

Newsletter

www.adelaide.edu.au/hda

Upcoming Events...

- **29 May-2 June**
The 9th International Society for the Study of Fatty Acids and Lipids Conference will be held in Maastricht, the Netherlands.
- **4-11 June**
The Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR - SA branch) annual medical research week will be held in Adelaide.
- **5-9 June**
The 24th annual SLEEP meeting will be held in San Antonio, Texas.
- **16-19 June**
The 8th annual International Society for Stem Cell Research annual meeting will be held in San Francisco, CA, USA.
- **19-22 June**
The 92nd annual Endocrine Society meeting will be held in San Diego, USA.
- **27-30 June**
The 26th annual European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology meeting will be held in Rome, Italy.
- **14-17 July**
The International Association for Dental Research meeting will be held in Barcelona, Spain.

Further information at www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events

LATEST NEWS

New HDA Partners

HDA would like to extend a very warm welcome to our new Partners.

FertilitySA are a reproductive medicine unit based at St Andrews Hospital, Adelaide providing patient-centred, specialist fertility care to families in South Australia. Their approach is to provide the best possible fertility outcomes in a personalised, compassionate way, by balancing safe, proven treatments with cutting edge technology.

Origins of FertilitySA are in the pioneering University of Adelaide Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Flinders Reproductive Medicine Unit. Their highly talented team is always at forefront of new developments and we are recognised nationally and internationally for our ongoing commitment to education and research in fields of reproductive medicine and embryology. FertilitySA offers a unique balance of history and innovation in reproductive medicine, to ensure the best chance of a successful pregnancy.

Children, Youth & Women's Health Service (CYWHS) brings together the Women's and Children's Hospital and Child & Youth Health to form a new state-wide health service for children, young people and women in South Australia. In providing excellence in health care and improved health for children, young people and women, we build the foundations for healthy and vibrant South Australia. CYWHS is South Australia's leading provider of health services for children, young people and women.

Flinders University enjoys a well-justified reputation for its excellence in teaching and research. It has a long-standing commitment to enhancing

educational opportunities for all and a proud record of community engagement. Since being established in 1966, Flinders has achieved much in innovative research, in high quality teaching and in community engagement.

They have attracted students from over 100 countries and alumni have built careers and lives that enrich communities across Australia and throughout the world. Flinders' achievements are underpinned by the network of strong external links that they have developed with stakeholders and with the communities we serve.

HDA Scholars Program

Proudly supported by the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation.

HDA would like to thank our 'hosts' and 'mentors' who are generously donating their time in the practicum placements and the mentoring components to our PhD Scholars.

Practicum Placement Hosts

- Adelaide Zoo
- Cancer Council SA
- Centre for Health Promotion, CYWHS
- Centre for Neuroscience, Flinders University
- Department of Gastroenterology, CYWHS
- OPAL site (City of Marion), SA Health
- School of Psychology, Flinders University

Mentors

- Dr Leah Brennan, Monash University
- Prof Simon Brookes, Flinders University
- A/Prof Pat Buckley, UniSA
- A/Prof Vicki Clifton, University of Adelaide
- Dr Susannah Elliott, AusSMC
- Ms Melanie Smith, SA Health
- Dr Cuong Tran, CYWHS/University of Adelaide

An initiative of University of Adelaide since 2004



HDA Partners





Dr Shirley Yates holds a PhD (Flinders University), MA (Hons) (Auckland University), and MEd (Adelaide University) and qualifications in Speech Pathology and teaching. She is the recipient of 22 research grants, has published a book, six book chapters, 41 articles in peer reviewed journals and conference proceedings and presented a further 50 papers at

international and national conferences.

Her research interests are centred on Children's Psychosocial Characteristics, Effective Teaching and Learning and Mathematics Education. In her PhD she explored the development of optimistic and pessimistic explanatory style in children and adolescents and considered the extent to which their characteristic explanatory style was related to their attitudes towards and achievement in mathematics.

She has extended this research to younger children and with funding from two grants from the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South

Australia has developed and validated an interactive, multi-media, computer based *Pessimism Scale for Young Children* (PSYCh). Results of this groundbreaking research are significant as they advance our understanding of the measurement and stability of pessimistic explanatory style and more broadly our ability to measure attributional constructs in young children.

