HRECs of the Department of Human Services and La Trobe University, has been a focus of discussion at two conferences this year. The *Maternal health study*, a cohort study of women having a first birth, got off to an excellent start in 2002 with very strong interest from senior staff in the five participating large Melbourne hospitals. The potential for this study design to clarify what the contribution of labour and birth events is to maternal postnatal health problems is widely recognised as a real strength of the project, and the range of participating hospitals makes the findings generalisable to a large proportion of women having their first child.

These two projects, and indeed most of the Centre's work fits into one of the Commonwealth Government's new research priorities – 'A healthy start to life!'

The three statewide *Surveys of recent mothers* all demonstrated that immigrant women of non-English speaking backgrounds were much more likely than women born in Australia to be unhappy with their

maternity care. Earlier papers from the *Mothers in a new country* (MINC) project which explored these issues with bi-cultural interviewers described the experiences of Vietnamese, Turkish and Filipino women during the antenatal and postnatal periods and the most recent paper published in December 2002, which is about labour and birth, confirms that the problems identified at other stages of pregnancy are also marked at this time (J141). A more extended exploration of these issues for Vietnamese women, also using bi-cultural interviewers, was carried out within the EPOCS project, which will be launched by the Hon. Bronwyn Pike, Minister for Health in April 2003.

We were very fortunate to have two public health trainees working with us this year. Penny Smithers worked with Lisa Gold and Bree Rankin on costing community resource use for *EcoPRISM*. Bernadette Pound took leave from the trainee program to work with Rhonda Small on an analysis of local newspaper coverage of maternal health and *PRISM* activities in intervention and comparison communities.

Two new projects received funding towards the end of the year. NHMRC funded a study looking at longer-term perinatal outcomes in women who had been referred for assessment and possible treatment of cervical dysplasia. The Telstra Foundation, in a highly competitive research grant process, awarded funding to *MOSAIC*, a project discussed later in the report with respect to advocacy issues.

One major event in 2002 was the Centre's Fourth Triennial Review convened by VicHealth. Some highlights from the external review panel's report were:

'The Panel was extremely impressed by the productivity of the Centre and the extremely high quality of its research output... noted that the Centre had completed all of the work that was projected at the last Review and congratulated the Centre on this high level of achievement. The Panel also recognised that the work of the Centre is unique, and much of the work is done in difficult, and sometimes controversial areas'.

'...noted the capacity of the Centre to work in partnerships with health service providers...and to influence policy relating to maternal care in hospitals. The evaluation of maternal care initiatives enabled the Centre to make timely and influential interventions, and resulted in significant policy changes'.

'The Centre's work in randomised trials has been particularly successful, with a demonstrated capacity to recruit and retain large cohorts', and elsewhere, 'that the Centre be congratulated for its ability to attract and supervise quality higher degree students'.

'The Panel congratulated the Centre on the thorough dissemination of research findings, many of which have the potential to influence policy at state, national and international levels...the Panel noted that the extremely important and successful dissemination of research findings done by Centre staff is not recognised as a significant criteria for success by [some] fund granting bodies'.

'The Panel congratulated the Centre on its still high publication output in the period between reviews. Especially pleasing to note was the continued practice of published reports, demonstrating the Centre's commitment to ensuring that it produced research findings in ways that were accessible to communities that had participated in research.'

'...that the Centre be congratulated on its success in continually increasing its overall revenue base, and in particular its outstanding success in obtaining competitive grants funding'.

The Panel's report provides a great deal of advice as well as these positive comments and we look forward to thinking through their recommendations with the assistance of VicHealth and the University.

AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND HIGHER DEGREES

This was a good year for higher degree completions. Dr Helen McLachlan was awarded a PhD and Dr Hua Xu a Master of Applied Science (Research). Beth Rankin completed her Master of Applied Science (Research) thesis and Sandy Campbell completed the bound volume for the Master of Applied Epidemiology (Indigenous Health) program at ANU. Ruth Bergman was awarded a Master of Public Health after carrying out the research component of her degree with Lyn Watson and Lisa Amir at the Centre. Three members of staff were awarded PhD scholarships to begin in 2003: Lisa Gold, an NHMRC PhD Scholarship, Della Forster a VicHealth PhD Scholarship, and Jane Yelland an Australian Postgraduate Award. Two staff members Creina Mitchell and Jo Rayner have enrolled in higher degrees, the former in the Doctorate of Public Health, and the latter in a PhD starting in 2003.

Jane Yelland received a New Investigator Award at the Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand Congress in Christchurch, becoming the fifth Centre staff member to have received one of these awards. Judith Lumley was awarded the Sidney Sax Public Health Medal by the Public Health Association of Australia, and was invited to join the International Advisory Board of *The Lancet*.

Judith Lumley



HEALTH SERVICES: PREGNANCY AND BIRTH

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

Judith Lumley and Lisa Donohue

This trial aims to evaluate whether providing information before pregnancy results in a better outcome for the baby. The project was part of the overall program offered by the Pre-Pregnancy Information Service situated in Richmond until June 1993. The 1200+ mothers involved in this project were recruited through the Maternal and Child Health Service and were visited at home by a midwife five months or more after the birth of their first baby. Data collected from all women included information about their pregnancy, birth and postnatal period. Half the women, those randomised to the intervention, received information which might assist in a healthier start for their next pregnancy. Follow-up of all participants was completed in 1994.

Funding NHMRC Public Health Research and Development Committee project grant 1991-94
Status literature review updated, 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, Department of Perinatal Medicine, Royal Women's Hospital, and former collaborators Judith Yates and Christopher Kohlenberg (both deceased)

Information about the timing of use of ultrasound for fetal anomaly scanning was collected as additional data within the perinatal forms of the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit in 1991-92. In those years 97% of women received ultrasonography during pregnancy with virtually all having either one or two scans. Close to 70% of women were scanned at the usual gestation for detection of fetal anomalies. Mothers of higher parity and those who were born outside Australia, in a country where English was not the most common spoken language, were less likely to be scanned at all, and less likely to be scanned at the stage of pregnancy where a number of serious birth defects can be recognised. An additional study component involved a review of scan reports and hospital medical records for all births, or terminations of pregnancy, with a malformation 'potentially diagnosable' by ultrasound at 16-20 weeks gestation, and for an equivalent number of births without birth defects.

The study was partially replicated in 2000 - using information available within the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection - for births and terminations of pregnancy in 1997 to see what changes had occurred in the timing and method of prenatal diagnosis over the decade.

We are very grateful to the staff of the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit, especially Dr Jane Halliday and Ms Marilyn Riley for facilitating this project in 2000 and to Fiona Bruinsma, and the members of the project's Scientific Advisory Committee.

Funding Victorian Health Promotion Foundation project grant 1990-1992, core grant 1994 onwards
Status three papers published, data collection for 1997 completed, data entry completed, paper in preparation

Victorian survey of recent mothers 2000

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

This study aimed to investigate the childbirth and early postnatal experiences, satisfaction with care, and physical and emotional health of a representative sample of Victorian women who gave birth in 1999. The study builds on two earlier Victorian surveys of recent mothers conducted in 1989 and 1994.

The third *Victorian survey of recent mothers* was commissioned by the Victorian Department of Human Services to inform the continuing development of the Maternity Services Program. The Survey provides a baseline measure against which changes implemented over the period of the Maternity Services Program may be assessed. All Victorian public and private maternity hospitals and home birth practitioners with births in the study period assisted with mailing out questionnaires to women who gave birth in two weeks in September 1999. A total of 1616 valid questionnaires were returned, giving a response of 67%.

Four papers based on the study findings have been submitted for publication this year. Three papers compare the findings of the 2000 Survey with the results of previous surveys covering women's views of care and outcomes of early discharge, and the other paper examines women's views of different models of public antenatal care. A series of invited talks providing feedback on the study findings were also given this year at regional and metropolitan hospitals.

Funding Victorian Department of Human Services 1999-2001
Status final report to DHS submitted June 2001, three reports published, two papers published, two papers submitted

Having a baby in Victoria 1989-2000: women's views of public and private models of care

Fiona Bruinsma, Stephanie Brown and Mary-Ann Darcy

Over the past decade researchers at the Centre have undertaken three population-based postal surveys of representative samples of Victorian women who had recently given birth. The first survey was undertaken in conjunction with the *Victorian Ministerial Review of Birthing Services* in 1989. The second and third surveys were undertaken in 1994 and 2000 respectively. The three surveys provide a rich source of data on women's experiences and views of their maternity care. Fiona Bruinsma analysed key items from each survey to compare and contrast women's views of antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal care across the decade and to chart changes in the provision of maternity care. This project extended analyses undertaken for the Victorian Department of Human Services in reporting the outcomes of the *2000 Survey*.

Funding core grant 2002
Status one paper published

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

Status data analysis, paper in preparation

A new approach to supporting women in pregnancy (ANEW)

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

Psychosocial risk assessment during antenatal care is becoming more common in public maternity care. 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 homelessness, violence from an intimate partner, depression, substance misuse, 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 main aim of the project is to enhance the skills of antenatal care providers to support vulnerable women and their families. 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.

584 women completed the baseline survey, a response fraction of 76%. The educational intervention was conducted from August to December with 24 midwives and nine medical staff participating. Analysis of the baseline women's survey and the health professionals' feedback is underway. Recruitment to the women's outcome survey commenced in January 2003.

Funding Victorian Department of Human Services 2001-2003

Status educational intervention complete; analysis of baseline survey and recruitment to the 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

Reviews of maternity care have identified a number of problems with traditional public maternity care. Southern Health (formerly Southern Health Care Network) is in the process of implementing a new approach to maternity care that addresses some of these problems. These new initiatives include 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 is examining the outcomes of these new initiatives in terms of women's experiences of care. A postal survey of over 1800 women who had given birth three months prior to the survey at four hospitals (Monash Medical Centre, Clayton and Moorabbin campuses; Dandenong; Sandringham) was completed in 1999. The survey provides baseline data prior to the commencement of the initiatives in late 1999. 1256 women took part in the survey, a response fraction of 65%. Feedback from this survey is currently being compared to women's responses to the post-implementation survey conducted over 2001-2002. 1050 women responded to the second survey, a response fraction of 57.4%. This 'before and after' approach to evaluation aims to determine the impact of implementation of innovations in care.

Process evaluation involving telephone interviews with women who had recently given birth at one of the four hospitals (n=107) and interviews with managers, midwives and medical practitioners (n=25) was conducted over 2000-2001. 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.

In addition, 75 women who were born in Vietnam participated in home interviews. Women were recruited during their postnatal hospital stay at Southern Health and interviewed in their own language three months following the birth. This component of the study will provide important feedback about the views and experiences of non-English speaking women following implementation of the initiatives. Monitoring of hospital readmissions and casualty attendances of mothers and infants is in progress.

It is anticipated that this evaluation will provide valuable information for the planning and organisation of maternity services at the four participating hospitals and across Victoria. We are grateful to Glenda McDonald, Suong Nguyen, Tuyet Cao, Liem Pham, Donna Trickey, Angela Fanzone and members of the project reference group for their practical support and assistance throughout the fourth year of *EPOCS*.

Funding Victorian Department of Human Services, Maternity Services Enhancement Quality Improvement Funding 1999-2002

Status baseline postal survey: report and summary report completed, paper in press; process evaluation: report completed; post-implementation survey: analysis and compilation of reports in progress

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 Survey of recent mothers of an association between operative delivery (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% (917/1041) 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 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 2002 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 major focus of activity in 2002 has been the postal survey mailed in April to 1039 women who had participated in the debriefing trial four to six years earlier. In June, with returned questionnaires from only 31.6% of women, following one reminder, efforts were put into a) tracing women whose questionnaires were 'returned to sender' and b) follow-up of non-responders by phone. By January 2003, 530 questionnaires had been returned, representing just over 51% of the original cohort.

A PhD scholarship funded by the NHMRC project grant awarded to the study was advertised in April 2002. Following an interview process in July, Michelle Kealy commenced her candidature in September. She is working on the development of the qualitative study component of HARP exploring women's health and recovery after caesarean section.

Funding NHMRC project grant 2001-2003

Status survey complete, coding of postal questionnaires under way, qualitative study in development

An exploratory study of domiciliary support during the first days following childbirth

Ann Krastev and Stephanie Brown

This study aims to explore and describe the structure, aims and scope of postnatal domiciliary midwifery support services offered by health service agencies in the Melbourne metropolitan area.

Data collection involved a survey of metropolitan maternity hospitals to obtain an overview of services offered, including the number and characteristics of women receiving domiciliary visits, and guidelines for determining eligibility. The survey was followed by interviews with maternity department managers at selected hospitals and health service agencies. Interviews and a postal survey were used in the second phase of the study to explore the perspectives of midwives providing postnatal domiciliary care.

Funding Royal Women's Hospital Postgraduate Research Degree Scholarship 1997-1998 (AK), La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences grant 1998, Australian College of Midwives Inc. Scholarship Foundation Grant 1998, Australian College of Midwives Inc. Vic. Branch Postgraduate Scholarship 1999

Status data collection complete, analysis commenced

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

Judith Lumley, Della Forster and Helen McLachlan in collaboration with Christine Beanland, Department of Nursing, Deakin University; 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

Despite the relatively high proportions of women who choose to breastfeed in Victoria, the duration of breastfeeding is still much briefer than recommended by the World Health Organization and falls well short of Australia's goals and targets. As well as marked social differences in breastfeeding, there are a number of factors that have been shown to influence women's decision to breastfeed and for 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 aimed to investigate whether breastfeeding education in the middle of pregnancy focusing on these factors, influenced breastfeeding duration.

Women having their first baby and who were booked into the Royal Women's Hospital were invited to participate in the research project. Women were enrolled in the project around the middle of the pregnancy (approximately 18 weeks) and randomly allocated to one of three groups: a control group or one of two interventions. One intervention was an antenatal breastfeeding class that focused on practical aspects of breastfeeding such as correct attachment and positioning of the baby. The other intervention included two antenatal breastfeeding classes that explored family attitudes to breastfeeding. The classes took place between weeks 20-25 of pregnancy. All women, including those in the control group as well as the intervention groups, were offered regular childbirth education at the Royal Women's Hospital.

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 six months later. Data collection was complete in July 2002. The response fractions were 100% at recruitment, 93.9% soon after birth and 93.3% six months later.

