

BEST OF health



**New study
weighs up**
exercise and
food choices

**New simulation
centre boosts**
clinical learning

**International
collaboration to boost**
local treatment of Parkinson's disease

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From the **EXECUTIVE DEAN'S** desk



Welcome to the July 2011 edition of Best of Health. In this issue, we bring you stories that demonstrate the high impact of projects, learning and research outcomes across the Faculty.

In research, QUT's health program has been significantly strengthened by the National Health and Medical Research Council's injection of \$2.38 million over five years towards establishing an Australian first – a new Centre for Research Excellence in Sun and Health. This centre will build on the large body of work led by Professor Michael Kimlin on the interrelationships of skin cancer, sun exposure, and Vitamin D in Australia. Also, our School of Nursing and Midwifery has been recognised for outstanding performance in the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA), being ranked as well above world standard. Additionally, we must congratulate Professor Ross Young and our team at the Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation (IHBI) and wish them happy birthday on five years of research since inception.

I'm also very excited to tell you that as part of our ongoing commitment to improve our students' learning experiences, we have opened a new clinical simulation centre, allowing students to use simulation equipment to practise their clinical skills. The Centre promotes a multidisciplinary approach where students studying different courses work together, emulating the real-world health environment. I would also like to congratulate Professor Robyn Nash and her team for their successful application and subsequent funding from the Australian Learning and Teaching Council. The funding agreement is still in process, but this success demonstrates our commitment to developing innovative learning and teaching initiatives.

I commend our staff for continuing to excel. A number of them have been recently recognised for their outstanding work. Professor Graham Kerr was awarded a Queensland Health International Fellowship; Dr Lisa Buckley was awarded a Vice-Chancellor's Fellowship; and Professor David Kavanagh's OnTrack online program, assisting people experiencing depression, was awarded a Queensland Government Mental Health Week Award. Congratulations to these staff and the many others who have been recognised for their innovation and dedication recently.

I do hope you have time to take a short break to read this issue and enjoy the stories.

Andrew Wilson
Executive Dean, Faculty of Health

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NEW SIMULATION CENTRE boosts clinical learning

A visit to the new Clinical Simulation Centre at the Kelvin Grove campus, and it's readily apparent why more and more students are choosing QUT to study health.

The Faculty of Health completed the new Clinical Simulation Centre in the nursing building (N Block) for the commencement of first semester this year.

The Centre is an impressive facility which is spread over two levels and features a unique combination of cutting-edge, purpose-built design and medical equipment to provide clinical skills training for students enrolled in nursing, paramedic, allied health and associated double degrees.

Executive Officer Strategic Projects, Dr Helen Williams was largely responsible for coordinating the design and deliverables of the centre, which featured the refurbishment of over 1000 square metres of existing nursing laboratories and the construction of 300 square metres of new space.

She said a key feature of the design was to create a range of simulated environments to facilitate the clinical skills training essential for students' health studies. The realistic, simulated environments include flexible scenario rooms as well as care environments equipped with the necessary technology, design and atmosphere to mimic actual hospital settings.

One of the standout features of the Centre is the emergency response training area, which features a 'home environment' in which emergencies can be simulated for paramedic students, and two purpose-built, simulated ambulance patient modules.

Another impressive feature is the purpose-built simulation and control rooms on both levels.

'The Centre has a strong focus on simulation, to provide clinical training to students in a realistic, genuine medical environment without leaving campus,' Dr Williams said.

'The learning environment is enhanced through the use of high fidelity simulation mannequins, which are able to be programmed to portray numerous medical conditions and scenarios. For midwifery clinical skills training, this includes state-of-the-art birthing and baby mannequins and equipment.

'The Centre has a new Laerdal 3G simulation mannequin. Supervisors and students benefit from the capacity to record and replay simulation sessions with these mannequins which allows them to view the sessions afterwards to debrief, reflect on their experiences and learn from the outcomes.'

The Centre also has the capacity to stream simulation or other clinical skills demonstrations via the intranet, through the use of IP cameras.

Professor Helen Edwards, Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery, said the Centre, which was jointly funded by a Commonwealth Government Capital Development Pool grant, QUT and the Faculty of Health, enhanced student learning by encouraging practice, simulation and reflection.

She said feedback from staff and students has been overwhelmingly positive, and there are plans to extend the simulated learning curriculum for nursing and paramedic students across year levels.

'The students love it,' she said.

'Nursing has developed current simulation activities for third-year students and this will be extended in the future, while paramedic students will use the facility even more intensively after 2011.'

Third-year paramedic students wholeheartedly agree the clinical skills learning provided through the Clinical Simulation Centre is invaluable to their learning.

Renee Trevaskis said the self-directed learning necessary for studies was enhanced through the practical experience and superior equipment available through the Centre.

'We learn in real-time,' Renee said.

'As paramedic students in this facility, we actually learn as we would on the job which is invaluable.

'We are given an emergency situation, injured patients, all the appropriate equipment and then we must provide care, take them to the ambulance and continue until we reach the hospital – all in a simulated environment.'

Fellow student Liam Walsh likens the learning outcomes provided through the Centre to those only achieved in a real emergency services environment.

'The simulated ambulances are an amazing learning experience,' Liam said.

'You're not just learning in a lecture room; you're actually in the back of an ambulance with the equipment, technology and atmosphere. It's a real working environment.

'It's so much more realistic.'

innovation

encourages diabetics to manage diets via

..... mobile phone

A new health research innovation is set to change the future of dietary management for people with Type 2 diabetes.

School of Public Health PhD candidate Megan Rollo, in conjunction with principal supervisor Professor Susan Ash, has conceptualised a new method for Type 2 diabetics to record their daily diet via mobile phones instead of the traditional written record.

Her associate supervisors, Associate Professor Philippa Lyons-Wall (University of Wollongong) and Associate Professor Anthony Russell (Princess Alexandra Hospital and The University of Queensland) also assisted with the concept development of the software, entitled Nutricam.

Nutricam allows users to capture a photograph and voice description of foods using a mobile phone. The information is then automatically sent to a dietitian for analysis.

'Traditional methods of recording intake, such as written records, often require the individual to measure or weigh the foods prior to consumption,' Ms Rollo said.

'These methods are inconvenient and time-consuming, and often result in changes to typical intake.

'The Nutricam Dietary Assessment Method (NuDAM) alleviates the burden associated with the traditional methods by simplifying the recording process.'

Ms Rollo said NuDAM had already been trialled by a number of adults with Type 2 diabetes, who rated the method highly in terms of usability and acceptability. Users preferred NuDAM over traditional dietary management methods due to its simplicity of use.

She said traditional written records could also be less than accurate tools for dietary management, as participants could change their eating habits to make their note-taking easier, or under-report what they had eaten.

'We are trying to make it more convenient for people to report accurately what they eat,' she said.

