

Newsletter

www.adelaide.edu.au/hda

Upcoming Events...

- **2 October**

Lloyd Cox Memorial Lecture by Professor Euan Wallace

- **9 October**

HDA Thematic Evening on Allergies in Maternal and Child Health

- **18 October**

State Population Health conference will be held in Adelaide.

- **20-22 October**

Fertility Society of Australia conference will be held in Brisbane, Australia.

- **13-14 November**

Children Communities Connections conference will be held in Adelaide, South Australia.

- **20 November**

HDA Thematic Evening on Nutrition and Development.

- **30 Nov - 3 Dec**

Nutrition Society of Australia Annual Scientific Meeting will be held in Adelaide, South Australia.

Further information at

www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events

An initiative of the University of Adelaide since 2004



LATEST NEWS

HDA Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation Scholarships for 2009

HDA and Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation are offering up to 8 PhD top-up scholarships. The top-ups are \$5,000 per annum for up to 3 years to augment an Australian Postgraduate Award.

Applicants must have a HDA member as their primary supervisor and projects must be multidisciplinary, co-supervised by a researcher from another discipline and/or faculty to the primary supervisor.

Applicants who apply for an Australian Postgraduate Award at either the University of Adelaide or University of South Australia may also be considered for this top-up scholarship if their proposed research is in an appropriate discipline area.

Applications close 31 October 2008 and must be submitted at either the University of Adelaide or University of South Australia. The full details on eligibility and requirements can be found at www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/students

HDA Travel Grants for 2009

HDA will be offering its second round of Travel Grant support to HDA members (early career researchers, upto 5 years post PhD) and final year PhD students supervised by a HDA member.

Travel Grants of \$1,000 will be awarded to each of ten successful applicants to further their research career by attending and presenting at an international conference in 2009.

Applications will close at 5.00pm Thursday 11 December 2008. The full details on eligibility, funding conditions and application form can be found at www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/support

HDA THEMATIC EVENING

ALLERGIES IN MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH



Wheezes, Itches and Bellyaches

Allergies in Maternal and Child Health



Chaired by Dr James Martin

Director: Pulmonary Medicine, Women's and Children's Hospital

Thursday 9 October 2008

4.30 - 7.00pm

University of Adelaide, North Terrace campus
Union House (Level 4, Eclipse Room)

Topics will cover the *Effect of asthma and its treatment on the unborn baby* (A/Prof Vicki Clifton), *Breast milk and the mucosal immune response to food antigens* (Dr Imme Penttila), *Trends in atopic disorders in childhood* (A/Prof Robert Heddle) and *Food allergy in children* (Dr Debbie Palmer)

Arrivals by 4.15pm, food & drink provided after conclusion of talks

RSVP by Friday 3 October

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

MEMBER PROFILE - DR DAVID PARSONS

DEPARTMENT OF PULMONARY MEDICINE, WOMEN'S & CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



Dr David Parsons is Chief Medical Scientist within the Department of Pulmonary Medicine, Women's and Children's Hospital (WCH); Affiliate Senior Research Fellow with Women's and Children's Health Research Institute; Visiting Senior Lecturer within Discipline of Paediatrics, University of Adelaide; and a founding member of the Centre for Stem Cell Research at the University of Adelaide.

David along with Dr Don Anson heads the Adelaide Cystic Fibrosis Gene Therapy Group at the WCH working to develop safe and effective airway gene therapy to cure the early-fatal genetic lung disease in Cystic Fibrosis.

In 1989 David Parsons changed careers from neuroscience into a clinical service/support and research role in Pulmonary Medicine at the Women's and Children's Hospital, Adelaide. In 1995-97 he relocated to the University of North Carolina to study airway gene therapy, establishing enduring collaborative links there. With continuous research funding from the USA CF Foundation in gene therapy since then, his interests in airway surface physiology saw development of the *in vivo* ASL-depth measurement technique in mice using special fixation tissue techniques which substantially validated the "low fluid volume" hypothesis as the primary cause of airway disease in CF.

