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Head of department’s report

I am very pleased to report on the achievements and continued development of the Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health (BH UDRH).

From modest beginnings when we were established a decade ago, the BH UDRH has grown to include more than 30 staff who support our teaching, research and community-based programs. I would like to draw particular attention to our efforts to encourage students to come to the region by increasing support during their time in Broken Hill and through enhanced educational opportunities. Indeed, we are now working with faculties from several feeder universities to develop new units of study in remote health that will enhance their rural education programs, and are in negotiations with the universities of Adelaide, Wollongong and Sydney to establish an extended six to 12 month placement program for medical students in our region.

Our research program has expanded significantly over the past two years with the BH UDRH contributing to several National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) projects and producing a number of high quality research papers. I am also pleased to note our continued participation in two state-based research capacity building programs (Australian Rural Health Research Collaboration and NSW Primary Health Care Collaboration) and the strengthening of our ties to the NSW Institute of Rural Clinical Services and Teaching and their research efforts.

Our staff demonstrate a strong commitment to community service. As a member of the Broken Hill Centre for Remote Health we work with our health service partners to improve staff recruitment and retention, establish new services, and support mechanisms that respond to the health needs of our remote and Indigenous communities and residents. One example is our work with local high schools to establish a ‘nurse academy program’ for local students that aims to increase interest in health careers and provide greater support for Indigenous students to enhance their educational achievements.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the strong leadership and commitment of our executive team, the significant contribution and professionalism of our staff and the continued support and encouragement of our partner organisations, colleagues and advisors.

Professor David Lyle, Head of the BH UDRH
Mission & objectives

The University of Sydney Broken Hill Department of Rural Health (BH UDRH) was established in 1997 to contribute to a federal government initiative to address rural workforce problems. It is a long-term strategy which aims to increase the recruitment and retention of rural health professionals and to improve the quality and appropriateness of health care for rural Australians. The BH UDRH is a department within the University's School of Public Health, part of the Faculty of Medicine.

The department offers accessible and flexible educational and vocational training programs of high quality and relevance. It also conducts research to improve rural health practice and the health of rural communities by engaging effectively in regional, governmental, professional and community consultations and initiatives.

View from the Broken Hill Health Service grounds looking towards the Line of Lode Miners’ Memorial and Visitors Centre, on the edge of the slag heap that bisects the city of Broken Hill.
The Broken Hill Department of Rural Health receives core funding from the federal Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA). It also receives funding from the Greater Western Area Health Service (GWAHS) to support rural workforce education, and local training, recruitment and retention activities.

The BH UDRH contributes to the Primary Health Care Research Evaluation and Development (PHC-RED) Capacity Building Program, a DoHA initiative. The BH UDRH is also a member of the Australian Rural Health Research Collaboration (funded by NSW Health), and operates a Centre for Remote Health Research as a joint initiative with the Greater Western Area Health Service.

The BH UDRH Advisory Committee

The BH UDRH Advisory Committee oversees the strategic development and monitors the performance of the department in areas of teaching, research and development, community service, promotion and support, and finance and administration.

The committee meets at least twice a year and membership includes representation from:

- The University of Sydney
- Federal Department of Health and Ageing
- Greater Western Area Health Service
- Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section)
- Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation
- Australasian Faculty of Public Health Medicine
- The wider community.
Clinical Medicine Stream

Highlights 2006 and 2007

During 2006 and 2007 the BH UDRH Clinical Medicine Stream continued its strong partnership with other regional service providers in the delivery of the student program. Efforts to enhance the performance and reputation of this program focused on three areas:

- improving student placement efficiency
- increasing support for students
- expanding educational opportunities.

The stream has increased its contribution to the formal teaching of third and fourth-year medical students from the University of Sydney’s School of Rural Health during eight-week placements in Broken Hill. New developments include the Presentation of Evidence Abstracted from the Research Literature for the Solution (PEARLS) program for third-year Integrated Clinical Attachment (ICA) students and the development and implementation of an eight-week integrated medicine/geriatric ICA placement which offers students a unique opportunity to work with community-based aged care services and participate in remote consultations with a geriatrician from Sydney. We held clinical examinations for ICA students in Broken Hill for the first time in 2007 and have added interprofessional learning sessions to our community rotation program.