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

Status trial completed, analysis underway, papers in preparation
ISRCTN 21556494



Systematic reviews

Interventions to facilitate smoking cessation during pregnancy

Judith Lumley in collaboration with Sandy Oliver, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London; Elizabeth Waters, Centre for Community Child Health, University of Melbourne; and Laura Oakley, Centre for Research in Primary and Community Care, University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom

The review currently includes more than 70 trials, with over 60 contributing to the formal overview. When combined they demonstrate a significant reduction in continued smoking during pregnancy, a reduction in preterm birth and in low birthweight, and an increase in mean birthweight, associated with the interventions. A narrative review of the process for developing the interventions and for implementing them identified a lack of attention to several outcomes which are of concern to women themselves.

Funding core grant

Status review published in July 1998, and January 2000; literature search updated December 2002, data entry and update underway, methods paper published

Early postnatal discharge from hospital for healthy mothers and term infants

Stephanie Brown, Ann Krastev and Rhonda Small in collaboration with Brenda Faber and Peter Davis, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Royal Women's Hospital, University of Melbourne

Since the 1970s there has been a steady decline in Western countries in the length of time mothers spend in hospital after giving birth. The primary objectives of this review are to determine whether a policy of early postnatal discharge is safe for healthy mothers and term infants, and to assess the effectiveness of a policy of early postnatal discharge in terms of important maternal, infant and paternal health and related outcomes. Eight trials were identified involving 3600 women. The findings were inconclusive. There is no evidence of adverse outcomes associated with policies of early postnatal discharge for healthy mothers with term infants, but the methodological limitations of included studies mean that adverse outcomes cannot be ruled out. Making comparisons between studies is problematic because of differing levels of primary and specialist support available in the different countries and settings where studies were conducted. It remains unclear how important midwifery or nursing support at home is to the safety and acceptability of early discharge programs.

Funding none

Status review published July 2002

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; Necia Burford, Public Health Branch, Victorian Department of Human Services; Jane Halliday, Birth Defects Register, Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit, Victorian Department of Human Services, and Murdoch Childrens Research Institute; and Lyn Watson

Funding Victorian Department of Human Services

Status data collection completed, three papers published, one paper submitted

Collaborative pregnancy care/team midwifery project

Mary Anne Biro, Jan Pannifex, Christine Tippet, Monash Medical Centre; Ulla Waldenström, Karolinska Institute, Sweden; and Stephanie Brown

Status final report submitted to Victorian Department of Human Services, one paper published, one paper in press, doctoral thesis awarded (MAB)

PERINATAL AND CHILD OUTCOMES

Parity, gravidity and reproductive outcomes

Judith Lumley, Lyn Watson and Creina Mitchell in collaboration with Jane Halliday, Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit, Victorian Department of Human Services and Niels Becker, National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University

In women having a first birth the relative risk of preterm birth increases with the number of previous pregnancies (prior pregnancy losses). Earlier work describing the association is being extended to a larger population of births – first and subsequent births in Victoria 1983–1997 – and to the inclusion of socio-economic area level indicators from the last census. With new funding the project will measure a broader range of pregnancy outcomes within the Victorian perinatal collections such as perinatal death, operative delivery and birthweight. In addition, there will be the development of methods for linking births into sibships and comparing 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 Lyn Watson

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 project has the following aims.

- Describe 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, and those who have not had any pregnancy.
- 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.
- 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 planning

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

Lyn Watson, Judith Lumley, Joanne Rayner, Kathryn Brown-Yung, Anne Harbison and Sally von Bibra 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, including associations with gestational age; 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 will include a semi-structured interview, either face-to-face or by telephone, and medical record data extraction.

Final ethics approval from the last hospital (the 76th) was obtained in September, after 16 months of work and more than 20,000 pages of documentation. Recruitment commenced in April. By the end of December 2002, 1250 women had been identified as eligible for the study and over 500 had been interviewed. A comprehensive tracking database enables easy monitoring of participant recruitment covered by the seven hardworking members of the interviewing team.

Funding NHMRC project grant 2001–2003; SIDS & Kids Victoria 2003–2004; La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences Research Enhancement Grant 2003

Status recruitment and data collection in progress, paper in preparation

The outcomes of first births which follow a prior pregnancy

Hua Xu and Judith Lumley

This study aims to measure the associations of previous pregnancies (spontaneous or induced abortion) with pregnancy complications and secondary infertility in the urban district of Kunming, China. In the long term the goal of the study is to provide persuasive evidence for women who are in their reproductive age to choose an effective contraceptive method. A case-control study has been conducted using data abstracted from >1000 medical records at three teaching hospitals in Kunming, China. A survey of Chinese gynaecologists sought their opinions about associations between previous pregnancy, infertility and preterm birth.

Funding none

Status project completed, MAppSci(Research) awarded (HX)

Perinatal outcomes following treatment for cervical dysplasia

Judith Lumley and Fiona Bruinsma in collaboration with Michael Quinn, Director Oncology/Dysplasia, 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 will be a retrospective cohort study in which records from the Dysplasia Clinic will be linked to a random sample of birth records in the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection for the years 1983-2001. 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 planning and development, seeking ethics approval

Systematic reviews

Alcohol misuse research project

Angela Taft

Amongst other findings, this review found that young women are fast narrowing the gender gap in harmful drinking. There is no evidence that low levels of alcohol consumption are harmful to a fetus, however higher levels of drinking can cause damage. In Australia, new drinking guidelines produced by the NHMRC (2001) advise limits for moderate and harm-free drinking for particular populations such as pregnant women.

Funding Victorian Health Promotion Foundation 2001-2002

Status report published

Periconceptional folate and multivitamin supplementation in the prevention of neural tube defects

Judith Lumley and Lyn Watson in collaboration with Max Watson, Department of Perinatal Medicine, Royal Women's Hospital, and Carol Bower, TWV Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, WA

Evidence for the preventive effect of periconceptional folate supplementation against neural tube defects in the developing fetus is very strong. The pooled data raise the possibility that folate supplementation might increase twinning rates. There is no evidence from the review that multivitamin supplementation without folate can prevent neural tube defects. Only one trial has tested dissemination strategies to the wider public.

Status review published October 1998, updated 1999 and 2000; paper published

Collaborative work

Prenatal diagnosis questionnaire study

Jane Halliday, Birth Defects Register, Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit, Victorian Department of Human Services and Murdoch Childrens Research Institute; Robin Bell, Department of Perinatal Medicine, Royal Women's Hospital; Pranee Liamputtong, School of Public Health, La Trobe University and Lyn Watson

Status one paper published, one paper in press, one paper submitted

CROSS-CULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Mothers in a new country (MINC): interviews with Vietnamese, Filipino and Turkish women about maternity care and motherhood

Rhonda Small, Jane Yelland and Judith Lumley in collaboration with Pranee Liamputtong, School of Public Health, La Trobe University

Bi-cultural research workers: Malou Anes, Gulseker Ozer, Anh Tran

This study was undertaken in order to give voice to the views of recent mothers of non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) about childbirth, maternity care and the experience of motherhood. Women from NESB have been consistently under-represented in previous research yet they comprise a significant minority of all childbearing women in Victoria.

Vietnamese, Filipino and Turkish women who gave birth at Monash Medical Centre, the Mercy Hospital for Women and the Royal Women's Hospital were visited during their postnatal stay by one of the bicultural research workers. Mothers agreeing to participate were interviewed at home when their babies were six to nine months old. 318 women completed the study with 104 Vietnamese, 107 Turkish and 107 Filipino women taking part. The major study findings were disseminated to the participating women, their communities and the recruiting hospitals in 1998. The final paper from the study was published in 2002.

Funding Victorian Health Promotion Foundation project grant 1993-1996 and dissemination grant 1997; NHMRC Public Health Research and Development Committee project grant 1994-1996; La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences grant 1996

Status six papers published, PhD awarded (RS)

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 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 one paper in press, two submitted

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

Lyn Watson in collaboration with Pranee Liamputtong, 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 and a comparison with Australian-born women over the same time period. It will use data from the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection from 1982 to 1995, extending the analysis conducted in a previous study.

The ethnographic study is aimed at further developing 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 were 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 1996-1999, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation project grant 1996-1999

Status epidemiological study – paper in preparation; ethnographic study - two reports written, two papers published, two papers in preparation

A review of Congress Alukura: its current role and future directions

Betty Carter, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress; Judith Lumley and Gai Wilson, Centre for Development and Innovation in Health, La Trobe University

Congress Alukura is the oldest Aboriginal women's health service in the country. The review, which was initiated by Alukura itself, had very broad terms of reference. The methods included document analysis, interviews, analysis of data on service use, and the use of data collected routinely by the Northern Territory Epidemiology Branch. The people interviewed were Aboriginal community women in and around Alice Springs and in remote communities, staff of Aboriginal community services, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, current and former Alukura staff, and health care providers in Alice Springs and elsewhere in Central Australia. More than 100 people took part in the interviews and consultation. The full report to Congress was completed in 1998. A paper based on the review was submitted in 2002.

Funding Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services

Status full report provided to Congress Alukura and Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, one paper and summary submitted

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.

Nganampa Health Council (NHC) is the Aboriginal controlled health service for the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands (AP Lands) which occupy an area of 500km by 200km in the far north-west of South Australia. NHC has adopted innovative approaches to the problems of the 3,000 Aboriginal residents. These have included: male and female staff in each of its clinics to address the cultural sensitivities related to gender and reproductive health; pioneering protocols of care for the treatment of clinical conditions, including obstetrics, women's health, STDs, childhood immunisations, growth monitoring and significant illnesses. NHC has made a substantial contribution to housing and environmental health issues, which has had a national impact on approaches to these issues in Aboriginal communities.

This research project involves reviewing the medical records of Aboriginal mothers and children from the AP 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)

Mildura 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 submitted (SC), report for Mildura Aboriginal Co-operative and Victorian Department of Human Services in preparation

Evaluating pregnancy care and outcomes for Australian Indigenous women

Jenny Hunt and Judith Lumley

This project uses a range of approaches to evaluate care and services provided for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in pregnancy. Four interrelated projects have been developed.

A paper about the first project, assessing the variability and evidence base of protocols for routine antenatal care in current use by Australian hospitals and Divisions of General Practice, was published in the Medical Journal of Australia in March 2002, together with an accompanying editorial.

The second project was a collaborative evaluation of the Gumileybira women's health unit of Danila Dilba Health Service, an Aboriginal community controlled health service in Darwin, and was completed in 2001, although discussions are continuing about future publications about the project's methods and results.

A review of pregnancy care received by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women giving birth at Royal Darwin Hospital in 1999 is the third project. Analyses of collected data were performed in early 2002, and results and their implications were presented to and discussed with relevant staff of the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services, the hospital and other organisations before and during a visit to Darwin in May 2002. Published reports resulting from this project are being planned.

The fourth project is a small interview study exploring the views and experiences of health professionals providing pregnancy care to Indigenous women in the Darwin region. In 2002, the interviews were transcribed and a qualitative thematic analysis was performed. The next steps for this project will be providing feedback to participants and preparing a report.

A discussion paper 'How can routine antenatal care protocols and practice in the Northern Territory be improved?' was published and distributed in July 2002. This included selected findings of each project and additional relevant information, and aimed to provide timely and useful information to practitioners and policy makers in the Northern Territory. Jenny Hunt is undertaking work on these projects towards a PhD, which is nearing completion.

Funding NHMRC Aboriginal Health Research Training Scholarship 1999-2003

Status protocols project – one paper published; Gumileybira evaluation project – project complete, report submitted to collaborating organisation, further dissemination activities being discussed; Royal Darwin Hospital review project – analysis complete, report in preparation; provider interviews – analysis complete, report in preparation; writing up doctoral thesis (JH)

Collaborative work

Aboriginal simulated patient project

Gail Harradine and Dick Sloman, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation; Morton Rawlin, GPEA Victoria; Shaun Ewen, VicHealth Koori Health Research and Community Development Unit, University of Melbourne; Kathryn Robertson, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne and Marlene Drysdale, School of Rural Health, Monash University

Funding RACGP Indigenous Health Projects 2002, and General Practice Education and Training Innovations Program 2003

Status pilot project completed, implementation underway

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 and Public Health, University of Melbourne and Penny Hawe, Department of Community Health Sciences, University of Calgary, Canada

Community development officers: Wendy Arney, Deborah Brown, Kay Duffy, Serena Everill, Anne Lanyon, Melanie Sanders, Leanne Skipsey, Jennifer Stone, Scilla Taylor

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 main achievements in 2002 included:

- completion of the 18-month period of data collection from mothers at six months after birth (Feb 2002);
- commencement of follow-up data collection from mothers at two years after birth, via rolling mail outs of questionnaires over 18 months (Feb 2002-August 2003);
- completion of coding and data entry of returned six-month questionnaires (n=11,300+) and commencement of analysis from September;
- distribution of *PRISM Points*, the project newsletter in May and December;
- completion of process and context evaluation activities, including a local newspaper audit, a maternal and child health survey of activities in comparison areas, an audit of council and general practice division maternal health activities, and a review of State and Commonwealth activity on maternal health;
- submission of three papers, one on the rationale for *PRISM*, the second on design issues and the third describing processes for establishing partnerships with local government for the implementation of *PRISM*;
- development of a comprehensive website about the project, to go online early in 2003.

As the project concludes its fifth year, we continue to be grateful for the input of members of our reference group and to all the local participants in *PRISM*, especially those who have worked hard to keep the process of data collection running so smoothly.

Funding La Trobe University and Victorian Department of Human Services Collaborative Industry grant 1997; NHMRC project grants 1997-1999; 1999-2001 and 2002-2004; 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' ongoing contributions to program implementation and data collection 1998-.

Status process evaluation completed, outcome data collection ongoing, three papers submitted
ISRCTN 03464021

Economic and ecological evaluation of PRISM (EcoPRISM)

Alan Shiell, Penny Hawe, Department of Community Health Sciences, University of Calgary, Canada and School of Public Health, La Trobe University; Therese Riley, Lisa Gold, and Bree Rankin in collaboration with Judith Lumley and Lyn Watson

The *EcoPRISM* project adds an economic and ecological evaluation to *PRISM*. The aim is to describe the broader impacts of *PRISM* including its effects on collaborative relationships and organisational networks. During 2002 we completed the documentation of activities that are supportive to mothers in the eight *PRISM* intervention communities. We would like to thank our community documenters Dianne Jackson, Andrea Speirs, Mandy Nealy, Katherine Lindsay, Mary Klonis, Debby McGorlick-Appelman, Sue Dawson, Ingrid Crosser, Maureen McMahon, Deborah Brown and Kellie O'Callaghan for all their work.

