



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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THE NEWSLETTER  
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## FACULTY OF HEALTH RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

### Did you know?

The Faculty of Health Research web page has had a facelift. Look at our new site at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/research/>

The new University Research Staff Web Page has been developed in response to researcher feedback. It is located at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/unit/research-services/>

### 3 Minute Thesis

Research Higher Degree candidates have been invited to register for the 3 Minute Thesis competition. Faculty registration closes on the 21<sup>st</sup> May and Faculty heats will be held on 4 June. Further details can be found at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/students/research-higher-degree/current-students/three-minute-thesis.html> or by contacting [Shirley.Savy@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Shirley.Savy@newcastle.edu.au).

### SRE

The overall University response rate for the SRE/Your Time Counts Survey was 70%. Thank you to all staff who submitted their surveys. Another survey will be held in May/June, further information will be broadcast closer to the date.

### Seminars for RHD Supervisors

-Seminars by Hugh Kearns and Maria Gardiner  
-Time for Research: It's a new ERA  
-Turbocharge Your Academic Writing: Increase your research output  
-The Seven Secrets of Highly Successful PhD Students

Further details can be found at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/students/research-higher-degree/supervision/workshop-series.html>

RHD candidates refer to <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/students/research-higher-degree/current-students/skills-training.html>

## NHMRC TRAINING SESSION

### SAVE THE DATE!

The School of Medicine and Public Health will be holding a NHMRC Fellowship Information Session at 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm on Thursday, 14th October 2010.

Topics to be covered include:

- NHMRC Fellowship Support Scheme
- Submitting an Application to the NHMRC
- University of Newcastle Fellowships
- Training (Postdoctoral) Fellowships
- Post-graduate Scholarships, Travelling Awards & Career Development Awards
- Research Fellowships & Practitioner Fellowships

All are welcome. Further information will be broadcast closer to the date. For enquiries contact [smpH-research@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:smpH-research@newcastle.edu.au).

## REMINDER... DEADLINE FOR INITIATIVES

Strategic Initiatives for Research (Equipment & Strategic Activities) – **Applications close June 4, 2010**

Support for Research Visitors – **Applications now open and close on July 30, 2010**

**WATCH THIS SPACE.....** An announcement will occur shortly in regards to the additional supplementation of RHD support.

Please direct all applications and enquiries to [Shirley.Savy@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Shirley.Savy@newcastle.edu.au)

# LAUNCH OF MADDISON COLLABORATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

The public health group in the School of Medicine and Public Health, at the University of Newcastle, Hunter New England Health and the Hunter Medical Research Institute has had a proud and successful history of making major contributions to national and international public health research, practice and teaching. Over the past couple of years the group has been actively engaged in examination of where and how it might make a significant contribution in the future. This has resulted in the joining together of groups including the Centre for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, the Health Behaviour Group, the Centre for Health Research & Psycho-oncology, the Priority Research Centres in Health Behaviour and Gender, Health and Aging, the Discipline of Clinical Pharmacology and Hunter New England Population Health.

These groups acknowledge the benefits of collaboration in further developing excellence in teaching, research and community service. As a consequence they have formally decided to come together in a new public health group called the Maddison Collaboration for Public Health. To celebrate the official launch of this group there will be some short presentations on 13<sup>th</sup> May from two o'clock until 4:30 pm at the David Maddison Building Case Study Theatre. Presenting will be those who have made a significant contribution to the public health group in the past, an overview of current activities and a vision of what the group might achieve in future. At the end of the presentation there will be an opportunity to discuss these aspects with colleagues and friends of Maddison Collaboration for Public Health.

For further information and RSVPs contact  
[Jane.Gibson@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Jane.Gibson@newcastle.edu.au).

## SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Maya Guest and Dr Ashley Kable (School of Nursing and Midwifery) have recently completed a study in partnership with the NSW Nurses' Association entitled 'Needlestick and Sharps Injuries in New South Wales Nurses'. The study explored factors associated with needlestick and sharps injuries, such as geographical work location and recapping needles after drawing up medication. The study was funded by a WorkCover Assist Applied Research Program Grant. The final report on the study has been submitted to WorkCover and WorkCover is reviewing two manuscripts prepared for publication from the study.

Susan Ryan and Carol Hills presented two papers at the Annual College of Occupational Therapists' Conference at Brighton, UK in June 2010 on preliminary findings from

research on Generation "Y" Occupational Therapy Students at The University of Newcastle. The two papers are:  
1) The Generation "Y" Phenomenon: Professional Lessons Learnt and Global Implications  
2) Work, Study, Play: The Balance of Life Phenomenon.  
This research is being extended to other universities in Australia to get a clearer picture of undergraduate Occupational Therapy students nationally.

Nationally competitive grants from Meat and Livestock Australia totaling \$282,900 have been awarded to:  
1. Dr Amanda Patterson, A/Prof Clare Collins, Dr Kerry Chalmers (School of Psychology, Faculty of Science and IT). The effects of non-anaemic iron deficiency on cognition, fatigue and mental health: a blinded randomised controlled trial of iron supplementation in women of childbearing age.  
2. A/Prof Clare Collins, Dr Tracy Burrows, Ms Maya Guest. Development of a short food frequency questionnaire which is validated for both children and adults for use as an educational tool by practitioners.

