

research ● ● ● matters

volume 12
number 3
dec 2003

newsletter of the south australian community health research unit

Launch of New SACHRU Report If Only Numbers Count



A new SACHRU report *If Only Numbers Count: Performance Indicators for Community Health*, written by Gwyn Jolley, was launched on 17th October 2003, by Jim Birch, Chief Executive of SA Department of Human Services, during the PHCRED conference in Adelaide.

This report presents the outcomes from a study to examine the use of performance indicators as an evaluation tool for the community health sector in Australia. The purpose of the study was to investigate performance measurement in primary health care services provided by the community health sector, assess the effectiveness of the performance measurement approach and consider future options.

Study methods included a review of national and international literature on performance measurement in the public sector

and in the primary health care and community health sectors; interviews with eleven key stakeholders in South Australia; and development of sample performance indicators for community health based on the National Health Performance Committee Framework.

The report concludes that there are a number of challenges in using performance indicators to assess the effectiveness of community health services. Performance measurement may provide a relatively straightforward tool to measure activity and quality standards against benchmarks (reflecting its origins in the manufacturing sector) but it is not up to the task of measuring complex and often long-term outcomes associated with public sector services such as community health. Qualitative evaluation methodologies are becoming more widely accepted and are more appropriate in the assessment of effectiveness for the community-based health promotion work of community health services. However, there is still much to be done in developing evaluation methodologies that are rigorous while at the same time able to measure, and compare across

(Continued on page 2)



Best Wishes for the Festive Season

What's Inside

<i>Director's Comments</i>	2
<i>Training and Workforce Development</i>	2
<i>Northern Dementia Respite Initiative</i>	3
<i>Putting Access and Equity into Practice in the Inner South</i>	3
<i>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Community Education Project</i> ...	4
<i>Just Practice in Men's Health and Wellbeing. Developing a Primary Health Care Approach</i>	4
<i>Effectiveness of Community Health Services: Systematic Review</i>	5
<i>Tapping into Civil Society: Guidelines for linking health systems with civil society</i> .	5
<i>An evaluation of the 'Seasons for Growth' program in SA primary schools</i>	6
<i>Work and Well Being</i>	6
<i>Research Workshop Program 2004</i>	7
<i>Talking Realities...young parenting project</i>	8

Director's Comments

(Continued from page 1)

services, long-term and complex outcomes in health and well-being.

In a climate of fiscal constraint and evidence-based practice, the community health sector is being asked to provide evidence for the effectiveness of its approach and the achievement of enhanced health for the community. The challenge is to obtain and present this evidence while acknowledging the large role played by the social and environmental determinants of

health outside the control of the sector, and protecting the value-base of primary health care as reflected in the emphasis on health promotion, participation, collaboration and equity.

Copies of the report can be obtained through the South Australian Community Health Research Unit, % Flinders Medical Centre, Bedford Park SA 5042.

Cost \$19.95, plus postage (*includes GST*) To order your copy telephone (08) 8204 5988, fax (08) 8374 0230 or email sachru@fmc.sa.gov.au.

Training and Workforce Development

Since our last newsletter, SACHRU has presented a number of successful training workshops on topics such as Focus Groups, Consumer Feedback, Evaluation, Arts and Health, Population Health and Primary Health Care Planning.

Lisel O'Dwyer, Michael Bentley and Gwyn Jolley contributed to the Evaluation for Primary Health Care short course run by the Department of Public Health, Flinders University in September.

Twenty five people attended a workshop run by Fran Baum for senior managers from Eyre Regional Health service in Port Lincoln in primary health care.

In October, the very successful Healthy Cities and Communities Short course was attended by over 50 participants. This course is a collaboration between Flinders University, Noarlunga Health Services and Healthy Cities Noarlunga. Participants always enjoy the opportunity to combine theory with a site visit to Noarlunga and attendance at the very entertaining Healthy Cities Noarlunga AGM.

We are pleased to include with this newsletter, a preview of our workshop program for 2004.

(Continued on page 7)

Group at Port Lincoln workshop that won prize for most visionary view of a Healthy Eyre Peninsula 2020



Northern Dementia Respite Initiative

SACHRU was the successful tenderer for the evaluation of the Northern Dementia Respite Initiative (NDRI), a collaborative project involving Metropolitan Domiciliary Care - Northern Region, Helping Hand Aged Care (HHAC), Alzheimer's Australia (SA) and North & West Metropolitan Adelaide Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre.

