HOD REPORT by David Lyle

It is great to see Outback Horizons in print again after a short break in publication during 2004. The newsletter has taken on a new look, inspired by the return of a familiar face - Chia Barlow as editor. Chia went on “sabbatical” to the FWAHS Population Health Unit last year. With the changes to health service boundaries in late 2004, we look forward to continuing our close, productive working partnerships with colleagues in Broken Hill and the far west region as well as taking advantage of new opportunities to work with, and support, health staff across the whole of the Greater Western Area Health Service. I trust you find the information in this newsletter interesting and informative.

STUDENT PROGRAM UPDATE

by Jocelyn Morris

The student program has been reviewed and expanded considerably over the last 12 months. Some key improvements to the program include:

- Significant academic support for students through the development of mentoring programs for all students by Dr David Garne and Dr Tara Walker.
- The development of a major new program for University of Sydney medical students in Community General Practice in collaboration with the Royal Flying Doctor Service. This rotation utilises the resources of Health Services in Wilcannia and Menindee and the RFDS, as well as local general practices within Broken Hill, to provide significant learning opportunities for students in rural, remote and indigenous health issues.
- Provision of new accommodation for student placements in the outlying communities of Menindee and Wilcannia.
- The implementation of a unique program for students undertaking placements through the John Flynn Scholarship Scheme, which has led to the largest number of scholars based in Broken Hill.
- Expansion of the Pharmacy program to provide Broken Hill placements for students from four universities in three states.
- Increased opportunities for students to attend a Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Aboriginal Health workshop, presented by Mr Tony Kickett.
- Students undertaking placements in Primary Health Care from several campuses which have not previously sent students here before.

All up it means another very busy year, which is by now well underway.

Students of Diploma in Indigenous Primary Health Care get stuck in!

The Department of Rural Health welcomed eight first year students to the Diploma in Indigenous Primary Health Care on 21st February. Students were keen to get started with supervised practice on some of their first year clinical skills, as shown by these pictures, taken in the Clinical Skills Lab.

Student Lynne Mitchell advises student Anthony Shepherd on the results of his blood glucose test, observed by fellow student Michael Ah Kit (standing).

Lecturer Christopher Ballantyne supervising students Elizabeth Keiso (standing) and Amanda Coe with taking blood pressures.  Sally Josh

USYD GMP Year 3 Medical students, Kyla Bremner, Stephen McGrath and Zui Chih Teo at Mundi Mundi Plains look-out, Silverton, Broken Hill NSW, February 2005.
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 e-mail DKeast@fwahs.nsw.gov.au or phone 08 8080 1210.

DIPLOMA STUDENTS WIN PUGGY HUNTER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The UDRH Broken Hill would like to congratulate two of their second year Diploma in Indigenous Primary Health Care students, Patricia Winch and Joseph Mieni, for being accepted into the Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarships Scheme.

The Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarship Scheme has been established in recognition of Dr Arnold ‘Puggy’ Hunter's outstanding contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

The scheme provides financial assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who undertake the study of Nursing, Medicine, Allied Health or Certificate III and IV or Diploma and Advanced Diploma Aboriginal Health Worker Course at an educational institution/University/Registered Training Organisation. It offers students scholarships worth $15,000 per annum for the usual term of the course.

Patsy and Joe are both Aboriginal Health Workers who manage to combine a full time study load with demanding full time jobs in their communities. Patsy is based at Balranald Hospital and Joe at Bourke Aboriginal Medical Service.

Well done Patricia and Joseph and we would like to encourage other students to apply for this very worthwhile scholarship.

Mandy Royle

IMPORTANT HEALTH AWARENESS DATES

MARCH 2005
- World’s Greatest Shave to Care & Cure (10/03-12/03)
- Coeliac Awareness Week (13/03-20/03)
- Brain Awareness Week (14/03-20/03)
- Lymphoedema Awareness Day (19/03)
- Multiple Birth Awareness Week (19/03-26/03)
- National Pregnancy Loss Awareness Week (21/03-28/03)
- World Tuberculosis Day (24/03)

APRIL 2005
- April Falls Day (01/04)
- Motor Neurone Disease Week (03/04-09/04)
- World Health Day (07/04)
- National Arthritis Week (11/04-17/04)
- World Parkinson's Day (11/04)
- Osteopathy Awareness Week (11/04-17/04)
- International Guide Dog Day (27/04)

Welcome to a New Staff Member

The BH UDRH is pleased to welcome Elizabeth Martin who joined the team mid-December 2004 to take up a conjoint position as Clinical Nurse Consultant - Mental Health in the Emergency Department of Broken Hill Health Services.

After much movement Liz and her family moved from Taree to Broken Hill in 1999 to take up an appointment of NUM at the local community team. After 12 months she then took a so-called ‘temporary’ position with the FWAHS where for 5 years she was the coordinator of Adult Mental Health before coming aboard UDRH (a move across the car park).

Liz is now looking forward to the challenge of assisting the ED to improve mental health care systems and translating evidence into practice (and back into evidence again!).

Staff Self-Profile by Sara Fergusson
Academic General Practice Registrar

As part of my general practice training with the regional training provider, Rhedwest, I am working as an Academic GP Registrar at Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health.

The academic post offers GP registrars the opportunity to be involved in a University Department through teaching, research, project work and participating in the activities of the department.

I have particularly appreciated the rural / remote nature of working in Broken Hill. It is clear that the UDRH plays a vital role in capacity building for all health professionals including GPs.

I would certainly describe my experience as 'invaluable' and would encourage more GP registrars to consider such a post as a core part of general practice training.

Mandy Royle

CONTACT US
University of Sydney Department of Rural Health—Corrindah Court PO Box 457 BROKEN HILL NSW 2880
Phone: 08 8080 1200 Fax: 08 8087 0051 or 08 8087 5240 Web: www.drh.med.usyd.edu.au