Throughout the year we continued with data collection and preliminary analysis. A community values survey has been developed to investigate what members of all 16 areas value about community programs such as *PRISM*. Interviews were held with key informants in each comparison community. In 2002 we conducted a second organisational network survey, following on from the first survey conducted in 1999. We would like to thank our organisation survey team of Alexandra Gartrell, Sarah L'Estrange, Jamileh Abu-Dubou, Julienne Corboz, Loretta Hoban and Jenny Challinor.

Funding NHMRC project grants 1998-1999 and 2000-2002

Status data collection, analysis, two papers submitted, several papers in preparation

Guidelines for assessing postnatal problems (GAPP)

Jane Gunn, Donna Southern, Nancy Carabella and Kathryn Robertson, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne in collaboration with Judith Lumley, Rhonda Small and Stephanie Brown

GAPP is a multifaceted educational program that aimed to increase the knowledge and skills of general practitioners enabling them to deal more appropriately with depression and physical health problems occurring in the year following childbirth. The program encouraged GPs to use systematic, evidence-based guidelines for postnatal care. It was offered to GPs working in the eight municipalities randomised to intervention community status in a large community intervention trial aimed at improving maternal health at the population level (*PRISM*). Eight GP Advisors, one from each local government area, were recruited to assist with local adaptation of the program. A total of 81 GPs registered to take part.

Funding General Practice Evaluation Program (GPEP) 1999-2000

Status project completed, GPEP report submitted, one paper in press, one 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.

Funding none

Status analysis and writing up MPH minor thesis progressing (KS)

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

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

Recent studies indicate a significant physical and psychological burden of ill health in the year after childbirth. Observational studies suggest an association between pelvic floor disorders (urinary and anal incontinence, persisting perineal pain, sexual problems, haemorrhoids) and obstetric events, such as higher birthweight infants, longer length of second stage, operative vaginal delivery, epidural anaesthesia, and perineal trauma. This has prompted debate about ways to protect the pelvic floor, with some clinicians recommending elective caesarean section in preference to vaginal delivery.

The aims of the *Maternal health study* are:

- 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;
- to 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 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 to the study will be via a mailed invitation to women who have booked for delivery at five participating 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 have obtained ethics approval from participating hospitals, developed baseline study instruments, and commenced piloting of recruitment and tracking procedures at four out of the five study sites. We aim to recruit 1900 nulliparous women commencing in March 2003.

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

Status piloting recruitment and tracking procedures, developing data base for telephone interviews, planning for commencement of main study March 2003

Mothers' advocates in the community (MOSAIC)

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

This community intervention trial – formerly called the Mentor Mothers' project – aims to reduce or prevent partner violence or abuse and depression in women pregnant or with children under five. Further, it aims to strengthen women's health and well-being and attachment to their children by offering women at risk support from trained peers, 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 development phase completed this year included a comprehensive review of violence in pregnancy and after childbirth, published as Issues Paper No. 6 by the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse. Other tasks completed this year include:

- development and piloting of a questionnaire for women taking part in the survey
- translation of this questionnaire into Vietnamese
- piloting of methods for recruiting GPs to take part in the trial.

A full report of this phase was delivered to the Victorian Department of Human Services in mid 2002. Partial funding for the commencement of the main study has been received from the Telstra Foundation. Further funding will be sought in 2003. The research team is grateful for the continued support of Women's Health West.

Funding Victorian Department of Human Services 2001, Telstra Community Development Fund 2003-2004

Status report on development phase submitted to Victorian Department of Human Services, June 2002; development of study instruments, planning for main study

Young women, intimate partner abuse and reproductive health

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

This project will analyse data from the 1996 and 2000 young women's cohort surveys in the Women's Health Australia longitudinal study. The aim of the project is to investigate the impact of violence and abuse (mainly but not only by intimate partners) on young women's health, particularly their reproductive health, over time. The project will also compare socio-demographic characteristics, social support, aspirations for parenting, use of health services and satisfaction with care of women reporting abuse with those not reporting abuse.

Angela Taft has adjunct investigator status with Women's Health Australia. The project is due to report preliminary analyses to the Office for the Status of Women, Second National Women's Health conference in March 2003. The final report of the cohort analysis is due in July 2003.

Funding Office for the Status of Women, Commonwealth Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet 2002-2003

Status ethics approval obtained, data analysis in progress

Cohort study to assess the existence and size of a protective effect of prolonged breastfeeding against premenopausal breast cancer

Judith Lumley, Marilyn Riley and Lyn Watson in collaboration with Graham Giles, The Cancer Council Victoria; and the Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia (now Australian Breastfeeding Association)

This study was carried out to see whether prolonged breastfeeding is associated with a lower incidence of breast cancer. It took advantage of the fact that the Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia (NMAA) was founded in Victoria, and that the association retained some basic identifying information about more than 7000 of its earliest members. No other study has assessed a possible protective effect against breast cancer of prolonged lactation in a large group of well-nourished women breastfeeding frequently.

The study aimed to locate as many of the original members as possible and to identify all instances of breast cancer in the group through State and Territory Cancer Registries. Each NMAA member was sent a brief (one-page) questionnaire seeking sociodemographic information, and information about pregnancies, births, contraception, and lactation. The incidence of breast cancer in the NMAA members was compared with the incidence in the Victorian population, taking into account the women's ages, age at first birth, number of children and the lifetime duration of lactation. Comparison of the NMAA members with all Victorian women, using data collected routinely in the 1960s and 1970s by the Maternal and Child Health Program showed very marked differences in the proportions breastfeeding at three and six months after birth.

Funding Victorian Health Promotion Foundation project grant 1991-1992
Status paper in preparation

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. At six months postpartum, 88% (FBC) and 95% (FPH) of women completed the same telephone survey that was used in the *ABFAB* trial. A comparison of breastfeeding duration and difficulties, between these groups, is underway.

The second part of the project is a trial to prevent mastitis: *ROBIn – reduction of breast infection*. Recruitment for the trial began in November 2001 at the Royal Women's Hospital and Frances Perry House, and extended to the Mercy Hospital for Women, Freemason's Maternity Hospital and Cabrini Private Hospital early in 2002. As very few women with cracked nipples were identified, recruitment ceased in November 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 and Darebin. The main research question is "Are women with mastitis more likely to be nasal carriers of *S. aureus* than other breastfeeding women?"

Funding NHMRC PhD Public Health Scholarship 2000-2003 (LA); Medical Research Foundation for Women and Babies 2002; flucloxacillin capsules supplied by CSL Ltd
Status survey - analysis, trial - analysis, case-control study - recruiting
ISRCTN 65289389 (ROBIn)

The therapeutic effects of music and dance for women after birth

Beth Rankin and Judith Lumley

This study aimed to test the benefits to women of being involved in a music and movement program with their babies in the first year after birth. The music and dance repertoire was drawn from the rich folk traditions of Australia's many cultures and blended with traditional children's material. Participants were encouraged to explore their voices and develop skills in singing and playing percussion instruments. The focus of the program was on health and social outcomes for mothers. The pilot study was conducted in 1999. Funding is being sought in order to conduct a randomised trial of this intervention.

Funding none

Status pilot study complete, MAppSci(Research) passed subject to minor amendments (BR)

Multi-centre study of cancer after infertility and IVF

Alison Venn, Menzies Centre for Population Health Research, University of Tasmania; Lyn Watson, Fiona Bruinsma and Penelope Jones in collaboration with Graham Giles, Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria; David Healy, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Monash University; David Clayton, Cambridge Institute of Medical Research, Cambridge, United Kingdom and participating IVF clinics

This study was set up to address concerns that fertility drug treatment with IVF might be associated with an increased cancer risk. The first stage of the study used a record-linkage cohort design to link the records of 29,700 IVF patients with State Cancer Registries. It found that cancer incidence in women who had had fertility drug treatment with IVF was no higher than expected from age-adjusted general female population rates.

The second stage of the study used a nested case-control design to collect additional data on cancer risk factors for all women in the cohort with breast, ovarian or uterine cancer (cases) and a group of women without cancer, randomly selected from the cohort (controls).

Analysis in 2002 focused on comparison of exposure data collected from electronic clinic records, medical histories and questionnaires completed by subjects. A comparison of the medical histories and questionnaires showed poor agreement on exposure status. The most common example was women recorded as unexposed in the medical record who reported a history of fertility drug use in the questionnaire. The implications of this finding are that large cohort studies relying on clinic records are prone to misclassification bias in the measurement of lifetime exposure to fertility drugs. Two-stage studies with direct data collection from subjects can improve exposure measurement but loss to follow-up presents challenges for diseases of long latency and high mortality.

Funding The Fertility Society of Australia 1995; IVF Friends 1995; Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria 1996; The Kathleen Cunningham Foundation 1996-1998

Status stage 1 – complete, three papers published (two in 2001), pamphlet for consumers produced and distributed to clinics; stage 2 – analysis in progress, paper in preparation

Collaborative work

Antenatal screening and intervention to reduce postnatal depression

Marie-Paule Austin, Mood Disorders Unit, Black Dog Institute, University of New South Wales, 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, University of Melbourne in collaboration with Rhonda Small and Angela Taft

Funding General Practice Evaluation Program 2000, 2001

Status data analysis and writing up

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, Joanne 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 compared final adult height with pre-treatment estimated mature height and 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 approximately 1300 women who were treated or assessed for treatment by a Melbourne-based paediatrician from the late 1950s through to the mid 1980s. Former patients of other doctors have also been included where possible. 83% of the eligible cohort have been traced and questionnaires and telephone interviews are currently being completed by participants. The questionnaires use 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.

Funding NHRMC consultancy contract 2000-2003

Status data collection and analysis

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. This substudy of Anne Kavanagh's major research project on health and place incorporates a systematic review of the literature from 1995-2002. The purposes of this substudy are to:

- critique current approaches to conceptualising, operationalising and measuring 'place' in multilevel studies of health and place;
- offer ways forward for future research in the field; and
- develop a database which can be used to monitor future trends in this field of research.

Funding La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences grant 2002

Status database developed, systematic review in progress

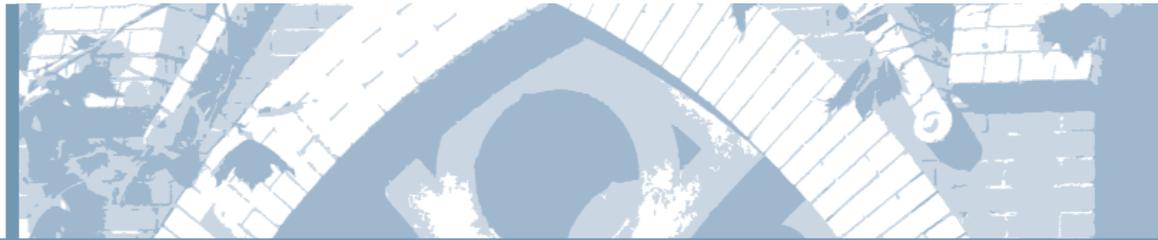
Development of clinical/field based performance tests for ankle injuries

Gaylene McKay, Patricia Goldie, School of Physiotherapy, La Trobe University and Warren Payne, Ballarat University in collaboration with Alison Venn, Menzies Centre for Population Health Research, University of Tasmania; and Lyn Watson

The study aimed to develop clinical tests to act as screening tools to identify balance and other physical deficits in basketball players with a history of recurrent ankle injury. The new tests detected a motor performance deficit in ankle-injured basketball players. Further research will be required to examine predictive validity of the tests. Gaylene received co-supervision from Alison Venn and Lyn Watson.

Funding La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences grant 1999

Status study completed, PhD thesis submitted (GMCK)



STAFF



Stephanie Brown BA (Hons), PhD

Stephanie studied history at the University of Melbourne before developing an interest in women's health policy and public health. She joined the Centre in 1991 to work on a study of women's experiences of motherhood, and analysis of the first *Victorian survey of recent mothers*. Currently, she is principal investigator of the *Maternal health study*, and also has continuing involvements in the *PRISM* community randomised trial, the *Victorian survey of recent mothers 2000*, *EPOCS* and *ANEW* research teams. She was awarded a VicHealth Public Health Research Fellowship in 2001, and is currently the Centre's postgraduate co-ordinator. Stephanie has two sons, both of whom share her enthusiasm for mountains and beaches.



Fiona Bruinsma BBSoc, GradDipAppPsych, MAppSc(Research)

Fiona joined the Centre in early 1993 after completing a Bachelor of Behavioural Science at La Trobe University and a Graduate Diploma in Applied Psychology at Monash University. During her time at the Centre she has worked on studies investigating cancer after infertility and IVF and women's experiences of maternity care in Victoria. She also completed a Master of Applied Science. Her masters project investigated the health of children born as a result of IVF treatment. In 2001 Fiona joined the *Tall Girls* project as data manager. In 2003 she will continue with the *Tall Girls* project and will also co-ordinate a study of pregnancy outcomes after cervical dysplasia.



Tracey Carpenter

Tracey has worked in many different university environments over the past two decades. Starting as a junior laboratory technician in the Zoology Department at La Trobe University in 1983, her computing skills enabled her to transfer easily from research support to university administration. From 1998-2000, Tracey worked at the University of Melbourne gaining administrative experience in that university's largest teaching focused department: Accounting and Finance. Tracey joined the Centre's administrative team as personal assistant to the Director in May 2000, and has since contributed to the reorganisation of data systems in the administration area as well as providing IT support to Centre staff. She is the mother of three sons, and is continuing her studies in the Diploma of Tertiary Administration.



Mary-Ann Darcy

RN, RM, DipAppSc, BEd, GradDipSoc(Social Survey and Research Techniques)

Mary-Ann enrolled in a doctoral program at the Centre in March 2002 with the support of an Australian Postgraduate Award. She is conducting a series of analyses of perinatal data focusing on interventions in labour, and is interested in exploring novel ways of analysing these data. Mary-Ann's doctoral program is jointly supervised by Stephanie Brown and Rhonda Small. Her background is in midwifery, and maternal and child health. She joined the Centre in 1999 to work on the *Victorian survey of recent mothers 2000*. Prior to this she co-ordinated a series of large, community-based infant vaccine trials at the Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics Unit at the Royal Children's Hospital Research Institute, and a parent education and support project at the Centre for Community Child Health.