The NDRI represents a coalescence of services for carers of people with dementia. Services include counselling, carer education and information resources as well as extended day, overnight and weekend respite care and group programs. Some services are provided from Styles House - a secure home environment with provisions for up to three overnight clients. NDRI funding has also supported the development of offsite and mobile respite programs for culturally and linguistically

diverse (CALD) and indigenous communities as well as those clients with dementia who live alone and remain physically active. Recent initiatives include a mobile respite program for Aboriginal clients and an active men's group.

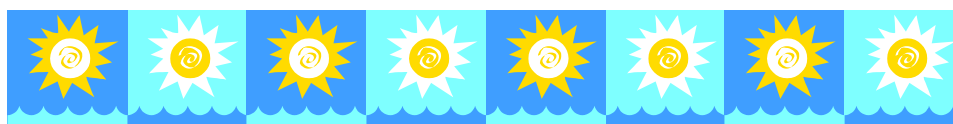
The first overnight stay occurred mid February 2003 and the evaluation is to report within a 12 month framework. The key evaluation tasks include an assessment of:

1. Outcomes for carers and persons with dementia
2. Consistency with the objectives of the funding initiative
3. Adherence to Home & Community Care National Standards
4. Cost effectiveness
5. Impact on service networks in the region.

A range of methods is being used to collate the quantitative and

qualitative data to inform the evaluation, including questionnaires for carers, management group and day respite coordinators, access to data on utilisation and service delivery costs and participation in Consumer Advisory, Dementia Action and Management Group meetings. Quality Improvement staff at Metropolitan Domiciliary Care has assisted SACHRU to identify an appropriate tool and process by which to document how the Northern Dementia Respite Initiative assists the organisation to demonstrate adherence to HACC National Standards. Final data collection is underway and project partners will be provided with an evaluation report in February 2004.

Enquiries can be directed to Stacey Masters on (08) 8204 5979 or email stacey.masters@fmc.sa.gov.au.



Putting Access and Equity into Practice in the Inner South

The "Putting Access and Equity into Practice: Inner Southern Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Regional Collaboration Project" involves a group of five agencies: the Inner Southern Community Health Centre, Family and Youth Services at Marion, the South Australian Housing Trust at Marion, Mental Health Services for Older People and Karpa Ngarratendi at Flinders Medical Centre. The project is now in its final stages and has undertaken a number of activities including a

survey of local DHS agency staff regarding Aboriginal access to their services, conducting a Cultural Day attended by community members and staff and conflict resolution training workshops for staff and community members involved with the project. The most recent activities include focus groups with local Aboriginal people to identify community needs and the completion of a survey of the local community regarding their attitudes toward, and experiences

of, the partner agencies. This data is currently being analysed and written up by SACHRU and the results will be compared with the earlier staff survey in order to make recommendation about improving the accessibility and cultural appropriateness of services. The project is due to conclude in March, 2004.

Any enquiries about the evaluation can be directed to Catherine Hurley on 8204 5982 or e-mail catherine.hurley@fmc.sa.gov.au

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Community Education Project

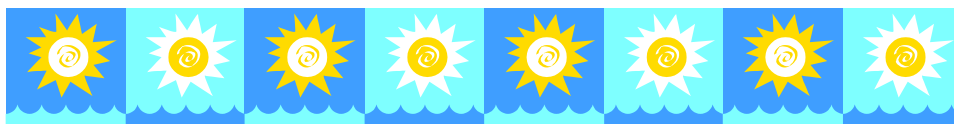
This project, run by the Carers Association of SA, sought to make links with carers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in order to better meet their needs for information and services to support their caring role. Four communities participated in this project: Italian, Polish, Lebanese/Arabic and the Vietnamese communities. The project is now completed and the final report has been drafted and should be available on the Carers Association of SA website

in the next few months.

The evaluation of the project found that it was successful in recruiting former or current carers as “Carer Ambassadors” from three of the four communities to speak to established groups within their communities about carer roles and the resources available to assist them. The project was also able to identify some of the barriers to CALD carers accessing services, including language and cultural differences, lack of trust and knowledge of services and

community attitudes toward seeking outside support. The project also helped to form useful links between the Carers Association and the community workers for each cultural group and other agencies involved in service provision to carers from CALD communities.

