

research ● ● ● matters

volume 12
number 2
july 2003

newsletter of the south australian community health research unit

South Australian Government responds to the Generational Health Review

In May 2002, the South Australian Government commissioned the Generational Health Review (GHR) to 'develop a blueprint for reform over the next 20 years.' As the Premier, Mike Rann, said, 'this was a "root and branch" examination of South Australia's health system - the most comprehensive review in thirty years.'

In April 2003, the Review Chair, John Menadue, presented the final report of the Generational Health Review to the Government. The Report covers some 74 recommendations commenting on such areas as population health and governance, promoting primary health care, accountability and transparency, workforce development, and health inequalities and health as a human right. A key message of the report is, 'there needs to be a significant shift from a system focused on illness to a health system reoriented towards health promotion, illness prevention and early intervention.'

The Treasurer, Kevin Foley, committed the Government to funding health reforms. He said, 'It's not about cutting the health budget to fund Menadue. It is about ... more money into health, ensuring that in the primary sector, out in the community, we do have a strong health system that gives all of us an alternative to hospital.' SACHRU welcomes the focus on primary health care. As the Minister for Health, Lea Stevens, said recently, 'South Australia once had a reputation amongst first world communities as being a global leader in primary health care reform. I will accept nothing less

than the restoration of that reputation.'

In February this year, the Minister announced the development of a new Primary Health Care policy to mark the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Alma Ata Declaration for Primary Health Care. She recently confirmed that commitment, 'South Australia's Primary Health Care Policy was a landmark achievement in the eighties and early nineties in providing the means to nurture progressive reform and provide the challenge for change to the rest of the health system. This is precisely what is needed now.'

SACHRU also welcomes the GHR's recommendation for strengthening research. As the report states: 'Research is an integral part of the health system. It is an enabler for many aspects of health care delivery, including informing the promotion of health and wellbeing, strengthening the evidence base for decision making and providing an avenue for stimulating debate for policy makers. GHR believes a culture of enquiry is needed in the health sector. Health related research should be integrated into all aspects of health care. The culture of enquiry should seek to promote greater linkages between research, policy and practice.'

You can follow the progress of the South Australian Government's health reform through their web site: <http://www.health.sa.gov.au/sahealthreform/>

In a serendipitous choice of name, South Australian health professionals, consumers and researchers have joined together to respond to and support the

Government's Generational Health Review. Health Reform SA is an alliance of doctors, nurses, health practitioners, consumers, carers and industry bodies.

Health Reform SA believes that it is time to build stronger links between institutional and community services; time to involve the community in health decision making, time to increase the funding to people most in need, and time to strengthen community based services. Further information for individuals or organisations wanting to join the alliance is available from John Wishart at SACOSS on (08) 8226 4111.

What's Inside

Director's Comments	2
Early Action for CVD/Diabetes Project ..	2
Putting Access and Equity into Practice ..	2
Identifying Models and Effective Approaches to Workforce Development for Primary Health Care	3
Effectiveness of Community Health Services: Systematic Review	3
Housing Tenure, Location and Social Capital	4
General Practice and Primary Health Care Research Conference 2003	4
New Staff Members—Lisel O'Dwyer and Michael Bentley	5
C-Health Email Distribution List	5
NHMRC Urban Locational Disadvantage Health Study	6
Human Services Research Grants 2003-2004	6
Research Training Workshop Program 2003	7
1st South Australian PHC RED Conference 2003	8
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Carers Project	8

Director's Comments

There is no doubt that it is an exciting time to work in the primary health care sector. The Generational Health Review has endorsed the importance of PHC as a foundation of our health system. 2003 is the 25th anniversary of the WHO's Health for All strategy and it is very fitting that South Australia, with its history of excellence in community health research and practice, will be launching a revitalised PHC policy. SACHRU is really glad to see that research is featuring prominently in plans for implementing PHC. The sort of research SACHRU engages in can provide the evidence base that will be essential to guide the implementation of the GHR. We do this by using appropriate evaluation methods to evaluate and improve service delivery and by conducting research on the social and economic determinants of health, which provides a program logic for much of the community development and social action work of community health.

SACHRU will be focusing some of its work program on Indigenous Health issues in the coming year. We hope to be guided in this work by the Aboriginal Health Council, by Aboriginal health workers around the state and by the Co-operative Research Centre in Aboriginal Health. If you have any views on this work then please contact Michael Bentley (michael.bentley@fmc.sa.gov.au) who is leading this initiative. Finally SACHRU has significantly strengthened its quantitative research capacity with the appointment of Lisel O'Dwyer. One of her first tasks will be to map routinely collected data from community health centres.