'NuDAM has been evaluated as an accurate and reliable measure of dietary intake amongst adults with Type 2 diabetes. In addition, a strong user preference for the NuDAM, compared to written records, suggests this method is a suitable alternative for measuring intake in this group.

'Nutrition is a fundamental component of successful diabetes management. The assessment of diet in this group is essential to determine current levels of intake, and to monitor changes in dietary behaviours. This information is useful not only to the dietitian, but also for the individual with diabetes.'

Ms Rollo said the Nutricam method was an extremely promising advancement in the nutritional management of people with diabetes, due to its potential to link to other technologies.

'In particular, I am interested in exploring the potential of various information and communication technology applications to improve the nutritional management of not only individuals with diabetes, but also other chronic diseases as well,' she said.

She said the technology also represented the ways in which information and communication technologies could be integrated to enhance healthcare delivery and patient self-management.



Image: PhD candidate Megan Rollo

School joins prestigious international society



The School of Nursing and Midwifery has joined a global network of nurses after being welcomed into the Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) Honor Society of Nursing.

The membership will enable QUT to support greater professional development and research throughout Queensland.

Director of Research for the school, and president of the new Phi Delta-at-Large Chapter of STTI, Professor Debra Anderson, said she was delighted about becoming part of the society.

'This is a very significant event in Australian nursing and we are very excited and feel honoured to have been accepted as a part of this prestigious society,' she said.

'It means that we are part of a global community of nursing leaders who are promoting research through grant scholarships and awards, as well as career development and leadership programs.

'The society is all about promoting the future of nursing scholarship internationally.'

Professor Anderson said there was only one other chapter of the STTI Honor Society in Australia, and this would be the only Queensland chapter.

In order to become part of the society, QUT's School of Nursing and Midwifery teamed up with Griffith University's School of Nursing and the University of the Sunshine Coast's Discipline of Nursing and Midwifery to form the Queensland Honours Society of Nursing.

'The concept came from QUT, and we contacted other nursing schools throughout Queensland. Griffith and USC joined up and we have all worked very hard for this,' Professor Anderson said.

'We had to build our society and gain membership for a year. Individual membership is by invitation only, and offered to students who demonstrate excellence, and nurse leaders who have exhibited exceptional achievements.

'We have shown through membership of Sigma Theta Tau International that this sort of leadership and excellence in nursing exists in Queensland.'

ACCOLADES for world-class nursing research

The School of Nursing and Midwifery has been recognised for its world-class research in the first comprehensive evaluation of research quality across all Australian universities.

Head of School, Professor Helen Edwards, said it was a great achievement that nursing research was judged five-out-of-five in the world rankings, with rankings three and above deemed to be world standard.

'We have done better than world standard,' Professor Edwards said.

'It is recognition of the School's commitment to quality and high-impact research.'

The Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) initiative is an assessment of research quality of Australia's higher education institutions, which used a combination of indicators and a review of committees comprising experienced, internationally recognised experts.

'The recognition is a credit to the things we have put in place over many years, such as building people's capacity, linking in with experts in other disciplines and developing a research training environment,' Professor Edwards said.

'What it also does is recognise the potential that nursing research has to improve health systems and health outcomes for patients.'

Professor Edwards said QUT was a world leader in research areas including wound healing and cancer and palliative care.

'These are the areas of research in particular where our research is internationally recognised and published in the highest rating journals.'

She said the ranking, as well as being an acknowledgement of QUT's expertise, also highlighted the huge opportunity nursing offered to research students.

'We hope that this inspires new research students into the field of nursing,' she said.

Other areas of research in the Faculty of Health performed well across the ERA rankings including research in human movement and sports science which was judged four-out-of-five.



Best of Health

Organisations ••••• have top students in sight

The Faculty of Health would like to gratefully acknowledge the contributions of all the individuals, groups and organisations who contributed to the 2010 Faculty Awards, which were presented at a special ceremony in February 2011.

A total of 58 students were selected to receive special prizes and awards at the Ceremony, and were officially recognised for their outstanding academic achievements.

The Optometrists Association Australia (Queensland and NT Division) is one of many organisations and businesses who recognise the potential of students within QUT's Faculty of Health.

The Association has proudly supported the annual student awards for more than 11 years.

Association Chief Executive Officer Greg Johnson said QUT was the only university supported in this manner by the Division, which offers the annual Bookshop Prize and Clinical Excellence Award.

'The Association has a long history of supporting the School of Optometry and its students, and we believe graduates should be acknowledged for high achievement,' Mr Johnson said.

'We are proud to continue this connection to the Faculty of Health and its students and formally recognise outstanding academic achievement.'

As the 2010 recipient of the Optometrists Association Australia (Queensland and NT Division) Clinical Excellence Award, Gary Venz received \$3000.

The award is given to a final-year student on the basis of performance within clinical optometry, together with a rating by clinical instructors on clinical aptitude and professionalism.

'I'm very thankful to the Association for their ongoing support of the award and the School of Optometry; it has provided me with the opportunity to purchase reference books and clinical equipment which I may not have otherwise had,' Mr Venz said.

'I already had contact with the Association for a number of years while I was a student and now that I've graduated, I have become

a full member and will continue to do so throughout my career.'

The Optometrists Association Australia (Queensland and NT Division) is among a number of sponsors who supported the 2010 Faculty of Health Awards. Other supporters include:

- Abbott Medical Optics
- Australasian College of Health Service Management
- Australasian College of Road Safety (Queensland Chapter)
- Australian Association of Social Workers
- Australian College of Critical Care Nurses (Queensland Branch)
- Australian College of Children and Young People's Nurses
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- Australian College of Midwives (Queensland Branch)
- Australian Health Promotion Association
- Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Queensland)
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- Australian Psychological Society
- Brooks
- CooperVision Australia
- Dietitians Association of Australia (Queensland Branch)
- Environmental Health Australia (Queensland)
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- Family Planning Queensland
- Health Information Management Association (Queensland Branch)
- Joan Penridge Commemorative Award Committee
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- Lifeline
- Masonic Care Queensland
- Medeleq
- Pearson Education Australia
- Public Health Association of Australia

- RACQ
- Royal College of Nursing Australia
- Ryan Kruger Lawyers: The Debbie Duddridge Memorial Award
- Safety Institute of Australia
- Taylor and Francis
- The Centaur Memorial Fund
- The Kenneth B Ward Family
- The Simon Ashton Family
- Queensland Eye Hospital
- Queensland Meals on Wheels
- Wesley Corporate Health
- Workplace Health and Safety (Queensland)

The value of the prizes exceeded \$30000 thanks to the generous support of these sponsors.

The Faculty of Health extends its sincere gratitude to sponsors and again congratulates all recipients.



Positive experience

REFLECTS QUALITY CARE

Parent Toni Soroczynski was unsure what to expect when taking her children to the podiatrist for the first time, but having attended the Back to School Foot Clinics in January she will definitely visit again.

Toni took her three children, aged 10, eight and five to the Clinic, having seen it advertised in the local newspaper.