Detection of pessimism during the early childhood years is critical as it has an adverse effect on children's classroom behaviour, motivation and achievement. It also has implications for early intervention and prevention.

The computer based multi-media format of the PSYCh is very appealing to young children and can be utilised for large-scale surveys and investigations of pessimistic explanatory style via CDROM or web based delivery.

Dr Yates plans to use the PSYCh in future studies to explore relationships between pessimistic explanatory style and depression in young children and would also like to develop and validate a measure of optimistic explanatory style in young children with the same methodology.

Dr Shirley Yates
✉ shirley.yates@flinders.edu.au

29
APRIL

HDA THEMATIC EVENING
INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S & CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Indigenous Women's & Children's Health
what are we doing to close the gap?

Thursday 29 April, 4.15 - 7.00pm

State Library Institute Building lecture theatre (corner of Kintore Ave and North Tce)

Chaired by Dr Jenny Baker

A/Professor in Aboriginal Health

School of Population Health and Clinical Practice, University of Adelaide

Dr Alice Rumbold

Optimising the care of Aboriginal women during pregnancy

Senior Research Fellow, The Robinson Institute, University of Adelaide

Ms Karen Glover

Improving Aboriginal birthing outcomes in metropolitan Adelaide

Children, Youth and Women's Health Service

Professor Kerin O'Dea

Intergenerational factors affecting Indigenous child health

Director, Sansom Institute for Health Research, University of South Australia

Dr Sue Sayers

An Aboriginal birth cohort: from the cradle to the grave

Founder of the ABC Study, Menzies School of Health Research

The full program and details with speaker profiles can be found at www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events

Seats are limited, RSVP by Thursday 22 April

✉ anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au or ☎ (08) 8303 8222

NEW HDA MEMBERS

Dr Genevieve Baratiny. Research Fellow, Centre for Rural Health and Community Development, UniSA. focus - cancer epidemiology, rural health, public health interventions, health services.

Dr Femke Buisman-Pijlman. Lecturer, Discipline of Pharmacology, University of Adelaide. focus - drugs and addiction, psychopharmacology, early environmental factors.

Dr Andrea Gordon. Research Fellow, School of Nursing & Midwifery, UniSA. focus - pregnancy substance abuse, neonatal abstinence syndrome.

Dr Debbie James. Post-Doc Fellow, Research and Evaluation Unit, CYWHS; Visiting Research Fellow, Discipline of Paediatrics, University of Adelaide. focus - children's communication, speech and language problems; assessment and intervention.

Dr Lois McKellar. Lecturer, School of Nursing & Midwifery, UniSA. focus - midwifery, postnatal, family-centred care.

Dr Nathan O'Callaghan. Research Scientist, CSIRO Food & Nutritional Sciences. focus - DNA damage, nutritional genomics, genome health.

HDA SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAM

HDA offers a School Education Program on research currently taking place in the areas of reproductive health and healthy development.

Senior researchers and their PhD students go out to schools for an interactive talk and slide session. The sessions cover both the latest research and the possible career paths open to students in these areas. The program is open to students in years 10-11.

Dr Carmela Ricciardelli and her PhD student Izza Tan from the Robinson Institute, University of Adelaide recently presented 'How reproductive cancers develop and spread?' at St Mary's College.

The full program can be found at www.adelaide.edu.au/hda



Dr Carmela Ricciardelli and Izza Tan with year 11 students, St Mary's College.



THE ROBINSON FOUNDATION LAUNCHED

The University of Adelaide launched the Robinson Foundation at a Gala Dinner on the lawns of Government House on Saturday 13 February. The event was hosted by University of Adelaide Vice-Chancellor and President Professor James McWha, in the presence of His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce, Governor of South Australia, and Mrs Liz Scarce.

At the dinner, Professor McWha welcomed the Governor and Mrs Scarce as joint patrons of the Robinson Foundation. The Foundation Board is currently being established and will be announced shortly. The event marked the first fundraising activity for the newly created Foundation and aimed to raise awareness of the life-giving research undertaken at the University of Adelaide by the Robinson Institute. Ms Cherylee Harris was Master of Ceremonies for the inaugural event and Chris Jarmer catered to the 250 guests.