The BH UDRH works in collaboration with other affiliated universities to provide clinical placements and academic support for students doing rural elective placements. In addition we have strengthened our contribution to the John Flynn and Fred McKay scholarship programs.

In 2007 we introduced an online student application form as part of a quality improvement process to streamline our operations. Another welcome addition has been the appointment of a part-time pharmacy academic, Ms Lindsay Scott, who will be managing our pharmacy placement program with funding from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

Future plans

Work has begun on establishing an extended placement program for medical students in Broken Hill as a collaborative venture between the universities of Sydney, Wollongong and Adelaide. This program aims to build on existing resources and facilities in the region, including those of the BH UDRH and its service partners – the GWAHS, the RFDS, Maari Ma and the Barrier Division of General Practice.

The program will focus on teaching core skills to medical students in a remote setting, adding value to their education with an emphasis on remote health, Indigenous health, and primary health care. This develops the links between primary, secondary and tertiary medical care. The program will also emphasise teamwork with opportunities for students from different disciplines to participate in interprofessional learning in the classroom and on placement throughout the year.
Primary Health Care Stream

Highlights 2006 and 2007

The Primary Health Care Stream (PHC) has invested significantly in new educational projects and improvements to existing programs. In 2006 we successfully piloted a Remote Indigenous Health Placement Program for undergraduate nursing students. Now an established part of our student program, we filled all available places in 2007, with 31 students recruited from two universities, and demand for future placements appears strong. The PHC team was also successful in gaining funding to evaluate this new program as well as to establish a ‘Secondary School Step Back Program’ for Indigenous students in the Broken Hill area. These programs are targeted at increasing student retention rates and inspiring future careers.

In May 2007, the PHC team established an international link with the United States’ University of Texas, School of Public Health and the East Texas Area Health Education Centre, located in Houston. An area of common interest and collaboration is adapting health careers promotion programs developed by the University of Texas for secondary schools in Broken Hill. Also in 2007, new Indigenous staff members were welcomed to the department to support Indigenous programs within the stream – another Aboriginal Health Education Officer position was filled by previous diploma graduate Maria Tattersall, and Kathie Naden filled the newly created Community Development Project Officer position. The team also expanded its involvement in related research projects.

The PHC team continued to deliver the awareness course on Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Aboriginal Health to students and health staff, and expanded the program to include Broken Hill City Council employees and staff from other non-health related organisations. There was only one intake for the Diploma of Indigenous Primary Health Care course in 2007 due to a fall in the number of applications.

Future plans

Future plans include the establishment of a secondary school-based program to promote health careers that builds on the East Texas model. Centred on an academy for junior nurses, it will link to other schemes under development in order to promote the recruitment and retention of health professionals in our region, including student programs, a UDRH alumni scheme and support for new graduate nurses. Plans are also in place to promote the Remote Indigenous Health Placement Program as an elective unit of study to a number of Australian universities. Also a visit from Associate Professor Ross Shegog and Mary Wainwright from the University of Texas will strengthen on-going international links. Plus another area of focus will be to extend the awareness framework to incorporate cultural respect in order to support new recruits to health services, as well as staff and students based in the Broken Hill region for extended placements.
Broken Hill Centre for Remote Health Research

Highlights 2006 and 2007

The Broken Hill Centre for Remote Health Research has made good progress in implementing a structured research and development program around five key areas: building research infrastructure, collaborative research, maintaining research networks, providing skills workshops and supporting novice and early career researchers.

Support for early career researchers was achieved through participation in the Australian Government’s Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation and Development (PHC-RED) Capacity Building Program, and ongoing support of those currently in our research network.

