**The View from the Top**

**Professor Mark Nelson**  
Director  
Menzies Research Institute (MRI)

The PHCREd MRI team has been fully involved in the workshop program, mentoring and supporting our new RDPs in the first half of the year.

We have also been strengthening our ties with General Practice Training Tasmania (GPTT) in a number of ways. Along with Danielle, our program coordinator, I ran several sessions, focusing on Critical Appraisal for the Research & Critical Thinking Workshop in May 2008.

We have also recently commenced a project with GPTT investigating the Predictors of Regional Retention in General Practice Training. This project aims to identify characteristics of GP registrars that predict whether they will work in general practice in the state of Tasmania.

**A/Professor Sue Kilpatrick**  
Director  
University Department of Rural Health (UDRH)

This has been the busiest start ever to the year for the UDRH PHCREd program. We have been involved in the delivery of a very full program of workshops spread across the whole state as well mentoring and supporting individuals and organisations. This year we have trialled opening bookings for a defined period before each workshop, rather than posting the whole program at the beginning of the year. This has resulted in strong enrolments and a marked reduction in the numbers enrolling but failing to show. All thanks to our great new office team, State Coordinator Theresa Doherty, and our ever reliable ‘workshop coordinator’ Sally Thurley.

**The view from the Ground**

**Dr Peter Orpin**  
Program Coordinator UDRH

Our April sojourn to Rural Clinical School, Burnie for the Northwest research clinic has been a highlight to date. The level of enthusiasm among the growing band of researchers associated with the ‘Research Matters’ group is always an inspiration.

It has been heartening to meet the large numbers of practitioners who are working to improve their practice and programs through ‘small r’ research and evaluation. These small projects add to the body of knowledge in primary health care research and contribute to a process of continual reflection, quality improvement and evidence gathering that has a major impact on on-the-ground delivery of primary health care services.

We are now beginning to identify a number of these practitioners who are likely to take the vital step from interest and ‘dabbling’ to become an important part of building an active and productive primary health care research culture in Tasmania.

Finally, it has been gratifying to be part of the increasing professionalization of our approach within the Tasmanian PHCREd program, something which has gathered pace in 2008.

**Ms Danielle Williams**  
Program Coordinator MRI

This is my first year as a PHCREd program coordinator and I am excited by the energy and enthusiasm that primary health care practitioners have for learning more about the research process. The 2008 workshop program has been received with great interest, with practitioners from the North West Coast displaying a particular hunger for research training and engagement with other researchers.

I have developed an introduction to research and evaluation workshop specifically for nurses which will be run in conjunction with the ANF professional development program – contact ANF for more details regarding this workshop.

I have also been involved with mentoring undergraduate medical students as part of their 3rd year primary care rotation. 14 students are paired up to investigate their nominated research areas over the eight week program. Students are required to develop a research or health promotion poster of their chosen topic, presenting their posters at the end of the rotation...

The MRI PHCREd team have also been working with Red Jelly, to develop a new corporate identity for PHCREd Tasmania – a strategy aimed at continuing to work on the marketing of the program. The ‘new look’ of PHCREd Tasmania will be officially launched in July 2008.
**Research Development Program (RDP) Report**

**Menzies Research Institute**

- **Sally Bennett**

Sally has a background in nursing but has also completed a degree in behavioural science and has an honours degree in social work. Sally currently works as a social worker on a new Tasmanian initiative, the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening program. UNBHS programs have been established in Britain for over a decade and more recently on the mainland of Australia. Sally is currently working on a literature review on the psychosocial needs of families with a child diagnosed with profound hearing loss. Most of the literature emphasises the need for family support after a diagnosis. It also emphasises the benefits of early diagnosis to maximise the child’s potential for communicating aurally. Sally is hoping her review will help to consolidate the literature and provide the new service with some guiding principles so that it can best work with families.

- **Jen Hargrave**

Jen has a bachelor degree in nursing, a diploma of midwifery and is currently enrolled in a master of midwifery degree. Her research involves documenting the essential epidemiological population characteristics and breastfeeding outcomes of a cohort of breastfeeding Late Preterm Infants who are born between 34 to 37 completed weeks of gestation. These infants represent 83% of the preterm population born at the Royal Hobart Hospital. The research project is complete and it is anticipated that the results will be published for peer review.

Both MRI research fellows are mentored by Danielle Williams.

**University Department of Rural Health**

- **Emily Shepherd**

Emily has a bachelor of health science degree from the University of Tasmania and a background in health promotion. Her research project is investigating how the print media produces and reproduces constructions relating to older adults and physical activity. The project may lead on to further study around how such constructions act as barriers or enablers to physical activity participation in older adults. At this stage Emily has completed the data collection phase of the project, having looked at Tasmanian newspapers and five magazines from 2007, 1997 and 1986. Her main focus is on the data from 2007 but she will use the data from earlier years as a comparison. The next phase of the project is to begin analysis of her data using NVivo.