So SACHRU is well positioned to contribute to the "culture of inquiry" urged by the GHR and all of us are looking forward to doing so over the coming months.

Fran Baum

Putting Access and Equity into Practice: Inner Southern Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Regional Collaboration Project

This project is being auspiced by the Inner Southern Community Health Service and is funded by a HSRIP grant and monies from the partner agencies including Inner Southern, Marion FAYS, Marion Housing Trust, Southern Mental Health Services for Older People and the Karpa Ngarratendi health service at Flinders Medical Centre. SACHRU is involved in the evaluation of this project. Current activities include a survey of service providers within the partner agencies regarding their knowledge of Aboriginal issues and access to their services and ways in which this could be improved. Results of this survey are currently being analysed. The project staff are also undertaking a

similar survey among the local Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander community to determine levels of service use and accessibility. This will also be analysed and the two sets of results used to inform interventions in promoting services to the community and to assist with staff education. The project is planning a Cultural Day for families in July, designed to engage the local Aboriginal community and inform them about the project.

Any enquiries about the evaluation can be directed to Catherine Hurley on (08) 8204 5982 or email catherine.hurley@fmc.sa.gov.au

Early Action for CVD/Diabetes Project

SACHRU has recently completed an evaluation of aspects of the *Early Action for Cardiovascular Disease/Diabetes Project* auspiced by Adelaide Central Community Health Service (ACCHS) – Enfield. Health Promotion SA funded the project.

SACHRU was involved in evaluating health promotion and education interventions developed for population groups at high risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease, specifically the Polish and Vietnamese communities. The evaluation affirmed the importance of genuine participation in fostering learning across cultures.

SACHRU was also involved in the evaluation of a continuing education session for Practice Nurses that looked at enhancing their role in identifying community members at risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease, patient education and follow-up. The evaluation highlighted some of the opportunities and constraints that exist for nurses in general practice in relation to an expanded and autonomous primary care role. Project staff had initially been optimistic about the opportunities afforded by the Enhanced Primary Care (EPC) items and practice nurses confirmed that policy and/or infrastructure support was needed to shift the focus of care to early identification and action.

The *Early Action for CVD/Diabetes Project* has developed effective partnerships across diverse cultures and organisations. As well as enhancing sustainability, the partnerships have ensured that interventions have been well informed, culturally appropriate and integrated as part of the fabric of existing services and community groups.

For further information, please contact Stacey Masters on (08) 8204 5979, or email stacey.masters@fmc.sa.gov.au

Identifying Models and Effective Approaches to Workforce Development for Primary Health Care

Researchers at SACHRU have recently completed a review entitled *Identifying Models and Effective Approaches to Workforce Development for Primary Health Care* for Health Promotion SA, Department of Human Services. The Review drew on published literature, reports and expert knowledge to identify models and effective approaches to workforce development for the nutrition, primary health care and other relevant non-health sector workforces.

Three main approaches to workforce development were identified: action research, capacity building and competencies. None of these approaches appears to have been evaluated systematically, in terms of their contribution to workforce

development.

In summary, the review findings are that:

- there does not appear to be a body of evidence on workforce development methodologies in the peer-reviewed literature or the grey literature reviewed
- there appears to be little evaluation of workforce development models and programs for the primary health care, including specialist nutrition, workforces
- there are acknowledged limitations of current education/training in supporting the primary health care workforce to incorporate change
- the focus on workforce alone is not sufficient – workforce development approaches tend to be

individualistic, rather than environmental

- there is a need to integrate workforce development into the broader context of the organisation and public health policy
- capacity building and competency-based approaches both have a place and show promise
- transfer of new evidence into practice is key and needs organisational support as well as support for the primary health care workforce.

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

The purpose of conducting a systematic review is to facilitate the aggregation of the evidence from a number of evaluations into one document that allows the evidence to be analysed collectively rather than individually. The process will build a credible body of knowledge on the effectiveness of community health services that is greater than the sum of the parts.

Objectives of the project are to

1. identify and document CHS evaluations
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. Over 90 reports have been identified that meet the inclusion criteria and each of these will be systematically reviewed by two members of the review team independently. Evaluations will be assessed under

two main headings: the adequacy of description and analysis of the intervention; and the evaluation methodology.