The Research Centre conducted in excess of 70 workshops and seminars on a diverse range of research-related topics; approximately 450 people took part throughout 2006 and 2007. Research productivity improved during this time with 18 papers accepted for publication, and a further eight submitted for publication.

A number of exciting research projects began, including: the Australian Rural Mental Health Survey (ARMHS), Lead and Intelligence in Children, and a randomised control trial of a GP-based intervention to prevent chronic vascular disease. We also worked closely with local communities, including assisting the Wellington Community Health team write up an evaluation of their WellingTonne challenge project and managing and evaluating a screening program for abdominal aortic aneurysm, which was initiated by the Broken Hill community.

Future plans

We expect to broaden our research work further with the recruitment of Dr David Perkins as director of the Broken Hill Centre for Remote Health Research. Dr Perkins brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience. Combined with the diversity of the existing team, this will enable the centre to expand its research activity even further.
Administration & finance

**Highlights 2006 and 2007**

The BH UDRH administration team has continued to focus on the provision of improved office systems, human resource management services, efficient student support services, as well as maintaining the physical infrastructures. The department again hosted a number of conferences, workshops, seminars and special visitors over the years. Professor Bruce Robinson, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, visited Broken Hill as part of the faculty’s 150th anniversary celebrations in 2006. We were also very honoured to welcome the Governor of NSW, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, at the end of 2006. The BH UDRH recruited a number of new staff during the period in line with the expansion of educational programs and operations. The launching of the BH UDRH online student application form in mid-2007 streamlined the application process for potential students and provides reliable and accessible information for our staff. The University of Sydney’s new Performance Management and Development system and other online services have also been embraced and help support the personnel.

The BH UDRH continues to improve and maintain existing student accommodation as well as providing new accommodation units at outlying remote communities. Two of the older accommodation blocks at the Broken Hill Bromide Street complex were renovated, including a new kitchen, new showers, internal and external painting, further installation of computers, and garden shade sails erected on the grounds.

**Future plans**

To support the increasing number of health students undertaking remote placements, new accommodation units are being provided at the townships of Bourke, Brewarrina and Wentworth. Further computer equipment upgrades are scheduled and funding has been secured to establish an area-wide web-based library catalogue which will electronically combine the collections of five health libraries in western NSW. The administration team hopes to continue providing effective office support for all future activities of the BH UDRH.

The Administration, Finance and Maintenance team
The BH UDRH provides a variety of educational schemes at a local and regional level which range from school-based programs to advanced health practice. Recently the programs have diversified to include new initiatives targeted at promoting health science careers and providing region-specific learning opportunities in primary health care, aged care and Indigenous health. The BH UDRH delivers a rural attachment program for medical and health science students, research training for general practitioners and primary health care workers, and other professional development and support for local health professionals.

**Schools program**

The BH UDRH launched an Indigenous Secondary School program in 2007. The scheme has so far focused on identifying Indigenous students’ perceptions of career barriers as well as changes that need to be made to improve learning and career outcomes. The Indigenous Secondary School Program includes the delivery of life-skill sessions that encompass self worth, cultural strength, social and emotional wellbeing, critical thinking, conflict management, establishing trust, partnerships and mutual commitment, mentoring, and stress reduction sessions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Indigenous participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>Year 11–12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self esteem</td>
<td>Year 10–11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study techniques and mentoring</td>
<td>Year 10–12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self esteem</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research techniques</td>
<td>Year 11–12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relaxation</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helpful resources</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Looking at self, culturally</td>
<td>Year 9–12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>101</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The BH UDRH’s involvement with the secondary school system has also led to the development of an academy program aimed at promoting nursing careers. Two pilot programs took place in 2007.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Indigenous participants</th>
<th>Non-Indigenous participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Undergraduate nursing program

The undergraduate nursing program provides elective rural and remote clinical placement experience within an Indigenous health and primary health care context for nursing students. This intensive experience incorporates resilience, survival skills for remote practice, person-centred care and insights into Indigenous history and contemporary health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Student groups</th>
<th>Participant numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training Indigenous primary health care workers