'We have just moved to the area and had not had the opportunity to do something like this before,' Toni said.

'I was keen for my eight-year-old to have her feet checked because we were concerned about the way she walked. However, quite surprisingly the podiatrist had more concerns about my 10-year-old daughter.

'The care and advice we were given was excellent; it's a good way for the students to learn.'

Toni congratulated QUT and the Health Clinics for developing such a program for the benefit of both the community and students alike.

'If it is not for the community to come to these programs, how do we get our next round of future health professionals,' she said.

Third-year podiatry student Aradhna Kumar is one of these future health professionals who values the hands-on experience provided through the Health Clinics and the Back to School Foot Checks program.

Aradhna said this was the first time she had participated in such a program, and loved the experience as it had helped secure her aspiration to work in paediatrics and sports medicine.

She said given podiatric care is often associated with the elderly, it was pleasing to see more emphasis being placed on the importance of paediatric care.

'We had a lot of positive feedback as the program provided an opportunity for parents to learn more about their child's movement and development – it's not usually an area given much attention until the later years when problems begin to develop,' she said.

'Screening clinics are a very effective means of detecting any pathology early on so prevention measures can be taken.'

The QUT Health Clinics offer services in human movement and exercise, nutrition and dietetics, optometry, podiatry, psychology and counselling and wound healing. For more information about the clinics or to book an appointment please contact:

QUT Health Clinics
44 Musk Avenue, Kelvin Grove QLD 4059
Phone 07 3138 9777

Image: Podiatry students Madeline Mee and Aradhna Kumar with patient Kristen Soroczynski





Norwegian students visit 'down under' for **PERSPECTIVES** on child protection

Five undergraduate students from the Sør-Trøndelag University College in Trondheim, Norway visited QUT in March, for the first student exchange between the university and QUT's Social Work and Human Services.

The second-year Bachelor of Child Protection Education students spent three weeks attending lectures, meeting staff, industry and agencies, and visiting the community of Cherbourg to complete a group project on Indigenous issues in child protection.

Social Work and Human Services Lecturer Ms Waveney Croft said the exchange came out of her visit to the social work faculty at the Sør-Trøndelag University College in 2010.

'Both universities saw it as an opportunity to develop links and provide students with a cross-cultural experience,' Ms Croft said.

'Undergraduate students in Norway are strongly encouraged to do an educational placement overseas and Australia was appealing to them.

'Opportunities like these offer so many benefits to the students both academically and personally – better language skills,

networks, a comparative experience, and of course the opportunity to see the other side of the world.

'It's a fantastic, enriching experience to do while at university – totally different to anything else they would have experienced. We hope that in the future, some of our students might be able to make a similar trip to Norway.'

Students Ane Elida Steinbakken and Ida Strømsnes Agård said they learnt so much during their time at QUT.

'We had such a great experience – all the people we dealt with took such good care of us,' they said.

Ane said the highlight of the trip was the visit to the Cherbourg community.

'Cherbourg was different to what we expected – we saw both sides of the community,' she said.

'We came in with a limited understanding of the problems – we knew Indigenous children were over-represented in child protection in Australia, but we didn't know how big and how complex the issues were.'

'We spoke with the Cherbourg Mayor, Sam Murray. He was very inspirational and gave us the impression that the community was eager to change and to work together to address issues.

'One of the things we will take back with us is the acknowledgement of Indigenous people – we were really surprised and encouraged with event presenters' public acknowledgement of Indigenous people and their land.

'We also noticed similarities and differences in the approach to child protection. For example, in Australia, intervention tends to be at a younger age, while in Norway, the children are usually older, and the focus is on prevention, rather than intervention where possible.'

Online alcohol and depression helpline awarded

HELP



A researcher's work to help people experiencing alcohol and depression problems has been recognised by the Queensland Government at the 2010 Mental Health Week awards.

Professor David Kavanagh, from the School of Psychology and Counselling, was awarded in the Government service or research and education category for his work developing the OnTrack website which provides confidential online assistance.

Deputy Premier and then Minister for Health Paul Lucas announced the awards at the culmination of Queensland's Mental Health Week last year.

Mr Lucas said Professor Kavanagh's work was helping immeasurably to improve community understanding of mental health issues, which would affect almost half of the Australian adult population at some stage.

'Yet two-thirds of those experiencing a mental illness do not seek treatment largely due to the stigma attached to it,' Mr Lucas said.

Professor Kavanagh said OnTrack, funded by Queensland Health, gave people free 24-hour access to assistance, no matter where they lived.

'OnTrack was developed with the needs of people in rural and remote communities in mind,' he said.

Professor Kavanagh said large numbers of people, particularly in rural and remote locations, were unnecessarily going without help.

'There are different reasons why people don't make appointments to get help for depression or drinking problems,' he said.

'Some people don't have time to commit to regular appointments, stigma is still a barrier and many regional and rural towns lack access to psychological services.

'When such services do exist, privacy can be a big concern, as you might know the psychologist personally or not want people to know you are seeing them.'

'However', Professor Kavanagh said, 'internet programs were designed to overcome these difficulties'.

'The OnTrack website allows people to get fact sheets and check their mood and their drinking without having to log in or give their name,' Professor Kavanagh said.

'If they want, and require, more support, there is a confidential online program they can use. It has tools to help people get their lives back on track, and gives feedback on how they are going.

'If their problems are severe, we ask that they use the program with their doctor.'





Motorists disregard medication WARNING LABELS

Most Queensland drivers don't take heed of medication warning labels and are potentially driving drug-impaired despite the threat of drowsiness and increased crash risk, according to a new study from the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q).

Researcher Tanya Smyth conducted a survey of 325 Queensland drivers who were taking medication, and compared the effectiveness of Australia's cautionary labels about driving, with newly-introduced colour-coded labels used in France.

'There was a significantly stronger perception of risk associated with medication displaying the strongest French warning, compared with the strongest Australian warning,' Ms Smyth said.

'Participants most frequently thought they would be slightly to moderately impaired after taking a medication that displayed the strongest Australian label.

'However, they also thought they would be very impaired after taking a medication displaying the strongest French label.

'Participants also thought they would be more likely to be involved in a crash if taking a medication that displayed the strongest French label, compared with the strongest Australian label.'

Ms Smyth said Australia's labelling system provided a thorough written explanation about the medication and its effects, with the strongest label reading: 'This medication may cause drowsiness and may increase the effects of alcohol. If affected, do not drive a motor vehicle or operate machinery.'

She said France's warning labels used a tiered categorisation system that included a pictogram with different colours to represent the level of risk the medication had for potentially impairing driving skills.

'The strongest label displays a vehicle, is coloured red and includes the words 'attention danger'.

'In France, labels also urge the driver to talk to their doctor or pharmacist before getting behind the wheel.

'Here in Australia we have written labels which rely on people being able to estimate their level of impairment and warn against using vehicles if they are impaired.'