Emily is being mentored by Dr Lisa Dalton and Dr Peter Orpin

- **Helen Zournazis**

Helen has a background in nursing and an interest in Primary Health Care, completing a Master in Primary Health in 2002. Her research project aims to explore the engagement and maintenance of social relationships of adolescents and young adults with intellectual disability living in rural environments; and the benefits to their health and well being from a parent carer’s perspective. This project will be recruiting participants from rural northern Tasmania, outside the greater Launceston area and within the ‘63’ telephone directory. At present, the project has just received ethics approval and Helen is in the process of recruiting participants.

Helen is being mentored by Mr Martin Harris and Dr Peter Orpin.
Scholarships and Awards

PHCREDSUTAS Honours Scholarship 2008

• Mrs Alison Archer (University Department of Rural Health Scholarship recipient $2500)

Alison has a Bachelor of Education degree and a graduate diploma of science. She has worked as a classroom teacher and counsellor and her research interests include adolescent health, particularly eating disorders and self harm. Alison is enrolled in an honours degree with the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering; School of Psychology, University of Tasmania. Her research project is examining deliberate self harm in rural adolescents. The thesis will involve creating a profile of 15/16 year old rural adolescents who have deliberately self harmed to use an indicator of behaviour for 13/14 year old rural adolescents who fit the profile as potential self harmers. Anne is a part time student and will present her research findings in 2009.

• Ms Rebecca Austen (Menzies Research Institute scholarship recipient $7000)

Rebecca completed a Bachelor of Nursing degree in 2002 and practiced as a registered nurse for five years. Her research forms part of a larger study - Pathways to Lung Health. It looks at how community health nurses’ training experience in developing their capacity to support people with COPD assists patients to self-manage their condition. Rebecca is enrolled in an honours degree with the School of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Tasmania and is being supervised by Helen Courtney-Pratt, Professor Andrew Robinson and Dr Christine Stirling. She will report on her research at the PHCREDS symposium in November 2008.

Travel Grants 2008 Round 1 ($1500)

• Ms Kim Jose (Menzies Research Institute recipient )

Kim is a physiotherapist working as a physical activity consultant with the Family Food Patch Project. She has developed a training program on physical activity and children for community workers/ health workers and volunteers in line with the pre-existing training module available in children’s nutrition. Kim will present her paper ‘Family Food Patch Project’ to the Population Health Congress 2008 in Brisbane.

• Ms Sue Freardin (University Department of Rural Health recipient )

Sue is the Manager, Health Priorities in Population Health in DHHS, will travel to the ‘Heart and Mind Psychogenic Cardiovascular Disease’ Conference in Italy. Sue has a long record of working to embed evidence-based practice and policy within the department around healthy lifestyle and chronic disease self-management. We expect that Sue will be an important champion in embedding a research culture within the Department.

Kim and Sue will both present at the PHCREDS Annual Symposium in November.

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Primary Health Care Scholarship 2008

• Mr Brett Mitchell

Brett is Clinical Nurse Consultant, Tasmanian Infection Prevention & Control Unit (TIPCU) DHHS. He is the second recipient of this $3000 award which is further cements the supportive relationship between PHCREDS and DHHS. His research project titled “Colonisation Burden of Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureas (MRSA) in Rural Hospitals in Tasmania” was selected from a strong field of applications by a joint panel from DHHS and PHCREDS.

We look forward to Brett presenting his research findings at the PHCREDS annual Symposium in November.
Activities January to June

Research Skills Training Workshops

Workshops have been well attended in the early part of the year with many booked to capacity. 159 people have attended a workshop or research clinic.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Workshop Name</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>attendance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Research and Evaluation</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>Launceston</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Burnie</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>Using the Literature</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Launceston</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northwest Research Clinic (including evaluation mini workshop)</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>Burnie</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>Research Method Qualitative</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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<td>Launceston</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Method Quantitative</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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<td>Launceston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Collection Methods</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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<td>Launceston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using Surveys</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Launceston</td>
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For more information on the workshops, including PowerPoint presentations please visit our website.

Upcoming events and activities

Workshops

Workshop 6 Qualitative Data Analysis (Hobart and Launceston). This workshop will suit those people who have a basic understanding of qualitative methods and have some research data they wish to analyse.

Workshop 7 Quantitative Data analysis (Hobart and Launceston). This workshop will assume a basic understanding of quantitative methods and statistical terminology. Participants are encouraged to bring along their own data set for analysis.