Lisa Gold MA, MSc

Lisa joined the Centre in November 2000 as a research officer on the *EcoPRISM* project. She started out as a researcher in development studies at the University of Sussex before moving into health research. Lisa moved to Melbourne from her position as lecturer in health economics at the University of Birmingham, where she worked on economic evaluations alongside clinical trials and a series of systematic reviews of health technologies. Lisa is continuing an economic evaluation alongside a clinical trial of obstetric epidural analgesia in labour (COMET) and maintains a teaching role within La Trobe University. Her work with *EcoPRISM* continues research interests in health state valuation and valuation of the broader benefits of community interventions. From January 2003 Lisa is taking up a NHMRC Public Health Postgraduate Scholarship to complete her PhD on the economic evaluation of new public health interventions. Lisa's doctoral studies are supervised by Stephen Duckett and Alan Shiell (School of Public Health, La Trobe University).



Penelope Jones RN, ICU, GradDipEpid

Penny obtained her general and intensive care nursing qualifications at the Alfred Hospital, Melbourne and completed the Graduate Diploma in Epidemiology at the University of Melbourne in 1991. From 1984 to 1993 she worked in the Gastroenterology Department, Alfred Hospital, co-ordinating clinical trials for people with liver disease. From 1993 to 1996 she was employed on the Australian Breast Cancer Family Study that was conducted at the University of Melbourne. She joined the Centre in 1997 to assist Alison Venn in the *Multi-centre study of cancer after infertility and IVF*. She is now working on the *Tall Girls* study. She is also busy with two young children.



Michelle Kealy RN, RM, MPH

Michelle joined the staff and postgraduate student group at the Centre in September 2002. She was awarded a PhD scholarship for a qualitative study exploring women's health and recovery after caesarean birth. The scholarship is funded by the NHMRC project grant for the *Health and recovery after operative birth project (HARP)*. Michelle is also working as a research assistant on *HARP* one day a week. Michelle completed Midwifery in Dumfries, Scotland, before moving to Nepal as a public health nurse to work in Chitwan on the Maternal and child health program. She returned to Australia to work on Palm Island and then with the Royal Flying Doctor Service (NSW Section). Michelle recently returned to Melbourne after working on an AusAID funded project in Laos and at Loddon Mallee Women's Health. Her doctoral studies are jointly supervised by Rhonda Small and Jeanne Daly (School of Public Health, La Trobe University).



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

Helen has a background in nursing and midwifery, and has worked as a clinical midwife specialist and clinical midwifery educator. She completed a Master of Nursing Studies in 1993. Over the last few years she has worked in midwifery research in areas such as team midwifery. She worked at the Centre from 1999 to November 2002 as joint project co-ordinator of the *ABFAB* breastfeeding randomised trial. She is currently a lecturer in midwifery in the La Trobe University Clinical School of Midwifery and Neonatal Nursing Studies. Her PhD, awarded in September 2002, focused on the views and experiences of women born in Turkey, Vietnam and Australia on giving birth in Australia. She was supervised by Ulla Waldenström and Roger Short.



Ann Krastev RN, BNursing, GradDipMid

Ann worked as a nurse for a number of years before deciding to enter midwifery, gaining her Graduate Diploma in Midwifery in 1995. She has worked as a midwife since this time. Ann joined the staff of the Centre in 1999 as a research assistant on the *EPOCS* project, where she is involved in the evaluation of changes in mainstream maternity service provision at Southern Health and Sandringham Hospital.



Creina Mitchell BAppSc, GradDipComp, MPH

Creina completed her Diploma in Applied Science (Nursing), then worked as a staff nurse at the Alfred Hospital. She completed her midwifery qualification at the Royal Women's Hospital, where she worked for several years. After completing her Bachelor of Applied Science (Community Health major, Maternal and Child Health option), she was employed as a research nurse at Monash University. In 1992, Creina completed a Graduate Diploma in Computing at Monash University. Since then, she has worked on a number of research projects. Creina undertook the Public Health Training Scheme in 1995-1996 and has completed a Master of Public Health at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. She joined the staff at the Centre in October 1997 as project co-ordinator for the *Victorian miscarriage treatment study* and has worked as data manager for the *PRISM* project since March 1999.



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

Judith studied medicine at Cambridge University and University College, London before moving to Australia with her husband, graduating in medicine at Monash University, and completing a PhD in fetal physiology. From 1970 to 1985 while her three children were young she worked in a variety of part-time positions in research, teaching, editing and medical administration. From 1981 to 1994 she developed, and then managed, the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit. From 1988-90 she chaired the *Victorian Ministerial Review of Birthing Services*. Apart from 18 months spent at the National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit, University of Oxford in 1995-1996 Judith has been the Director of the Centre since it began in 1991.



Priscilla Pyett BA (Hons), DHSc

Priscilla has an honours degree in sociology from Monash University and a Doctor of Health Science from Deakin University. As a sociologist and public health researcher, Priscilla has built up considerable experience in researching the health of marginalised and disenfranchised population groups. Her research interests include research ethics and methodology. Priscilla is a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Melbourne and is working part-time at the Centre as a chief investigator on the *Tall Girls* study.



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 (RACGP) in the Assessment and Examination Division for four years prior to joining the Centre in August 2002 as project co-ordinator and data manager for the *Maternal health study*.



Joanne Rayner RN, BNursing, GradDipWomHlth, MWHlth

Jo has a background in plastic and reconstructive-surgery nursing. After completing a Bachelor of Nursing at RMIT in 1992 she undertook a Graduate Diploma in Women's Health in 1993. Jo has worked as a research officer at the Key Centre for Women's Health and the School of Postgraduate Nursing at the University of Melbourne. She completed a Master of Women's Health (Research) in 1998. Jo joined the Centre in 2000 to assist Alison Venn in the *Tall Girls* study and in March 2001 was appointed project co-ordinator of the *Early births* study. Juggling time between two projects is challenging but rewarding.



Therese Riley BSocSci, PhD

Therese graduated from RMIT University in 1991 with a Bachelor of Social Science in Socio-Environmental Assessment and Policy. She then worked for several years undertaking research into environmentally sustainable design. During this time she developed an interest in the sociology of technology and completed her PhD in this area in 1997. Therese was then involved in research into chronic illness with Monash University and joined the Centre in September 1998 as a research officer on the *EcoPRISM* project. Therese has a longstanding commitment to interpretivist sociology with the application and advancement of qualitative methods being the common element in all her research endeavours.



Lyn Watson BSc, MSc

Lyn Watson is the statistician at the Centre and is involved in many Centre projects, and a number of collaborative studies. Her primary focus in 2002 was the *Early Births* case-control study. This study is also the focus of her PhD candidature which she commenced in March 2002. Lyn's doctoral research is supervised by Judith Lumley and Damian Jolley (School of Health Sciences, Deakin University). She is also involved in other Centre projects notably *PRISM* and *EcoPRISM* and the *Multi-centre study of cancer after infertility*. Other activities at the Centre include convening the Computer Committee and the Methods Seminar Series. She has been working in health research since 1982, completed her MSc at La Trobe University in 1990 and joined the Centre in 1992.



Felice Rocca BA (Hons)

Felice came to the Centre in March 1998 in the position of Executive Officer. After studying ancient and Australian histories he worked for over nine years in the Commonwealth Departments of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, and Administrative Affairs, in project and personnel based positions. During this time he also enjoyed a year's overseas travel and study, chiefly in Italy. In 1990 he moved over to tertiary education administration, expanding his experience into finance, arts administration and international education while successively at the University of Melbourne, the Victorian College of the Arts and at the Australian Catholic University. In 2000 he successfully participated in La Trobe University's six month management development program.



Vicki Wyatt SEN, AdvCert in Office Admin

Vicki worked for some years as a state enrolled nurse mainly in the area of drug and alcohol rehabilitation before training in office administration. She has experience working in several community based organisations. From 1996-97, Vicki was employed as administrative officer for a research project at the Centre for the Study of Sexually Transmissible Diseases, La Trobe University. She joined the Centre in October 1997 as administrative officer. In 2001 Vicki enrolled in the La Trobe University Diploma of University Administration.



Rhonda Small BA, DipEd, GradDipLib, GradDipEpid, PhD

Rhonda worked initially in education, welfare and librarianship before moving into health research. She has worked at the Centre since 1991 where her research has focused on women's views and experiences of childbirth and on maternal health and recovery after birth, including in cross-cultural contexts. Currently Rhonda is one of the chief investigators for the community-randomised trial, *PRISM*, the *Health and recovery after operative birth project (HARP)* and for *MOSAIC*. Rhonda has three children who continue to fuel her interests in both education and health.



Robert Yearsley Info Tech Dip Cert IV

Robert joined the staff in a part time capacity as the Centre's information technology officer in October 2001. Robert has undertaken formal studies at Deakin and Monash Universities in robotics, artificial intelligence, computer systems engineering, and computer applications development. Robert has extensive professional IT experience in both private enterprise and local government. When not at the Centre he is CEO of Blue Box Technology, which is devoted to the research and development of neural networking and artificial intelligence systems for consumer electronics. Robert is working in the Centre to establish and maintain high quality IT strategic and support services for the staff and students.



Angela Taft BA, DipEd, MPH, PhD

Angela returned from London to Australia in 1988, first working with the community-based District Health Council program, then the Women's Health Unit in the Victorian Department of Health. After leaving the public service, she taught undergraduate and postgraduate public health at Deakin University. Her MPH (Monash) and PhD (ANU) focussed on women's experiences and GPs' management of partner abuse. Angela's major research interest is the public health response to violence against women and children. She is currently a chief investigator on the *MOSAIC* project and *Young women, partner abuse and reproductive health*. She is an honorary fellow in the Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne and Vice-President (Policy) of the Public Health Association of Australia.



Jane Yelland RN, BAppSc

Following the completion of nursing courses in Adelaide, Jane moved to Melbourne to undertake a Bachelor of Applied Science (Community Health). She joined the Centre in 1991 following employment in the community health sector and two years as a research officer with the *Victorian Ministerial Review of Birthing Services*. Since then, Jane has worked on a study of child care practices and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, a review of mother and baby residential units in Melbourne, the *Mothers in a new country study* and an examination of women's use of pain relief in labour. She is currently co-ordinator of the *EPOCS* study and is undertaking PhD studies part-time, supervised by Stephanie Brown. She continues to combine her research interests with caring for her three young daughters.

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS AND PROJECT SUPPORT STAFF

Kathryn Brown-Yung RN, RCN, BA (Hons), MA (policy)
Kathryn trained as a nursing sister in the UK and worked at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne as an associate unit manager before commencing full-time study and travel. Kathryn is particularly interested in qualitative methods in health research and completed a BA (Hons) in sociology and a Masters in Applied Policy Research at Newcastle upon Tyne University before returning to Australia in 2001. She worked with on the *Early Births* study in 2002, resigning in November 2002 due to a family move to South Australia, where she plans to pursue her PhD.

Tuyet Cao Cert Interpreting and Translating
Tuyet Cao is a qualified Vietnamese interpreter specialising in the medical field. She has over five years of experience and has recently worked with the Mercy Hospital for Women and the Central Health Interpreter Service. Tuyet joined the *EPOCS* project team in 2002 to assist with the conduct of the home interviews with Vietnamese women.

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

In 1995, after 16 years work as a nurse, Maggie began to work casually as a research assistant on immunisation studies at the Royal Children's Hospital. This developed into an inspiring career change to clinical data management. Maggie joined the Centre in 2000, combining two great interests: mothers and research. She began work on coding of the *Victorian survey of recent mothers 2000* and now does data management work for the *PRISM* and *HARP* research teams. As part of her Arts course Maggie researched the history of the infant welfare movement in Victoria and changes to maternal and child health services in Victoria.

Alex Gartrell BEc(Social Sciences) (Hons)
Alex graduated from the University of Sydney with an honours degree in human geography in 1995. Since then, she has worked on a number of research projects at the University of Sydney, the University of New South Wales and with aid agencies in Cambodia. Alex joined the *EcoPRISM* team in September 2001 to conduct key informant interviews in the intervention communities of the *PRISM* study. Alex managed the organisational network survey and the key informant interviews in the *PRISM* comparison communities in 2002. She is currently in the final stages of writing up her PhD thesis at the University of Melbourne. Her thesis focuses on the socio-cultural and spatial construction of the experience of physical disabilities in rural Cambodia. She has a longstanding interest in the interface between the social and spatial processes that marginalise particular groups.

Anne Harbison RN, RM

Anne is a registered nurse and midwife with experience in community nursing. She is currently practising in the palliative care area in addition to her work as a research assistant with the *Early Births* study.

Michelle Kingston BA

Michelle graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Melbourne University in 2001. Her degree was obtained with a double major in psychology and cultural studies. In 2002 she worked with the *Tall Girls* and *HARP* research teams.

Glenda McDonald BEd, MEdSt

Glenda worked as a teacher of mathematics, physical education and health for five years prior to having a family. She left teaching to pursue her interest in education research on a project at Deakin University. This, combined with an interest in health led to a two year appointment at the Centre for Adolescent Health. Whilst living in New Zealand, Glenda continued to work in the adolescent health field. She was employed by Southern Health in 2001 to recruit women for the second *EPOCS* postal survey. Glenda continued work on the *EPOCS* project in 2002, assisting with coding and thematic analysis of the post-implementation survey.

Suong Nguyen BA, RN, RM

Suong joined the *EPOCS* project team in 2002 to recruit and interview Vietnamese women who had recently given birth at Southern Health. Suong was born in Vietnam and moved to Australia following the completion of a BA. She has worked as a midwife over the past 15 years primarily in the area of childbirth education and maternal and child health. Suong combined her work on the *EPOCS* project with community midwifery, childbirth education classes for Vietnamese women and time with her young daughter.

Bernadette Pound DipNurs, DipMHNurs, BSc(Nursing)(Hons), GradDipMid, MHLthAdmin

Bernadette has a background in nursing and midwifery and a strong interest in mental health. She took leave from the Victorian Public Health Training Scheme to work with the *PRISM* team on process and impact evaluation between October 2001 and March 2002. As a public health trainee, Bernadette undertook projects in epidemiology, health policy development and organisational change. She completed the Training Scheme in mid 2002 and is now working in the Victorian Department of Human Services, continuing her commitment to public health.