Led by University of Adelaide reproductive medicine expert Prof Robert Norman, the Robinson Institute comprises of more than 300 research staff and students. There are very few similar concentrations of experts of such diversity in one Institute anywhere in the world. The Robinson Institute brings together clinical and research leaders in reproductive health and regenerative medicine, and results in world leading, multidisciplinary research, from conception to mature age.

By focusing on the earliest stages of life, the Institute is looking at preventing disease and promoting health in children and adults across generations. The Institute is incorporating outstanding lab

research with clinical investigation to discover more about: reproduction, fertility & pregnancy; health of women & babies; stem cells; and origins of healthy living.

For further information:

Website - www.robinsonfoundation.org.au

Email - robinson.foundation@adelaide.edu.au



Media release 24 March 2010 - University of Adelaide

A University of Adelaide researcher has announced new national guidelines recommending that women at risk of early preterm birth use magnesium sulphate to protect their babies from cerebral palsy.

Professor Caroline Crowther from the University's Discipline of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and the Robinson Institute says the clinical practice guidelines are based on overwhelming evidence over the past 14 years that magnesium sulphate is effective in protecting the fetus.

"Five trials, including one funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council, confirm this finding," Prof Crowther says.

The clinical guidelines were announced by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists at their annual Scientific Meeting in Adelaide yesterday.

More than 600 children in Australia and more than 120 children in New Zealand are diagnosed with cerebral palsy each year - over a third of which are related to preterm birth.

"The cost to the Australian community of cerebral palsy is nearly \$4 billion per annum," Professor Crowther says. "At present there is no cure for this neurological condition, which results in substantial disabilities."

Cerebral palsy affects one in 500 newborn babies overall and one in 10 very premature babies (less than 30 weeks' gestation). Cerebral palsy and cognitive dysfunction are the most frequent occurring neurologic impairment associated with preterm birth.

Magnesium sulphate therapy involves giving doses of magnesium sulphate to pregnant women via injection within 24 hours of birth. The exact mechanism of magnesium sulphate in protecting the developing brain is not certain. However, magnesium is vital for normal cell function, may protect against destructive molecules that can harm cells, and in some circumstances improves blood flow.

Side effects of the treatment include flushing, sweating, nausea, vomiting, headaches and palpitations. However, researchers have found no increase in major complications in mothers due to magnesium therapy.

Professor Crowther is Director of the University's Australian Research Centre for Health of Women and Babies, based at the Women's and Children's Hospital.

The guidelines apply to health professionals, pregnant women and for policy makers. Professor Crowther says it will be important to monitor the antenatal use of magnesium sulphate for neuroprotection of the fetus through a national audit and to link data to national childhood cerebral palsy registers.

The University of Adelaide expands the frontiers of knowledge more frequently, and in more disciplines, than any other institution in South Australia. Our leading researchers, many globally recognised, relentlessly seek answers that will positively impact life on earth.

The Research Tuesdays monthly presentation series is your chance to share in some of their most fascinating discoveries.



**Research
Tuesdays**

SHARING GREAT RESEARCH
WITH THE COMMUNITY

**A World of Hurt.
The true global death count of
environmental degradation.**

Professor Corey Bradshaw

**Tuesday 11 May, 5:30pm - 6:30pm
Napier Building, Lecture Theatre G04
North Terrace Campus, University of Adelaide**

Synopsis

It's no secret that environmental degradation has been shown to have damaged people's health, often fatally, in many specific cases.

Now, however, world-leading research at the University of Adelaide has linked the two on a staggering global scale.

Using data from over 100 countries, Professor Corey Bradshaw has examined the relationships between key indicators of human

health and environmental quality and discovered a clear correlation, with dire implications.

As only one example, his findings indicate just a 10% overall reduction in water quality would raise infant deaths by 35.5 million per year.

It's vital information for people and planet. And in this important presentation Professor Bradshaw will reveal the full story.