The School hosted two workshops for researchers through its Australian Centre for Evidence Based Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEBaND). The first workshop on 'Critical Appraisal' was held in March and the second workshop 'Conducting a Systematic Review' was held in April. Both workshops were successfully hosted by Associate Professor Clare Collins.

Dr Imelda Burgman has recently had two publications accepted. The first is a book chapter publication and the second a journal article co-authored with an Honours student from 2008:

1. Burgman, I. (2010). Enabling children's spirituality in occupational therapy practice. In S. Rodger (Ed.), *Occupation-centred practice for children*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.  
This is an international undergraduate text for occupational therapy students.
2. Serdity, C., & Burgman, I. (2010). Being the Older Sibling: Self-Perceptions of Children with Disabilities. *Children & Society* (in press).

Alumni Dr Peter Stanwell has been appointed as an Associate Professor in Medical Radiation Science. Dr Stanwell is a radiographer with extensive research and clinical expertise in MRI, particularly in breast and prostate cancer. He also holds an appointment at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, USA as part of the Harvard Clinical and Translational Science Center.



**Is anything interesting happening with your research or research team?** Send your articles through to [Shirley.Savy@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Shirley.Savy@newcastle.edu.au) for the next Newsletter edition by the 25th June 2010.

# PRC GENDER, HEALTH & AGEING

In October 2010, the Priority Research Centre for Gender, Health and Ageing is hosting the Emerging Researchers in Ageing (ERA) conference in Newcastle. ERA is a higher education initiative which exists to provide support and encouragement to students undertaking research higher degrees in the field of human ageing in Australia, by offering them opportunities to network and collaborate with their peers, senior academics and policy makers within Australia and internationally. Each year since 2002, an Emerging Researchers in Ageing Conference has been hosted by an Australian university. The ERA conference is the only national conference in Australia that showcases exclusively the work of postgraduate students doing research in ageing. It has grown larger each year and, in 2010, the conference will extend over two full days - one half-day of workshops followed by 1½ full days of conference activities. The theme of the conference for 2010 will be "Getting the Right Skill Mix", and workshops on quantitative research, mixed methods research and writing and reviewing for publication will be provided. The conference attracts between 100 and 150 postgraduate student presenters and attendees, along with a variety of academics, policy-makers and representatives from community organisations in ageing. It provides excellent opportunities for postgraduate researchers in ageing to network with their peers and with senior people in the field, and to keep abreast of contemporary trends in ageing research. This is also an excellent opportunity for local students in ageing, across all disciplines, to attend a national conference dedicated to their research and learning needs.

For further information please contact Associate Professor Lynne Parkinson ([lynne.parkinson@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:lynne.parkinson@newcastle.edu.au))

## SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & PUBLIC HEALTH – RESEARCHER PROFILE



### Katie Baines PhD

Dr Katie Baines is an early career researcher in Respiratory Medicine, within the School of Medicine and Public Health. She is a biomedical scientist interested in using molecular techniques to understand more about mechanisms of respiratory disease particularly asthma.

Dr Baines has expertise in conducting laboratory experiments using molecular techniques such as gene expression profiling and in vitro models of inflammatory cells.

1. **What got you interested in research?** I have always been interested in science, so when I got to University

level, a degree in Biomedical Science caught my attention. This degree really opened my eyes into the possibilities for research and my thirst for knowledge drove me to study further. I went on to conduct my first research project in cytogenetics for my honours degree, and shortly after I got the opportunity to do a PhD in respiratory medicine. I was supervised by Prof Peter Gibson and Prof Rodney Scott, and was awarded my PhD in 2008. Since joining this research team I have learnt so much, and I continually think myself lucky to be able to work with such a supportive group. I like research for its variety and flexibility, there is always something new and interesting to work on, but it is the possibility of one day making a difference that keeps me motivated.

2. **Who and/or what inspires you?** It really is those closest to me that inspire me the most particularly my immediate family and close friends. They often are interested in what research I am doing and think it's fabulous, and this motivates me to keep it up. However, if I wasn't surrounded by inspirational colleagues who perform great quality research I would not be where I am today. It's also inspiring to see other researchers present their work at conferences, and a great compliment when they show interest in what I am presenting.
3. **What are you working on now?** Currently I run a number of projects essentially related to investigating the molecular mechanisms and treatments of non-eosinophilic asthma. About half of adults with asthma have this type of asthma, and their symptoms are not well controlled by the current medications that are available. We are investigating the use of a commonly available antibiotic to treat this type of airway inflammation.