'One of the drawbacks of the Australian label is the driver's requirement to self-assess their impairment.'

Ms Smyth said it was concerning that the Australian label relied on drivers to recognise the symptoms of impairment and to assess their affected status.

'There is a chance that these decisions may not be the right ones, especially in light of the results which show that text warnings on labels fail to convey the level of risk involved with driving under the influence of certain medication,' she said.

Ms Smyth said it was widely known that medications that have the potential to cause drowsiness could be harmful to driver safety.

Ms Smyth is a member of the Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation. The study was funded by the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust.

New study **weighs up** exercise and food choices ●●●●●●●●

Exercise to assist weight loss may not have the same effect across individuals trying to lose weight, according to health researcher.

Associate Professor Neil King, from the School of Human Movement Studies, has discovered that exercise has the potential to affect appetite depending on how the individual regards the 'reward value' of food and food choice.

The study found that 12 weeks of exercise could affect appetite by either increasing the individual's fasting appetite and desire for healthy foods, or by increasing the desire to eat high-fat sugary foods which in turn can lead to the inability to achieve weight-loss goals.

'For some individuals, exercise increases the reward value of high palatability, high energy food and diminishes the impact of exercise on fat loss,' Dr King said.

'In our research, we found that overweight and obese individuals who showed an immediate post-exercise increase in expected liking for food, and more specifically

an increased wanting and preference for high-fat, sweet foods, displayed a smaller reduction in fat mass with exercise.

'The people in the study who exercised and made healthy food choices were more likely to reach their goal weight.'

Associate Professor King said contrary to the widely held belief, evidence suggested that acute exercise did not, in fact, affect hunger and food intake in children and in adults.

He said some people chose to reward themselves for exercise by eating foods that were usually forbidden, or by increasing the portion size of foods eaten.

'This is in line with some people's perception that they can eat whatever foods they like after they have just exercised,' he said.

'However, one must consider the relative rate of energy expenditure of exercise (low) compared with the relative rate of energy intake of eating (high). There is a mis-match between the rate we can burn energy compared with the rate we can consume energy.

'Some people will be less successful at using exercise as a method for weight management as they believe that exercise allows them to eat whatever they want.'

Associate Professor King said there was strong evidence to suggest that eating a high-fat and energy-dense diet in combination with increased physical activity could negate and possibly reverse the beneficial effects of exercise.

He said it was therefore important to educate the public about the importance of healthy food choices combined with physical activity, not only in the pursuit of weight loss, but also for general wellbeing.

'It is important to note that weight loss is not the only benefit of increased exercise or physical activity; nor is it the most useful and appropriate marker of health,' he said.

'Those who are undertaking exercise as a means to lose weight must also consider that body weight changes and compensatory responses to exercise are not the same for all people.

'Put simply, being physically active does not allow people to eat what they want.

'Early identification of this predisposition to high-fat, sugary foods could assist to optimise weight control strategies by augmenting the health benefits of exercise with dietary modification or pharmacotherapy.'



Exercise & healthy diet

● ● ● ● ● ● ● are **KEY INGREDIENTS**

Christine Gustafson doesn't see the point in eating high-fat, sugary foods after exercise.

The Brisbane resident exercises at least six days a week and, while she does allow 'treats' in her diet, she maintains healthy and balanced eating habits.

'Exercise makes me want to eat well,' she said.

'If I eat healthy, I feel healthy and I want to exercise.

'Why would I negate the benefits of the exercise by eating fatty foods. If I've just worked really hard at the gym there's no way I'm going to ruin it by eating junk.

'Exercise does make me hungry, but I'm also encouraged to eat healthy as a result.'

When Christine was 18 she began to exercise in pursuit of weight loss, now some 17 years later she continues a regular routine at the gym and outdoor activity.

She confesses she is addicted to physical activity due to the way it makes her feel.

'It makes me happy,' she said.

'I love it; can't get enough of it. Regular exercise makes me feel really happy and energised.

'The more you do, the more energy you get. Once you start to see the results of the exercise and healthy eating, it drives you to do even more.'

While Christine admits she is at one end of the exercise spectrum due to her daily exercise regimen, she understands some people may see food as a reward after exercise.

'Sure, I allow myself treats here and there, but the key is ensure energy output is greater than energy input,' she said.

'Otherwise this is where people fall down in their weight loss plans.

'If you work hard at exercise, it's important not to ruin the benefits by eating fatty foods. The best motivation is to start seeing the positive results of healthy eating habits and physical activity.'



Image: Christine Gustafson

Nursing leader awarded **QUT** honorary doctorate



Rosemary Bryant has had a long and distinguished nursing career and now has another accolade to add to her collection: an honorary doctorate from QUT.

Image: Rosemary Bryant

Since beginning her nursing life in 1963, Rosemary has become nationally and internationally renowned within the nursing profession for her tireless work to improve nursing education and working conditions for nurses.

She is the president of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) – only the third Australian ever to have been elected to the role.

She is also Australia's first Commonwealth Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer, Emeritus Director of Nursing at Royal Adelaide Hospital and a member of the Advisory Board for the World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Rosemary said a real passion for nursing spurred her on to want to make a difference for nurses – in Australia and worldwide.

'Nursing is so important to the community; nurses are in the privileged position of taking care of people when they are at their most vulnerable, and of being a spokesperson for their patients – so to me it has always been really important that the contribution of nurses be acknowledged,' Ms Bryant said.

'When I was running a ward at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, many people knew and remembered me, and it is pretty gratifying that you are able to make that impression and that nursing care is so important to people.

'It is still a developing profession in many ways, and I have been lucky enough to be able to influence how it has developed in Australia, and lobby for many different aspects of the profession – it is always daunting but another privilege to be able to do so.'

She said her career has been filled with high points and challenges.

'Getting a job as Director of Nursing at the Royal Adelaide Hospital at the age of 37 was a huge honour, and becoming president of the ICN was pretty exciting too – getting this doctorate is another great high point as well,' she said.

'I have a fantastic relationship with the School of Nursing and Midwifery at QUT, and have worked with them on a number of things. I was also at their 30th anniversary celebrations in 2008.'

Ms Bryant was part of the push to professionalise nursing education by moving teaching out of hospitals and into universities, as well as creating a career structure with many levels.

She said her most recent project was one very close to her heart – opening up the medical benefits schedules to nursing practitioners, which would mean nurses could set up practices and write prescriptions.

'This is a major reform which really provides higher access to health care for the public which is very important,' Ms Bryant said.

Her role as president of ICN has taken her to Haiti and Rwanda this year alone, to assess the conditions of nursing and try to help improve them.

'The ICN represents 13 million nurses in 135 countries and we are in charge of a range of activities, including making sure we have standards and processes to keep patients safe in all countries, assess if places need assistance, and so on,' she said.

Professor Helen Edwards, Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery, said she was delighted that Ms Bryant was honoured in December 2010.

