GROUND-BREAKING STUDY RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION

Dr Tom Buckley is one of five scientists from Australia who received the honour of participating in the American Heart Association’s distinguished International Lunch Forum during its Scientific Sessions 2010 in Chicago, 13–17 November 2010.

The AHA International Lunch Forums highlight research from the 10 countries with the largest number of accepted abstracts, adjusted by individual country population.

Tom Buckley, Senior Lecturer and cardiovascular researcher at Sydney Nursing School, was chosen for his abstract as lead researcher of a ground-breaking study examining the health impact of bereavement on recently bereaved spouses and parents.

Early findings from the Cardiovascular Risk in Early Bereavement (CARBER) study, published in the Internal Medicine Journal in 2009, reported the impact of bereavement on psychological and behavioural cardiac risk factors. At the AHA scientific meeting, Tom will present further findings from this study reporting the impact of bereavement on heart rate, rhythm and variability, which have all been associated with increased cardiovascular risk.

Continued page 3
DEAN’S MESSAGE

It has been a fantastic year at Sydney Nursing School. We are reaping the rewards of our new and revised programs that we introduced this year and we have succeeded in negotiating Commonwealth Supported Places for students in 2011 enrolling in our advanced learning specialty degrees. I am confident that these and other developments will ensure our vibrancy of learning and teaching and research in 2011 and beyond.

Over the last few months we have welcomed many prospective students to Sydney Nursing School, from Open Day in August, GO Expo in September and culminating in our terrific Postgraduate Information Evening in October. It has been very rewarding to meet so many prospective students exploring their options for meaningful careers in nursing and midwifery. I’d particularly like to thank our student ambassadors who participated in these events and shared with our visitors their refreshing perspectives about studying at Sydney Nursing School.

We are constantly reviewing our learning and teaching programs to ensure they are meeting the needs of nurses and other health professionals. We continue to be committed to nurturing a vibrant research community and this will be enhanced in 2011 for students enrolled in our advanced learning master’s. They will have the option of taking a research stream to develop their research skills and knowledge and use it as a pathway into the PhD program at Sydney Nursing School. Also next year, we will be collaborating with the Faculty of Education and Social Work and other health faculties with the new Master of Education (Health Professional Education). This program will be particularly relevant for people who have educational responsibilities in the health professions, including nurses and midwives.

Sydney Nursing School continued its international collaborations with all eyes on China during the World Trade Expo in Shanghai in September. There we attended a Commonwealth Roundtable and contributed to Shanghai Jiao Tong’s 3rd International Research Symposium on cancer. We continue to work with Shanghai Jiao Tong on developing a cancer nursing curriculum and providing support for their cancer research students. In August I delivered a keynote address on the topic of “Nursing Knowledge, Research and Practice in a New Global Environment” at the Peking Union Medical College School of Nursing conference. In September we travelled to Singapore and Malaysia to see our Bachelor of Nursing (post-registration) students graduate. We wish these graduates well. Through the Hoc Mai Australia Vietnam Medical Foundation I’m pleased to announce that we will be sending three of our Master of Nursing students to Viet Nam to undertake additional clinical placements over the summer break.

Finally, we celebrate November as a very auspicious time for nurse practitioners and midwives with the commencement of Medicare funding for nurse practitioners and eligible midwives as part of the package of reforms legislated by the federal government earlier this year.

I thank you for your contribution to the nursing and midwifery professions in 2010 and I wish everyone all the best over the festive season and a great new year.

– Warm regards,
Jill White
HEALTH IMPACT OF BEREAVEMENT STUDY CONT.

The research found that acute bereavement from the death of a spouse or child, particularly during the early weeks, can cause elevated heart rates and other potentially harmful heart rhythm changes which could increase the risk of heart attacks and sudden cardiac death.

According to Tom, “While the focus at the time of bereavement is naturally directed towards the deceased person, the health and welfare of bereaved survivors should also be of concern to health care professionals, as well as family and friends. Some bereaved, especially those already at increased cardiovascular risk, might benefit from medical review, and they should seek health care assistance for any possible cardiac symptoms.”

Tom and his co-researchers studied 78 bereaved spouses and parents within two weeks of the death of a spouse or child. They then compared them to a group of volunteers who had not lost a loved one. Bereaved participants consisted of 55 women and 23 men who were between 33 and 91 years old.

“We hope that our findings do not establish causality,” Tom said, “they are consistent with evidence for psychosocial triggering of cardiovascular events. They highlight the need for further investigation of the link between bereavement and cardiovascular risk including potential preventive measures.”