Travel Grants Round 2

Open to all primary health care practitioners undertaking research and to primary health researchers. Travel grants can be used to attend a conference within Australia or to bring a primary health care researcher to Tasmania. Round 2 close at the end of June.

UDRH ‘apprenticeships

UDRH have recently called for expressions of interest for ‘mini’ research apprenticeship positions in three small research projects under our Priority Research funding. The projects are:

- Transitions to Primary Health Care in Rural Tasmania
- Adolescents and the Self-management of Type 1 Diabetes
- Reducing social isolation among older caregivers

Visit the PHCREDS website for more information.

Symposium

This year’s symposium will be held at the University centre, Sandy Bay Campus Friday 24 November. Symposium theme “Building Communities of Practice-primary health care research”

Close 30 June
GP and PHC Conference Hobart 2006

The annual GP and PHC conference was held 4-6 June at the Grand Chancellor in Hobart attracting over 330 delegates. PHCRED Tasmania hosted a breakfast session for visiting RDPs as part of the conference activities. “Breakfast in the Pier” at T42 gave local and interstate RDPs an opportunity for informal networking and hopefully forging a community of practice amongst emerging primary health care researchers.

Dr Peter Orpin presented a poster “The Mini Research Apprenticeship- A Pathway To Primary Health Care Research Involvement” and presented a paper titled “Talking to the Community: Client Services Dialogue in Rural Health Centres” at the conference. Prof Mark Nelson’s paper (in conjunction with the University of Adelaide) was accepted as the Conference distinguished paper. Danielle Williams presented a paper titled “(Re)examining the multilayered meanings of being fat: developing ‘new strategies for working with overweight and obese female consumers of primary healthcare.” Dr Elizabeth Shannon (DHHS representative on the Tasmanian PHCRED Statewide Advisory Committee) presented a poster titled “Tasmania Health Plan: Changing Service Delivery in a Small State.”

From the Statewide Coordinator’s Desk

It has been very busy in PHCRED since I commenced in late October 2007 but we have achieved so much already this year. Demand for our services continues to grow, not just the workshops but mentoring and other research support services. We are currently updating our database and website to improve communication with our clients and hope to have online registration facilities available for all future workshops and this year’s Symposium. Meanwhile just a reminder from Sally; if you have registered for a workshop and have not received confirmation at least two days before the scheduled date, please contact her by email Sally.Thurley@utas.edu.au or by phone 62 264767.

PHCRED is undergoing a national evaluation this year and Tasmania has been chosen as one of the case study sites. The evaluator, Stuart Riley, will meet with program staff and past PHCRED participants during June 2008.

Planning has commenced for the PHCRED annual symposium. Its Hobart’s turn to host this year and we are looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible in November. Key dates for submission of abstracts and registration will be posted on our website as well as updates on keynote speakers and any other symposium related events. This year for the first time we also hope to hold a public seminar in conjunction with the symposium.

I have spent some time this year connecting with primary health stakeholders throughout Tasmania. I attended the Australian Physiotherapist Association Conference in April where I gave a talk titled “The Role of Research in Innovation.” I have also been in touch with our colleagues in the Department of Health and Human Services where I have provided PHCRED updates to senior management groups in Primary Health Care and Allied Health. This year PHCRED aim to strengthen our ties with Tasmanian Divisions of General Practice and so far I have met with senior divisional staff in Hobart and Burnie. We are also looking at opportunities for partnerships with others in the non government, not for profit sector and local government. I hope to make contact or reconnect with these important stakeholders in the coming months. As always I am keen to hear from organisations and individuals who are interested in conducting their own research in primary health care.

Also this newsletter sees a preview of our new ‘look’ designed by Red Jelly, Hobart. Thanks to Susannah and the creative team for coming up with the very contemporary and beautiful leaf logo which will make future PHCRED Tasmania publications and communiqués instantly recognisable.

Theresa Doherty
Statewide Facilitator
PHCRED
Photo Gallery

GP and PHC conference June 4-6 Hobart.
Clockwise from top left. Elizabeth Shannon, Peter Orpin, Danielle Williams, Mark Nelson (centre) with colleagues Prof Justin Beilby (lt), University of Adelaide and Dr Grant Blashki,(rt) University of Melbourne, Peter Orpin

GP and PHC conference June 4-6 Hobart.
Clockwise from top left Emily Shepherd, Sally Bennett, Danielle Williams, Helen Zournazis, Theresa Doherty, Jen Hargrave and Faline Howes

RDP Conference delegates enjoying “Breakfast on the Pier” at T42

We welcome your feedback
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