'I believe that by awarding Rosemary an honorary doctorate, we have recognised a nursing leader who has demonstrated outstanding achievements and contributions to nursing in Queensland, Australia and internationally,' she said.



International collaboration to **BOOST** local treatment of Parkinson's disease

International collaboration with Oxford University is set to place QUT at the forefront of research into deep brain stimulation treatment for Parkinson's disease.

QUT's Professor Graham Kerr, of the Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation, was recently awarded a Queensland International Fellowship to collaborate with Oxford University to research improvement of deep brain stimulation treatment for Parkinson's disease.

Professor Kerr is working with Oxford's functional neurosurgery department to research the latest technology for alleviating the symptoms of the disease.

The international collaboration will bring direct benefits for the treatment of the disease in Queensland, as Professor Kerr will also partner with St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital to develop the technology and new clinical assessments for use in Brisbane.

'Oxford University is the world leader in deep brain stimulation, in which electrodes are implanted in key parts of the brain to send regular electrical impulses and rebalance critical neural networks,' he said.

'This collaboration will put QUT and St Andrew's at the forefront of this research and lead to new and better treatment outcomes.'

Professor Kerr is highly regarded for his knowledge and research developments into posture, balance control and falls associated with Parkinson's and neurological disease, having secured research funding from the National Health and Medical Research Council and Parkinson's Queensland.

His most recent research found that a group of tests may help predict which people with Parkinson's disease are more likely to fall.

'Gait and balance difficulties lead to falls and these are a major problem for people with Parkinson's disease,' Professor Kerr said.

'Falls can lead to injuries and reduced mobility which can result in increasing weakness, loss of independence and increased need for nursing home care.'

'Despite these issues and their impact on the healthcare system and society, little research has been done to help predict which people with Parkinson's disease are more likely to fall so we can try to prevent these falls.'

To assist his research, Professor Kerr conducted tests of people with Parkinson's disease who were able to walk without any aids to evaluate their Parkinson's symptoms, balance and mobility. The participants then reported any falls that occurred over a six-month period.

Professor Kerr said the tests that were the best predictors of whether a person was likely to fall included a test of overall Parkinson's symptoms, a questionnaire on how often they tended to 'freeze' while walking, and a test of balance. One test showed that people who fell were more likely to have reduced leg strength than people who did not fall.

'The tests are easy to implement and take only a short time to complete,' he said.

'Once we can identify those at risk of falling, we can take steps to prevent these falls.'

Professor Kerr's other research projects include injury prevention of older people and central nervous system and movement disorders.

Ground-breaking research of the **Community:** IHBI CELEBRAT

In just five short years, the Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation (IHBI) has placed QUT in the international spotlight for its cutting-edge research into community health issues.



2011 marks the five-year anniversary of the opening of IHBI's main research facility at the Kelvin Grove campus, representing the perfect opportunity to celebrate the many research achievements and collaborations achieved by the Institute since this time.

IHBI is devoted to improving the health of individuals through research innovation by bringing together researchers from a variety of disciplines who collaborate to find real-time solutions for health problems concerning many Australians.

Researchers are drawn from QUT's faculties of Health, Science and Technology and Built Environment and Engineering. More recently, researchers from other faculties, including Business and Creative Industries, have contributed to IHBI.

Executive Director Professor Ross Young said a key element of IHBI's success was its ability to draw on the expertise of researchers representing a wide range of disciplines to encourage creative, synergistic and rapid solutions to health problems affecting the community.

'Since its inception, IHBI has also been able to develop ongoing links and partnerships with local and interstate hospitals, healthcare service providers, medical researchers worldwide, clinical specialists and industry professionals,' Professor Young said.

'This cross-industry, cross-disciplinary approach has allowed us to develop more than just innovations to health issues; our researchers also apply solutions to real-world practice to ensure these solutions are effective in the community.'

Professor Young said IHBI had achieved a number of major research achievements across the five IHBI research domains, being Cells and Tissue; Human Health and Wellbeing; Injury Prevention and Rehabilitation; Medical Device and Vision Improvement.

'IHBI is instrumental in wound management research in Australia,' Professor Young said.

'In our Cells and Tissue and Human Health and Wellbeing research domains, we have been able to improve our understanding and treatment of chronic wounds through the establishment of the Wound Management Innovation Cooperative Research Centre. Led by IHBI members Professor Zee Upton and Professor Helen Edwards, the Wound Management Innovation CRC has 22 collaborators across Australia who are working together to improve wound healing and quality of life for people with wounds, and provide cost-effective wound care that lessens the burden on the health system.

'Other exciting research outcomes in the Cells and Tissue domain include the commencement of trials of a chlamydia vaccine in koalas as a precursor to human trials, driven by Professor Peter Timms and Professor Ken Beagley.

'We have also expanded the prostate cancer research group which was established by Professor Judith Clements. This group has instigated multiple international collaborations and attracted leading researchers including Professor Colleen Nelson, Professor Pam Russell and Dr Patrick Ling.'

The Human Health and Wellbeing domain has also celebrated a number of exciting research outcomes, from support for adolescents and depression, to ground-breaking research into sun exposure.

The Resilience in Adolescents Program, designed by Psychology and Counselling Professor Ian Shochet, has enjoyed ongoing success since its inception through its support of thousands of teens in 13 different countries to provide tools to help them cope with life's challenges.

Professor David Kavanagh also launched the OnTrack Program in 2009 to provide internet-based alcohol and depression management tools specifically designed to be accessible for rural and remote Australians. And 2010 saw IHBI awarded funding by the National Health and Medical

benefits health

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ES FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Research Council for the Centre of Research Excellence in Sun and Health to continue Professor Michael Kimlin's research into the duality of sun exposure and the balance between the prevention of skin cancer and the health benefits of adequate Vitamin D production.

'In our Injury and Prevention domain we have improved our understanding of Parkinson's disease, including the impact of treatments such as Deep Brain Stimulation and how to predict which patients are most likely to fall through the research conducted by Professor Graham Kerr,' Professor Young said.

'We have also conducted significant awareness-raising in the mining and construction industries to improve health and fitness through research led by Professor Tony Parker.

'The Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q) celebrated 10 years of influencing the policy and research agenda for road safety in 2007 under the leadership of Professor Mary Sheehan. CARRS-Q celebrates many notable achievements in the past five years, including the introduction of roadside random drug driving tests, implementation of the 'Under the Limit' drink driving rehabilitation program, ongoing investigations into older drivers, the effect of fatigue on drivers, and support of innovative road safety practices through the annual Queensland Road Safety Awards. I congratulate Professor Barry Watson and the CARRS-Q team for their ongoing research excellence.'

Key achievements in the Medical Device domain include improved spinal injury treatment led by Dr Ben Goss and enhanced by significant collaborations with Canadian spinal injury research leaders, and improved treatment of scoliosis, informed by research conducted by Associate Professor Clayton Adam.