Data will be analysed by

- Initiative type e.g. one to one, group, community development/ social action
- Health issue e.g. interpersonal violence, diabetes

Researchers will also be visiting community health sites to seek information about the promoters and barriers to conducting and using evaluation in this setting. This information will provide a useful context for documenting the findings of the systematic review process. Reviews will start shortly and it is hoped that the project will be able to produce a final report in February 2004.

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

Housing Tenure, Location and Social Capital: A Preliminary Study of the Implications for Health

The neighbourhoods we live in, the social connections we make, as well as the kinds of houses that we live in, can have an impact on our health and well-being. The Housing Tenure, Location and Social Capital project is interested in examining the interactions between housing, social capital and location, and the potential impacts that this has on people's health. This pilot research project provides a preliminary examination of some of the ways in which these three elements contribute to health inequities.

The project involves developing case studies of three suburbs (selected according to concentration of

housing tenure types) and will employ qualitative research methods to collect preliminary data relating to housing tenure, social capital and health. The study areas will include one suburb with a high concentration of public housing, one with a high concentration of private owner-occupation and one with a mix of public housing and private owner-occupation.

As it is a pilot study, one focus group will be conducted in each area to discuss issues relating to people's experiences of housing tenure, location, social capital and health. The focus groups will be supported by an observational audit of the features of the areas, to independently measure

and validate the relationship between health and housing tenure that is carried through the physical and environmental features of an area.

The research team is currently identifying the areas for study, undertaking an initial literature review of previous research and completing the required ethics approval. Fieldwork is expected to take place in August – October, with preliminary findings completed by November.

For further information, please contact Catherine Palmer on (08) 8204 4277 or email catherine.palmer@flinders.edu.au

General Practice & PHC Research Conference Primary Health Care Research: Evolution or Revolution

This national conference was held in Canberra from 18th to 20th June. I attended for SACHRU and presented two posters: one on the Reality Parenting project evaluation and one on the Coorong Good Food project evaluation. Both these posters were prepared with input from the respective project managers and demonstrate the value of effective links between SACHRU researchers and health promotion practitioners. I also presented a poster on behalf of Angela Lawless, Fran Baum and team entitled *General Practice, Primary Health Care and Population Health*.

While the focus of the conference continues to be general practice, there were a number of papers that acknowledged the broader primary health care approach and stretched delegates thinking beyond the medical and clinical aspects of primary care.

The first keynote address was Bonnie Sibbald presenting research about the expectation that practice nurses can increase access to primary health care more cheaply than doctors. She suggested that, for minor illness, care by a nurse is effective and acceptable to consumers but no cheaper than care provided by a doctor because productivity is lower for nurses. She also argued that the cost of coordination

increases as the size of the primary care team increases and these transaction costs may outweigh the benefits.

As a speaker for the 'think tank' *Maintain health or preventing illness: approaches to primary care*, Gawaine Powell Davies discussed the notion that primary health care is pulled in two directions: population health and specialist general practice. He argued that we need to strengthen both aspects and increase integration.

An afternoon concurrent paper session on Building Research Capacity included a discussion of the feasibility of an Australian primary health care research register. Another paper reviewed qualitative research methods in general practice and concluded that, while the use of qualitative research has increased, there is still a conceptual deficiency in terms of rigour and other quality criteria. A number of other papers described innovative ways of increasing research capacity amongst primary health care practitioners, particularly those in a rural setting.

The second day opened with a very thought provoking address from Prof. Penny Hall. Penny suggested that it was not necessary to throw away randomised controlled trials (RCTs) in health promotion research and that RCTs are more adaptable than most people think. She asked the question 'When no effect is evident, is this an evaluation failure or a

program failure?' Health promotion interventions are complex systems and we need an intervention theory to match. For an RCT, something has to be standardised and replicable but Penny argued that this standardisation can be the process rather than the delivery. She called for program evaluation to be replaced by 'program-in-context' evaluation.

The final plenary session on health inequalities was the highlight for me. Dr. Wendy Rogers described the Scottish *Starting Well* project and some of the ethical issues that have arisen. These include the need to balance service delivery with rigorous evaluation requirements and protocols, and the tension between a commitment to involve communities and the requirement for only evidence-based interventions.

