

# CRRAH Chatter





## Newsletter from the Centre for Rural and Remote Area Health

Dec 2006 / Jan 2007

# The Centre for Rural and Remote Area Health



The Centre for Rural and Remote Area Health (CRRAH) started in 2001 and became a jointly badged Centre of the University of Southern Queensland and The University of Queensland in 2003.

The Centre exists to facilitate and conduct high quality regional, rural and remote area health research. CRRAH is committed to enhancing the health of regional, rural and remote peoples in Australia and internationally by supporting the work of health policy planners, rural and remote area health professionals, health workers and consumers with relevant research.

The objectives of the Centre are to:

• Provide research train-

ing to academic and general staff, clinicians and students:

- Undertake applied research and research training;
- Engage in research and consultancy work and seek to commercialise outcomes when appropriate;
- Enter into partnership arrangements where there is mutual benefit and similar values are held in order to enhance the standing of the Centre and its research inputs and outputs.

It provides research support through funded and unfunded projects, tenders, consultancy work and project management.

The Centre is located at the University of Southern

Queensland's Toowoomba campus, with a satellite office at the University of Queensland's South West Rural Clinical Division at the Toowoomba Base Hospital.

The Centre has received funding from the Department of Health and Aging, National Health and Medical Research Council, Divisions of General Practice, Queensland Nurses Union, Queensland Nurses Council, Australian Nurses Federation, Australian Research Council and other federal and state government bodies.

Copies of CRRAH's research reports are available from the Centre. A full list of publication is available on the CRRAH website.

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## Our mission:

Is to conduct and facilitate health-related research and training in rural and remote communities for the benefit of the community and the health workforce.

# Contact us

Centre for Rural and Remote Area Health (CRRAH) USQ, West Street, Toowoomba Qld 4350 07 46315444

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# CRRAH lands \$2m in grants in 2 days

The Centre has recently been awarded two research grants totalling \$2m. One of the research projects commencing in 2007 is "Learning from the experts: Building bridges to implement successful life promotion and suicide prevention expertise across Aboriginal communities" in partnership with the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health. This important research is funded by the National Suicide Prevention Strategy Community Based Projects Funding

to the value of \$1,500,000. A Project Officer will be located at CRRAH in Toowoomba and a Research Assistant will be based at Dalby, 1 hour west of Toowoomba.

Another significant research project to commence in 2007 is an ARC Discovery funded project. This project, titled "Acceptability, feasibility and cost effectiveness of nurse-led models for chronic disease management in general practice", will run from 2007-

2009. 'Workforce shortages, the growing burden of chronic disease and an ageing population are major challenges facing primary care in Australia. To address this challenge, this project aims to test a practice nurseled model of chronic disease management to patients in general practice. The findings will be significant in addressing gaps in the current body of knowledge about alternate models of primary health care delivery in Australia.' - UQ website

# A Closer Look



There is a huge gap in knowledge of available health services across rural and remote Queensland, particularly among the practitioners and service providers. The researchers at CRRAH have made this discovery through a series of workshops held in central and southeast Queensland with community groups and health service providers.

Dr Robert Eley said the lack of knowledge was just one of the interesting outcomes. "We identified 15 key themes in health that service providers considered to offer particular challenges or issues," he said. These themes were then categorised under four main areas awareness, information, workforce and mental health.

Dr Eley said. "Already the workshops have assisted with this issue as different health practitioners and care providers were able to

meet and establish relationships." "Another issue with awareness was among the general public using the services, whether information was available and could be understood." CRRAH has already received internal funding to investigate this element.

"CRRAH is also looking at where information is placed, whether people know where to look, and how to best make this information available to them." Results will then be made available to organisations which provide the information, such as town councils.

Another category where action is soon to begin is in the area of workforce. Dr Eley said a number of people who are interested in work-

"There is a general perception that information about health services does not exist. We are looking at whether this is true."

ing on collaborative research projects in this area have already contacted CRRAH. The issues surrounding workforce included providing professional development opportunities to help with staff recruitment and retention.

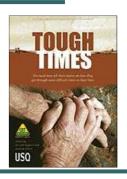
"One of the more surprising outcomes of the study was mental health," Dr Eley said. "Health providers recognised mental health in youth, rural and Indigenous areas as problematic with inadequate counsellors, psychologists and social workers. And the people who were identifying these needs didn't necessarily work in the area of mental health. Lots of other providers identified it as being a really major issue."

Dr Eley said the issues identified through the workshops will help shape the future of CRRAH research activities.- USQ News

# In the News

**Dr Rob Eley** was interviewed by *USQ News* about recently started research into awareness and extent of community access and use of health resources provided by local councils.

Demand for *Tough Times*: ten rural men tell their stories on how they got through some difficult times in their lives, was so high that it has now been reprinted. Copies of the publication can be purchased from CRRAH for \$5 including postage and through selected CRT outlets. Please contact Annette Nanka on 07 46315444.



