1. Latest News

2. Head of School News (T. Nolan)

3. Teaching and Learning

*3.1. Postgraduate News (C. Bennett)

The reports are in for the student perceptions of the quality of teaching in Semester 1 2006 and the results are once again most encouraging. All 26 of the SPH postgraduate subjects evaluated were rated as well taught, 23 of these were rated as very well taught (scored an average of 4 or more out of a possible 5), with 14 rated as exceptionally well taught (scored 4.5 or higher). Once again, our student evaluation averages are well above both the Faculty and University averages.

We have had a number of course completions during the year including 10 new MPH graduates. Once again, we had students completing with outstanding academic records. In addition, we had a number of award winners at the recent Victorian Consortium of Public Health and VicHealth MPH awards ceremony. The joint winners of the University of Melbourne top MPH graduate award in 2005 were Jaithri Ananthapavan and Caroline King. Melbourne students were also among the prize winners as top students in 2005 in the foundation subjects taught across the consortium universities, winning top student in 3 of the 8 subjects. Catherine Hutton was top student in Epidemiology, Kate Dwyer joint top student in Statistics, and Matthew Hercus was joint winner for Principles and Practice of Public Health. Congratulations to all our winners and recent graduates.
3.2. Undergraduate News (M. Guillemin)
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3.3. RHD News (J. Fisher)
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3.4. SPH Postgraduate Group – “Lofty Thoughts” (eds. Jennifer Stone and Kelsi Kriitmaa, Co-Presidents)
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*3.5. SPH Academic Programs Office (Liz Lagias)
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SPH handbook (hardcopy) for 2007 should be available late October, a copy of the main sections are now available on-line from the SPH website.

2007 Application forms are also available on-line from the SPH website.

MPH Information Night (for prospective students) will be held on Wednesday 25th October 2006, 6.30 – 8.30pm, 207 Bouverie Street, Carlton. Details available on the SPH website.

Re-enrolment for 2007 will be held from 16 October - 25 November 2006. All continuing students (students who will not have completed their program by 31-Dec-2006) will be required to complete this process on-line. Student Administration will be posting information on the process to continuing students on the 6th October. Academic Programs Office will also be contacting students via email to assist them with the process by providing them with details about subjects, timetables and obtaining course advice.

*4. Research Committee News
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All Welcome to attend Work in Progress seminars. October dates as follows:

Monday 2nd October:
"Diet related risk factors for type 2 diabetes mellitus in the Melbourne Collaborative Cohort Study"
Allison Hodge
Epidemiologist, The Cancer Council Victoria

Wednesday 4th October:
"The risk of breast cancer: translating expert knowledge into everyday decision-making"
Louise Keogh
PhD, Key Centre for Women’s Health in Society, The University of Melbourne.

Wednesday 12th October: Julie Woods, Mental Health Research Institute, topic to be advised

Wednesday 19th October: TBA

For further details see:
http://www.sph.unimelb.edu.au/research/schoolwipmeetings.html

5. Centres/Units News
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*5.1 School Office (L.Taylor)
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5.1.1. SCHOOL MEETING FOR ALL ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF
There will be updates on several important issues including Faculty structural reviews and changes (both MDHS and Arts), thinking and changes associated with the Growing Esteem agenda (at School, Faculty and University levels), 2007 budget update, and other new developments in the School of Population Health.

All staff are expected to attend

5.1.2. COSTING AND PRICING OF RESEARCH

This is a reminder to all staff applying for grants/consultancies/grants not on the National Competitive Grants Index (NCGI)

1 BACKGROUND

Prior to 2006 research overheads were set at 20% for on-campus departments and 15% for off-campus departments. Of this 10% (7.5% off-campus) was retained by the Central Administration with 7.5% allocated to the School (2.5% SPH and 5% Centre/Unit) and 2.5% allocated to the Faculty (5% School and 2.5% Faculty for off-campus Centres/Units).