IHBI has also contributed to the design of biomaterials that improve fracture healing, wound healing and delivery of pharmaceuticals to specific sites through research led by Professor Dietmar Hutmacher.

An exciting development in the Medical Device domain during the past five years was the establishment in 2009 of the Medical Engineering Research Facility, a biomedical engineering and surgical research and training facility, at the Prince Charles Hospital, run in conjunction with the Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering.

'Finally, our Vision Improvement domain is also at the cutting-edge of research development with its many exciting projects, including research to assess the effectiveness of eye tests to diagnose diabetic nerve damage (peripheral neuropathy) by Professor Nathan Efron,' Professor Young said.

'We have also been able to improve our understanding of the mechanisms of age-related maculopathy and those at risk of developing the condition, with research conducted by Dr Beatrix Feigl.'

Professor Young said he was excited for the next five years in IHBI's research portfolio and how they would impact on better health.

This will include the establishment of the TRI in 2012, which will allow, for the first time in Australia, biopharmaceuticals and treatments to be discovered, produced, clinically tested and manufactured in one location. The TRI, to be established at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, will see IHBI researchers from the prostate cancer and tissue repair groups join researchers from Mater Medical Research Institute, the University of Queensland's Diamantina Institute and the Princess Alexandra Hospital's Centres for Health Research to improve and accelerate medical research and translate that research into greater palliative care.

New nursing professor WELCOMED

QUT's School of Nursing and Midwifery recently appointed Dr Ann Bonner as their new Professor of Nursing.

Recognised nationally and internationally as an expert renal nurse, Dr Bonner was previously the Associate Professor and Director of Postgraduate Studies at Charles Sturt University.

Dr Bonner has extensive experience in postgraduate teaching and supervision of doctoral candidates using mixed methods and grounded theory methodological approaches.

Her research interests include advanced clinical practice roles, chronic illness and rural and remote health care and she currently conducts collaborative research projects with academic staff and clinicians in New South Wales and Queensland.

Dr Bonner is an Associate Editor and Editorial Board Member for the Renal Society of Australasia Journal and reviewer for several national and international journals.



Changing Australia's sun prevention landscape

QUT WELCOMES

the Centre for Research Excellence in Sun and Health

New sun exposure guidelines focusing on the diverse nature of the Australian population is the research focus of QUT's new Centre for Research Excellence in Sun and Health (CRESH).

The Centre was established in 2010 at the Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation (IHBI) through \$2.3million in funding through the National Health and Medical Research Council.

The Centre was one of only 11 awarded in Australia and brings together a multidisciplinary team of clinicians, medical scientists, epidemiologists, behavioural researchers, psychologists, public health researchers and health economists from across Australia to research sun and health.

Over the next five years, CRESH will collect data about knowledge, attitudes and behaviours concerning skin cancer, sun protection and Vitamin D. The findings of the research will influence new public health guidelines to enhance the health of the Australian population.

CRESH Director Professor Michael Kimlin said researchers would focus on the development of new guidelines that take into account the broad range of skin types, sun exposure preferences and environmental characteristics across Australia.

He said one of the key research issues aimed to address how to achieve a balance between adequate Vitamin D levels, produced through ultraviolet radiation exposure, and the prevention of skin cancers.

'The guidelines for sun exposure in Australia have been aimed at reducing the high incidence of skin cancer caused by ultraviolet radiation,' he said.

'There is increasing evidence of the protective health effects of adequate Vitamin D, which means such exposure guidelines must be revised to ensure people are getting enough of this vitamin.

'Australians need to enjoy the benefits of Vitamin D, but not suffer from an incidence of skin cancer.

'New sun exposure guidelines are needed that reflect this more balanced approach.'

Professor Kimlin said insufficient Vitamin D in the body was linked to some cancers, infection and issues within the central nervous system.

He said Vitamin D was important for bone health and strength.

'It is vital for people to be made aware of how much sun is good for them, and what is too much,' he said.

'There has never been an opportunity to undertake such innovative, cross-discipline research into sun-related disease in Australia's history, and for that matter, globally.'

Other CRESH collaborators include the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, University of Melbourne, Australian National University, Griffith University, Cancer Council Queensland and Cancer Council Victoria.

Professor Kimlin said CRESH provides the framework to build capacity within the research workforce through the awarding of doctoral and postdoctoral research opportunities.

'These training schemes will not only allow researchers to grow and develop new skills, but will also expose them to a network of investigators who are all leaders in their fields,' Professor Kimlin said.

'The level of funding provided to establish this Centre acknowledges the importance of preventative health research, and will allow the new centre to focus on cutting-edge research and the training of the next generation of Australian scientists in this area.'



Young men eat most TAKEAWAY

Image: PhD candidate Kyoko Miura



Whether they know which food is healthy or not, 40 per cent of Queenslanders regularly consume takeaway meals, a researcher has found.

PhD researcher Kyoko Miura, from the School of Public Health, investigated the amount of takeaway food Queenslanders ate and has found men were more likely to eat it than women, the young ate more than older people and the least educated ate significantly more.

Ms Miura undertook a survey of Queenslanders to gain an updated view on their eating habits.

Prior to this study, the most recent data available on the population's takeaway consumption was the 1995 National Nutrition Survey.

Ms Miura said while nutritional knowledge did not alter whether takeaway food and beverages were consumed, it did affect the type of takeaway that was chosen.

'The demand for takeaway foods is similar among people who have different levels of nutritional knowledge; however, nutritional knowledge may play an important role for types of takeaway food chosen,' Ms Miura said.

'Those who had low nutritional knowledge were more likely to report eating 'less healthy' takeaway foods, such as pizza, fried foods and soft drinks, compared with those who had high nutritional knowledge, who ate 'healthy' takeaway foods, such as sushi, sandwiches and fruit juice.'

'Participants who chose 'less healthy' takeaway foods were also less likely to report eating the recommended levels of fruit and vegetables (two or more serves of fruit per day and four or more serves of vegetables per day).'

Ms Miura said the people most likely to eat takeaway food of any kind were young people, and those who were socioeconomically disadvantaged.

'About 55 per cent of people aged 25 to 29 years and 46 per cent aged 30 to 35 ate takeaway food at least once a week, while people aged 60 to 64 ate takeaway food least often, with only 20.7 per cent eating it at least once a week,' she said.

'Men were more likely to eat takeaway food at least weekly (42.7 per cent) compared with women (33.7 per cent).'

'The least educated were significantly more likely to report frequently eating takeaway overall, with 45.9 per cent regularly eating 'less healthy' food options and 45.3 per cent eating 'healthy' food options.'

Ms Miura said people who ate takeaway foods regularly were influenced by time constraints and beliefs that takeaway foods were value for money; cheaper than cooking and nutritious. They felt cooking was a chore and infrequently cooked a meal from basic ingredients.

She said consumption of 'less healthy' takeaway food, and associated low level of fruit and vegetable intake, among socioeconomically disadvantaged groups might contribute to their higher rates of obesity and diet-related chronic disease.