David was recipient of the 2002 Solvay CF Travelling Fellowship, and acted as CI on previous and current NHMRC project grants regarding CF gene therapy. As a member of the ANZSRS Scientific & Conference Committee he chaired the ANZSRS Abstract-Review Panel in 2005/6, and has presented Plenary sessions at national CF and respiratory conferences. He has been a reviewer for a range of respiratory journals and granting bodies such as the NH&MRC.

Over the last 5 years his work with interested CF parents has helped gain corporate funding to supplement core project needs. This has included funding of initial studies at the Japanese X-ray synchrotron in 2005 with colleagues from the Synchrotron Science group at Monash University, resulting in the discovery and development of novel non-invasive imaging methods in living airways. These have developed over subsequent visits into the ability to detect the movement of fine particles and gas bubbles along airways, and further studies are investigating the potential of this technique as a new outcome measure in CF airway-disease therapeutics.

Dr David Parsons can be contacted at ☎ (08) 8161 7004 or ✉ david.parsons@cywhs.sa.gov.au

NEW HDA MEMBERS**A/Professor Cory Xian**

NHMRC Senior Research Fellow
Bone Growth and Repair Research Unit
Sansom Institute, and School of Pharmacy & Medical Sciences
University of South Australia

My research interest has been mainly in the paediatric bone biology area, aiming to increase our understanding how bone growth is regulated and to develop strategies to achieve optimal bone growth and bone mass accumulation during development, which will be critical for maintaining good adult bone health and prevention of age-related osteoporosis. We are currently working on mechanisms of bone growth and regulation (including nutritional regulation), pathophysiology of and prevention strategies for some risk factors that impact strongly on bone growth.

Dr Lynne Giles

Discipline of Public Health / Discipline of Obstetrics & Gynaecology
School of Paediatrics and Reproductive Health
University of Adelaide

An epidemiologist and biostatistician who has recently joined the Lifecourse and Intergenerational Health Research Group with A/Prof Michael Davies and A/Prof Vivienne Moore. Lynne will contribute to the Lucina study and the Generation 1 studies.

Dr Ming Li

Postdoctoral Research Fellow
School of Health Sciences
University of South Australia

Dr Li has broad interests in exploring the relationship between social, environmental and lifestyles with epidemical chronic conditions (overweight and obesity, metabolic disorders, CVD) in various age groups in different culture backgrounds.



The Research Centre for Reproductive Health (RCRH) has grown considerably in the last year and is increasingly focused on research impact. We recognise that reproductive health issues have environmental, genetic, lifestyle and nutritional factors that affect society today. We are moving increasingly into areas such as intergenerational research, peri conception, obesity and the increasing problem of male infertility. In 2007, RCRH is based in world-class facilities and is addressing broad topics relating to reproductive health. The membership has grown by nearly 20% and is a direct result of the high quality of research and its relevance to Australian society.

The University of Adelaide has committed substantial funds and facilities towards a new Research Institute, the Australian Institute for Reproduction, Women's and Child Health. The RCRH will form the core of this Institute together with a new Centre for Stem Cell Research, The Australian Research Centre for the Health and Wellbeing of Women and Babies and The Centre for the Early Origins of Health and Disease. We believe this will form one of the outstanding groupings of researchers in reproduction, pregnancy and early life in the world. **Professor Robert Norman, Director of RCRH**

BASIC BIOLOGY

- EARLY DEVELOPMENT
- OOCYTE BIOLOGY
- EGGS, SPERM AND EMBRYOS
- OVARIAN CELL BIOLOGY
- JS DAVIES ANIMAL GENETICS & EPIGENETICS
- COMPARATIVE BIOLOGY OF MAMMALIAN SPERM & EGGS
- MOLECULAR REPRODUCTION
- CIRCADIAN RHYTHMS
- PLACENTAL DEVELOPMENT
- OVARIAN DEVELOPMENTAL BIOLOGY

CLINICAL RESEARCH

- ENDOMETRIOSIS
- REPRODUCTIVE CANCER
- POLYCYSTIC OVARY SYNDROME
- SCREENING FOR PREGNANCY ENDPOINTS (SCOPE)
- DEVELOPMENTAL NEUROMOTOR PHYSIOLOGY
- REPRODUCTIVE BIOTECHNOLOGY & EMBRYOLOGY
- ASSISTED REPRODUCTION & IVF
- REPRODUCTIVE IMMUNOLOGY

PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH

- REPRODUCTION & SOCIETY
- CEREBRAL PALSY CAUSATION
- EARLY LIFE PROGRAMMING OF HEALTH AND DISEASE
- MENOPAUSE AND CLIMACTERIC

To receive a hardcopy of the RCRH Research Report 2007 contact Virginia Furness at virginia.furness@adelaide.edu.au or phone 8303 4552. The report can also be accessed at www.adelaide.edu.au/rcrh

PROGRESS
REPORT
2008

SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP) was launched by the Government of South Australia in March 2004 and updated in January 2007. Most of its targets have a 10-year timeframe for achievement. The Government committed to a report to the public every two years on progress against the plan's targets. The second biennial report, compiled by South Australia's Strategic Plan Audit Committee was released in July 2008.

Targets are grouped under the following six objectives:

- Growing Prosperity
- Improving Wellbeing
- Attaining Sustainability
- Fostering Creativity and Innovation
- Building Communities
- Expanding Opportunity

Progress ratings:

1	Positive movement	55 ratings given
2	Steady or no movement	23 ratings given
3	Negative movement	13 ratings given
0	Unclear (new target – baseline established)	6 ratings given
0	Unclear (no data or no new data)	8 ratings given
<i>Total:</i>		105

Achievability ratings:

1	Achieved	8 ratings given
2	On track	34 ratings given
3	Within reach	26 ratings given
4	Unlikely	20 ratings given
0	Unclear (new target – baseline established)	9 ratings given
0	Unclear (no data or no new data)	8 ratings given
<i>Total:</i>		105

This table summarises the total numbers for progress and achievability ratings of all targets across the Plan.

A detailed summary of the individual ratings is given at the beginning of the section for each Objective, with a full list at the end of the report.

To download the SA Strategic Plan Progress Report 2008 go to www.saplan.org.au.

To receive a printed copy email saplan@saugov.sa.gov.au or phone 8226 3537.



Since our last update in April, the Centre for Intergenerational Health (CIH) has been busy setting up its Governance structure, developing our first funding scheme offering CIH seed-funding towards developing ARC-Linkage Grants.

CIH Mission Statement

The Centre for Intergenerational Health (CIH) is a Centre of excellence created to generate research on biological and social determinants of health outcomes over an individual's life course crucial to reduce inequalities in health outcomes over an individual's life course and improve health and wellbeing within and across generations.

CIH Objectives

The objective of the CIH is to be the pre-eminent Intergenerational Health Centre in Australia, bringing together researchers from diverse research fields spanning fundamental bio-medical and clinical research, intervention and evaluation research, population studies, strategic research, and the social and environmental determinants of health and multidisciplinary research that will inform future decision making and health and wellbeing outcomes.

The CIH proposes to increase the success of research funding in South Australia by attracting research funding both at a state and national level.

The CIH brings together research fields creating an environment where disciplines inform each other as well as create new methodological approaches to address the complex health problems facing the Australian population in the 21st century.

CIH Aims

- ★ Create a new and unique faction of research, building on the concepts of health across generations and across the life course that creates a niche area for South Australian researchers both within Australia and internationally.
- ★ Create a forum which brings together scientists and researchers from different disciplines with an interest in the life sciences and wellbeing for our community.
- ★ Increase research partnerships within and across universities and with the public sector.
- ★ Build a new generation of highly skilled researchers with a focus on intergenerational health.
- ★ Increase the focus on real world problems that require multi-disciplinary expertise.
- ★ Increase research effort to improve the health of individuals and the Australian population.
- ★ Integrate research with policy and translate research findings into practice.

For more information contact Program Director, Tricia Berger on 8463 6198 or tricia.berger@health.sa.gov.au

NEW

NHMRC PARTNERSHIPS *CREATING EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN POLICY AND RESEARCH*

NHMRC Partnerships represent a major new focus for the NHMRC. They aim to lead to more effective connections between decision makers who design policy and researchers, and to improve the availability and quality of research evidence to help inform the policy process. It will provide funding and support to create new opportunities for researchers and policy makers to work together, to define research questions, undertake research, and interpret the findings.