Dr. John Marwick from New Zealand outlined the role of the Primary Health Care Strategy and the newly established Primary Health Organisations (PHOs). John reported that government funding will increase substantially and change health care access to a universal system with much reduced co-payments. Payment will shift from a fee-for-service subsidy to payment of a PHO according to the expected needs of the enrolled

(Continued on page 8)

New Staff Member - Lisel O'Dwyer

Lisel O'Dwyer has taken up a Senior Research Officer position with SACHRU, coming from a health geography and broader social science background. She has worked as an academic researcher in the area of housing studies and health geography since completing her BA in psychology and human geography in 1989, first at the University of Adelaide's Department of Geography, then at the National Key Centre for Social Applications of GIS while based at Flinders University's School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management. She was also located in the School while working on a large ARC project on private rental housing and an AHURI project on evidence-based policy.

Her PhD, completed in 1997, was a multidisciplinary work drawing on fields such as housing studies, human geography, estate law, economics, the sociology of families, social policy and political economy and distribution philosophy. She then extended her existing interests in the geography of health by using GIS to determine lead risk for children. Other research interests include social justice (now rebadged as social exclusion), research methods, relationships between housing and health and locational disadvantage.

Lisel's work with SACHRU will involve the use of her GIS skills and knowledge of quantitative research methods. She is also keen to facilitate communication with other researchers and workers in community health and has set up a new electronic discussion group called "C-Health" which has attracted over 200 members in less than two weeks.

One of her keen interests in her spare time is animal training using a bridging signal followed by positive reinforcement, a method known as "clicker training". She is keen to advance the use of this humane and simple method based on the principles of learning and operant conditioning in the training of assistance and therapy animals, including dogs and miniature horses, and in animal shelters. She has four horses, two donkeys, two cats and one human partner (but the human is hardest to train).

C-Health Email Distribution List

SACHRU has set up a distribution list called "C-Health". The aim of the list is to promote communication within the field of community health, especially in the Australian context but international members are also welcome.

The list may be used to: discuss any relevant

New Staff Member - Michael Bentley

Michael joined SACHRU in June this year as a Senior Research Officer. He is on 12 months secondment from the Hills Mallee Southern Regional Health Service, where he has been the Region's Planning and Research Officer since 1997.

In a life-long career in the health system, Michael has worked at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and the Adelaide Children's Hospital (as it was then) as a Clinical Technologist in Cardiology, Intensive Care and Anaesthesia. Before moving to the Hills Mallee Southern Regional Health Service, he was in the South Australian Health Commission as a Senior Planning and Project Officer in Country Health Services.

As a mature-age student, Michael completed a Bachelor of Mathematical Science (University of Adelaide) and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Health Administration and Information Systems (Central Queensland University). He is currently undertaking a Master of Arts (University of Western Sydney), investigating complexity as it applies to health, ecology, and organisations.

Michael will be undertaking a key role in developing SACHRU's involvement in Aboriginal health research. He has previously worked on a number of Aboriginal health projects, including the development of the Aboriginal Primary Health Care Access Program plan in the Hills Mallee Southern region.

Michael's other interest areas are population-based planning, and gender, equity and health. He also has responsibility for the Planning & Evaluation Wizard (PEW).

Out of work hours, Michael enjoys photography, walking, bush care, cinema, learning the Irish language, and listening to the diversity of the music of the planet.



topic; advertise job vacancies, workshops or conferences; seek information on any relevant issues; seek other researchers or practitioners with knowledge/experience of particular issues; discuss opinions on relevant policy or research methods. Go to <http://listserver.flinders.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/c-health> for further information on the list and to subscribe.

NHMRC Urban Locational Disadvantage and Health Study

The NHMRC 4 year Urban Locational Disadvantage and Health study, which is in the first phase of the study, has seen a focus on the Health Monitor survey and social and environmental characteristics of metropolitan Adelaide. The Project Team has in this time seen the addition of Dr Catherine Palmer and Dr Lisel O'Dwyer.

The inaugural Advisory Committee meeting was held at the Department of Human Services office in the CitiCentre building in June. This provided useful input to the project by key people in the health service industry. The Project Team has completed the design of the questionnaire for the Health Monitor survey and this will be conducted by the Department of Human Services in early July and completed in August. Data for the independent area level measures, or indicators of social and environmental factors, are in the process of being collected, with the aim of concurrent analysis with the Health Monitor data in September. For further information, please contact Andrew Lyons-Reid on (08) 8204 4277.