Indigenous health workers can study for a two-year full-time Diploma of Indigenous Primary Health Care. The program includes six one-week study blocks in Broken Hill throughout the year and clinical placements that combine study and work in students’ communities at other times. Academic supervisors spend time with students in their communities working with them and the health service staff. The advanced diploma was offered for the first time during 2003. Students can also continue their studies with Yoorroang Garang in the University of Sydney’s Faculty of Health Sciences if they wish to progress to a bachelor’s degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>New enrolments</th>
<th>Graduated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Professional development

The department has developed learning modules which provide relevant work-related education for health practitioners in rural, remote and isolated practice. The modules offer professional development that increases a health worker’s ability to effectively implement primary health care by improving their knowledge of key concepts and equipping them with a range of skills essential for everyday practice.

The modules are aimed at health professionals with different levels of expertise, and are grouped in three sections:

- Preparing health practitioners for effective and confident implementation of primary health care in a rural or remote setting. This includes the development of stronger assessment and clinical skills relevant to remote practice.
- Improving community understanding through helping health practitioners develop skills to work effectively with communities.
- Helping health practitioners already working in a rural or remote setting put theory into practice.

Other professional development activities

The BH UDRH runs and supports a number of professional development short courses and workshops covering issues such as cross-cultural awareness, clinical skills enhancement, submission writing, primary health care assessment, management and practice. The department works with local professionals and communities to identify rural and remote health care practitioners who would most benefit from the workshops.

Professional development program for 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Number of attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Aboriginal Health (CCPIAH)</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preceptoring Program</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Health Care: Assessment and Management</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote &amp; Isolated Health</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Health Care in Practice</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Skills Sessions</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Public Health Officer Intensive</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Methods Short Courses</td>
<td>2-3 days</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Training Meetings</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Database Searching</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1078</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aboriginal Health Education Officers Maria Tattersall (standing far left) and Tony Kickett (standing right) teaching the CCPIAH Research skills courses

The BH UDRH, in collaboration with the NSW Primary Health Care Collaboration and Australian Rural Health Research Collaboration delivers a number of short courses in research methods, evaluation methods, and writing for publication. Support for these courses is provided by the Australian Government’s Primary Health Care, Research Evaluation and Development Program.

### Number of people attending CCPIAH workshops in Broken Hill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Staff/community partners</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1263</strong></td>
<td><strong>918</strong></td>
<td><strong>2181</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aboriginal Health Education Officers Maria Tattersall (standing far left) and Tony Kickett (standing right) teaching the CCPIAH
University Student Placement Program

Highlights 2006 and 2007

The BH UDRH Student Placement Program continued to develop across a wide range of disciplines and through the cooperation of health organisations across the far western region provided opportunities for more in-depth learning by medical and nursing students.

During 2006 and 2007 the number of medical students on placement from the University of Sydney increased through the introduction of an integrated geriatric medicine scheme. Students have participated in the whole spectrum of care for older persons, from independent living to high-level nursing home care. Aged-care assessments and working within multidisciplinary teams enhanced student learning, while collaboration with local health service agencies demonstrated holistic and integrated care models. The program has been embraced by the large number of health care professionals locally involved in aged care who see the benefits of equipping doctors to work more effectively with older patients and their families.

The BH UDRH primary health care nursing intensive block program initially ran as a pilot program in 2006 followed by five sessions in 2007. The program involves structured teaching in Broken Hill before immersion in local communities. Students gain confidence in their own clinical skills as they develop a rapport with residents from remote communities including Bourke, Cobar, Dareton, Wentworth, Balranald, Tibooburra, Ivanhoe, Wilcannia, Menindee and Broken Hill.

Social work students also come for extended placements of three to four months, when they develop a greater understanding of issues facing rural and remote communities. Pharmacy students from the University of Sydney completed a one-off 13-week placement in Broken Hill, working in local pharmacies and undertaking regular structured teaching with videoconference and web-based training. It was very interesting and rewarding for these students to learn about outback life and the challenges of rural pharmacy.