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# **CRRAH's Activities**

## **Current Research Projects**

- Health Service Information: Access and use to internet based community directories.
- Music therapy to assist in the management of asthma in Indigenous people.
- Food consumption behavioural patterns of intellectually disabled individuals.
- Bridging the Gap: Identifying needs to facilitate entry to
- Extension of the Better Living Diabetics.
- Indigenous Australian traditional health practices and treatment by health services.
- Identifying and prioritising the health research needs of Southern and Central Queensland communities.
- Learning from the experts: Building bridges to implement successful life promotion and suicide prevention across Aboriginal communities.

#### **Current Consultancies**

- Southern Queensland Rural Division of General Practice: Audit of Allied Health Services in South West Queensland Communities.
- South West Healthy Communities (Charleville): Data collection tools and database for evaluation of the South West Healthy Communities programme.

## Research Projects Commencing in 2007

 Acceptability, feasibility and cost effectiveness of nurse-led models for chronic disease management in general practice.

## PhD Candidate's Studies Exploring the psychological factors influencing breastfeeding Maxine O'Brien

- The influence of psychological strengths on health and qual-
- ity of life in older Australians.
- Healing Connections: The journey of recovering from cancer for rural Queenslanders who report a strong sense of connection to the land.
- Breastfeeding knowledge and skills of GP Registrars.
- What are the experiences of Aboriginal nurses in Queensland from 1950 to 2005?

#### **Team**

• Recruit to Retain: From medical school to rural practitioner. Dr Louise Young, Dr Diann Eley, Prof David Wilkinson, Prof Desley Hegney, Ass Prof Peter Baker and Ms S Garside

Dr Rob Eley, Dr Yunus Khatri, Dr Delwar Hossain

Prof Don Gorman, Dr Rob Eley, John Williams-Mozley and Karen Brosnan (CARBAL)

Dr Yunus Khatri, Prof Don Gorman, Dr Diann Eley, Fiona Hjortshoj and Dr Louise Young

Dr Yunus Khatri, Prof Don Gorman and John Williams-Mozley

Prof Don Gorman, Odette Best, Goondir Aboriginal Health Service

Prof Don Gorman and Odette Best

Prof Desley Hegney, Dr Tony Fallon, Dr Rob Eley, Prof Don Gorman, Paul Fahey, Dr Liz Buikstra, Dr Cath Rogers-Clarke

Prof Diego De Leo, Prof Don Gorman, Melissa Haswell, Prof Ernest Hunter, Janya McCalman, Helen Travers

Dr Rob Eley and Dr Yunus Khatri

Dr Rob Eley and Jacqueline Tate

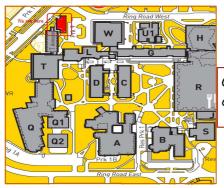
Prof Desley Hegney, Chris Del Mar, Elizabeth Patterson, Paul Scuffham, Dr Diann Eley and Paul Fahey

Coralie Graham

Susanne Pearce

Dr Wendy Brodribb

Odette Best



CRRAH is located on the southern side of the USQ campus along Baker Street in the T Block Annex

## A Chat with....



Name: Dr Diann Eley

Title: UQ Senior Research Fellow

### Background:

Di obtained her Masters degree in Physiology from the University of Florida before moving to Nairobi, Kenya, with her husband Rob, where she worked in biomedical science for 11 years.

Then followed a move to the UK where Di qualified as a biochemist in pathology and worked in a NHS hospital for 6 years. At this stage it was time for a change in direction with Di commencing her PhD in Social Psychology—Sport and Exercise Psychology at the University of Bristol. Once her PhD was completed, Di then worked in Sport and Exercise Psychology at the University of Loughborough.

Di then "got lucky" and landed the Senior Research Fellow position at The University of Queensland.

Di and Rob arrived in the Sunshine (Smart) State on 1st November 2003 and are now residing in Toowoomba.

#### Research Area of Interest:

Rural health workforce, recruitment and retention of rural workforce, social psychology and medical education.

#### Recent Achievement:

Part of the team that recently won the UQ Teaching and Learning Award that focused on the Rural Clinical Division

Interests: Triathlon!

## Meet the Team

#### Research Staff

Director (Acting)

Professor Don Gorman

Deputy Director

Professor Peter Baker

Senior Research Fellows

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Administration Staff

P/A to Director

Annette Nanka

UQ Research Administration Assistant

Erin Bowly

#### Students

PhD Candidates

Maxine O'Brien

Coralie Graham

Dr Wendy Brodribb

Susanne Pearce

Dr Diann Eley

Dr Rob Eley

Research Fellow

Dr Yunus Khatri

Post Doc Researcher

Dr Delwar Hossain

Visiting Researcher

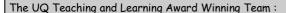
Mitra Zareai



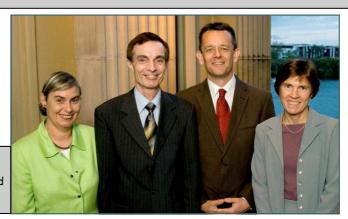
L-R: Rob Eley, Wendy Brodribb, Diann Eley, Don Gorman, Coralie Graham, Annette Nanka, Delwar Hossain, Erin Bowly, Susanne Pearce and Yunus Khatri

# Thought for the day...

He who has health has hope, and he who has hope has everything. ~Arabian Proverb



Dr Louise Young, Dr Peter Baker, Prof David Wilkinson and Dr Diann Eley from the Rural Clinical School SWQ Region



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