From 1 January 2006 there has been no central overhead charged so Centres and Units will receive the full amount of revenue for the project including any overheads or infrastructure costs built into the approved budget. However the new University Funding Model has cost drivers associated with total research income and operating turnover which means the School’s operating grant is effectively taxed on the revenue generated by these contracts. In order to offset the reduced revenue to the School (and Faculty) the following policy has been adopted.

2 COSTING AND PRICING POLICY

The University’s Costing and Pricing Policies for Research recommend a cost recovery target of 45% of direct costs (salaries and on-costs, travel, consumables etc) for all research project budgets. However as a minimum the Faculty requires 20% of direct costs to be recovered from the client for overheads/infrastructure. There is general recognition that 20% overheads does not fully match the real cost of research and so the Faculty is keen to increase the overhead component to make a more realistic contribution to its research effort and as such recommends that researchers negotiate the overheads for new contracts to be 30% or more. This cost recovery is to be distributed between the Faculty and the School.

The two most common scenarios requiring the calculation of indirect costs/overhead charges are:

• The researcher is responding to a call for tender and is potentially competing for the tender with the private sector
• Calculation of cash and in-kind contributions to a project

To summarise the School’s position it is recommended that a minimum charge of 20% and where possible a charge of 30% overhead/infrastructure be factored into the budget for research projects.

SUMMARY of the OVERHEAD RECOVERIES for 2006

| Overheads | 20% | 30% |
| University Process | | |
| Central | 0 | 0 |
3 EXEMPTIONS
In some cases the recovery of overheads from a research sponsor is not possible, and as a result the project budget will be based on direct costs only. These situations include:

- Granting schemes listed on the Australian Competitive grants (ACG) Register, sometimes also referred to as Category 1 grants (Australian Government policy precludes charging "indirect" or "overhead" costs on ACG-funded projects)
- Research undertaken for charitable organisations
- Postgraduate student research projects that are governed by the terms of a student project (studentship) agreement
- The contract research undertaken for an organisation that will not fund indirect/overhead costs.

In these cases, the approval of the Head of School and Associate Dean Commercialisation (Professor Eric Reynolds) must be obtained.

5.2 Centre for Health and Society (D. Scobie)

*5.3. Centre for MEGA Epi (M.Lenaghan)

RESEARCH NEWS:

AEA 2006 MEETING IN MELBOURNE
The Australasian Epidemiological Association held its 15th Annual Meeting at The University of Melbourne on the 18th and 19th of September. The theme of the conference was "Opportunities and limits in epidemiological research". The conference had the highest attendance yet of any AEA meeting, with 330 registrants, and was an outstanding success.

Professor Ken Rothman gave the opening plenary speech on the theme of the conference. His presentation was provocative and stimulating, as one would expect from such a distinguished epidemiologist. Associate Professor Ana Diez Roux, from the University of Michigan, was the second international guest to give a plenary presentation. She spoke about the rapidly emerging field of social epidemiology. The Ian Prior oration was given by Professor Judith Lumley, from LaTrobe University. She spoke about the paucity of monitoring data on birth anomalies. The conference concluded with a lively enjoyable debate between Professors Konrad Jamrozik and Neal Pearce on whether epidemiologists should do more randomised trials, chaired by John Carlin.

There were three sets of five concurrent sessions for proffered papers and around 150 posters displayed. The oral presentations and the posters were of high quality.

Dorota Gertig, from MEGA, co-convened the conference, while Dallas English, also from MEGA, chaired the scientific committee.

TWIN REGISTRY WORKSHOP
The Australian Twin Registry hosted a one day workshop on Sunday 17th
September that presented the opportunities that new genetic knowledge, techniques and approaches have opened up for epidemiological research, and the potential for researchers to use nationally funded resources and facilities. It also described the important contributions that epidemiology can make to genetic research.

110 delegates braved the early Sunday morning start and were introduced to a wide range of speakers from a variety of research areas, resulting in very positive feedback on the value of the day.

The workshop convener, Katrina Scurrah (Dept of Physiology) said that the workshop was a great opportunity for researchers from various fields including both genetics and epidemiology to network and explore possible collaborations.