Future plans

We plan to develop a more structured framework of interprofessional learning involving two or more disciplines. The trials will then be evaluated in order to develop a long-term program.
Educational facilities

The BH UDRH campus at Corindah Court is located at the Broken Hill Health Service and provides a range of educational facilities including tutorial and meeting rooms, lecture theatres and conference space, a library and a computer laboratory. The BH UDRH operates two videoconferencing units and the lecture areas are equipped with digital projectors, PCs, video and DVD players and sound equipment. The computer laboratory provides 24-hour access for students and local health staff with 10 terminals with internet access. The department also provides a clinical skills laboratory that has equipment used to teach basic procedural skills such as suturing, resuscitation, endotracheal intubation and plastering.
Far West Health Library

The Far West Health Library is located within the BH UDRH and provides a wide range of services to BH UDRH staff, students, researchers and GWAHS employees. The library is one of five libraries serving the GWAHS catchment area, and recent joint initiatives have greatly enhanced its services.

Highlights of 2006 and 2007

Recent developments include a greatly enhanced library website and the establishment of a local history collection. During 2007 a GWAHS libraries blog was started, which has proved very successful in promoting useful resources to remote area users.

The library reference room was redesigned to create more user space. A range of DVDs and the Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation collection have recently been added to the catalogue.

Future plans

There are a number of developments in the planning stages. These include the addition of further resources to the library website, placing the library catalogue on the internet and establishing a library services page on the GWAHS website.
Student accommodation

The BH UDRH provides accommodation for students in Broken Hill and the outlying townships of Menindee and Wilcannia, with new units planned for Wentworth, Bourke and Brewarrina. Additional student accommodation is available through the Greater Western Area Health Service.

The accommodation complex provides comfortable and modern living, and is within easy walking distance to the Broken Hill department and the health service. The air conditioned and heated facilities offer:

- single or double bedrooms
- shared or en suite bathrooms
- communal kitchen facilities
- common lounge rooms with television and DVD equipment
- computer and internet facilities in selected rooms
- outdoor area and barbecue facilities
- pool table and table tennis equipment
- access to mountain bikes

Accommodation at the remote townships of Menindee (left) and at Wilcannia (right)

Student accommodation housing in Broken Hill ('Middle House')
Summary of research activity

**Bold name indicates member of BH UDRH staff**

**Research grants**

**Funding sources listed on Australian Competitive Grants Register:**

**Antecedents of Renal Disease in Aboriginal Children and Young Adults – 12 year follow-up** (NHMRC project grant, received 2007 for period 2008–12, Total funding $1,568,125 over four years).

Chief investigator: Craig J. Associate investigators: Hodson E, Lyle D, Yarnold D, Roy P, Haysom L.

**A randomised controlled trial of a general practice based intervention to prevent chronic vascular disease** (NHMRC project grant, received 2006 for period 2007–9, Total funding $722,700 over three years).

Chief investigators: Harris M, Lyle D, Powell Davies G, Mckenzie S, Passey M, **Heading G**. Associate investigators: Purcell K, Tsar K.

**Living in a rural community: determinants and consequences for mental health and wellbeing** (NHMRC project grant, received 2005 for period 2006–08, $717,750 over three years).


**Lead, intelligence, and behavioural problems in children** (NHMRC project grant, received 2005 for period 2006–7, total funding $279,250 over two years).

Chief investigators: Baghurst P, Sawyer M, Burns N, Nettlebeck T. Associate investigators: **Lyle, D**.

**ARDAC (Antecedents of Renal Disease in Aboriginal Children) Follow-up study** (NHMRC project grant, received 2005 for period 2006–7, total funding $294,712 over two years).

Chief investigators: Hodson E, **Lyle D**, Roy P. Associate investigator: Craig J.

**Other external research grants:**

**Community Attitudes Towards an Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening Programme** (NSW Health – Institute of Rural Clinical Skills and Teaching, received 2007, total funding $126,000 over two years).