Other members of the research team, pictured below with Tom Buckley (front row centre), include Professor Geoffrey Toffler, Associate Professor Roger Bartrop, Professor Sharon McKinley, Dr Anastasia Susie Mihailidou, Associate Professor Christopher Ward, Dr Marie-Christine Morel-Kopp, Monica Spinaze, Margaret Bramwell, Dianne Roche, Angela Tannard, Belinda Hocking, Kerrie Goldston, Jenny Havyatt, Emeritus Professor Christopher Tennant and Walter Chen.

The Cardiovascular Risk in Early Bereavement (CARBER) study team. Dr Tom Buckley pictured centre front row.

The North Shore Heart Research Foundation, Sydney and the National Heart Foundation of Australia funded the study. Visit http://www.newsroom.heart.org/index.php?s=118&cats=14 to watch an interview with Tom Buckley.

CONFERENCE BURSARY

A recipient of the 2010 Sydney Nursing School Conference Bursary, Master of Nursing student Brie Cormier attended her first nursing conference, Communication and Counselling Skills during End of Life Care in Brisbane.

Brie was motivated to attend this conference after her challenging first clinical placement in the palliative care ward at Westmead Hospital. “I hope the conference would help me to effectively communicate with patients and their families when death and dying occurs. And it did just that. It also built upon my general knowledge of patient-nurse communication,” Brie said.

OUR OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

Each year Sydney Nursing School awards scholarships to its students, generally based on academic merit. In 2010, we congratulate the following scholarship recipients:

Pre-registration
Master of Nursing (Graduate Entry) Merit Scholarship:
Jessica Porter
Master of Nursing/Combined Degree Merit Scholarship:
Lauren Grace Whalan

International
For international students who have completed at least one year of their studies:
Kanako Sato

Conference Bursary
Awarded to enable students to attend or present at a conference:
Juliane Samara
Brie Cormier
Sophie Curtin

Hoc Mai Australia Vietnam Medical Foundation Scholarships
Awarded to enable students to undertake a one-month clinical placement in Vietnam:
Nadia Hjij
Erin Law
Elliott Ventress

STUDENT AMBASSADORS

We thank our fabulous student ambassadors who have done a great job to represent Sydney Nursing School in 2010:
Elizabeth Barber, Charlotte Beniuk, Rachel Cheng, Rebecca Elfees, Louise Heather, Rebecca Karraz, Aileen Manahan, Maricel Mariano, Rita Muscat, Aaron O’Grady, Anna Scott-Murphy, Tom Schrader, Morgan Snow, Charles Tian, Lauren Whalan, Winnie Teo Sook Ying, Ifteker Ibne Zuha.
CANCER SUPPORT CARE FOR CHINESE WOMEN

A research team at Sydney Nursing School launched a culturally sensitive cancer support group for Chinese-Australian women with breast cancer.

In collaboration with a Chinese community organisation (CanRevive), a research team at Sydney Nursing School, led by Dr Cannas Kwok and Professor Kate White, launched a culturally sensitive cancer support group in July 2010 to provide supportive care for Chinese-Australian women with breast cancer.

Earlier research undertaken by the research team highlighted cancer information and resources were neither culturally nor linguistically appropriate for the Chinese-Australian community. The lack of culturally appropriate information, cancer and social support services and resources, reinforced the injustice these Chinese-Australian women already felt as breast cancer patients.

“We were delighted that 28 women have completed the program,” said Dr Kwok. “The participants reported that they had gained confidence in managing the disease and really appreciated that the information was provided within a common cultural context. All women stressed that there was an urgent need for this kind of program.”

Over eight weeks the breast cancer support program involved the delivery of information sessions which were culturally and linguistically tailored for women with breast cancer from Chinese-speaking backgrounds. The information sessions provided participants with comprehensive information and resources about managing breast cancer treatment and remission, and offered prevention based strategies for cancer recurrence.

While she was pleased with the women’s response to the program, Dr Kwok also acknowledged that, “it also indicates the pressing need for more culturally sensitive cancer support and care to be made available within the migrant Chinese community, not only in Sydney, but across Australia.”

In collaboration with a Chinese community organisation (CanRevive), a research team at Sydney Nursing School, led by Dr Cannas Kwok and Professor Kate White, launched a culturally sensitive cancer support group in July 2010 to provide supportive care for Chinese-Australian women with breast cancer.

Earlier research undertaken by the research team highlighted cancer information and resources were neither culturally nor linguistically appropriate for the Chinese-Australian community. The lack of culturally appropriate information, cancer and social support services and resources, reinforced the injustice these Chinese-Australian women already felt as breast cancer patients.

“We were delighted that 28 women have completed the program,” said Dr Kwok. “The participants reported that they had gained confidence in managing the disease and really appreciated that the information was provided within a common cultural context. All women stressed that there was an urgent need for this kind of program.”