Any enquiries about the evaluation can be directed to Catherine Hurley on 204 5982 or e-mail catherine.hurley@fmc.sa.gov.au



Just Practice in Men’s Health and Wellbeing: Developing a Primary Health Care Approach

The *Just Practice* document is a joint project between the South Australian Department of Human Services and the South Australian Community Health Research Unit.

The implementation of the recently released Primary Health Care Policy will “focus on better health for the population and actively works to reduce health inequalities between different people.” Men are a diverse population group and thus men’s health and wellbeing needs to be located in this primary health care context, recognising the principles of equity, participation, cultural and gender accountability, comprehensiveness, and sustainability.

The project is developing a primary health care framework that recognises the complexity of men’s health issues and needs, and the power inequalities

between men and women and between different groups of men. Thus, the ‘*Just Practice*’ framework is underpinned by the principles of equity and social justice.

The project is using case studies that cover a diversity of men’s health and wellbeing services and programs across the life course. These programs and services not only address physical health but also address the social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of population groups of men. They include work in the areas of Gay Men’s Health, Men and Violence, Male Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse, Fatherhood, Engaging Middle-aged Men, Older Men, Indigenous Men, and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Men.

The purpose of the case studies is to illustrate just practice principles in projects that have been developed to improve the health

and wellbeing of men in South Australia, and to provide practical examples of how primary health care for men’s health and wellbeing is applied within various service and community settings.

The *Just Practice* document will also aim

- to inform education, training and development for service providers and the broader community in relation to men’s health and wellbeing
- to contribute to the provision of information and resources on men’s health and wellbeing
- to inform the development and delivery of men’s health programs and services.

For further information on the *Just Practice* project, contact Michael Bentley on (08) 8204 5981 or michael.bentley@fmc.sa.gov.au

Effectiveness of Community Health Services: Systematic Review

The first stage of the Effectiveness of Community Health Services project culminated in a report "Investing in Community Health – Finding the Evidence for Effectiveness" launched in February last year by the South Australian Minister for Health. The next stage of the work is to undertake a systematic review of evaluation reports from metropolitan community health services over the last four years. This will allow us to assess the appropriateness and usefulness of applying systematic review to community health program evaluation.

Objectives of the project are to

1. identify and document CHS

2. trial the application of systematic review and analysis to the evaluations
3. assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of systematic review to CH evaluations
4. determine areas in which common assessment tools could be used by CHS
5. contribute to an evidence base for CH services and approach

A review framework has been developed and trialed with a team of reviewers made up from the metropolitan community health services, researchers from SACHRU, and Denise Fry from NSW who will be acting as an external reviewer.

The review team is nearing completion of the systematic review of the evaluation reports and the data is being entered onto a database in preparation for collation and analysis. Researchers have also visited all the metropolitan CHS to gain an appreciation from staff of the promoters and barriers to undertaking evaluation in provider agencies.

The project has had some delays and is now likely to hold a forum to present the findings some time in the first half of 2004.

For further information please contact Gwyn Jolley on (08) 8204 5978 or email gwyn.jolley@fmc.sa.gov.au

Tapping into Civil Society: Guidelines for linking health systems with civil society

A new resource *Tapping into Civil Society: Guidelines for linking health systems with civil society* is produced by SACHRU and written by a team of researchers from Flinders University and the University of the Western Cape, South Africa for the World Health Organization, Geneva.

The *Guidelines* were developed as

a result of two multi-country research projects sponsored by the World Health Organization. These *Guidelines* are designed to help staff in regional or district health systems work in partnership with civil society organizations and groups in their areas in order to promote health. They provide a practical tool that can be used in the development of partnerships between health professionals and existing community groups.