Chief investigator: **Lyle D**. Associate investigators: Payne K, Lesjak M, Flecknle-Brown S, Dyer C, Fletcher F.

**Remote Alcohol Resource and Advocacy Unit** (Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation, received 2005, total funds $350,000 over two years for period 2006–7).

Partnerships in Wellbeing Award (Eli Lily Australia, Total funding $6000). **Martin E.**

**Parkintii Kiira-Muuku** (NSW Health Promotion Demonstration Research Grants 2006–7, total funding $290,200 over three years for period 2006–8).

Chief investigators: Jones T, **Lyle D**, Weston R, Whyman N, Stubbs E, **Heading G**.

**Evaluation grants**

**Getting it Right for Undergraduate Nurses and Indigenous Communities in Far West NSW: A Model For Recruitment.** (NSW Institute of Rural Clinical Services and Teaching, received 2007, total funding $50,000 over 12 months).

Chief investigator: **Jones D**. Associate investigators: Heading G, Firth A.

**Research Capacity Building (PHCRE&D)**

Primary Health Care Research Capacity Building Initiative (Australian Department of Health and Ageing, total funding $1,144,000 over four years for period 2006–9).

**Australian Rural Health Research Collaboration** (NSW Health Research & Development Capacity Building Infrastructure Grants Program, $1,500,000 over three years for period 2007–9).

Fragar L, **Lyle D**, Kelly B, Beard J, **Heading G**, Fuller J, Lesjak M, Selden S, Stain H, Morgan G, Passey M.

**Education development grants**

**Online learning modules on rural/remote communities** (University of Sydney Teaching Improvement Grant, submitted 2006, received January 2007, $100,000 over 12 months plus further $50,000 from participating units).

Chief investigators: Taylor S, Fuller J, **Lyle D**, Klineberg I, Canalese J.

**Opening doors and breaking down barriers**, (Indigenous Advisory Council, University of Sydney, received 2007, total funds $100,000 over 12 months).

Research projects (2006–7)

1. **Evaluation of the Lead Management Program**
   The department supports the ongoing evaluation of the Broken Hill Lead Management Program, which is responsible for reducing blood lead levels in young children.

2. **Unravelling the primary health care maze locally**
   This study explores the crucial factors for developing successful primary health care programs in isolated and remote Australian communities which can be applied to primary health care programs more broadly.

3. **Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm – (AAA)**
   The aim of this pilot study is to conduct a screening program for the detection of abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) in men aged 65 and over in the town of Broken Hill in order to assess the effectiveness, acceptability and feasibility of an AAA screening program and to determine its transferability for wider application.

4. **The Australian Rural Mental Health Survey – (ARMHS)**
   The aim of the study is to investigate individual, family and community factors associated with the mental health and wellbeing of residents in rural communities of NSW. It will also examine rural residents’ perceptions of their mental health needs and their access and use of health services.

5. **Health effects of lead in children**
   A collaborative study between the Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health, Women’s & Children’s Hospital Adelaide and the University of Adelaide. The study aims to examine the relationship between chronic low-level lead exposure and cognitive and behavioural development in children living in Broken Hill and Port Pirie.

6. **WellingTonne**
   The Centre for Remote Health Research is conducting an impact evaluation of the WellingTonne Challenge, a local health promotion project in rural NSW that aims to mobilise the community and support overweight or obese residents to lose weight.

7. **Randomised control trial of GP-based intervention to prevent chronic vascular disease**
   This study aims to evaluate the impact of recalling patients to general practice for a visit to assess their risk of chronic disease and to help them lower their risk through changes to smoking, diet, alcohol consumption and physical activity behaviours as well as pharmacological management of their blood pressure and cholesterol.

8. **Thinking about weight**
   This study explored the risk logics, embodiment and sociocultural issues related to obesity in remote NSW.

9. **Antecedents of renal disease in Aboriginal children**
   This study, which commenced in 2003 will complete its first phase in December 2007. Initiated by Professor Jonathon Craig, from the Westmead Children’s Hospital and School of Public Health, the Broken Hill Department is a co-investigator for this project.