Human Services Research Grants 2003-2004

The South Australian Department of Human Services has recently invited research applications under its Human Services Research and Innovation Grants scheme. SACHRU and the Department of Public Health, Flinders University have submitted a number of applications:

- Primary Health Care and Health Promotion: establishing an evidence base for multi-sectoral, community-based initiatives
- Reducing Health Inequities: the contribution of health services
- Life-course Outcomes for Young Parent Peer Educators and their Children
- Multidisciplinary Teams in Primary Health Care
- Children and Social Inclusion: agency, environment and health
- The Relationship between the Mental Health and Housing Sectors

We understand that all the grant applications are currently being reviewed and hope to hear the results over the next few months.



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



Investing in Community Health—Finding the Evidence for Effectiveness

This report is a thorough review of the various mechanisms for assessing the performance of community health services. It was commissioned following discussion between SACHRU and the Directors of the four South Australian metropolitan community health services which led to the formulation of a SACHRU project to investigate systematically the various means by which community health evidence can be judged. The report discusses the use of economic techniques, routine databases, systematic reviews and performance indicators. Each of these techniques has been assessed to determine the contribution they make to measuring effectiveness of community health services. This report also considers the types of evidence used in South Australian community health services and annotates the reports completed by SACHRU that have contributed to this evidence base.

The final chapter draws general conclusions about the evidence for effectiveness of community health services and compares this evidence to that available for other sectors of the health system. It then considers three factors that contribute to the assessment of community health: the problem of attribution, the complexity of most community health interventions and the problems this poses for evaluators, and finally, the importance of ensuring that seductively simple evaluation methods do not drive the type and scale of community health interventions. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the way forward to a more systematic approach to assessing the performance of community health services. The systematic framework proposed assesses the quality of planning, program logic, evaluation and subsequent



implementation of change in the community health sector, while taking into account the importance of the core values underpinning comprehensive primary health care, especially participation, equity and population-based approaches.

To purchase a copy of this report, please contact SACHRU Tel: (08) 8204 5988 Fax: (08) 8374 0230. **Cost:** \$19.90 plus postage (GST included)

Training Workshop Program 2003

SACHRU and the Department of Public Health (DPH) at Flinders University have compiled a comprehensive Training Workshop Program for 2003 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.

Wednesday, August 6 (9.30 am – 12.30 pm)

Focus Groups

Catherine Hurley, SACHRU

Focus groups are often used in evaluation; they have many strengths and some distinct disadvantages. Using examples, this practical workshop will equip participants with the knowledge needed to successfully conduct/manage focus groups and an awareness of the issues involved and skills required.

Participants will be able to identify when focus groups might best be employed, the roles of the moderator/facilitator, how to stratify groups, heterogeneous versus homogeneous groups and how to deal with some of the pitfalls of using this method.

Wednesday, September 3 (9.30 am – 12.30 pm)

Consumer Feedback

Anne Johnson, DPH

How do service providers find out about the levels of satisfaction patients have with the services they have received? What contextual problems are there in attempting to obtain valid information from patients and how might these be addressed? Does 'satisfaction' really reflect the nature of the service provided or hinder the identification areas which can be improved? This workshop is aimed at providing participants with an overview of the range of surveys used in health care settings across Australia to gain patient feedback and determine satisfaction.

Wednesday, October 8 (9.30 am – 12.30 pm)

Evaluation

Gwyn Jolley and Catherine Hurley, SACHRU

What is evaluation, why do it and who is it for? This session provides an introduction to program/project evaluation and looks at different types of evaluation (process, impact, outcome) and the issues to consider when planning and conducting an evaluation.

Quantitative and qualitative approaches and data collection methods will be briefly described along with ways to present the findings and optimise the usefulness of the evaluation effort.

Wednesday, October 8 (1.30 pm – 4.30 pm)

Arts and Health: Who's Afraid of Evaluation?

Christine Putland, DPH

Arts and Health initiatives in health care and community settings present unique challenges and opportunities for

evaluation. Arts and Health is about creating, growing, learning, improving and striving to do things 'better'. It is an emerging field in which evaluation plays a particularly important role, by helping to appraise new developments in practice and generate evidence of the value of the work. This workshop will place Arts and Health in a health promotion context and explore appropriate, meaningful and convincing approaches to its evaluation. Participants will have the opportunity to develop strategies to capture and express the contribution made by these initiatives to promoting health and wellbeing in a range of settings.