The *Guidelines* contain seven sections:

- Section 1: Crucial concepts
- Section 2: Is your district health system ready to work with local civil society organizations?
- Section 3: Identifying and making contact with local civil society organizations

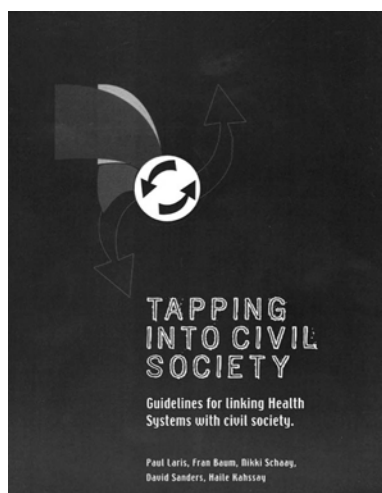
- Section 4: Analysis of local civil society organizations
- Section 5: Building partnerships and working with local civil society organizations
- Section 6: Case Studies
- Section 7: Appendix

The *Guidelines* are illustrated by cartoons from Simon Kneebone.

Copies of the *Guidelines* can be obtained through the South Australian Community Health Research Unit, % Flinders Medical Centre, Bedford Park SA 5042.

Cost A\$29.95 or A\$14.00 for non-OECD countries; plus postage (includes GST)

To order your copy telephone (08) 8204 5988, fax (08) 8374 0230 or email sachru@fmc.sa.gov.au.



An evaluation of the 'Seasons for Growth' program in SA primary schools

SACHRU has been engaged by the Metropolitan Division of the Department of Human Services to undertake an evaluation of the *Seasons for Growth* program in participating SA primary schools. *Seasons for Growth* is a national grief education program for young people aged 6 to 18 years who have experienced significant change or loss due to death or family breakdown. It is an early intervention program that seeks to promote mental health and psychosocial competence in young people. *Seasons for Growth* is currently offered as a student withdrawal program in both primary and secondary schools.

The purpose of the evaluation is to fulfil the requirements of the service agreement between Metropolitan Division, DHS and the Mary MacKillop Foundation (who auspices *Seasons for Growth*), to contribute to information about the quality and outcomes of the program.

The evaluation will focus on four areas:

1. Reach of the program, with particular focus on equity of

access to disadvantaged students and schools;

2. Collation of activity data (eg training of teachers and lay staff as 'companions' (group facilitators); number and sources of requests for program information);
3. Factors impacting on program sustainability within schools; and
4. Impact on program participants.

Evaluation methods will include:

1. Collation and analysis of program data collected by the Seasons for Growth State Office, including routine feedback forms completed by participating students, Companions and parents.
2. Telephone interviews with companions and classroom teachers of participating students re the perceived impact on students taking part and how the program fits with other student support mechanisms and resources.
3. A case study of how *Seasons for*

Growth has been introduced, established and maintained in a school setting over several years.

The evaluation has received ethics approval from the Social & Behavioural Research Ethics Committee at Flinders University and the Department of Education & Children's Services (DECS). Members of the SA Reference Group - comprising representatives from Catholic Education Australia, Independent Schools Board, DECS, Adelaide University, Bereavement Services, Department of Human Services and members with expertise in grief and loss - were also provided with an opportunity to comment on the evaluation proposal and tools.

Data collection will be completed by mid December, with a final evaluation report to be presented to the SA Reference Group at the end of April 2004.

Enquiries can be directed to Stacey Masters on (08) 8204 5979 or email stacey.masters@fmc.sa.gov.au.



Do you have any comments, suggestions, or feedback? Please email us at: sachru@fmc.sa.gov.au



Work and Well Being

The *Work and Well Being* project is gathering information about the links between working conditions and employee health that have been well established in other communities. It is a Flinders University collaborative project between the Department of Public Health and the National Institute of Labour Studies. It is intended that the results of the project will help to establish further research

in this field.

The study will focus on white collar occupations for which demand is low and the researchers will gather the perceptions of young workers about the impacts of employment conditions on their health. Data concerning how family responsibilities interact with work responsibilities will also be gathered. Comparisons will be

made between private and public sectors and between continuing, casual and contract employees.

The project began in August 2003 and plans are now well advanced for the conduct of employee focus groups early in 2004. The final report is expected in March/April 2004. For more information email peter.nixon@flinders.edu.au or phone (08) 8204 5982.

Research Workshop Program 2004

SACHRU and the Department of Public Health (DPH) at Flinders University have compiled a comprehensive Training Workshop Program for 2004 that aims to help equip community health workers and others with the critical knowledge, awareness and skills to understand a variety of issues and approaches in evaluation and social research. The sessions cover a wide range of techniques, in an applied and practical sense, highlighting good and flawed practice, common pitfalls, and examples from real-life studies in the field.