Bree Rankin

Bree Rankin joined the *EcoPRISM* research team in 1999 as a research assistant, primarily coding and entering data from the *EcoPRISM* community documenters. She is also involved in health state valuation research with Lisa Gold. Bree is completing a Bachelor of Commerce at the University of Melbourne taking subjects in economics, geography and statistics.

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

Bonnie's association with the Centre began in 1991 transcribing interviews through her home based secretarial service. In 2001 she joined the *PRISM* research team working on questionnaire coding. In 1999 Bonnie completed a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Community Development. Her thesis *Beckoning the White Butterfly* is a Foucauldian exploration of adoption, relinquishment and reunion, using the letters pages of Australian women's magazines from 1970–1999. In 2001 Bonnie completed a Diploma of Vocational Education and Training which assists in her role as computers coordinator and trainer at a neighbourhood house in North Carlton.

Martine Spaul

Martine first worked at the Centre as part of a work experience program with La Trobe University in early 2001. She has completed two years of a Bachelor of Health Information Management. Martine returned to the Centre in mid 2001 to work on a part-time basis on data management aspects of the *PRISM* project. Her duties include coding of the *PRISM* questionnaires, data entry and various other administrative tasks. Martine is returning to university in 2003 to complete her degree.

Liesje Toomey BA, BSc (Hons)

Liesje began working with the *PRISM* project in mid 2001 while studying for a combined Arts-Science degree at the University of Melbourne. Primarily involved in data entry, she was able to continue at the Centre during 2002 as she completed her honours year at the Geelong Hospital, investigating the relationship between rheumatoid arthritis and the incidence of osteoporotic fracture. As for the future, Liesje hopes to take a break from academic study in favour of full-time paid employment, preferably in the public health field.

Sally von Bibra RN, RM

Sally completed her contract with the *ABFAB* project in 2001 and is now involved with the *Early Births* study. Prior to coming to the Centre she worked for four years as a clinical trials coordinator for the Macfarlane Burnet Institute. Since becoming an accredited vaccinator in 1999 she also manages a student health program at Melbourne University. Outside work she enjoys cooking and gardening.

Hannah Woolhouse

Hannah joined the Centre in April 1999 and has since worked mainly with the *PRISM* project in both administration and data management areas. During the last three years she has combined part-time work at the Centre with a Bachelor of Arts (Social Science). In 2003 she will continue to work part-time whilst completing her honours year in psychology. Working at the Centre has given Hannah a strong interest in women's health issues, in addition to her long-standing interests in developmental and forensic psychology.

RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

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

Lisa is a midwife with a background in women's health, community nursing and maternal and child health. Lisa was a lecturer at the La Trobe University, School of Nursing and Midwifery from 1995 to 2001. From 1996 to 1999, she also worked on the randomised trial of debriefing after an operative delivery as a research midwife. Lisa is currently a research associate on the *HARP* project and is completing her doctoral thesis at the Key Centre for Women's Health, University of Melbourne.

Dick Sloman MBBS, GradDipEpid, FRACGP

Dick has a background in general practice and medical education. From 1982-1992, he was a general practitioner in inner city Melbourne, and worked for the RACGP Training Program. He completed a Graduate Diploma of Epidemiology at the University of Melbourne in 1991. From 1992-1993, he worked for a remote Aboriginal health service in north-west South Australia. In 1994, he returned to Melbourne and resumed inner city general practice. He works as a GP at the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, teaches in the VicHealth Koori Health Research and Community Development Unit at the University of Melbourne and co-ordinates Aboriginal health training for the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation. He is doing a PhD about Aboriginal obstetric and child health in the remote communities where he worked, supervised by Judith Lumley.

Penny Smithers BAppSciPhysio, PGradDipHthProm

Penny Smithers has worked as a physiotherapist in Victoria, Western Australia and London. In 1998 she returned to Melbourne, and subsequently worked as a rehabilitation consultant. In 1999 Penny obtained a Post-Graduate Diploma in Health Promotion at Curtin University, and is now completing a Master of Public Health degree. Penny worked with Lisa Gold and the *EcoPRISM* team (Feb-June 2002) on the identification, measurement, and valuation of community-based resource use in the *PRISM* project, while on a placement at the Centre as a participant in the Victorian Public Health Trainee Scheme.

Alison Venn BSc (Hons), PhD, GradDipEpid

Alison was a member of staff at the Centre from 1991-1999. She is now a senior research fellow 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. Collaborative projects include follow-up studies of cancer in IVF patients and of the long-term health effects of hormone treatment for tall stature.

STUDENTS

Lisa Amir MBBS, MMed (Wom Hlth), IBCLC

Lisa is a medical graduate from Monash University with a long interest in women's health. She qualified as an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant in 1989, and continues to work in this field. She completed a Master of Medicine in Women's Health at the Key Centre for Women's Health, University of Melbourne, in 1995, focusing on nipple pain in lactating women and the role of *Candida albicans*, as well as psychological aspects of nipple pain. Lisa is completing a PhD on the topic of mastitis supervised by Judith Lumley. She has two teenage daughters.

Sandy Campbell RN, RM

Sandy has worked almost exclusively in Aboriginal health in Queensland, Northern Territory and Victoria since completing midwifery training at the Royal Women's Hospital in Brisbane in 1986. She strongly supports the philosophy of Aboriginal community control and the provision of holistic primary and preventative health care. In 1993 she enrolled at La Trobe University to study politics and legal studies and transferred to a law course in 1996 (not yet completed). Throughout this part-time study she worked for the Victorian Aboriginal community as a clinical midwife and co-ordinator of a statewide maternity program. Sandy submitted her bound volume for the Master of Applied Epidemiology (Indigenous Health) to the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health (NCEPH) at the Australian National University in January 2003. Her masters has been jointly supervised by Stephanie Brown and Jill Guthrie (NCEPH).

Della Forster RN, RM, DipAppSci, BHealthSci, MMid

Della trained as a midwife in 1989. Since then she has worked in various midwifery models and settings including the Royal Women's Hospital, Moorabbin Birth Centre, community health midwifery and clinical education. She joined the staff at the Centre in April 1999 as joint project co-ordinator of the *ABFAB* trial. Della commenced a PhD based on the *ABFAB* trial in March 2002 supervised by Judith Lumley. She also works part-time as a midwifery consultant at the Mercy Hospital for Women.

Jenny Hunt MBBS, MPH, FAFPHM

After graduating from medicine at the University of Western Australia in 1983, Jenny worked mainly in accident and emergency medicine. In 1991, she completed the course work for a Master of Public Health at the University of Sydney, and went on to do a treatise about the management of minor Pap smear abnormalities. In 1993, Jenny moved to Darwin and worked for three years for Danila Dilba Medical Service, an Aboriginal community controlled health service. During this time, she helped establish the Gumilebyrra women's health clinic, worked on collaborative Aboriginal health research projects, and completed specialist training in public health. After a brief interlude in general public health practice for a year after

returning to Sydney, Jenny has returned to work and now study in Aboriginal women's health. Since February 1999, she has been enrolled full-time in a PhD about evaluating pregnancy care and outcomes for Australian Indigenous women, supervised by Judith Lumley.

Gaylene McKay BAppSci (Physiotherapy), MAPA

Gaylene graduated from physiotherapy at Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences in 1987. Since 1990 she has been involved in the treatment of sports injuries at Alphington Sports Medicine Clinic. In 1993 Gaylene enrolled in a Masters degree by research at La Trobe University to investigate injuries sustained in basketball and netball, converting to a PhD in 1997. Gaylene submitted her PhD thesis in 2002. She was supervised by Patricia Goldie, School of Physiotherapy, La Trobe University, Warren Payne, Ballarat University and Alison Venn, with additional statistical support provided by Lyn Watson.

Beth Rankin RN, GradDip (Performing and visual arts)

Beth's background is in nursing and arts education. She has worked with the *Victorian miscarriage treatment study* as an administrative assistant and project co-ordinator and moved with the project to the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society in May 2002. She works part-time with the La Trobe University Postgraduate Association (LUPA) at Bundoora as the student advocate and has retained her links with the Centre as a research student. Beth is also a sessional lecturer in music education at the University of Melbourne. She submitted her masters thesis in 2002. Her postgraduate studies were supervised by Judith Lumley.

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

Katrina has a background in health, education and community development. Presently she is working as a Health Promotion Coordinator for Manningham Community Health Service. She is also enjoying her time as a mother, caring for three year old Patrick and very new son Liam. Katrina is completing a Master of Public Health degree at La Trobe University. The thesis component of her MPH has explored the views and experiences of recent mothers in the City of Bayside regarding forming social contacts, making friends and feelings of isolation since having a baby. Her thesis is being supervised by Rhonda Small.

Hua Xu BMed, MAppSci (Research)

Hua graduated from Kunming Medical College in 1992 with a Bachelor of Medicine and then did specialist training in gynaecology. She did general training in the First Teaching Hospital of Kunming Medical College for two years. She worked at the Department of Gynaecology from 1995-1998. Hua completed her study into the first pregnancy outcome after a previous pregnancy this year. Her masters research was supervised by Judith Lumley.

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 following members of our reference groups for their contribution over the last year.

Project: Early births

Prof Robert Burrows, Chair Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Monash University

Dr Linda Danvers, general practitioner, Ballarat

Ms Lisa Dunlop, Manager, Perinatal Medicine, Royal Women's Hospital

Dr Jane Halliday, Birth Defects Register, Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit, Victorian Department of Human Services and Murdoch Childrens Research Institute

Prof David Henderson-Smart, Director, Centre for Perinatal Health Services Research, University of Sydney

Assoc Prof Damian Jolley, School of Health Sciences, Deakin University

Assoc Prof James King, Consultant in Perinatal Epidemiology, Royal Women's Hospital

Dr Peter McDougall, Director, Neonatology, Royal Children's Hospital

Ms Fiona Molloy, Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (SANDS)

Ms Rachael O'Connor, Featherweight Club

Dr Andrew Watkins, Clinical Director/Neonatology (Medical), Mercy Hospital for Women

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

Dr Andrew Batty, general practitioner, GP Unit, Monash Medical Centre

Ms Jane Berryman, community nurse and midwife, Greater Dandenong Community Health Services – Springvale

Prof Robert Burrows, Chair Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Monash University

Ms Therese Cotter, Unit Manager, Monash Medical Centre

Ms Linda Dennis, Unit Manager, Monash Medical Centre

Ms Bronwyn Kriek, midwife, Dandenong Hospital

Ms Lorraine McDonell, Unit Manager, Monash Medical Centre

Ms Kerry Papacostas, Unit Manager, Monash Medical Centre

Ms Debbie Rogers, Unit Manager, Dandenong Hospital

Ms Helen Simmons, Unit Manager, Sandringham & District Memorial Hospital

Ms Donna Trickey, Unit Manager, Monash Medical Centre

Project: Evaluating pregnancy care and outcomes for Australian Indigenous women

Mrs Jenny Baraga, Senior Aboriginal Health Worker, with experience working in Indigenous women's health

Miss Lynore Geia, Indigenous registered nurse midwife, with a background in Indigenous women's health

Ms Gwenda Lawton Gless, Senior Aboriginal Health Worker with an interest and experience working in women's health

Project: Health and recovery after operative birth project (HARP)

Ms Lisa Donohue, associate investigator and research midwife (previously with Debriefing trial)

Ms Anne Potter, research midwife (previously with Debriefing trial)

Ms Patricia Glynn, maternal and child health nurse, City of Wyndham

Assoc Prof Jane Gunn, associate investigator, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne

Ms Dell Horey, consumer representative

Assoc Prof Les Reti, associate investigator and senior gynaecologist, Royal Women's Hospital

Ms Jenny Ryan, labour ward unit manager, Royal Women's Hospital

Project: Maternal and child health on the AP Lands

Dr Kerrie Gell, Medical Officer, Nganampa Health Council

Dr Paul Torzillo, Medical Director, Nganampa Health Council

Project: Multi-centre study of cancer after infertility and IVF

Ms Jan Anderson, IVF counsellor, Monash IVF

Dr Linda Fiske, consumer representative, ACCESS and IVF Friends

Rev Prof Graeme Griffin, Chair, Ethics Committee, Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria

Miss Suzanne Neil, breast surgeon, Monash Medical Centre

Assoc Prof Michael Quinn, gynaecological oncologist, Royal Women's Hospital

Prof Loane Skene, Faculty of Law, University of Melbourne

Project: Tall girls study

Ms Janet Cregan-Wood, chairperson, Tall Girls Inc. (consumer group)

Ms Gaylene MacKay, physiotherapist and former elite basketball player

Ms Anne Mitchell, community liaison officer, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University

Assoc Prof Michael Quinn, gynaecological oncologist, Royal Women's Hospital

Prof Loane Skene, Professor of Law, University of Melbourne

Ms Fiona Wilson, committee member, Tall Girls Inc.

Project: PRISM

Ms Christina Bryant, clinical psychologist

Dr Regina Clarke, general practitioner, Bendigo Community Health Service

Ms Mary Draper, Manager, Effectiveness Unit, Quality Branch, Division of Acute Health, Victorian Department of Human Services

Ms Kay Dufty, former *PRISM* community development officer in Melton Shire (from November 2000)

Ms Crissene Fawcett, consumer advocate, mother of three children, background in community development

Assoc Prof Michael Hamel-Green, Co-ordinator BA (Community Development), Department of Social Inquiry and Community Studies, Victoria University

Ms Clare Hargreaves, Municipal Association of Victoria

Ms Lesley Hoatson, Department of Social Inquiry and Community Studies, Victoria University (from November 2000)

Assoc Prof David Legge, School of Public Health, La Trobe University

Ms Reay Presser, Maternal and Child Health Co-ordinator, City of Yarra

Ms Melanie Sanders, former *PRISM* community development officer in Mornington Peninsula Shire (from November 2000)

Ms Jennifer Stone, former *PRISM* community development officer in the City of Bayside (from November 2000)

Prof Roger Strasser, Director, Centre for Rural Health, Monash University (to mid 2000)

Ms Lorraine Williams, Senior Policy Officer, Family and Community Support Branch, Community Care Division, Victorian Department of Human Services

Staff and students co-ordinate a range of activities that contribute to the daily functioning of the Centre in addition to activities covered elsewhere in the Annual Report.