Over eight weeks the breast cancer support program involved the delivery of information sessions which were culturally and linguistically tailored for women with breast cancer from Chinese-speaking backgrounds. The information sessions provided participants with comprehensive information and resources about managing breast cancer treatment and remission, and offered prevention based strategies for cancer recurrence.

While she was pleased with the women’s response to the program, Dr Kwok also acknowledged that, “it also indicates the pressing need for more culturally sensitive cancer support and care to be made available within the migrant Chinese community, not only in Sydney, but across Australia.”
“It was a very interesting process to be a part of and a little bit of a boost for the cause of the community nurse, who we’re all now aware, can do almost everything!”

ERIN LAW
MASTER OF NURSING
YEAR 2

NURSING JOINS HEALTH FUSION
TEAM CHALLENGE 2010

A team of students from across the University of Sydney’s health faculties competed at the 2nd National Australian HealthFusion Health Care Team Challenge in Brisbane on Friday 17 September 2010.

Master of Nursing student Erin Law represented Sydney Nursing School in a joint University of Sydney health faculty team at the Australian HealthFusion Health Care Team Challenge, organised by the University of Queensland. The University of Sydney team, comprising students from health sciences, medicine and nursing, competed against interprofessional student health teams from seven other universities across Australia to tackle a complex clinical case study.

The University of Sydney team entered as a community-based team and were required to prepare and present an interprofessional management plan to support a patient’s return to the community, including risk management and ongoing support. They had to work together in order to develop and present a multidisciplinary management plan to an audience of local practitioners, interstate university representatives, academic staff, registry boards and students.

Before the competition, the students undertook approximately 10–12 hours of preparation as a team. Each student also consulted with their discipline-specific academic mentor (Christopher Gordon from Sydney Nursing School mentored Erin). On the day of the competition, students had five minutes to present their interprofessional management plan for their client and were required to conduct a team interview with the client which was recorded and judged. Importantly, they also had the opportunity to meet other health students from around Australia and watch their case presentations.

A/Professor Michelle Lincoln, A/Dean Undergraduate Learning and Teaching at the Faculty of Health Sciences, accompanied the students to Brisbane. She said, “while the students didn’t make it into the finals [they] performed well ... and were a credit to the University and their faculties”.

The students themselves found the experience extremely rewarding, enjoying the practice of creating an evidence-based plan, learning to work as part of a multi-disciplinary team and creating friendships. Erin was very positive, saying “it was a very interesting process to be a part of and a little bit of a boost for the cause of the community nurse, who we’re all now aware can do almost everything!”

“I hope the University of Sydney participates again next year. It was a very valuable experience,” Erin said.
Congratulations to our Bachelor of Nursing students for their graduations in Singapore and Malaysia in September. Students pictured with Sydney Nursing School’s A/Professor Maureen Boughton and Stuart Newman.

NEW ZEALAND NURSE AWARDED FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP

Congratulations to Sydney Nursing School PhD candidate, Rachel Vernon, who is one of 10 leading researchers in New Zealand to be recently selected for a Fulbright exchange in the USA. Rachel is Head of the EIT Hawke’s Bay School of Nursing. She will research models for the assessment of continuing competence of nurses, at the University of California, San Francisco. She will compare existing requirements in the US, New Zealand, Australia, the UK and Canada to identify areas of consensus and best practice, before making recommendations for a new framework for assessing nurses’ competence in patient care throughout their careers.

NEW ZEALAND NURSE AWARDED FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP

BOOK LAUNCH: NOTES ON NIGHTINGALE

In August, Sydney Nursing School and the Nursing History Research Unit hosted a highly successful launch of a book marking the centenary year of Florence Nightingale’s death.

Notes on Nightingale: the influence and legacy of a nursing icon is a collection of essays edited by Professor Sioban Nelson, Dean of the Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto and Professor Anne Marie Rafferty, Dean, Florence Nightingale School of Nursing, Kings College London.

Sydney Nursing School and the Nursing History Research Unit were pleased to host the first launch of the book in Australia, with co-editor Professor Sioban Nelson (pictured) guest of honour.

Dr Judith Godden, Honorary Associate, Department of History at the University of Sydney, and also one the eminent Nightingale scholars in the collection, introduced the authors and the book.

Professor Nelson gave an insight into the tenor of the book by reading from her own chapter. She used an excerpt from an oral history by a recent graduate of Sydney Nursing School (Dr Ryoko Ohara) where the very idea of Florence Nightingale – promoted through reciting her pledge every day – strengthened the resolve of a group of Japanese Red Cross nurses to stay to provide care in the unimaginable aftermath of the bombing of Hiroshima.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

T +61 2 9351 0693
F +61 2 9351 0508
E nursing.info@sydney.edu.au
sydney.edu.au/nursing
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/SydneyNursingSchoolUniversityofSydney

Sydney Nursing School

The University of Sydney

Criocs Provider No.00026A