- Session 1** **Planning Research** *(morning workshop) Tuesday, May 4*
- Session 2** **Introduction to Primary Health Care** *(morning workshop) Wednesday, May 12*
- Session 3** **Research Skills for Policy Development in Primary Health Care** *(afternoon workshop) Wednesday, May 12*
- Session 4** **Helping Research to Influence Policy and Practice** *(afternoon workshop) Thursday, May 27*
- Session 5** **Developing Questionnaires for Primary Health Care Settings** *(morning workshop) Friday, June 4*
- Session 6** **Analysing Questionnaire Data** *(afternoon workshop) Friday, June 4*
- Session 7** **Participatory Action Research** *(morning workshop) Friday, July 9*
- Session 8** **Observational Techniques in Research and Evaluation** *(afternoon workshop) Friday, July 9*
- Session 9** **Focus Groups** *(morning workshop) Friday, August 6*
- Session 10** **Qualitative Interviewing and Analysis** *(afternoon workshop) Friday, September 10*
- Session 11** **Consumer Feedback** *(morning workshop) Wednesday, September 3*
- Session 12** **Evaluation** *(morning workshop) Friday, October 8*
- Session 13** **Evaluating Arts in Health** *(afternoon workshop) Wednesday, October 8*
- Session 14** **Population Health, Planning and Spatial Perspectives** *(full day workshop) Friday, November 5*

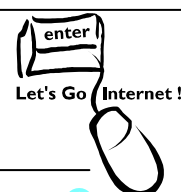
Cost: \$85 per person per half-day session (\$25 per person per half-day session for SA metro/country Community Health Services)

All prices include GST

To book your place, contact SACHRU on (08) 8204 5988 or email sachru@fmc.sa.gov.au. The workshops are held at the Education Development Centre, located on Milner Street, Hindmarsh.



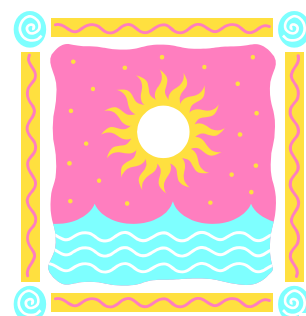
For up-to-date information on publications and training workshops and to read newsletters from the last twelve months, visit us on the internet:
<http://www.sachru.sa.gov.au>



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Regrettably we have had to increase our charges this year, however the workshops are great value and are usually booked to capacity so we suggest you get in early to reserve your place.

To book, contact SACHRU on (08) 8204 5988 or email sachru@fmc.sa.gov.au. The workshops are held at the Education Development Centre, located on Milner Street, Hindmarsh.



Talking Realities...young parenting project

The *Talking Realities...young parenting* project supports young parents to raise the awareness of parenting issues for secondary school students and young people in general. The project is funded through Parenting SA, Department of Human Services, and the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services and is auspiced by Adelaide Central Community Health Service. SACHRU has been contracted to undertake the evaluation of the project.

The goals of the *Talking Realities...young parenting* project are to:

- Contribute to increasing the capacity of young people in the Adelaide metropolitan area to make informed choices regarding parenting and health

- Improve the social health outcomes for young parents (peer educators) in the Adelaide Central Community Health Region

Talking Realities...young parenting provides early intervention with young people who are parents as well as those who are likely to become parents. Young parents are given training and support to develop a parenting and health program and to take on a role as peer educators. The peer educators then present the program to school students and other groups of young people. The content of the program is intended to demonstrate to recipients the significant impact that teenage pregnancy has on young people and their children with regards to their life choices. Topics include education, employment, careers, housing and relationships. The content highlights the emotional

and social consequences of young parenting as well as children's needs and responsibilities in children's development.

Project workers and peer educators collect and record feedback sheets from teachers and students who are recipients of the *Talking Realities* program. SACHRU is analysing and reporting on this data. The evaluation will also include focus groups with the peer educators and students, and interviews with teachers and key stakeholders.

Data collection and analysis is in the final stages with the evaluation report due at the end of the year.

Enquiries can be directed to Gwyn Jolley on (08) 8204 5978 or email gwyn.jolley@fmc.sa.gov.au



Research Matters is a publication of the South Australian Community Health Research Unit (SACHRU).

Research Matters was written and produced by the South Australian Community Health Research Unit. Layout by Vicki Barrett.

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