Computer committee

Lyn Watson, Robert Yearsley, Creina Mitchell, Tracey Carpenter, Felice Rocca

This Centre committee meets regularly to discuss IT administration, the computer budget and expenditure, the Centre's network maintenance and updating of the Centre's computer hardware and software.

Data security and storage committee

Tracey Carpenter, Della Forster, Ann Krastev, Lyn Watson

This committee co-ordinates arrangements for secure storage of data and archived files within the Centre.

Newsletter editorial team

Lisa Amir, Maggie Flood, Ann Krastev, Penelope Jones, Jo Rayner, Rhonda Small, Vicki Wyatt

Centre News is published twice a year in July and November. The editorial team co-ordinate contributions from staff and oversee production of the newsletter.

Strategic planning committee

Judith Lumley, Lyn Watson, Felice Rocca

This committee meets regularly to discuss planning issues at the Centre such as accommodation and computing requirements for new and existing research projects. It is also an avenue for discussing problems raised by individual staff members or by groups.



ARTICLES IN REFEREED JOURNALS

Current year

- J143 Bruinsma F, Brown S, Darcy M-A. Having a baby in Victoria 1989-2000: women's views of public and private models of care. *Aust N Z J Public Health* 2003;27:20-26.
- J142 Austin M-P, Lumley J. Antenatal screening for postnatal depression: a systematic review. *Acta Psychiatr Scand* 2003;107:10-17.
- J141 Small R, Yelland J, Lumley J, Brown S, Liamputtong P. Immigrant women's views about care during labor and birth: an Australian study of Vietnamese, Turkish and Filipino women. *Birth* 2002;29:266-277.
- J140 Liamputtong P, Watson L. The voices and concerns about prenatal testing of Cambodian, Lao and Vietnamese women in Australia. *Midwifery* 2002;18:304-313.
- J139 Bergman R, Amir LH, Watson L. A descriptive survey of breastfeeding clinics in Victoria. *Breastfeed Rev* 2002;10(3):25-29.
- J138 Fisher JW, Feekery CJ, Amir LH, Sneddon M. Health and social circumstances of women admitted to a private mother-baby unit: a descriptive cohort study. *Aust Fam Physician* 2002;31:966-973.
- J137 Donath SM, Amir LH. The introduction of breast milk substitutes and solid foods: evidence from the 1995 National Health Survey. *Aust N Z J Public Health* 2002;26:481-484.
- J136 Pyett P. Working together to reduce health inequalities: reflections on a collaborative participatory research approach to health research. *Aust N Z J Public Health* 2002;26:332-336.
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- J128 Amir, LH. Breastfeeding and *Staphylococcus aureus*: Three case studies. *Breastfeed Rev* 2002;10(1):15-18.
- J127 McLaren B, Shelley JM. Reported management of early pregnancy bleeding and miscarriage by Victorian general practitioners. *Med J Aust* 2002;176:63-66.
- J126 Gissler M, Shelley J. Quality of data on subsequent events in a routine Medical Birth Register. *Med Inform* 2002;27:33-38.

In press

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- Liamputtong P, Halliday JL, MacDonald G, Warren R, Watson LF, Bell RJ. Why do women decline prenatal screening and diagnosis: Australian women's perspective. *Women and Health*. 2003 in press
- Lumley J. Defining the problem: the epidemiology of preterm birth. *Br J Obstet Gynaecol*. 2003 (supplement) in press
- Lumley J. Method of delivery for the very preterm infant. *Br J Obstet Gynaecol*. 2003 (supplement) in press
- Lumley J, Austin M-P, Mitchell C. Intervening to reduce postnatal depression. A systematic review of the randomised trials. *Int J Technol Assess Health Care*. 2003 in press
- Small R, Lumley J, Yelland J. How useful is the concept of somatisation in cross-cultural studies of maternal depression? A contribution from the Mothers in a New Country (MINC) Study. *J Psychosom Obstet Gynecol*. 2003 in press
- Yelland J, Brown S, Krastev A. Evaluating innovations in maternity care: methodological approaches to a baseline postal survey. *Birth*. 2003 in press

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- Brown S, Bruinsma F, Darcy M-A. New models of public maternity care in Australia: are they overcoming problems associated with busy public hospital antenatal clinics?
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- Carter E, Lumley J, Wilson G, Bell S. 'Alukura For my daughters, and their daughters and their daughters'.
- Hawe P, Riley T, Shiell A, Gold L. Effects are a product of program and context.
- Lumley J, Small R, Brown S, Watson L, Gunn J. PRISM: evolution of a community-randomised trial to reduce depression and physical ill-health after birth.
- Lydon-Rochelle M, Hodnett E, Renfrew MJ, Lumley J. A didactic approach for teaching midwifery students how to consider the importance of evidence-based medicine.
- Pyett P. Validation of qualitative research in the 'real world'.
- Riley T, Hawe P, Shiell A. Researcher as subject: searching for ethical guidance about the use of formative evaluation within a cluster randomised community intervention trial.
- Small R, Brown S, Dawson W, Watson L, Lumley J. PRISM: Mounting a community-randomised trial (2). Establishing partnerships with local government authorities.
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- J122 Taft A, Hegarty K, Flood M. Are men and women equally violent to intimate partners? *Aust N Z J Public Health* 2001;25:498-500.
- J121 Venn A, Hemminki E, Watson L, Bruinsma F, Healy D. Mortality in a cohort of IVF patients. *Hum Reprod* 2001;16:2691-2696.
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- J119 Halliday J, Warren R, McDonald G, Rice PL, Bell RJ, Watson L. Prenatal diagnosis for women 37 years and over: to have or not to have. *Prenat Diagn* 2001;21:842-847.
- J118 Hegarty K, Taft A. Overcoming the barriers to disclosure and inquiry of partner abuse for women attending general practice. *Aust N Z J Public Health* 2001;25:433-437.
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- J112 Meads C, Gold L, Burls A. How effective is outpatient care compared to inpatient care for the treatment of anorexia nervosa? A systematic review. *Eur Eat Disord Rev* 2001;9:229-241.

- J111 Taft A. To screen or not to screen? Is this the right question: Quality care, intervention and women's agency in health care responses to partner violence and abuse. *Women Against Violence* 2001;10:41-46.
- J110 Venn A, Jones P, Quinn M, Healy D. Characteristics of ovarian and uterine cancers in a cohort of in vitro fertilisation patients. *Gynecol Oncol* 2001;82:64-68.
- J109 McKay GD, Goldie PA, Payne WR, Oakes BW, Watson LF. A prospective study of injuries in basketball: A total profile and comparison by gender and standard of competition. *J Sci Med Sport* 2001;4:196-211.
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- J101 Stone C, Halliday J, Lumley J, Brennecke S. Vaginal births after Caesarean (VBAC): a population study. *Paediatr Perinat Epidemiol* 2000;14:340-348.
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- J89 Venn A, Watson L, Bruinsma F, Giles G, Healy D. Risk of cancer after use of fertility drugs with in-vitro fertilisation. *Lancet* 1999;354:1586-1590.
- J88 Small R, Yelland J, Lumley J, Rice PL, Cotronei V, Warren R. Cross-cultural research: trying to do it better. 2 Enhancing data quality. *Aust N Z J Public Health* 1999;23:390-395.
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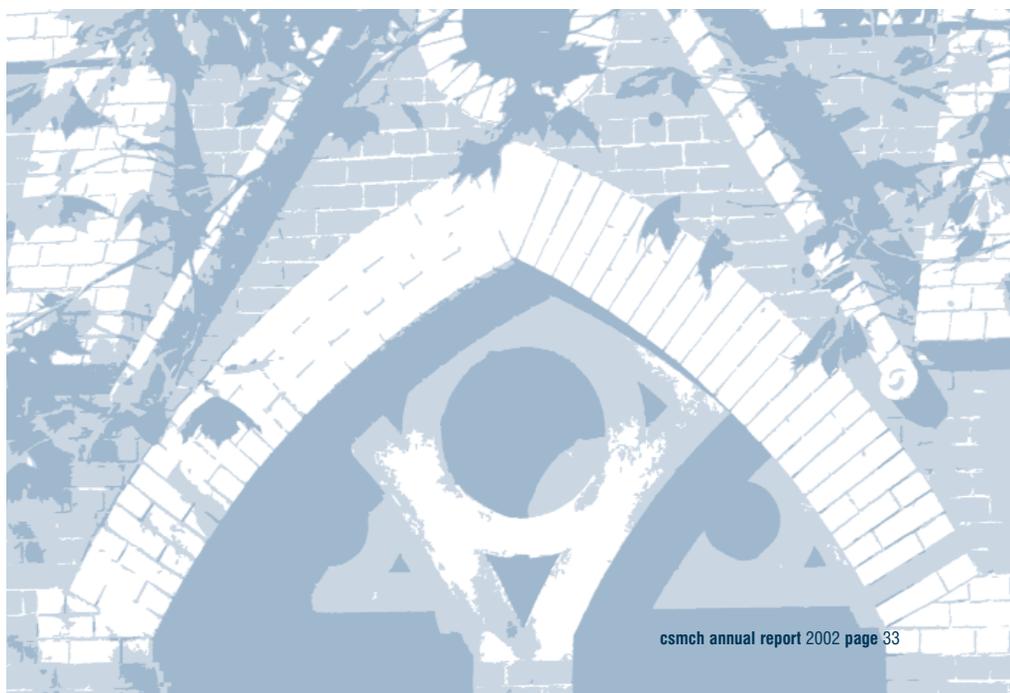
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- Lumley J. Primary prevention, early intervention and secondary prevention of postnatal depression. Interdisciplinary Maternal and Perinatal Australasian Collaborative Trials (IMPACT) Network. Christchurch, March 2002, Session 2.
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- Small R, Lumley J, Yelland J. How useful is the concept of somatisation in cross-cultural studies of maternal depression? A contribution from the Mothers in a New Country (MINC) Study. International Marcé Society Biennial Conference. Sydney, September, 2002, p9.
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- Taft A. Problematising family medicine, the doctor/patient relationship and intimate partner abuse: implications for research and practice. In Hegarty K, Taft A, Feder G, Richardson J, Ramsay J. Symposium on Partner Abuse Research in General Practice: Challenges and Implications for Primary Care Clinicians. WoncaEurope 2002. London, June 2002, p37.
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- Yelland J, Brown S, Krastev A. Recognising the value in process evaluation. Interdisciplinary Maternal and Perinatal Australasian Clinical Trials (IMPACT) Network. Christchurch, New Zealand, March 2002, Session 3.
- Yelland J, Brown S, Krastev A. Developing an evidence based approach to implementing changes to mainstream maternity care. Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand 6th Annual Congress & Federation of the Asia and Oceania Perinatal Societies 12th Congress. Christchurch, New Zealand, March 2002, A94.



SHORT COURSE IN REPRODUCTIVE AND PERINATAL EPIDEMIOLOGY

The 2002 Short Course in Reproductive and Perinatal Epidemiology was held at the Kathleen Syme Education Centre at the Royal Women's Hospital, Carlton over five days from 4-9 July.

The course includes a mix of lectures and practical sessions on critical appraisal and problem solving and aims to provide participants with an appreciation of the principles of epidemiological methods and research in the areas of: fertility, infertility and early pregnancy; preterm birth, fetal growth; perinatal outcomes; maternal mortality and morbidity; birth and intervention; birth defects and malformations; multiple births; and women's views of care.

In 2003 the course will again run over five days, preceded by a half-day epidemiology and biostatistics workshop. **The dates for the course are 20-24 June, 2003.** For further information regarding the program please contact Stephanie Brown by email at Stephanie@latrobe.edu.au or by phone on (03) 8341 8565. To register please contact Vicki Wyatt at csnich@latrobe.edu.au or by phone on (03) 8341 8500.

Course co-ordinator: Stephanie Brown

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

Invited presenters: Jane Gunn, Jane Halliday, James King, Paul Lancaster, Marilyn Riley, Caz Nickson, Alison Venn

Critical appraisal and problem solving workshop facilitators: Stephanie Brown, Fiona Bruinsma, Judith Lumley, Creina Mitchell, Dick Sloman, Rhonda Small, Lyn Watson, Jane Yelland

Administrative support: Tracey Carpenter, Felice Rocca, Vicki Wyatt

WORKSHOPS ON THE DESIGN AND CONDUCT OF RANDOMISED TRIALS IN REPRODUCTIVE MEDICINE

Two workshops were held in conjunction with the Fertility Society of Australia in 2002 (1-2 March and 5-7 December). Twenty-nine participants attended the workshop in March and fourteen in December. The workshop covered aspects of trial design and management. Participants worked in small groups to develop a protocol for a proposed randomised trial in reproductive medicine and practical tutorials focused on the use of computer packages for the estimation of sample size and power.

At the December workshop we also introduced a pre-course half-day session focusing on the planning and implementation aspects of trials, together with other practical issues in conducting trials.

Workshop facilitator: Judith Lumley

Pre-course workshop: Creina Mitchell

Presenters: Judith Lumley, Creina Mitchell, Lisa Gold, Mary-Ann Darcy

Administrative support: Tracey Carpenter, Vicki Wyatt, Rhonda Small

POSTGRADUATE STUDENT SEMINARS

The Centre's higher degree candidates meet monthly to discuss research matters of special interest to postgraduate students and to present project plans or work in progress papers. In 2002, we continued with a format focusing on practical aspects of conducting research (such as data management and analysis), and short issue based presentations of work in progress. The student group includes students and staff enrolled at the Centre, and staff undertaking higher degrees elsewhere. The monthly seminars generate lively discussion and sharing of information that is enriched by the diverse multidisciplinary backgrounds of the students.

Two Centre students submitted higher degrees this year: Hua Xu and Beth Rankin. Hua was awarded a Master of Applied Science (Research), and Beth has recently been advised that her Masters thesis has been passed subject to minor corrections. Helen McLachlan, a staff member at the Centre, enrolled for her doctoral studies through the School of Nursing, was awarded her PhD in 2002.

For inquiries regarding postgraduate research at the Centre please contact the postgraduate co-ordinator, Stephanie Brown at Stephanie@latrobe.edu.au or by phone on (03) 8341 8565.