About the Speaker

Corey Bradshaw is Professor of Ecological Modelling at the University of Adelaide's Environment Institute. He was awarded the 2010 Scopus Young Researcher of the Year Award, 2009 Andrewartha Medal and 2008 Young Tall Poppy Science Award.

Registrations are essential, go to

www.adelaide.edu.au/researchtuesdays

For enquiries or questions email

research.tuesdays@adelaide.edu.au

Media release 22 February 2010 - UniSA

While Year 6 and 7 students might enjoy watching television or MSN-ing their friends way past their bed time, UniSA researchers are hoping to make sleep a priority for South Australian school children.

UniSA Paediatric Sleep Research Fellow Dr Sarah Blunden is leading a new study to see if sleep education delivered in schools can improve students' sleep duration and subsequent behavioural, learning and health outcomes.

Dr Blunden's sleep education package will be rolled out to randomly selected schools in the metropolitan area during term two this year, and she is giving students a hands-on role in learning about the importance of sleep.

"Researchers already know that poor sleep is a major contributor to a whole range of problems in kids," Dr Blunden said.

"Firstly there are behavioural deficits, where they're more irritable and more aggressive. Secondly, there are cognitive deficits, where the child is not able to concentrate, they get fidgety, can't take on board information and can't remember information, so their poor sleep compromises their learning ability.

"On top of this, the immune system doesn't do well and children get sick more often, have more coughs and colds, and even have increased risks of accidents."

Dr Blunden believes many parents simply do not know just how much sleep children require. Year 6 and 7 students need between nine and 11 hours sleep per night.

"As a society we also tend to give up sleep to do other things we think are more important. For a Year 6/7 student, those things might be homework, watching TV, playing computer games, or talking to their friends on MSN even when the bedroom light is out and they're supposed to be sleeping," she said.

As part of the study, teachers will deliver the sleep education lessons and students will prepare their own projects at the end of the term for presentation to their parents and the school community.

Dr Blunden says two pilot studies – one in SA and one in NZ – showed children were enthusiastic about sleep education.

"We want to find out if increased knowledge actually changes students' behaviour in the longer term. If they know sleep is important will they actually get themselves to bed earlier and do the bedtime routine stuff we tell them is going to be helpful?" she said.

"Then we'll look at if their sleep changes, is that going to change their health and wellbeing? Are they going to be better concentrated, better settled and all of those things?"

"We'll also be measuring the children's Body Mass Index (BMI) because we know that in adults shorter sleep duration can be a predictor of obesity. This is an area that needs more research in children."

The study is being funded through an Australian Research Council Linkage grant, with a major contribution from SA Health as a partner organisation and support from the Department of Education and Children's Services. It is the first of its kind in Australia.

Media release 25 February 2010 - UniSA

The National Health and Medical Research Council has awarded researchers at UniSA a prestigious Program Grant to support research into the causes, appropriate interventions and health system changes that will help reduce the incidence and adverse health impacts of diabetes and cardiovascular disease in Indigenous populations.

Lead investigator and Director of UniSA's Sansom Institute for Health Research, Professor Kerin O'Dea and her UniSA colleagues Professors Robyn McDermott, John Lynch, and Leonie Segal, with Kevin Rowley from the University of Melbourne have been awarded more than \$8 million over five years.

Professor O'Dea says support for the project will help to tackle a serious and urgent problem. "The impact of diabetes and cardiovascular disease is devastating because it is affecting Indigenous people at such young ages, and at rates around 10 times higher than non-Indigenous Australians," Professor O'Dea said.

"The research team will be developing comprehensive approaches to the problem by combining strengths in epidemiology and population health with expertise in interventions at the community and population level, health economics and health systems

change."

The NHMRC Program Grant will support a multi-skilled team of senior and junior researchers with Indigenous partners to better understand the development of these conditions and guide the development of diet, lifestyle, clinical and health system interventions in order to minimise their adverse impacts and improve health overall.

"It is an exciting program and one we hope will make an important difference to Indigenous health outcomes into the future," Professor O'Dea says.

UniSA Vice Chancellor, Professor Peter Høj said he was very pleased that the expertise of UniSA's researchers had been recognised by the award of such a large and prestigious grant. "The award of this Program Grant, along with Professor Robyn McDermott's recent success in NHMRC Partnership grant funding and Professor John Lynch's award of an Australia Fellowship in 2009, is a tribute to the international standing of UniSA researchers working in population health, and further adds to the University's rapidly growing research income," Prof Høj said.