10. **Factors affecting attendance at the Broken Hill Lead Screening Clinic**
    This study, which was completed in October 2007, confirmed that there had been a significant decline in attendance rates for blood lead screening in Broken Hill since 1999. Two papers have been submitted for publication – one based on the literature review and a second on the results of the analysis of attendance data at the Broken Hill Lead Screening Clinic.

11. **Short term costs of alcohol misuse to agencies in Broken Hill**
    This study aimed to estimate the proportion of alcohol related presentations to the emergency department and police-related incidents or events in a remote regional centre and to calculate the direct costs of dealing with alcohol issues.

12. **Filling the caps in the clay pans**
    This study aims to explore the impact of a rural/remote, Indigenous primary health care authentic learning experience for undergraduate nursing students and the potential recruitment impact of this model.

13. **Tracking of Diploma of Indigenous Primary Health Care graduates**
    This study aims to identify career pathways and impact of training on Indigenous graduates of the Diploma of Indigenous Primary Health Care.

14. **Point of care testing trial**
    This was a national trial led by the Department of General Practice, University of Adelaide. The trial evaluated the clinical effectiveness, cost effectiveness and safety of point of care testing in the general practice setting. Broken Hill was responsible for managing the remote component of the trial.
Publications

2007


Jones D, 2007, ‘Filling the cracks in the claypans’ (Master of Indigenous Health, minor treatise), University of Wollongong.


2006


Non-peer reviewed reports:


Dalby, J, 2006, report by Janet Dalby, 2005 Churchill Fellow. Winston Churchill Memorial Trust.
Other publications:

Boreland F, ‘Sometimes you get lucky’, in Opportunities as vast as the landscape, Australian Rural Health Education Network.

Jones D, 2006, ‘Opportunities as vast as the landscape’, in Opportunities as vast as the landscape, Australian Rural Health Education Network.


Conference presentations and posters

2007


Naden K, Jones D, 2007, South-East Asia and Oceania Regional Health Impact Assessment Conference, UNSW Research Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity, 8–9 November.


2006


Martin E, O’Reilly S, 2006, ‘Consumer collaboration in health education’, Interdisciplinary Learning for Interprofessional Practice, University of South Australia, Adelaide, 8–9 November.


## Staff

### Head of department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor David Lyle</td>
<td>Professor of Rural Health</td>
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### Broken Hill Centre for Remote Health Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position and Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helen Cameron</td>
<td>Senior manager (to March 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Gaynor Heading</td>
<td>Associate professor, academic leader (to February 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Baker</td>
<td>Research officer, associate senior manager (from April 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Margaret Lesjak</td>
<td>Senior epidemiologist/lecturer (conjoint GWAHS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Selden</td>
<td>Senior lecturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frances Boreland</td>
<td>Research officer and PHC-RED network coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Hooper</td>
<td>Administration assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Sidford</td>
<td>Research manager – Australian Rural Mental Health Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Dalby</td>
<td>Research assistant (to June 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charmaine Farrell</td>
<td>Manager, Remote Alcohol Resource and Advocacy Unit (to February 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Ogle</td>
<td>Casual, research assistant – Australian Rural Mental Health Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Kerryn Payne</td>
<td>Public health officer (to February 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Tylor</td>
<td>Casual, administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Turnour</td>
<td>Trainee public health officer – NSW Health, Public Health Training Unit (from July 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katina Kardamandis</td>
<td>Trainee public health officer – NSW Health, Public Health Training Unit (from Nov 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominca Walter</td>
<td>Researcher project officer (to December 2007)</td>
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### Clinical Medicine Stream

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position and Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr David Garne</td>
<td>Director, clinical medicine (conjoint RFDS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jocelyn Morris</td>
<td>Rural attachment programs coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Michael Hill</td>
<td>Lecturer, RFDS medical officer (conjoint RFDS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Peter Lyall</td>
<td>Lecturer, RFDS medical officer (conjoint RFDS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacquie Pogson</td>
<td>Educational support officer, research assistant (from May 2005 to June 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honor Beck</td>
<td>Teaching support officer (from July 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay Scott</td>
<td>Pharmacy academic</td>
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### Primary Health Care Stream