SEMINARS AT THE CENTRE

We would like to thank the following people who contributed to the Centre's monthly lunchtime seminars. The seminars covered a wide range of issues and provided a forum for lively discussion.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| March | <i>Penny Hawe</i> Department of Community Health Sciences, University of Calgary, Canada
People, Place and Network (PLANET). A program of research on social context and health |
| March | <i>Anne Kavanagh</i> Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University
Rethinking the place of place in the social determinants of health |
| April | <i>Brigid Jordan</i> Infant Mental Health Program, Consultation & Liaison Mental Health Service, Royal Children's Hospital,
Infant sorrow: The treatment of crying infants |
| May | <i>Alison Ritter</i> Turning Point, Alcohol and Drug Centre Inc.,
Research guidelines for women of child-bearing age participating in clinical trials |
| June | <i>Julia Shelley</i> , Director of Research, VicHealth
VICMIST: The Victorian miscarriage study update |
| July | <i>Ruth Morley</i> , Department of Paediatrics, Royal Children's Hospital
On gold, convict maids and birth weights |
| August | <i>Jane Halliday</i> , Head, Epidemiology and Genetics Unit, Murdoch Childrens Research Institute
The current status of prenatal testing for Down Syndrome and other birth defects |

September *Jane Thomas*, Director, National Collaborating Centre for Women's and Children's Health, UK
Centre update and latest Caesarean research

October *Josephine Green*, Senior Lecturer, Mother & Infant Research Unit, University of Leeds
Changes in women's expectations and experiences of intrapartum care from 1987 to 2000

November *Jane Gunn*, Assoc Prof, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne
Managing depression in primary care - are new models better than usual care? A review of randomised trials in general practice

Seminar convenor: Penny Jones

METHODS SEMINARS

The series of Methods Seminars held monthly is organised jointly by the Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics Unit and the Centre for Adolescent Health from the Royal Children's Hospital and the Centre for the Study of Mothers' and Children's Health. The series aims to provide discussion about issues in design, conduct or analysis raised during the projects being undertaken by members of the participating research groups. It is for work in progress rather than completed work and collaborative presentations are encouraged. In 2002 the following seminars were presented at the Centre:

April *Patty Chondros*, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne
Issues of cluster analysis using the WEB (Women's Well-being Study) data

June *Pip Pattison*, Department of Psychology, University of Melbourne
Introduction to network surveys

September *Therese Riley*
"Verifying the lead": questioning in in-depth interviews

November *Lisa Gold*
Valuing health outcomes in women's health studies

JOURNAL CLUB

Journal club is held monthly, and provides an opportunity to review, critique and discuss two journal articles per month. Staff 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

First year, School of Public Health, La Trobe University. Epidemiology for public health. May 2002 (JL).

Reproductive epidemiology, MPH/Masters of Clinical Epidemiology Course, Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, Monash University. Methods for Chronic Disease Epidemiology, May 2002 (LW).

Third year Health Policy and Management students, Bachelor of Biomedical Sciences, Monash University. Evaluation of a community randomised trial - Program of Resources, Information and Support for Mothers (PRISM) and EcoPRISM, August 2002 (LG, RS).

Undergraduate Aboriginal Studies course students, Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies, Churchill campus, Monash University. Aboriginal health seminar, August 2002 (DS).

Postgraduate Diploma, Master and Doctoral Students, School of Public Health, La Trobe University. Health economics and finance, August-October 2002 (LG).

Fifth year medical students, University of Melbourne. Interventions to reduce postnatal depression (May); Increasing smoking cessation during pregnancy, (August, November), 2002 (JL).

Graduate Diploma in Infant and Parent Mental Health Students, Royal Children's Hospital, University of Melbourne. The social contexts of motherhood: maternal depression and physical health after birth, August 2002 (RS).

Postgraduate Diploma, Master and Doctoral Students, School of Public Health, La Trobe University. Resources, economic analyses and decision-making in health care, October 2002 (LG).

China Health Program, School of Public Health, La Trobe University. Comparative Health Systems: the NHS, November 2002 (LG).

Undergraduate medical students, VicHealth Koori Health Research and Community Development Unit, University of Melbourne. Aboriginal Health (DS).

GP registrars, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, Fitzroy. General practice supervisor (DS).

GP registrars, Victorian GP training system, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation. Aboriginal Health Training (DS).

TALKS AND LECTURES

Eastern Health, Nurse Unit Managers Meeting, Angliss Hospital, An overview of the results of the *Victorian Survey of Recent Mothers 2000*. February 2002 (FB).

Rural Health Education Foundation, Early intervention and prevention of domestic violence, Satellite national broadcast, Speaker and panel member. February 2002 (AT).

Centre for Health Economics Research and Evaluation, University of Sydney, Valuing the benefits of community development interventions in public health: issues from an ongoing study. February 2002 (LG).

Women's and Children's Services, Sunshine Hospital, *Victorian Survey of Recent Mothers 2000*: early postnatal care. February 2002 (SB).

Australian Breastfeeding Association Conference, Ballarat, Giving thrush the flick. February 2002 (LA).

Southern Health, Clayton, An overview of the results of the *Victorian Survey of Recent Mothers 2000*. March 2002 (MAD).

Victorian Department of Human Services, Ararat, senior managers of midwifery services in Grampians region, An overview of the results of the *Victorian Survey of Recent Mothers 2000*. March 2002 (MAD).

Royal Women's Hospital, 'Half-Days at the Women's', *Victorian Survey of Recent Mothers 2000*. March 2002 (SB).

Royal Women's Hospital, ABFAB Childbirth Education Facilitators, Background demographic data of women in ABFAB. March 2002 (DF).

Victorian Department of Human Services, Forum on Innovations in Antenatal Care, Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne, Presentation on website "Having a Baby in Victoria". March 2002 (DF).

University High School, Parkville, Talk on Aboriginal health to Year 12 students. March and October 2002 (DS).

Southern Health, Dandenong Hospital, An overview of the results of the *Victorian Survey of Recent Mothers 2000*. March 2002 (FB).

Southern Health, Moorabbin Campus, An overview of the results of the *Victorian Survey of Recent Mothers 2000*. April 2002 (FB).

Royal Women's Hospital, *Victorian Survey of Recent Mothers 2000*: women's views of early postnatal care. April and July 2002 (SB).

- AusMed National Midwives conference, Midwifery and Mental Health, Mental Illness, Plenary speaker. April 2002 (AT).
- Royal Women's Hospital, Pregnancy care: knowledge and nous, The annoying bits of pregnancy. April and July 2002 (HMc).
- Royal Women's Hospital, Clinical Staff Development, Red, hot, lumpy and very painful!, Mastitis and the ROBlN trial. April 2002 (LA).
- Key Centre for Women's Health, University of Melbourne, Prevalence and prevention of mastitis. April 2002 (LA).
- Mornington Shire Council Executive, Rationale for community development strategies in *PRISM* to improve maternal health. April 2002 (RS).
- Mercy Hospital for Women, Infant Feeding Matters Course, Breast problems. April 2002. (LA)
- Sandringham Hospital, Midwifery Department, An overview of the results of the Survey of Recent Mothers 2000. May 2002 (MAD).
- Victorian Department of Human Services, Effectiveness Unit, Quality and Care Continuity Branch, Labour and Birth Forum, Postnatal care in hospital – time to reassess and rethink. May 2002 (SB).
- Victorian Department of Human Services, Effectiveness Unit, Quality and Care Continuity Branch, Labour and Birth Forum, Looking ahead – postnatal discharge planning. May 2002 (AK).
- Victorian Department of Human Services, Effectiveness Unit, Quality and Care Continuity Branch, Labour and Birth Forum, Evaluation of maternity enhancement initiatives at Southern Health and Sandringham Hospital. May 2002 (JY).
- Victorian Department of Human Services, Effectiveness Unit, Quality and Care Continuity Branch, Labour and Birth Forum, What women and midwives say about breastfeeding in the early postnatal period. May 2002 (JY).
- Birth Forum of the Top End Division of General Practice, Darwin NT, What's routine about antenatal care? May 2002. (JH)
- Northern Territory Perinatal Information Group Meeting, Darwin NT, Improving pregnancy care for women in the Top End. May 2002. (JH)
- University of Tasmania, Women Tasmania and the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services, Working together to break the silence: domestic violence conference, Keynote and closing speaker. May 2002 (AT).
- Mercy Hospital for Women, Maternity Care in Victoria: what the research says. May 2002 (DF).
- Masada Private Hospital, Australian Lactation Consultants' Association, Vic Chat night, Thrush information hot off the press. June 2002 (LA).
- College of Lactation Consultants Australia (Vic Branch) Annual conference, Melbourne, *ABFAB*: Attachment to the breast and family attitudes towards breastfeeding. June 2002 (DF).
- Royal Women's Hospital, Research and breastfeeding: Keeping abreast of the evidence, Lactation Consultants' Course. June 2002 (HMc).
- Mercy Hospital for Women, Infant feeding matters course, Introduction to research. June 2002 (LA).
- Victorian Department of Human Services, Disability Services Community Development Forum, Measuring the benefits of community development Number 4, Catherine Wheels and Rainy Days: evaluating the intended and unintended consequences of community development in a community based health program. June 2002 (TR).
- Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne, Qualitative methods in GP research. July 2002 (AT).
- Centre for the Study of Health and Society, University of Melbourne, Too tall to be a ballerina?, The health and psychosocial effects of hormone treatment to reduce the adult height of tall girls. August 2002 (PP).
- VicHealth Methods Seminar, From process to context and back again: program evaluation methods in complex social environments. August 2002 (TR).
- Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services, Victorian Office, staff seminar on Aboriginal health. October 2002 (DS).
- Royal Women's Hospital, GP Continuing Professional Development, All you ever needed to know about breastfeeding. September 2002 (LA).
- Outer Western Maternal Health Network meeting, *PRISM* Update. October 2002 (CM, TR).
- Rural Workforce Agency Victoria/Jean Hailes Foundation, Professional medical responses to intimate partner abuse, Overseas-trained doctors training day. October and November 2002 (AT).
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, Men's Sexual Health Forum Marysville. Talk on men's reproductive health. November 2002 (DS).
- Victorian College of Midwives conference, What do we know about intimate partner abuse in pregnancy: what should we be doing in the birthing system? November 2002 (AT).
- Royal Women's Hospital, Research team, research midwives, childbirth education facilitators, *ABFAB* primary outcomes. November 2002 (DF).
- Royal Women's Hospital, La Trobe University, Graduate Clinical School of Midwifery and Women's Health, Keeping abreast of the issues: current evidence in breastfeeding, *ABFAB*: primary outcomes. November 2002 (DF).
- Royal Women's Hospital, La Trobe University, Graduate Clinical School of Midwifery and Women's Health, Keeping abreast of the issues: current evidence in breastfeeding, Cultural contrasts: the breastfeeding practices of women born in Turkey, Vietnam and Australia on giving birth in Australia. November 2002 (HMc).
- Royal Women's Hospital, La Trobe University, Graduate Clinical School of Midwifery and Women's Health, Keeping abreast of the issues: current evidence in breastfeeding, Mastitis: can we prevent this common problem? November 2002 (LA).
- Royal Women's Hospital, La Trobe University Graduate Clinical School of Nursing and Midwifery, Keeping abreast of the issues: current evidence in breastfeeding. Breastfeeding help beyond the hospital. November 2002 (MAD).
- Royal Women's Hospital, Staff development program, *ABFAB* Results. November 2002 (HMc).
- Early Childhood Systems National Meeting, Melbourne, Evaluation in action: adding an economic dimension to evaluation. November 2002 (LG).
- Early Childhood Systems National Meeting, Melbourne, Challenges in evaluating complex community interventions. November 2002 (JL).
- Werribee Mercy Hospital, Twilight Seminar: Breastfeeding Issues, Red nipples, white nipples: infection, dermatitis or vasospasm? November 2002 (LA).
- La Trobe University, School of Public Health, Postgraduate Research Festival. Analyses of Perinatal Data. November 2002 (MAD).
- Victorian College of Lactation Consultants, Local Links Group, *ABFAB* results. December 2002 (HMc).
- La Trobe University School of Nursing and Midwifery, *ABFAB* results. December 2002 (HMc).
- Victorian Department of Human Services, Maternity Services Advisory Committee, Preliminary comparative analysis of the *EPOCS* postal surveys. December 2002 (JY).

Advocacy and dissemination activities

In addition to publishing results of research in refereed journals, the Centre undertakes 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 Centre projects is given below.

Mothers' advocates in the community (MOSAIC)

As part of the background research for this project, Angela Taft completed a comprehensive review of the current evidence about links between partner abuse and poor health outcomes for both mothers and their children. The ensuing publication was widely disseminated on the website of the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse⁷ and Victorian Department of Human Services' websites and in hard copy both in Australia and overseas.

In addition, Angela has given talks to midwives and presented the evidence behind the study to GP conferences. She has been invited to speak to the plenary of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Annual Scientific Meeting in 2003 and conjointly to conduct a training workshop on managing domestic violence in pregnancy for specialists at the conference. In 2002, she was commissioned by the Royal Australian College of General Practice and General Practice Education Australia to rewrite the Checkup2 training questions for GPs on domestic violence. She has also conducted training on domestic violence for overseas trained doctors for the Rural Workforce Agency Victoria.

Australian protocols about routine antenatal care

Dissemination and advocacy activities have been an integral part of the work undertaken by Jenny Hunt in reviewing Australian protocols about routine antenatal care. The research resulted in two major publications: a refereed journal article on Australian protocols and a discussion paper on Northern Territory protocols. Following publication of the journal article, there was considerable interest in, and dialogue about the findings, including: an interview for ABC Radio National and print media coverage in *The Age*, *the West Australian* and *the Courier Mail*. The article was also abstracted and discussed in a widely circulated international journal of obstetrics and gynaecology (*Obstetrical and Gynecological Survey*).

The discussion paper was prepared because of interest expressed by practitioners and policy makers during a Darwin visit in May 2002 and, in particular, during and after two invited presentations for the Top End Division of General Practice and the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services. Hard copies of the 90-page paper were distributed in July and August 2002 to 90 practitioners, managers, policy makers and researchers throughout the Northern Territory, and to interested individuals in other states. The paper was put on the agenda and discussed at the annual meeting of the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services' Perinatal

Information Management Group in October 2002, and contact with practitioners and policy makers interested in antenatal care in the Northern Territory is ongoing.