Notable highlights were speakers Sam Berkovic from the Epilepsy Research Centre, who was recently awarded the 2005 Curtin Medal for Outstanding Contribution to Australian Medical Science, and Tom Mack from the University of Southern California who presented exciting perspectives on and examples of the use of twins in research into early life risk factors for diseases such as Multiple Sclerosis and Breast Cancer.

RECENT GRANT/AWARDS:
B.Erbas: NBCF $98,253 "Influence of mammographic density on DCIS tumour characteristics: A pilot nested case/control study."

STAFF NEWS:

Penny Allen
After 10+ years working at the various "iterations" of this Centre Penny has moved to a new career as full time PA at Victorian Cytology Service with Dorota Gertig. Congratulations on your new appointment!

Maree Brinkman
Joined as an Honorary Fellow while she completes her PhD on cancer epidemiology based primarily at the Cancer Council Victoria. Maree is an Australian student at Leuven University, Belgium.

Bircan Erbas
Since joining John Hopper's research group in 1995 as an RA, Bircan commenced and completed her PhD and post doctoral fellowship, and has continued to extend her research and teaching activities. She is moving to the Department of Econometrics & Business Statistics at Monash University. Bircan will continue her collaborations with us as an Honorary staff member from 1 October 2006. Congratulations on your new appointments!

Julie Simpson
Julie will transfer from Cancer Council in early October to work an extra 2 days per week on "Platypus" research. She will continue teaching one day per week. Welcome to extended research hours!

PUBLICATIONS:
See 8.3 below

*5.4. Program Evaluation Unit (T. Mayhew/J.Yeadon)
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RESEARCH NEWS:
Cathy Segan, Ron Borland (Cancer Council), Kay Wilhelm (UNSW), Sunil Bhar
(UPenn) and David Dunt have been awarded a 2 year grant from Beyond Blue to investigate the effectiveness of Quit Victoria's telephone callback service tailored for smokers with a history of depression.

PEU SEMINARS:
These seminars will be held in room 405A, level 4, 207 Bouverie Street building from 12.30-1.30pm. A light snack will be served from 12 noon.

3 October Michael Otim Priority setting in Aboriginal health
17 October Peter Feldman Intercultural evaluations
21 November Sonja Hood Implementing evidence in health care

PUBLICATIONS:
See 8.4 below

5.5. Key Centre for Women's Health in Society (A. Tattam)

5.6. Diabetes Vaccine Development Centre (MJ. Gleeson)

5.7. Centre for International Mental Health (J.Burchill)

5.8. Sexual Health Unit (K.Fairley)

NEW STAFF:
We welcome Carol Hopkins who joined the Unit in August as a Research Assistant and Deborah de Guingand, Research Nurse, who will be looking at the prevalence of Chlamydia and associated risk factors, acceptability of testing and cost effectiveness in antenatal clinics.

PUBLICATIONS:
See 8.8. below

5.9. VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Social Wellbeing (J.Wiseman/J.Campbell)

CENTRE NEWS:
The VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Social Wellbeing is pleased to announce our name is changing to the McCaughey Centre: VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Community Wellbeing.

The McCaughey Centre is named in honour of two outstanding Victorians, Davis and Jean McCaughey. Their commitment to ‘knowledge for common good’ – to creating and sharing knowledge about the values and actions needed to build healthy, just and resilient communities – is at the heart of all of the work of the McCaughey Centre. Further background detail regarding the work of the McCaugheys, and its relevance to the policy and research goals of the McCaughey Centre, will be available soon from the Centre website.

NEW STAFF:
The Centre’s start-up phase is now in full swing, and compiling a team of
talented individuals to develop and achieve the Centre’s research and policy development program has been the first major priority. We are thrilled to announce the following appointments, who have joined the Centre over the past number of weeks, and look forward to introducing our new staff to School of Population Health staff and other partners over coming weeks and months:

Dr Marion Frere commenced as the Centre’s Deputy Director: Research and Policy on the 25th September, and comes to the Centre from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, where she was Principal Adviser in Policy and Strategy Projects Branch and Acting Assistant Director in Social Policy Branch. Prior to this, Marion spent several years at the Centre for Public Policy, University of Melbourne, undertaking teaching and research. Marion’s research interests include community building and community sector capacity, role of NGOs in policy making and women in local government. In addition, she has undertaken research on a number of population groups including disengaged young people, same-sex attracted young people and people who have been in prison. Marion’s role as the Centre’s Deputy Director will include working closely with Centre Director John Wiseman, and other Centre staff, to develop and implement the Centre’s applied research and policy development strategy, and to develop collaborative policy research partnerships with relevant academic, government, non-government, community and business organisations.