NHMRC Partnerships will enable researchers to carry out substantial research programs, publish policy-relevant research in leading journals, and have access to funding to support training, mentoring and partnerships. The schemes will enable researchers to draw on and create teams from various disciplines, including the social sciences (such as economics, education, epidemiology, ethics, management, psychology, and sociology), as well as medical and engineering sciences. They will also develop a better understanding of how their work is viewed by those who use it.

These awards are envisaged as being similar in value and conditions to the NHMRC Project Grants. It's anticipated that cash and/or in-kind contributions would be provided by the policy/practice partner organisation. Application close 19 December 2008.

The funding policy and advice to applicants can be found at the NHMRC website or you can contact Maryanne Haslam on (02) 6217 9289 or maryanne.haslam@nhmrc.gov.au.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Bonnie Babes Foundation

The Bonnie Babes Foundation Inc. was established to provide grief counselling for families who have experienced the loss of a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth or prematurity and to assist with vital medical research into the reasons more than 50,000 babies die in Australia each year. The Foundation is now accepting applications for 2008 Medical Grants. Grant applications are usually provided in the range of \$2,000 to \$20,000. Applications in excess of this amount may be considered, as may partial funding of projects. **Deadline 23rd October.** For further information and application forms, please visit their website: <http://www.bbf.org.au/MedicalResearch/tabid/55/Default.aspx>

The Foundation for Children

The Foundation for Children is a company whose purpose is the promotion of the health and welfare of children of Australia. As the full application requires detailed information that would be reasonably time consuming to collate and prepare, the Foundation introduced an **Expressions of Interest (Eoi)** process whereby the participants can submit a two page summary. **Deadline 22nd October.** For further details, guidelines and application forms, please visit their website: <http://www.foundationforchildren.com.au/scripts/runisa.dll?FFC.1114988:LANDING::pc=L4>

Foundation for Young Australians - Indigenous Small Grants

Indigenous Small Grants provides an opportunity for Indigenous organisations and organisations that work with young Indigenous people and communities to support new initiatives or expand existing successful initiatives. The initiative must enhance youth participation or create opportunities for the development of young people aged 12-25 years. **Deadline 7th October.** Full details, guidelines and application forms are available on their website: <http://www.youngaustralians.org/fundingopp/list.shtml?folder=Indigenous%20Small%20Grants>

Respiratory Research Grants

Australian Respiratory Council is offering in 2009 several research grants of approximately \$50,000 each. These grants are offered nationally to support clinical, public health & basic scientific research in Tuberculosis, Respiratory diseases related to other infection, Smoking-related respiratory diseases. Deadline 28th October. Further details at <http://www.thearc.org.au/>

Macquarie Bank Foundation

The Macquarie Bank Foundation focuses its resources in six core areas – arts, education, environment, health care, health research and welfare. They are also committed to projects specifically aimed at supporting indigenous communities. **Applications open all year round.** Further details at http://www.macquarie.com/foundation/aboutus/application_process.htm

HDA THEMATIC EVENING



EARLY
NOTICE

HDA's 4th Thematic Evening for the year
will be held on
Thursday 20 November

Nutrition and Development

more details in mid October

“The Importance of Co-Morbidity in Mental Health”

PROF FRAN BAUM - Promoting mental health equitably through action on the social determinants

DR SHARON LAWN - Tobacco control and mental health populations: controversies for research and practice

PROF ROBERT ALI - Screening and brief interventions for illicit drug use in primary health care – results from a multi-national study

PROF CHARLOTTE DECRESPIGNY, PETER ATHANASOS - Translating co-morbidity evidence into Indigenous health care practice

DR JULIE CONNOR - Breast cancer and mental health

A/PROF PAUL DEL FABBRO - Gambling and mental health

For the full program of speakers and to register contact Dianne Williams at dianne.williams@health.sa.gov.au

Keynote Speaker

Professor John Lynch

“Epidemiology and public health: understanding the difference between individual and population risk.”

Professor John Lynch is Research Chair (Epidemiology) at the University of South Australia and former Professor of Epidemiology and Canada Research Chair in Population Health at McGill University in Montreal.