Wednesday, November 5 (9.30 am-12.30 pm)
Population Health and Primary Health Care planning using spatial perspectives and techniques

Michael Bentley and Dr Lisel O'Dwyer

The current South Australian Health Reform places strong emphasis on population health and primary health care. The Generational Health Review proposes that, 'A population health focus will require a fundamental shift in health system perspectives and priorities to place the health of the population at the centre of decision making.'

What is population health? What is the relationship between population health, public health, and primary health care? What does this mean for primary health care service planning?

This workshop will draw upon contemporary health reforms to explore some of these questions and to consider some planning frameworks.

How are spatial perspectives and techniques used in planning?

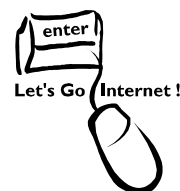
Using the Australian Bureau of Statistics product CDATA 2001 with MapInfo, the workshop will explore the range of population data most commonly used in demographic analysis. Data on population characteristics form the baseline for planning and it is important to understand how such data should be interpreted. Factors involved include the geographic level of study (and how to choose the most appropriate geographic level), the statistical distribution of the data and the background of the target audience. The workshop will also consider how fundamental population parameters such as age structure and mobility vary over geographic space and scale and the implications of this when planning health services. Participants will have the opportunity put this information into practice through a scenario planning exercise.

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>



1st South Australian PHC RED Conference 2003

Growing Research in Primary Health Care

16-17 October 2003 Enterprise House, 136 Greenhill Rd, Adelaide

Invitation

The first South Australian PHC RED Conference 2003 is a key event for all primary health care professionals, general practitioners, students in medical and health sciences, and consumers with an interest in primary health care research and evaluation.

The Conference will consist of an exciting mix of keynote presentations, concurrent paper and poster sessions, informal discussion forums, and research related training workshops.

The Conference provides an excellent opportunity to showcase primary health care research & evaluation in South Australia and offers a great forum for networking, sharing ideas, and building state-wide collaborations in primary health care.

For more information and to register, visit the website at <http://www.phcred-sa.org.au/>

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Carers Project

This project, by the Carers Association of SA, seeks 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 have been participating in this project: Italian, Polish, Lebanese/ Arabic and the Vietnamese communities. The project has trained volunteer "carer ambassadors" from these communities, former or current carers who speak to their community members at group functions and individually and provide information about where they can seek help for themselves and support from the Carers Association. SACHRU is conducting the evaluation of this project via a series of focus groups, interviews and an e-mail survey of stakeholders. The project is due to be concluded in September, 2003.

Any enquiries about the evaluation can be directed to Catherine Hurley on (08) 8204 5982 or email catherine.hurley@fmc.sa.gov.au

(Continued from page 4)

population. There may be some lessons here for Australia!

Finally, Elizabeth Harris gave an inspirational talk on the challenges and opportunities in ensuring all Australian citizens have access to quality primary health care. She argued that there are many examples of a comprehensive and intersectoral primary health care approach improving health at individual and community level. It is important to keep a strong and viable universal health system and develop a national primary health care policy that is not driven by reduction in costs to acute systems but by a commitment to health gain. States and regions need to establish organising structures that go across jurisdictions and include General Practice Divisions, and other

government and non-government organisations. Australia has a strong consumer movement and this needs to be celebrated further strengthened. At service delivery level, we need greater access to multi-disciplinary care and providers need 'time and space' to do a good job. Research and evaluation should increase the focus on research in local contexts and we should ensure that all research looks at differential impacts on populations. Health impact assessments on government policy should also be developed.

More information about the conference and copies of papers can be accessed from

http://www.phcris.org.au/events/conference_frameset.html

Gwyn Jolley



Gwyn Jolley

Gwyn's colleagues at SACHRU were delighted but not surprised to hear that Gwyn has achieved a high distinction for her M.Sc. (Primary Health Care) thesis on performance indicators in community health. Both external examiners were glowing about her thesis. Well done Gwyn! Gwyn is preparing a SACHRU publication on performance indicators that will be available later this year.



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.

All enquiries should be referred to:
South Australian Community Health Research Unit
C/- Flinders Medical Centre
Bedford Park, South Australia 5042
Telephone (08) 8204 5988 Fax: (08) 8374 0230
E-mail: sachru@fmc.sa.gov.au www.sachru.sa.gov.au

south australian

COMMUNITY HEALTH
RESEARCH
unit