Associate Professor Tony LaMontagne joins the Centre at the beginning of October, and will take on the role of Principal Research Fellow. His background includes a Bachelor of Science (BS summa cum laude, 1982) in botany from the University of Massachusetts, a Master’s degree (MA) in molecular toxicology from Harvard University (MA, 1987) a Master’s degree in science and adult basic education from the University of Massachusetts (MED, 1988), and a Doctor of Science in occupational & environmental health from the Harvard School of Public Health (ScD, 1994). Tony’s research integrates occupational health, health promotion, and intervention research in those two fields, and his senior role within the Centre will include a focus on the ‘economic participation and security’ and ‘social connectedness’ aspects of the Centre’s work.

Dr Gabrielle Berman will commence toward the end of October, and joins the McCaughey Centre from RMIT where she has worked as a strategic consultant in policy and planning. Gabrielle holds a Bachelor of Economics and Finance from RMIT and a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Melbourne. She completed a Doctor of Philosophy in Economics at RMIT titled ‘A Charity: Accountability and Efficiency in Nonprofit Social Welfare Organisations in Australia’ in 2002. Gabrielle’s role within the Centre will include the research and publication of an integrated series of Community Wellbeing Trend and Policy reviews that focus on the Centre’s four priority areas of freedom from violence; freedom from discrimination; economic participation and security; and social inclusion and connectedness.

Dr Melanie Davern joined the Centre in September from the Melbourne Institute for Applied Economic Research, where she was Survey Analyst for the Household Income and Labour Dynamics Australia (HILDA) project. Melanie is a psychologist, and has taken on the role of Research Fellow: Wellbeing Indicators and Data within the Centre, within which she will manage the Community Indicators Victoria work hosted by the Centre.

Sue West joins the Centre from the Institute for Community Engagement and Policy Alternatives at Victoria University, where her role included acting as the Principal Coordinator of the Department for Victorian Communities funded Community Building Resource Service. In her role as Research Fellow: Community & Workforce Development Coordinator in the Centre, Sue
will have a community liaison focus, with a view to developing and implementing a program of community strengthening and engagement partnership projects on behalf of the Centre.

Dr Kathleen Brasher joined the Centre in September as a Research Fellow. Kathleen has a BAppSci Nursing, and her PhD explored the experiences of parents whose infant had experienced an acute illness through narrative. Kathleen is currently undertaking a Graduate Diploma Arts in Philosophy and Social Theory, and prior to joining the Centre was employed as a Senior Project Officer at Disability Services, Department of Human Services. Kathleen’s multi-faceted role within the Centre will involve her input across the broad range of the Centre’s applied research, policy development and knowledge exchange activities.

Steve Gelsi commenced with the McCaughey Centre in September. Steve holds a visiting appointment with the Centre in his capacity as an Australian Bureau of Statistics Outposted Officer. Steve has been with the ABS since 1992, and will work closely with the Centre’s staff on the Community Indicators Victoria project.

PUBLICATIONS:

see 8.9 below

6. Seminars/Events
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see http://www.sph.unimelb.edu.au/seminars/

7. IT News (N.Golovachenko)
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*8. 2006 Publications (not listed previously)
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8.1 School
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8.2 Centre for Health and Society
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*8.3 Centre for MEGA Epidemiology
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8.4 Program Evaluation Unit

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8.5 Key Centre for Women’s Health in Society

8.6 Diabetes Vaccine Development Centre

8.7 Centre for International Mental Health

*8.8. Sexual Health Unit


*8.9. VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Social Wellbeing