'Therefore, I will be researching why these dietary differences exist and what factors contribute to them,' she said.

'This is important information so that we can develop health promotion programs and interventions to reduce dietary differences and consequently, reduce health differences within the population.'





Scholarships support postgraduate RESEARCH IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Completing their postgraduate research studies has become a lot easier for two students in the School of Public Health, thanks to scholarship funding by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Emily Li and Susie de Jersey both received NHMRC scholarships in the recent round for their research projects, entitled (respectively) Fall surveillance in midlife in Queensland: Evaluation of patients, emergency department records, and health data sources and Are we missing opportunities: understanding health behaviours associated with overweight in pregnancy.

Ms Li said her research aimed to improve the understanding of falls and fall-related injuries in Queensland among middle-aged adults (40–64 years) by examining the quality of fall-related injury data from a range of data sources.

The study will identify existing injury data essential to informing fall prevention initiatives in midlife and will examine the quality of these data as potential falls surveillance systems. Evaluation of data quality sources will also seek to improve the quality and validity of future evidence-based injury prevention research.

She said the research project would also explore the knowledge, attitude, beliefs and behaviours toward fall prevention among midlife adults to identify opportunities for interventions.

‘There are extensive studies on fall prevention in the elderly yet little attention is given to middle-aged adults with only a few studies providing epidemiological data on the risk factors, protective factors, incidence, prevalence and circumstances surrounding falls in these age groups,’ she said.

‘Studies have shown middle-aged adults progressively start to show several fall-related risk factors including higher incidence of disease and medication use, and lower level of physical activity.

‘With an ageing population, the health costs from fall-related injury are predicted to increase almost threefold to 1.4 billion by 2051. To reduce the financial burden it is important that prevention of falls and the related injuries should also extend to mid-aged populations (the baby boomers) which represent the largest cohort ever born.

‘Prevention strategies targeted at midlife populations may assist in reduction in fall injuries in future elderly populations, by positioning those in midlife to transition into old age with fall prevention behaviours already established.’

Ms Li said she was honoured to be awarded the scholarship, which will assist her research studies on midlife falls and fall-related injuries for the next three years.

‘The scholarship will cover the costs used towards the research activities including conducting surveys to examine the views of middle-aged adults regarding injury from falls and fall-prevention strategies,’ she said.

‘It is pleasing to see the NHMRC recognises falls and fall-related injury issues as one of the national health priority areas.’

Similarly, Susie de Jersey is grateful to the NHMRC for the scholarship as the funding will allow her to take unpaid leave from her employment as Senior Dietitian Nutritionist at the Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital.

She said the scholarship also acknowledged the national obesity issue and the need for research into the prevalence of weight gain during pregnancy in Australia.

Ms de Jersey’s research aims to describe influences on health behaviours during pregnancy and how these may differ according to maternal pre-pregnancy weight status and gestational weight gain to guide the future development of appropriate interventions to support overweight women to achieve a health pregnancy.

‘Pregnancy has been identified as a critical period in the human lifecycle that may influence the development of overweight in both the mothers and their offspring,’ she said.

‘Excess maternal weight, closely linked to over nutrition and physical inactivity, and failure to initiate and continue breastfeeding, have been associated with overweight in both mothers and their offspring.’

Ms de Jersey said through her work at the hospital it was apparent the opportunities to develop intervention programs to prevent future chronic disease in pregnancy and early life were not being captured.

‘Pregnant women often have a heightened awareness of their health and that of their unborn baby, and I would like to find ways we can better support women to achieve positive lifestyle changes in pregnancy that may influence not only their own health, but that of all their family,’ she said.

‘The research will identify those areas to target in supporting women to achieve healthy eating, physical activity and appropriate weight gain goals in pregnancy.

‘Clinicians and researchers will be able to use this information to design targeted interventions to support women in achieving healthy lifestyles in pregnancy.’

Image: PhD candidates Susie de Jersey and Emily Li

Life tougher for **REFUGEE** single mums



Image: PhD candidate
Caroline Lenette

Refugee single mothers face many more challenges in adapting to their new home than married refugee women and are overcoming great obstacles for the benefit of their children, a Faculty of Health researcher said.

PhD social work and human services researcher Caroline Lenette said refugee single mothers were a minority within a minority.

'They face discrimination both because of their cultural background and because of their single motherhood status,' Ms Lenette said.

'This discrimination as single parents comes from both within their own communities and from the broader Australian community.'

Ms Lenette said challenges for refugee single mothers included learning English, learning to drive, getting a job, and in many cases lacking a relative to support them, which were compounded by the multiple responsibilities involved with being a single parent and the social stigmas associated with single motherhood.

She conducted several in-depth interviews with eight women and focussed on the complex and multifaceted circumstances of four single mothers, spending time in their family homes and becoming familiar with their struggles and successes.

The women were aged between their mid-twenties to fifties and were sole carers for between one and seven children. They came from several African countries, including Burundi, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

'Being isolated in a new country with little support impacts on single mothers' mental health,' Ms Lenette said.

'But having spent several years waiting to come to Australia, the feeling can be bittersweet.

'They may feel depressed about living in Australia while also recognising this is a good place to raise their children.'

Ms Lenette said refugee single mothers managed to accomplish a range of positive outcomes, including securing ongoing employment and undertaking tertiary studies, despite significant obstacles they encountered during resettlement.

She said an understanding of the challenges faced by refugee single women meant support organisations could tailor programs to their needs.

Faculty of **HEALTH** wins **QUT CUP**

The Faculty of Health was crowned the winner of the first annual QUT Cup in 2010.

Coinciding with Melbourne Cup, it was introduced as a way of encouraging staff to support the Learning Potential Fund (LPF) and 'Back an LPF student, not just a horse'.

The LPF provides scholarships and bursaries to help disadvantaged students throughout the year.

Health was officially presented the Cup at the Faculty Forum in April recognising Health's active participation throughout 2010 in raising money for the LPF.

While fundraising was a key element of Health's success, creativity and staff involvement were also key aspects of the criteria.

Staff Giving Committee Chair Professor Martin Betts said the 2010 QUT Cup was an outstanding success.

'The Staff Giving Committee and I were delighted with the level of engagement throughout the University during the inaugural year of the QUT Cup,' he said.

'It was a closely run race with much jostling towards the finish line that ended in a photo finish. But when all the criteria were closely analysed by the judges it became clear that the Faculty of Health won by a nose.'

Executive Dean Andrew Wilson said he is proud of all members of staff who were involved.

'I would like to personally thank and congratulate all staff who supported the Faculty of Health's QUT Cup activities during Melbourne Cup 2010,' he said.

Professor Wilson said he aims to secure the Cup a second time for 2011.