Cost is \$30 non-members, \$20 members (PHAA, AHPA, AFPHM, AEA), \$10 full time students. Registrations close Friday 10 October to victoria.shtangey@cywhs.sa.gov.au and forms and program can be downloaded from <http://www.phaa.net.au/stateConferences.php>



**Stronger Families and
Communities Strategy**

An Australian Government Initiative

This conference aims to further the agenda of recent SA Thinker in Residence Dr Fraser Mustard with other early childhood experts that have stimulated key players in Education, Health and Community Services to take investment in the early years seriously. A key component of this is the development of integrated parent & children's centres.

Conference themes include:

- ▶ Developing integrated services in parent and children's centres - multi agency, multi and trans disciplinary service delivery
- ▶ Building community capacity in partnership with parents as children's first educators
- ▶ Research based family & community strategies that support child wellbeing
- ▶ Social Inclusion and multi-cultural competence in integrated service delivery

Keynote speakers include:

Dr Margy Whalley

Director, Research Development & Training Pen Green Centre
Northhamptonshire, UK

Associate Professor Margaret Sims

Head, Centre for Social Research Edith Cowan University

**A partnership between University of South
Australia, City of Salisbury, SA Department
of Education and Children's Services, and
the Mawson Lakes Joint Venture**

Further details on the conference can be found at www.salisburyc4c.org.au or phone 8397 9333

The Centre for Stem Cell Research was officially launched by the University of Adelaide's Vice Chancellor, Professor James McWha at the National Wine Centre of Australia. In attendance were Member of the Legislative Council Hon. Ian Hunter MLC, National Cloning Bill Representative Ms Natasha Stott Despoja, Mr Andrew Stanley, Director of the Strategic Planning, Policy and Research Branch of SA Health, and many others from organisations such as the Leukaemia Foundation, the Heart Foundation and the Ethics Centre of SA.

Professor McWha stated "This new Centre will undoubtedly help put South Australian researchers at the forefront of stem cell research in Australia"

The University of Adelaide's Centre for Stem Cell Research is a collaborative initiative comprising 18 mature research groups located in the Faculties of Sciences and Health Sciences, the Women's and Children's Hospital, the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Sciences, and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

The focus of the Centre is on translating basic research into clinical and commercial outcomes via collaboration of its members, and with external partners. Its members undertake internationally recognised and awarded research on areas such as the isolation of adult and cord blood stem cells, clinical applications including potential cures for stroke damage and cardiac repair, as well as novel approaches to diseases such as cystic fibrosis and leukaemia.

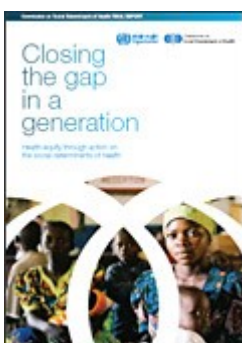
For further information on the Centre go to www.adelaide.edu.au/stemcell



L-R: Centre Directors A/Professor Mark Nottle (Discipline of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, University of Adelaide); A/Professor Stan Gronthos (Mesenchymal Stem Cell Group, IMVS); Centre Clinical Advisor Dr Simon Koblar (School of Molecular and Biomedical Science, University of Adelaide), and Cystic Fibrosis Group Leader, Dr David Parsons (Department of Pulmonary Medicine, Women's and Children's Hospital).

WHO REPORT

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



Closing the gap in a generation: Health equity through action on the social determinants of health

Social justice is a matter of life and death. It affects the way people live, their consequent chance of illness, and their risk of premature death. We watch in wonder as life expectancy and good health continue to increase in parts of the world and in alarm as they fail to improve in others.

"...Many of the differences in health between - and within - countries result from the social environment where people are born, live, grow, work and age. These "social determinants of health" have been the focus of a three-year investigation by an eminent group of policy makers, academics, former heads of state and former ministers of health. Together, they comprise the World Health Organization's Commission on the Social Determinants of Health.

The Report in English and the Executive Summary in six UN languages and supporting media materials including a press release, backgrounders, country examples, figures, tables and graphs, visuals, and a podcast including voices of the Commissioners can be found at the WHO website www.who.int/en/.