

Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation & Development (PHC RED) Strategy

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RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE – 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

The Discipline of General Practice, University of Newcastle, receives funding under the Research Capacity Building Initiative (RCBI) of the 2006-2009 Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation & Development Strategy (PHC RED) in order to build research capacity in primary health care.

For each objective, there are several strategies for focusing activity during 2009, many of which were implemented at the beginning of 2006 under Phase 2. Detailed performance indicators and budget requirements are described. This Business Plan reflects progress towards the overall PHC RED Strategy goals and specific RCBI objectives for the Department. The plan builds upon activities of earlier years and represents a refinement based on the experience of past years.

The following tables illustrate:

- a) objectives and strategies against each of the PHC RED Strategy goals
- b) activities planned for 2009
- c) associated performance indicators
- d) linkages with PHC RED Strategic Plan objectives.

In 2009 the research capacity building activities of the Capacity Building in Research and Evaluation (CAPRE) Program will focus on embedding a culture of research in primary care through the support of individual and practice-based research in the local region.

List of Acronyms

AHS	Area Health Service
AMS	Aboriginal Medical Service
APHCRI	Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute
CAPRE	CAPacity building in Research and Evaluation
CCEB	Centre for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
GP	General Practice/practitioner
GPT	General Practice Training
VTC	Valley-to-Coast
HEARNet	Health Evaluation and Research Network
NHMRC	National Health & Medical Research Council
NRGP	Network of Research General Practices
NSWRDN	New South Wales Rural Doctors Network
PHC	Primary Health Care
PHC RED	Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation and Development
RACGP	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
RCBI	Research Capacity Building Initiative
RDP	Researcher Development Program
RHD	Research Higher Degree
UDRH NNSW	University Department of Rural Health Northern New South Wales

OBJECTIVE 1: TO INCREASE THE POOL OF PRIMARY HEALTH CARE RESEARCHERS BY UP-SKILLING EARLY-MID CAREER RESEARCHERS, AND SUPPORTING THE SUSTAINABLE ADVANCEMENT OF RESEARCH CAREERS IN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE (NOTE: THIS IS THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE FOR RCBI)

This objective meets the first Goal of the PHC RED Strategy - an expanded pool of primary health care researchers

STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES
1.1 Encourage PHC clinicians to enrol in post graduate courses with relevance to public health research.	1.1.1 Support and encourage PHC clinicians to complete subjects from the Centre for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics (CCEB) post graduate courses (including Diplomas, Graduate Certificates and Masters).
1.2 Support local PHC clinicians to increase their research capacity by conducting or participating in research and evaluation projects.	1.2.1 Support and mentor local PHC early career researchers (including previous recipients of CAPRE Small Grants and RDP applicants/participants). 1.2.2 Encourage and support GP Registrars and Medical Educators based in the local GPT Program (Valley-to-Coast) to participate in research skills training and research projects.
1.3 Support PHC Clinicians to conduct practice based research and evaluation projects.	1.3.1 Continue to support local Network of Research General Practices (NRGP). 1.3.2 Provide input into designing and conducting research and evaluation projects in PHC practices (especially those in the NRGP).
1.4 Provide research and evaluation skills training for local early-mid career PHC researchers.	1.4.1 Needs analysis with stakeholders (including RDP participants, HEARNet members, NRGP members and other local PHC stakeholders) to identify training needs. 1.4.2 Facilitate a program of research and evaluation upskilling seminars/workshops. 1.4.3 Facilitate a Critical Appraisal Journal Club for Members of HEARNet.
1.5 Maintain communication with local PHC researchers through the Health Evaluation and Research Network (HEARNet).	1.5.1 Produce a regular HEARNet newsletter. 1.5.2 Inform HEARNet members of upcoming events and funding opportunities.
1.6 Encourage PHC clinicians to enrol in RHDs or Post Doctoral Fellowships.	1.6.1 Mentoring for PHC clinicians who wish to apply for a RHD/Scholarship/Post Doc Fellowship (such as the NHMRC PhD Scholarships and Fellowships), where appropriate.
1.7 Support PHC clinicians to complete RHDs.	1.7.1 Supervise and mentor RHD students.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO SUPPORT EARLY-MID CAREER RESEARCHERS TO UNDERTAKE MORE HIGH QUALITY PRIMARY HEALTH CARE RESEARCH AND ENSURE ITS RELEVANCE TO POLICY AND PRACTICE BY ALIGNING IT WITH IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND PRIORITIES.