I am particularly interested in using gene expression profiling to identify asthma phenotypes, with the hope of finding molecular biomarkers and novel drug targets that can assist in the identification, treatment and management of asthma. A relatively new area of research that is an interest of mine is epigenetic regulation of airway inflammation particularly DNA methylation profiling and the activity of histone enzymes. I am also involved in other projects that examine the effects of diet and viral infection on gene expression in asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

4. **What are your goals?** Generally I would like to further my research into this growing area of molecular medicine, using high throughput technologies to understand more about the mechanisms of respiratory diseases including asthma. Right now I would like to get my current work published and achieve further funding to keep my research going, which is easier said than done!
5. **What's the last book you read for fun?** Like many people I have recently loved reading the 'Twilight' series by Stephanie Meyer. Right now I am reading the

'True Blood' series by Charlaine Harris, and I'm onto the fifth book called 'Dead as a Doornail'.

6. **What do you do when not working on your research?** I play netball, walk my border collie Jada and catch up with friends and family. I have been especially busy outside of work lately with wedding planning, as I am getting married in August this year.
7. **What's your favourite Newcastle beach?** It's hard to pick one; there are many beautiful beaches in Newcastle! I think my favourite would be Redhead beach mainly because I can take my dog, but Merewether would be a close second place.
8. **Where's your favourite place for coffee?** I think Grind on Darby St, not just for the coffee but also for their smoothies; especially the blueberry bliss – so good!



## SCHOOL OF NURSING & MIDWIFERY

In March the SON&M conducted the annual research week program for research higher degree candidates and staff. The program was evaluated and 12 responses were received, representing approximately 25% of the RHD students in the school. The program was very well supported.

We were fortunate to have a visiting scholar from the University of Keele (Professor Sian Maslin-Prothero) who contributed to several sessions in the program. She is also Associate Editor and a member of the editorial board of the Journal: Nurse Education Today; and conducted a session on publishing literature reviews. Her contributions to the program were excellent and very much appreciated.

There were 8 student presentations during the week and 4 of these were for confirmation. These sessions were supported by 49 attendances and were also rated as good or excellent.

There were 14 workshops and more than 150 attendances overall. The workshops were rated as good or excellent overall. Many of these sessions were recorded and have been posted in Blackboard as a permanent resource that is available to all RHD students within the Faculty. Workshops were conducted on the following topics:

- Academic integrity
- Endnote skills
- Ethics applications
- Candidates information: Office of Graduate Studies, Learning Development and Cultural connections/Community
- The supervisor-student relationship
- Conducting focus groups
- Dealing with procrastination
- Conducting research interviews
- Professional resumes

- connections
- Preparing Powerpoint slides to present research
- Mock confirmation panel
- and teaching portfolios
- Working with large documents
- What you wish you were told about RHDs

The program was possible due to the generous contributions of the following staff who conducted these workshops: Sharyn Hunter, Debbie Booth, Sophie Percival (OGS), Julia Dennis (Learning Development), Ruth Gresham and Veronica Clayton (Cultural Connections), Kathleen Fahy, Rachel Rossiter, Teri Stone, Isabel Higgins, Steve Bowe, Saxon White, Jane McDonald and Diana Keatinge.

Thank you to all staff and students who contributed to, and supported this program.

## A WORD FROM THE DHoF RESEARCH

Last week I led a small delegation from the Faculty (Prof Brian Kelly, Drs Liz Holliday, Nikki Verrills, Murray Cairns and myself) to attend a 2 day Australia-Malaysia Medical Research Colloquium (April 28-29) in Kuala Lumpur hosted by the Australian High Commission and jointly sponsored by the Australian NHMRC and the Malaysian NIH. The Colloquium explored various models for international collaboration, presented some case studies of Australian-Malaysian collaboration and discussed factors that facilitated and hindered collaboration. We were able to identify a number of potential projects and collaborators and these will be followed up in the coming months.

The day before the Colloquium we visited Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Medical Molecular Biology Institute (UMBI) to explore possibilities for expanding the collaborations begun 2 years ago between UKM and the Faculty following a cancer research conference hosted by UMBI. Newcastle and UKM have clearly complementary research interests and capacity in several areas including: cancer, asthma, neuroscience, molecular epidemiology, nutrition in ageing, reproductive biology and obesity and physical activity. One major research resource that will generate an enormous number of future research projects and collaborations is the flagship Malaysia Cohort Project that UMBI hosts and coordinates ([http://intra.hukm.ukm.my/cohort/home/fail/THE\\_MALAYSIA\\_N\\_COHORT\\_STUDY\\_brochure\\_v300507.pdf](http://intra.hukm.ukm.my/cohort/home/fail/THE_MALAYSIA_N_COHORT_STUDY_brochure_v300507.pdf)). This is a most impressive population cohort and extraordinary organisation. They have recruited almost 50,000 people and are aiming for 100,000.

The Director of UMBI, Professor Rahman bin A Jamal, is planning a conference in October (in Kuala Lumpur) focussed on cancer research and neuroscience at which researchers from Newcastle and UKM can identify and initiate collaborations. The possibility of jointly supervised RHD students is one avenue for driving collaboration that is being explored.

Those of you who are keen to develop research collaborations with international colleagues from any country should consider applying for the special Research Visitor Scheme announced recently. If you have identified a potential collaborator, the Research Visitor Scheme offers funding to bring colleagues to Newcastle in 2010 for in depth discussions and planning.