However, most importantly, in this and related research we hope to make a real difference to people's lives in an area of great need."

The Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia Inc (CRF) invites research applications for the 2011 grant period, which opened on Thursday 4 February 2010.

The purpose of the Foundation is to promote health, educational or social research that encourages and advances investigation into the cause, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of any condition that may affect the general health, education or welfare of children.

Applicants are asked to note:

1. Applications are sought from the fields of Medicine, Education, Dentistry, Nursing, Social Sciences, Environment, Mental Health and Allied Health.

2. Applications will be received in three categories - basic science, clinical studies or community-based studies. Special consideration will be given to 'early career applicants', applying for the first time as Chief Investigator.

3. Grants are allocated solely to applicants for research completed in South Australia or the Northern Territory.

4. The Foundation generally supports grants up to \$75,000 per annum.

5. Applications may be supported for a maximum of two years.

The closing date for applications is **Thursday 29 April 2010 at 5pm**.

Successful applicants will be advised in October 2010, with funds being available from January 2011.

Please note: If you have any outstanding reports or unremitted funds, they must be finalised prior to making an application for the current funding round. Failure to do so may make you ineligible for future grants.

For further information go to www.crf.org.au

NEWS

World First in Preventing Eating Disorders

Media release 29 March 2010 - Flinders University

The only eating disorder prevention program in the world to show long-term success when trialed on early teenagers has just been released by the Flinders University School of Psychology.

Media Smart is an eight-lesson program that focuses on the manipulation of images in the media, building self-esteem and teaching young people how to analyse and challenge media messages.

Flinders Psychologists Dr Simon Wilksch and Professor Tracey Wade developed *Media Smart* to try to prevent the growing number of Australian adolescents engaging in dangerous eating behaviours.

"Eating disorders are associated with the highest level of mortality of any psychological disorders," Professor Wade said.

As one of the world's largest eating disorder prevention studies with the longest follow-up evaluation, Professor Wade said part of the success of the *Media Smart* trial comes from the program not including discussions of eating disorders.

"In the past, researchers have trialed a lot of other programs but they haven't managed to decrease risk factors or show any long term effects. In fact, some studies have even found providing information to young people about eating disorders can be harmful," she said.

Media Smart was trialed with 233 Year 8 students from four Adelaide schools over 30 months. Before the program and at regular follow-ups, students were required to complete questionnaires about shape and weight concerns, dieting, perceived pressures, depression and self-esteem.

Evaluation showed a significant improvement in the way both male and female students who received the program felt about their shape and weight over the 30-month period, as compared to the same number of control students who had not received the program. Significant benefits were also found for four other risk factors including depression and dieting.

The program is now available to purchase for individuals and schools from the Flinders University School of Psychology by calling (08) 8201 7996.

EVENT

John Kerin Symposium

Does life really begin at 40?

Putting all your eggs in one basket...too late?

Monday 19 April

5:30pm for a 6:00pm start (8pm close)

Queen Victoria Lecture Theatre

Women's and Children's Hospital

Kermode St, North Adelaide

Drinks and nibbles served from 5:30pm - 6:00pm. Please RSVP by Monday 12 April to 8226 6048 or email sacr@health.sa.gov.au for catering purposes and to reserve your place.

Guest Speakers

Professor Robert Norman, Director, Robinson Institute.

Professor Gus Dekker, Professor in Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Linda Matthews, Equal Opportunity Commissioner.

Dr Lorna Hallahan, Ethicist and Lecturer in Social Sciences.

John Kerin, a pioneer in ART, was tragically killed in January 2006. He was also a long serving member of the Council.

This Symposium is in his memory.

This SA Council on Reproductive Technology (SACRT) event is sponsored by SA Health, Flinders Reproductive Medicine, and Repromed.