This objective meets the second Goal of the PHC RED Strategy - More research relevant to primary health care policy and practice.

STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES
2.1 Identify needs and priorities of the Discipline of General Practice RCBI Program.	2.1.1 Conduct a forum/survey with stakeholders to identify needs and priorities of the program based on national priorities, local epidemiological data, perceived needs of PHC professionals and the local community.
2.2 Encourage RDP applicants to submit PHC project proposals that align with identified needs and priorities.	2.2.1 When advertising and assessing RDP placements consider relevance to practice and policy as well as alignment with identified needs and priorities.
2.3 Encourage clinicians to conduct practice based research and evaluation projects that are aligned with identified needs and priority areas.	2.3.1 Work with local General Practices and PHC practices (especially through the NRGP and HEARNet) to produce research and evaluation projects that are based on needs and priorities.
2.4 Encourage PHC clinicians to submit grant applications around identified needs and national priority areas.	2.4.1 Inform local PHC clinicians of funding opportunities (including NHMRC, APHCRI and other grants). 2.4.2 Assist local PHC clinicians to submit grant applications on topics that are aligned with identified needs and priorities.
2.5 Provide opportunities for PHC early career researchers to collaborate with and work on PHC projects that are aligned with identified needs and priorities.	2.5.1 Offer PHC early career researchers positions as Associate Investigators on larger projects (e.g. NHMRC grants) in the Discipline of General Practice. 2.5.2 Encourage PHC early career researchers to collaborate with more experienced researchers by including the more experienced researchers as part of the project team. 2.5.3 Encourage PHC early career researchers to collaborate at a range of levels (which could include collaboration with other university departments, with other universities, AHS, AMS, Divisions of General Practice, NSW RDN, Primary Health Institute). 2.5.4 Work collaboratively with the local GPT consortium (Valley- to- Coast) on research and evaluation projects

OBJECTIVE 3: TO DISSEMINATE AND FACILITATE THE UPTAKE OF EVIDENCE IN POLICY AND PRACTICE.

This objective meets the third Goal of the PHC RED Strategy - In consultation with other relevant organisations, contribute to well informed primary health care practice and policy (focus is dissemination and use).

STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES
3.1 Facilitate communication of research findings to local stakeholders.	3.1.1 Host a GP Network Meeting for NRGP members 3.1.2 Encourage stakeholders to submit research/evaluation articles for the HEARNet/NRGP newsletters.
3.2 Facilitate communication of research findings to state level stakeholders.	3.2.1 Contribute time and expertise to NSW PHC Consortium activities (such as Alliance Forum, NSW PHC Conference, and membership of Advisory Group). 3.2.2 Encourage PHC early career researchers to present research findings at state conferences.
3.3 Facilitate communication of research findings to national level stakeholders.	3.3.1 Encourage PHC early career researchers to present research findings at national conferences (including GP & PHC Research Conference, RACGP Scientific Convention).
3.4 Encourage early career PHC researchers to publish findings in peer-review journals.	3.4.1 Writing retreat (co-hosted by Discipline of General Practice and UDRH Northern NSW RCBI programs) to provide protected writing time. 3.4.2 Mentoring researchers to write for publication. 3.4.3 Internal peer-review of draft papers by CAPRE staff available for stakeholders.
3.5 Collaborate with local/state/national organisations (e.g. Divisions of GP, GP Training Program, Hunter Post-graduate Medical Institute [HPMI], UDRH Northern NSW, Awabakal Aboriginal Medical Service) to provide a mechanism for disseminating research findings and influencing local policy and practice.	3.5.1 Host research seminars and presentations for local/regional interest groups aimed at disseminating research findings. 3.5.2 Encourage and facilitate PHC researcher membership on local, state and national policy making bodies/references groups. 3.5.3 Build on opportunities for collaborative research with UDRH Northern NSW PHCRED Program (via regional meetings and other communications)