'Let's continue the fundraising, creativity and engagement across the Faculty that secured us the Cup last year.'



higher degree highlights



Ching Kuei Chiang

PhD (Nursing and Midwifery)

Introducing action research as a vehicle to bring about change to a psychiatric nursing curriculum in Taiwan

Mai Hoa Do

PhD (Public Health)

Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) adherence among people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the north of Vietnam: A multi-method approach

Susanna Doyle

PhD (Social Work and Human Services)

Being in the world of care: The lived experience of older people receiving community aged care packages in Queensland

Weiwei Du

PhD (Public Health)

Policy analysis of disaster health management in China

Beverley Duff

Professional Doctorate (Nursing and Midwifery)

Development and evaluation of an integrated clinical learning model to inform continuing education for acute care nurses

Halima Goss

PhD (Human Movement Studies)

Wellness education: An integrated theoretical framework for fostering transformative learning

Rei Mei Hong

PhD (Nursing and Midwifery)

The lived experience of being a sole mother in Taiwan

Andrew Hunt

PhD (Human Movement Studies)

Heat strain, hydration status, and symptoms of heat illness in surface mine workers

David Lawson

PhD (Social Work and Human Services)

Indigenous Australians and Islam: Spiritual, cultural and political alliances

Nerida Leal

PhD (Psychology and Counselling)

Illegal street racing and associated (hooning) behaviours

Marie Lenette

PhD (Social Work and Human Services)

Narratives of complexity: An ethnographic exploration of resilience and wellbeing among single refugee women in Brisbane

Yen Peng Lim

PhD (Public Health)

Malnutrition and clinical outcomes in elderly patients from Singapore acute hospital

Yan Lou

PhD (Nursing and Midwifery)

Self-management of cancer treatment-related fatigue, nausea, vomiting and oral mucositis in Chinese cancer patients

Husnain Malik

PhD (Psychology and Counselling)

An assessment system for evaluation of driving competencies

Rebecca Michael

PhD (Psychology and Counselling)

An examination of monotony and hypovigilance, independent of fatigue: Relevance to road safety

Tam Minh Nguyen

PhD (Public Health)

Drinking and driving in Vietnam: Perceptions and risk

Sharon O'Brien

PhD (Psychology and Counselling)

The psychosocial factors influencing aggressive driving behaviour

Alexis Stockwell

Professional Doctorate (Public Health)

Evaluation of financial incentives as a quality improvement strategy in the public hospital context: clinician attitudes, design variables, and economic costs

Qunyan Xu

PhD (Nursing and Midwifery)

An examination of the relationships between lifestyle factors and mental health among Australian midlife and older women

Fan Yi

PhD (Optometry)

Wavefront aberrations and the depth of focus of the human eye.

Shu Ying Zhang

PhD (Nursing and Midwifery)

Measurement and correlates of caregiver self-efficacy amongst family caregivers of persons with dementia living in Shanghai, China

Jingzhou Zhao

PhD (Public Health)

An economic evaluation of the safe motherhood programme in Guangxi, China

OUTSTANDING DOCTORAL THESIS AWARD

David Alonso Caneiro

PhD (Optometry)

Non-invasive assessment of tear film surface quality

Kathleen Finlayson

PhD (Nursing and Midwifery)

Identification of factors contributing to recurrence of venous leg ulcers

EXECUTIVE DEAN'S COMMENDATION AWARDS

Gregoire Larue

PhD (Psychology and Counselling)

Monotony and its effects on driver's vigilance

Louise Munro

PhD (Psychology and Counselling)

The development and evaluation of a culturally affirmative counselling model for deaf clients in Australia

Maria O'Reilly

PhD (Nursing and Midwifery)

Clinical indicators of quality for Australian residential aged care facilities: Establishing reliability, validity, and quality thresholds

Yunxian Zhou

PhD (Nursing and Midwifery)

The experience of China-educated nurses working in Australia: A symbolic interactionist perspective

Teaching kids a lifesaving lesson in mateship

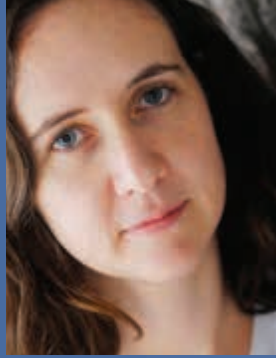


Image: Dr Lisa Buckley

Year nine students will be taught the importance of mateship in a bid to reduce risky behaviour and save lives as part of a school-based intervention program to be introduced in Queensland.

The three-year program, funded by a \$327 000 Australian Research Council Discovery grant and designed by QUT, aims to encourage teens to protect their friends.

Lead researcher Dr Lisa Buckley, from the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q), said serious injuries due to transport accidents, violence and alcohol associated risk-taking were the main causes of teenage death.

Dr Buckley, who piloted the program in Queensland, will look at whether or not mateship can stop teens from participating in risk-taking behaviours.

‘After the pilot program, we saw a reduction in a number of risk-taking behaviours and injury, including a 10 per cent drop in students injured while being violent,’ she said.

‘Students from participating schools reported a 20 per cent increase in wearing a bicycle helmet, and we saw a 15 per cent reduction in students being injured cycling, when compared to students from non-participating schools.’

Dr Buckley said in terms of changing attitudes, students who took part in the program had a greater awareness of risk and actions they could take to reduce it.

‘Our aim with this new research is to test the theory that the message about looking out for friends is the key to the program’s effectiveness.

‘As well as looking after themselves, we make them think about looking after others and keeping their friends out of harm’s way.’

The intervention program will also include providing students with basic first aid skills and working with teachers to promote a connected environment where teachers reach out to provide support.

‘We know that young people who are connected to their school are more likely to have better health outcomes and be less likely to take risks,’ Dr Buckley said.

‘Being connected means that students feel they are part of the school, and adults in the school care about, and are supportive of them.

‘Connectedness is a really important factor and has been shown to help reduce adolescents’ high levels of health risk behaviours, including alcohol use, delinquency and violence.’

The program is expected to be implemented in schools across Queensland in 2012 and involve more than 2500 students.

Contact us

The Faculty of Health is committed to providing innovative courses, significant research and innovation, and improving the quality of life for all Australians. Contact us for more information on the faculty’s research programs, course developments and community initiatives; or to become involved in supporting the Faculty’s future projects.

Research

Information about the Faculty’s research facilities, current projects, and postgraduate research courses can be found at www.hlth.qut.edu.au/research

Courses

Information on course developments including new degrees, course structures, undergraduate and postgraduate offerings can be found at www.hlth.qut.edu.au

Clinics

Information on the services provided by the QUT Health Clinics can be found at www.hlth.qut.edu.au/clinics

Your support

Donations from QUT staff and alumni as well as charitable gifts from other members of the community are making a real difference to students and researchers in the Faculty of Health. Our health friends and donors often choose to support a cause close to their hearts. Research on vision problems such as myopia, skin cancer prevention and awareness programs, mental health studies and nursing education have all received philanthropic gifts over the past years. These gifts make a real difference.

For further information about opportunities to support the Faculty of Health and its important programs please phone the Alumni and Development Office on 07 3138 1657.

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