Media release 25 February 2010 - Flinders University

The fundamental 'disconnect' between the public's awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and putting it into practice was explored at a conference this month to launch a new Flinders University healthy lifestyles research group. A/Prof Murray Drummond, Chair of the new Sport, Health and Physical Education (SHAPE) group, said national and international experts who took part in the conference discussed ways of improving 'health literacy' in the community.

"We're finding that people are aware that we should be leading healthier lifestyles; that we should be looking at our nutrition; that we should be trying to do greater levels of physical activity. But people lead very busy lives and they struggle to act upon it," Associate Prof Drummond said.

"This is what the concept of health literacy is about: how people gather health information, how they interpret it and how they act upon it," he said. A/Prof Drummond said the conference, held at Flinders University's Bedford Park campus, was ideal springboard for SHAPE, which has special focus on healthy lifestyles for chil-

dren and brings together researchers in physical education, body image and nutrition.

"One of the aims of SHAPE is to examine the latest healthy lifestyle programs here and abroad, how they are implemented and to assess which are the most effective," A/Prof Drummond said.

"The research group will draw together academics, researchers, practitioners and policy makers in a holistic approach to improving health and wellbeing of adults and children alike," he said. "That means addressing some of the 'big picture' issues such as investigating the links between obesity, sedentary lifestyles and socio-economic status, but also everyday, practical concerns such as healthy school canteens and teaching children healthy habits through games."

Derek Colquhoun, Prof of Urban Learning at the UK's University of Hull, who led the evaluation of Shape Up Europe, a three-year project that aimed to address the determinants of childhood obesity in 20 cities across Europe, delivered the conference's keynote address. Other guest speakers included A/Prof Jenny O'Dea from University of Sydney, and Mark Williams from SA Health.

EVENT

NATSINSAP & PHAA SYMPOSIUM

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan (NATSINSAP) Steering Committee and the Public Health Association of Australia present

**The Way Forward for Indigenous Health:
A Focus on Food and Nutrition.**

**Canberra, 22 April, 8.30am-4.00pm.
Registration is \$70.**

Keynote speakers include Prof Sandra Eades, Dymphna Leonard, Dr Julie Brimblecombe, Dr Cate Burns, Dr Karen Adams.

The symposium will be facilitated by Dr Norman Swan and highlight how investing in nutrition initiatives in Indigenous communities can make a difference to health status. There will be a focus on evidence-based initiatives in maternal and child nutrition, remote food security, and urban and regional food security.

The event is specifically designed for representatives from Indigenous Health Services, Community Health Services, Federal, State and local Government, and Research Institutions.

For more information on the program and registration details go to www.phaa.net.au/FoodFuturesConference

EVENT

ADELAIDE NUTRITION UPDATE DAY

The Nutrition Society of Australia and the Nestle Nutrition Institute jointly present the Adelaide Nutrition Update Day.

Friday 30 April, 9.00am-3.30pm

Adelaide Oval, Gil Langley Room, 3rd Floor of Bradman Stand
War Memorial Drive, North Adelaide

Cost: \$40 (incl. GST), \$20 for Nutrition Society members

Session One - Keynote Presentation

9.20am – 9.25am – Peter Fryer

Welcome and Introduction

9.25am – 10.25am – Prof Patricia Conway

Changes in intestinal microflora throughout the 1st year of life – from mode of delivery to weaning and beyond.

10.25am – 10.50am - Morning tea

Session Two - Post-Natal Nutrition

10.50am – 11.25am – A/Prof Jane Scott

Breast-milk: Latest news on long-term effects & functional benefits

11.25am – 12.00pm – Dr Andrew McPhee

Measuring and monitoring growth, and practical tips on using growth charts

12.00pm – 12.35pm – Dr Debbie Palmer

Introducing solids – when, what & why?

12.35pm – 1.30pm – Lunch

Session Three - Hot Topics in Paediatrics

1.30pm – 2.05pm – Dr Mike Gold

Diet and allergy prevention

2.05pm – 2.40pm – Ersilia Tassone

Key Nutrients during early childhood – what's new & emerging, and what's still important.

2.40pm – 3.15pm – Prof Kerin O'Dea

Aboriginal child health and nutrition

3.15pm – 3.30pm - Summary and Close

RSVPs due by 23 April.

For more information on program and registration details go to www.nsa.asn.au