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position and Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Debra Jones</td>
<td>Director, primary health care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindy Hunt</td>
<td>Health education officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Ballantyne</td>
<td>Health education officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Bennett</td>
<td>Health education officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tony Kickett</td>
<td>Aboriginal health education officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maria Tattersall</td>
<td>Aboriginal health education officer (from February 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathie Naden</td>
<td>Community development project officer – Indigenous education (from July 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Martin</td>
<td>Clinical nurse consultant – mental health, Emergency Department Broken Hill Health Service (conjoint academic lecturer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honor Beck</td>
<td>Teaching support officer (from July 2007)</td>
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</table>
Far West Health Library

Donald Keast Librarian
Veronica Barlow Assistant librarian, research project officer

Administration and finance

Mandy Royle Executive officer
Brett McInnes Finance officer
Chia Barlow Executive assistant (to Professor David Lyle)
Lyn Singleton Administration officer (Reception)
Steve Fazulla Maintenance officer

Academic associates

Captain Clyde Thomson Royal Flying Doctor Service (SE Section)
Dr Steve Flecknoe-Brown Broken Hill Health Service
Dr Ron Wilkinson Broken Hill Health Service
Dr Bill Hines Lecturer/ RFDS medical officer

The BH UDRH building at Corrindah Court, Broken Hill
Partnerships

The BH UDRH has developed excellent collaborative arrangements with local health service organisations since its establishment in 1997. They contribute greatly to the teaching and research activities of the University of Sydney and provide opportunities for the BH UDRH to support the service work of those organisations.

For example:

- During 2003 the BH UDRH established conjoint appointments with the RFDS and the Broken Hill Health Service, recruiting senior practitioners to support the expanding requirements for teaching of medical students.

- The BH UDRH’s Diploma of Indigenous Primary Health Care and cross-cultural workshops are delivered in partnership with the Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation and with the support of staff from the GWAHS.

- The Broken Hill Centre for Remote Health Research is an initiative jointly funded and supported by the BH UDRH and the Division of Population Health (part of the GWAHS).

- The BH UDRH supports service work in the region, such as the Well Person’s Health Check. GWAHS has led the implementation of a well person health check program across far western NSW, based on a program originally developed in Northern Queensland. The BH UDRH has been responsible for preparation of the health check training guide and coordination of staff training prior to community checks as well as working with the team during health checks.

- The BH UDRH has worked with local health service organisations and the communities of Menindee, Wilcannia and Broken Hill to take a team of young people to the Sun Herald City-to-Surf fun run in Sydney every year since 1995.

It is thanks to the unique collaboration with its partner organisations that the BH UDRH has been able to continue to expand, providing further training, research and development for rural and remote community health in the Western NSW region. The department looks forward to continuing these productive partnerships into the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>Australian Rural Health Education Network</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute</td>
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<td>State</td>
<td>NSW PHC-Research Capacity Building Consortium</td>
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<td>Australian Rural Health Research Collaboration</td>
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<td>NSW Primary Health Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>School of Public Health, University of Sydney</td>
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<td></td>
<td>School of Rural Health, University of Sydney</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Faculty of Dentistry, University of Sydney</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Sydney</td>
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<td></td>
<td>NSW Centre for Overweight and Obesity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School of Biomedical Sciences, Charles Sturt University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Centre for Equity and Primary Health Research in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, University of NSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Health Research Unit in the Women’s and Children’s Hospital, University of Adelaide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>Barrier, Outback and Dubbo Plains Divisions of General Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Greater Western Area Health Service</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Royal Flying Doctor Service (south-eastern section)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Sturt Peas growing in Broken Hill region – photo taken and supplied by Boris Hlavica, Images of Australia