Advocacy Workshops

The monthly advocacy workshops continue to be an integral part of the Centre's 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 following speakers who contributed to our program in 2002:

- February** *Natasha Davidson*, Public Health Trainee, CSMCH
A review of State and Commonwealth policies and programs relevant to maternal health – 1999-2002
-
- March** *Various CSMCH staff*
'Practice' talks prior to presentations at the Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand Annual Congress
-
- April** *Lisa Amir, Penny Jones and Ann Krastev*
Project challenges – Experiences from ROBlN, Tall Girls and EPOCS
-
- May** *Wendy Dawson*, Senior Policy Officer, Effectiveness Unit, Quality and Care Continuity Branch, Metropolitan Health and Aged Care Division, Victorian Department of Human Services
Three Centres Antenatal Care Guidelines Project
-
- June** *Bev Knowles*, Director of Public Affairs, La Trobe University
Research dissemination and the role of Public Affairs
-
- July** *Caroline Northwood and Sue Cotton*, La Trobe University
Research funding opportunities, the role of RGSO and the Human Research Ethics Committee
-
- August** *Gillian Lueckenhausen*, Academic Development Unit, La Trobe University
Presentation skills: talks, lectures, oral dissemination of research findings
-
- September** *Kerreen Reiger*, Director of Women's Studies, La Trobe University
Restructuring Maternal and Child Health Services in Victoria: weighing costs and benefits for staff
-
- October** *Helen Butler*, Centre for Adolescent Health, Royal Children's Hospital
Research dissemination strategies at the Centre for Adolescent Health
-
- November** *Barbara McDonald*, Education Resource Unit, Women's and Children's Health and *Tracey Carpenter*, CSMCH
Posters - ideas about design and presentation

Advocacy workshop convenors: Fiona Bruinsma, Mary-Ann Darcy, Rhonda Small

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

University of Sydney, Expanding Our Horizons: Understanding the Complexities of Violence Against Women, International Conference, Sydney, February 2002 (AT).

Interdisciplinary Maternal and Perinatal Australasian Clinical Trials (IMPACT) Network, Satellite Meeting, Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand 6th Annual Congress and Federation of the Asia and Oceania Perinatal Societies 12th Congress, Christchurch, New Zealand, March 2002 (SB, JL, RS, JY).

Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand 6th Annual Congress and Federation of the Asia and Oceania Perinatal Societies 12th Congress, Christchurch, New Zealand, March 2002 (SB, MAD, JL, JR, RS, JY).

International Congress of Midwives, Vienna, April 2002 (DF).

Women's Hospitals Australasia and Children's Hospitals Australasia, National Conference, April 2002 (SB).

General Practice and Primary Health Care Research Conference, Melbourne, May 2002 (LA, AT).

5th Wonca World Conference on Rural Health, Melbourne, May 2002 (AT).

10th Canadian Conference on Health Research, Change and Stability in the Canadian Health Care System, Halifax, Canada, May 2002 (LG).

Canadian Health Economists' Study Group, 1st Meeting, Halifax, Canada, May 2002 (LG).

Victorian Department of Human Services, Labour and Birth Forum, Melbourne, May 2002 (FB, SB, MAD, AK, HMc, RS, JY).

WoncaEurope, London, June 2002 (AT).

XV World Congress of Sociology, Brisbane, July 2002 (PP, TR).

Australian Health Economics Society, 24th Annual Conference, Sydney, July 2002 (LG, PS).

General Practice Education and Training Conference, Canberra, August 2002 (DS).

Australian Indigenous Doctors Association Indigenous Health Symposium, Sydney, September 2002 (DS).

Australasian Epidemiological Association, 11th Annual Scientific Meeting, Wellington, New Zealand, September 2002 (MAD, CM, LW).

Fourth International Conference on Priorities in Health Care, Oslo, Norway, September 2002 (LG).

EuroQoL Group, 19th Plenary Meeting, York, UK, September 2002 (LG).

International Marcé Society Biennial Conference, Sydney, September 2002 (RS).

Public Health Association of Australia, 34th Annual Conference, Adelaide, September 2002 (LA, SB, JH, JL, RS, AT).

Research in Aboriginal Health Working Group (NHMRC), Roadmap workshop, September 2000 (JL, DS).

Research strategies and priorities in perinatal clinical trials. International Clinical Trials Symposium, Sydney, October 2002 (JL, CM).

Australian Lactation Consultant's Association Annual Conference, National Biennial Conference, Perth, October 2002 (LA, DF, HMc).

Maternal and Child Health Saturday Conference, Melbourne, November 2002 (CM).

Queen Elizabeth Centre, Second National Conference, Melbourne, November 2002 (CM).

Royal Women's Hospital/La Trobe University, Keeping abreast of the issues: current evidence in breastfeeding - a seminar, Melbourne, November 2002 (LA, MAD, DF, HMc).

Early Childhood Systems National Meeting, Melbourne, November 2002 (LG, JL).

Mental Health Conference, Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University, December 2002 (JL).

COURSES ATTENDED

Clinical Update Day, Australian College of Midwives. Melbourne, February 2002 (HMc).

Information to midwives on current trends and issues in maternity care, Perinatal Data Collection Unit. Melbourne, May 2002 (HMc).

Statistical Methods for Clinical Research course, NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre, University of Sydney, May 2002 (DS).

Training Workshop on New Privacy Laws, AHEC. Melbourne, May 2002 (DF).

Binan Goonj Aboriginal Health facilitator training course. Sydney, May and December, 2002 (DS).

Advanced Access 2000, STEPS, La Trobe University. Melbourne, June 2002 (CM).

School of Nursing and Midwifery, Systematic Review Workshop, La Trobe University. Melbourne, June 2002 (HMc).

Short Course in Reproductive and Perinatal Epidemiology, CSMCH, La Trobe University. Melbourne, June 2002 (AT).

School of Nursing, Supervisors' Workshop, La Trobe University. Melbourne, July 2002 (HMc).

Intermediate Access 2000, STEPS, La Trobe University. Melbourne, July 2002 (AT, LW).

Project management course, Mercy Hospital for Women. East Melbourne, August 2002 (DF).

Thesis Writing, LUPA Seminar Series, La Trobe University. Melbourne, September 2002 (MK).

Access 2000, STEPS, La Trobe University, September 2002 (MS, VW).

Editing Your Thesis, LUPA Seminar Series, La Trobe University. Melbourne, October 2002 (MK).

Introduction to EndNote 5, La Trobe University. Melbourne, October 2002 (MK).

Staff Development Equity and Access Training, La Trobe University. Melbourne, October 2002 (CM).

Antenatal Clinical Update Day, Australian College of Midwives. Melbourne, November 2002 (HMc).

Epidemiologic Principles and Methods Course, Menzies Centre for Population Health Research. Hobart, December 2002 (SB, FB, PJ, CM, JR).

Cochrane Library Tutorial, Women's and Children's Health. Melbourne, December 2002 (MK).

Literature Searching: Tutorial 2, Women's and Children's Health. Melbourne, December 2002 (MK).

Using and managing styles, Women's and Children's Health. Melbourne, December 2002 (MK).

WebCT Training, STEPS, La Trobe University. Melbourne, December 2002 (HMc).

Microsoft Word, Styles and Templates, IT Training, Women's and Children's Health. Melbourne, January 2003 (LW).

COMMITTEES

Australian College of Midwives Inc, Victorian Branch, Education Sub-committee (HMc).

Canadian Perinatal Surveillance System (CPSS), Steering Committee (JL).

Canadian Perinatal Surveillance System (CPSS), Fetal and Infant Health Study Group (JL).

Canadian Perinatal Surveillance System (CPSS), Maternity Experiences Study Group (JL).

Infertility Treatment Authority Victoria, Registers Sub Panel (FB).

La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty Development Committee (LW).

La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences, Midwifery Course Advisory Committee, Graduate School of Midwifery and Women's Health (LW).

La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences, Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Nursing (Child, Family and Community Nursing), Liaison and Advisory Committee (RS).

La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences, Research and Higher Degrees (Research) Committee (SB).

Macaulay Community Credit Co-operative, Director (DS).

Medical Board of Victoria, Sexual Misconduct Strategy Working Group (AT).

Mercy Health and Aged Care, Research Ethics Committee (DF).

National Medicare Alliance (AT).

Occupational Health and Safety, City Campuses sub-committee, Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University (MAD).

Partnership Advisory Group, National Public Health (AT).

Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand, Treasurer, Executive and Council Member (SB).

Public Health Association of Australia, Public Health Research Advisory Group (JL).

Public Health Association of Australia, Vice President (Policy) and Board Member (AT).

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Aboriginal Health Training Working Party (DS).

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Aboriginal Health Teaching Reference Group (DS).

Royal Women's Hospital, Clinical Ethics Advisory Group (JL).

Royal Women's Hospital, Research Committee (LW).

Victorian Department of Human Services, Maternity Services Advisory Committee, Data sub-committee (DF).

Victorian Department of Human Services, Maternity Services Advisory Committee, Data sub-committee, Information systems project reference group (CM).

Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, Ethics committee (DS).

ASSESSING RESEARCH GRANTS

Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal and Tropical Health (SB).

Health Research Council of New Zealand (AT).

Healthway, Western Australia (JL).

La Trobe University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty Grants (SB).

La Trobe University, Inter-Campus Research Incentive Grant Scheme (AK).

Lotteries Board, New Zealand (JL).

Monash University Small Grants Scheme, Faculty of Information Technology (TR).

National Health and Medical Research Council, Project Grants (LA, SB, RS, AT, LW).

South African Medical Research Council (JH).

UK National Health Service Research and Development Health Technology Assessment Programme (LG).

Wellbeing (Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists UK) Research Grants (SB, RS, JY).

Wellcome Trust (JL).

Women's and Children's Hospital Research Foundation (SB).

MEMBERSHIP OF EDITORIAL BOARDS

Birth, Editorial Board (JL).

Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology, International Advisory Board (JL).

Midwifery, Editorial Board (SB).

The Lancet, International Advisory Board (JL).

REVIEWING PAPERS

Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health (SB, FB, DF, LG, JH, AK, JR, TR, RS, AT, LW, JY).

Australian Family Physician (LA).

Australian Journal of Primary Health - Interchange (JY).

British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (SB).

British Medical Journal (LG).

Disease Management and Outcomes (JL).

e-Journal Rural and Remote Health (AT).

European Journal of Health Economics (LG).

Health Economics (LG).

Health Promotion Journal of Australia (FB, LW).

JAMA (LA).

Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology Research (JL).

Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynecology (SB, RS).

Journal of Culture, Health and Sexuality (AT).

Journal of Human Lactation (LA).

Medical Journal of Australia (LA, LW).

Midwifery (SB).

Social Science and Medicine (RS).

THESIS EXAMINATION

PhD, University of Newcastle

Doctor of Public Health, University of Ballarat

NEW GRANTS

National Health and Medical Research Council

Pregnancy outcomes following treatment for cervical dysplasia

Judith Lumley, Michael Quinn, Fiona Bruinsma

2003-2004 - \$93,000

Office for the Status of Women

Young women, intimate partner abuse and reproductive health

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

2002-2003: \$48,455

Telstra Community Development Fund

Mothers' advocates in the community (MOSAIC)

Angela Taft, Rhonda Small, Kelsey Hegarty, Judith Lumley and Lyn Watson

2003-2004: \$90,000

SIDS & Kids Victoria

Case-control study of very preterm birth

Lyn Watson and Judith Lumley

2003-2004: \$20,530

Victorian Department of Human Services

Mildura Women's Business Service Evaluation Project in collaboration with Mildura Aboriginal Cooperative

Sandy Campbell

2002: \$10,368

La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences

Faculty research grant

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, Judith Lumley and Ann Krastev

2003: \$8,924

Faculty research enhancement grant

Case-control study of very preterm birth

Joanne Rayner and Lyn Watson

2002-2003: \$4,536

Postgraduate support grants

Awarded to Lisa Amir, Dick Sloman, Lyn Watson, Mary-Ann Darcy, Della Forster

2002: \$2,500

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

National Health and Medical Research Council

Project grant PhD Scholarship awarded to *Michelle Kealy*: Qualitative study exploring women's health and recovery after caesarean birth (2002-2005)

Australian Postgraduate Research Award

PhD Scholarship awarded to *Jane Yelland*: Changing maternity care: assessing the impact on women's experiences (2003-2004)

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

Public Health PhD Research Scholarship awarded to *Della Forster*: ABFAB – Does breastfeeding education in the middle of pregnancy make a difference to breastfeeding initiation and duration? (2003-2004)

Victorian Department of Human Services

Best poster prize at Labour and birth forum awarded to *Jane Yelland* and *Ann Krastev*: What women and midwives say about breastfeeding in the early postnatal period.

Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand

New investigator award at 6th Annual Congress awarded to *Jane Yelland* for an oral presentation: Developing an evidence-based approach to implementing changes to mainstream maternity care.

	\$
Victorian Health Promotion Foundation	
Program Grant (Core Budget)	350,000
Program Grant reimbursement	46,462
Public Health Research Fellowship (S Brown)	100,000
Alcohol misuse: information and analysis into planning a research program (research review)	11,200
La Trobe University - Faculty of Health Sciences	
Operating budget and supervision of students	135,098
Postgraduate support grants	2,500
Centre courses, workshops and reports 2002	19,498
DEST Research Infrastructure Block Grant	
	91,171
Victorian Department of Human Services	
Evaluating practice and organisation of care at Southern Health and Sandringham Hospital (EPOCS)	102,494
Mildura Women's Business Service evaluation	10,368
A new approach to supporting women in pregnancy (ANEW)	9,000
Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care	
Long term health effects of hormone administration on tall girls	102,672
Office for the Status of Women, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet	
Violence against young women, and reproductive health	12,111
Intimate partner abuse and domestic violence in pregnancy and postpartum (Issues paper)	6,500
NHMRC	
Program of resources, information and support for mothers (PRISM)	166,998
Economic and ecological evaluation of PRISM (EcoPRISM)	114,587
Early births: case control study	135,621
Health and recovery after operative birth project (HARP)	76,035
Maternal health study	111,210
Parity, gravidity and reproductive outcome	50,000
PhD Scholarship: Prevalence and prevention of mastitis in lactating women (L Amir)	27,793
PhD Scholarship: Evaluating pregnancy care and outcomes for Indigenous mothers (J Hunt)	28,432
Public Health Association of Australia Inc.	
Editing the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health	9,091
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners – Family Medical Care, Education and Research Foundation	
Breastfeeding Survey	3,479
General Practice Education Australia	
Checkup2: professional education resources - domestic violence	2,379
Medical Research Foundation for Women and Babies	
ROBIn: reduction of breast infection trial	7,500