HOD REPORT
by Professor David Lyle

We’re already half-way through the year and have been very busy over the last few months improving our educational facilities and recruiting staff to the Research Centre. Students can now access modern comfortable units at Menindee and Wilcannia during their remote placements courtesy of an Australian Government grant. At Corrindah Court the Primary Health Care Team moved into a newly refurbished work area in May which offers increased desk and storage space for all in a well-designed workspace (see below). Also we are really pleased to welcome Helen Cameron as the senior manager to the Research Centre (featured in this edition), as well as Associate Professor Gaynor Heading, who recently arrived from Newcastle to head up our research team. The next 6 months will continue to be very busy.

A section of the office refurbishment showing new workstations for some of the Primary Health Care team.

STUDENT PROGRAM UPDATE
by Jocelyn Morris
Rural Attachment Program Coordinator

Students undertaking Integrated Clinical Attachments in Broken Hill have been involved in the weekly routine of ward rounds, small-group case studies and a variety of additional learning activities, including regular clinical skills sessions, special pathology visits and observation of autopsies.

It’s not just about learning about medicine in Broken Hill - recently student donned their oldest clothes to take part in the annual harvest of local olives, gathering the crop from backyard trees in scattered neighbourhoods of Broken Hill. Under the direction of Dr Stephen Flecknoe-Brown, students enjoyed some warm afternoon exercise and the camaraderie of the olive pickers. One student from Singapore joked that they couldn’t imagine doing something like this back home: and for them, it summed up much of the Broken Hill experience…trying something different and having fun as well.

Four students have undertaken a very enjoyable Community Rotation including four weeks at Menindee and Wilcannia under the supervision of the doctors from the Royal Flying Doctor Service. This was an interesting and rewarding insight into general practice in outback communities, along with time spent at the RFDS Base with the On-call doctor. Getting to know the locals while camping under the stars and catching yabbies in the Darling River made this a memorable placement for all the students.

Two of these students have achieved a first – they have managed to visit every National Park in western New South Wales during their Stage 3 and 4 rotations to Broken Hill.

International Recognition

The efforts of the Broken Hill community to manage lead has received international recognition. The Broken Hill UDRH is involved in the evaluation of the program, and has had a paper describing the program and long-term changes in blood lead levels accepted in Science of the Total Environment, an international journal. The paper, ‘Dealing with Lead in Broken Hill – trends in blood lead levels in young children 1991 – 2003’, focuses on research into changes in the environment caused by human activity.

CONTACT US

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**Preceptors are important people!**

*What happens in a preceptor workshop?* The workshop provides an opportunity to discuss key aspects of preceptorship - roles and responsibilities of preceptors, preceptees and organisations; communication skills; learning theories and styles; use of a range of teaching/learning models and strategies; workplace conflict. The workshop is interactive and provides opportunity for debate and for individual and small-group practical activities.

*Can’t attend a workshop?* For those unable to attend workshops the preceptor program is available in flexible mode (self-directed learning), and is proving very popular.

*Who can do the course?* The preceptor program is suitable for any experienced health practitioner who is genuinely interested in facilitating workplace learning. Nurses, allied health staff, administration staff and ambulance officers are among our current enrollees.

*Want more information?* please telephone Sally Josh or Tara Walker on 08 8080 1200. Or email sjosh@fwahs.nsw.gov.au

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**NEW PUBLICATION**

**Alcohol Handbook for Frontline Workers**

By the Broken Hill Centre for Remote Health Research.

The 184 page, illustrated handbook offers frontline workers straightforward, practical information and advice about doing brief intervention for alcohol use.

It gives information about when and how to do brief intervention, including what to do and say when working with people to help reduce alcohol related harm.

The content is structured according to the priority of topics that frontline workers themselves identified during the writing process.

The handbook retails for $27.50 per copy (+ $5.50 postage per order). Further details are available from the BH UDRH Librarian, Donald Keast - contact him via email DKeast@fwahs.nsw.gov.au or phone 08 8080 1210.

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**IMPORTANT HEALTH AWARENESS DATES**

**JUNE 2005**

- Drug Action Week (20/06—24/06)
- Red Nose Day (24/06)

**JULY 2005**

- National Blood Donor Week (01/07—07/07)
- National Diabetes Week (10/07—17/07)
- National Glaucoma Week (17/07—23/07)
- National Farm Safety Week (18/07—23/07)
- Riding for the Disabled Awareness Week (29/07—08/08)

**AUGUST 2005**

- Jeans 4 Genes Day (05/08)
- National Healthy Bones Week (07/08—13/08)
- Continence Awareness Week (07/08—13/08)
- 40 Hour Famine (12/08—14/08)

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**Welcome to a New Staff Member**

Yet another belated staff welcome - Helen Cameron has been working as the new Manager of the Broken Hill Centre for Remote Health Research here at the BH UDRH for the last 5 months. Helen and her partner have been living in Broken Hill for over a year but prior to this they had a stint in Canberra. Helen grew up in Sydney, she has a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts (Modern History) from Macquarie University and was admitted as a Solicitor. Since graduating Helen has worked mainly in Government Departments including Department of Health & Ageing, Office of the Employment Advocate, Glebe Coroner’s Court, and Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. Besides long hours at work Helen also likes swimming, cycling, reading and renovating their house. The BH UDRH is more than pleased to have her aboard.

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