

IILLAWARRA AND SOUTHERN PRACTICE RESEARCH NETWORK (ISPRN) NEWS CONNECT: UOW

SPRING 2012

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CCCGPT Small Grant Project Success

ISPRN would like to congratulate Dr Fiona Williams and Dr Meike Flore who were successful in receiving the CCCGPT Small Grants.

1. Dr Fiona Williams is working with Dr Carl Mahfouz, Dr Rowena Ivers and Dr Russell Pearson on a qualitative study regarding Australian elderly patients use and knowledge of nocturnal benzodiazepines and their attitudes to cessation.
2. Dr Meike Flore is working with Professor Andrew Bonney and Dr Lily Chen on a qualitative study regarding the reasons why women ask to have their Implanon (progesterone-only contraceptive) device removed early (less than three years).

These two projects have been supported with literature reviews and the development of research protocols. They will be further supported in the development of their ethics applications, project implementation and analysis throughout 2012-2014.

If you would like further details about these new projects or would like to become involved, please contact ISPRN Coordinator, Bridget Dijkmans-Hadley.

ISPRN member profile- Dr Duncan MacKinnon



What is your training and background?

I completed my medical degree at the University of Sydney in 1984 and spent six years in the Illawarra completing my internship and residency; mostly at The Wollongong Hospital. I then travelled to the UK, spending three years in anaesthetics completing the diploma and three years in general practice gaining the Member of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCGP). Now married

with the first of our four children, we decided to head back to Australia. The long-term plan was to look for a sustainable rural general practice where I could practice anaesthetics. This led to a journey around Australia, finally settling in Bega, where we have been for the last 16 years.

How did you hear about ISPRN and what motivated you to join?

I heard about ISPRN at the Murramarang conference for medical educators and supervisors held by CCCGPT in 2011 (I have been involved in training registrars for 10 years). This was where I met Professor Andrew Bonney who gave a presentation about general practice research. What I really liked about ISPRN was that it was ground-up research [GP led research] rather than top down [university-driven or other researcher-driven research]. This was supported by Andrew's own personal journey through research and the respect he has for GPs in developing research ideas, which has been carried through ISPRN.

How has ISPRN supported you so far?

I have been guided all the way through the research process for my current pilot project on the effect on weight of regularly weighing 20-70 year old general practice attendees. ISPRN funded two brainstorming weekends for GP research ideas, with various studies presented. With the support of experienced mentors, these weekends enabled us to work through our research questions, simplifying them and making them achievable. The ideas were supported by a small group of interested participants who became part of the development and study team.

ISPRN has also been proactive in securing funding for these projects which has been essential to buy equipment and generally undertake the studies. I have been given administrative support and assisted with writing grants. ISPRN has also provided webinar sessions on how to utilise the university library and has been very supportive and patient throughout the development of my project.

What was your level of research knowledge prior to ISPRN?

I was involved in collecting data for the BEACH (Bettering the Evaluation and Care of Health) project as well as a couple of smaller projects such as National Pharmaceutical Stockpile (NPS) audits. I had virtually no research knowledge prior to joining ISPRN.

What are some of your professional and personal achievements so far?

I have begun to understand how complex research is and how slow the process is from idea development, ethics and then project implementation. I have also learned that, even though the project is your baby, sometimes other people have even better ideas so it is good to get advice from other researchers in the field. My achievements so far include starting my project and my final achievement will be completing it. I now have a better understanding of how other projects are structured (the methods they use) and has allowed me to meet other researchers who are like-minded.

What do you hope to achieve, professionally, in 2013?

Goals for 2013 involve finishing my project and commencing another project as soon as I have finished.

I think GP supervisors and trainers need to model research in general practice for their trainees so that research becomes a core component" within the speciality. We [GPs] look at research as academia but I have learned that research doesn't have to occur in the university environment. However, you do need support in developing it. I believe that GP trainers should be doing research as part of their everyday life, to improve their practices. I am currently negotiating with CCCGPT about different models of funding for GP trainers so that it includes a component for research as part of the funding.



ISPRN blog- Public

The ISPRN blog has become a public site so that ISPRN members can access blog updates and educational modules more easily. Any past discussions of research ideas have been moved to a password protected 'members only forum'. The ISPRN Blog enables members to participate in the network in their own time:

- the ISPRN site is hosted by the University of Wollongong and provides a secure 'members only' forum for members to discuss their ideas
- it enables multiple discussions to be carried simultaneously, can archive threads and act as a bulletin board
- it is also the location of a series of educational resources focusing on how to develop research ideas.

To access the blog please click here:
<http://uowblogs.com/isprn/>.

ISPRN research development project updates



Dianna Fornasier- Development of a Type 2 Diabetes Insulin Assessment Tool

This project has involved various different stages:

1. The first stage (now completed) was to ensure content, face and construct validity of the type 2 insulin assessment tool with an expert review panel. Dianna also met with A/Prof Peter Caputi (University of Wollongong) who assisted her in the validity of scoring the tool.
2. The second stage involved a read-aloud focus group with a patient group to ensure that the questions were able to be interpreted by patients. The tool was further refined.
3. Stage three, which has now commenced, entails a pilot of the tool with 40 patients. Dianna has a team of three Credentialed Diabetes Educators who are assisting her with the pilot, which will be audio-recorded by the investigators, de-identified and transcribed verbatim. In addition, the tool will be peer reviewed to check for the reliability of the final assessment scores for each patient. The transcripts will also be reviewed by the expert review panel.

Further updates will be provided as the project progresses.

Lucie Stanford- Chaperone use in Australian general practice: current practice and attitudes of general practitioners and patients

Lucie's study has involved cross-sectional surveys of patient attitudes to chaperone use, as well as a pilot survey of general practitioners' attitudes and their current practises regarding chaperone use. The GP survey has collected data from GP's and GP registrar's from CCCGPT and Illawarra Shoalhaven Medicare Local (ISML) via email and follow-up hard copy surveys. Responses to the survey have been very interesting so far.

Lucie wishes to thank those who participated in the survey and will provide further updates the final results.

Duncan MacKinnon- What is the effect on weight of regularly weighing 20-70 year old general practice attendees: a pilot study

The aim of this pilot is to establish the feasibility of an intervention study to determine if the weighing of patients at every consultation, followed by usual care, has an impact on healthy weight maintenance of 20-70 year old general practice attendees. The project has now commenced with Duncan visiting all the pilot practices to discuss the project and deliver scales. Updates will be provided over the next 12 months.

Electronic Medical Data (EMD) Interest Group

The EMD interest group is currently investigating searches of the SQL database in best practice to assist in data collection concerning lipid drug discontinuation in older general practice patients. If you are interested in being a part of the EMD Interest Group please email Catherine Rostron (isprn-enquiries@uow.edu.au) for further information.

ISPRN Partner Research Project- Is there an association between health literacy level and quality of chronic disease management in primary care?

The above health literacy project is being conducted by Dr Judy Mullan, Prof Andrew Bonney, Dr Chris Magee, Dr Kath Weston and Bridget Dijkmans-Hadley from the University of Wollongong's Graduate School of Medicine and Centre for Health Initiatives.

The project is part of an international collaboration investigating if there is an association between health literacy and the management of chronic disease in primary care settings.

The study investigates how much people understand about their chronic illnesses and how this impacts on their health and health care. Previous research has indicated that people who have trouble understanding about health can have poor health outcomes. Investigating this issue can help GPs develop management strategies for doctors caring for patients.

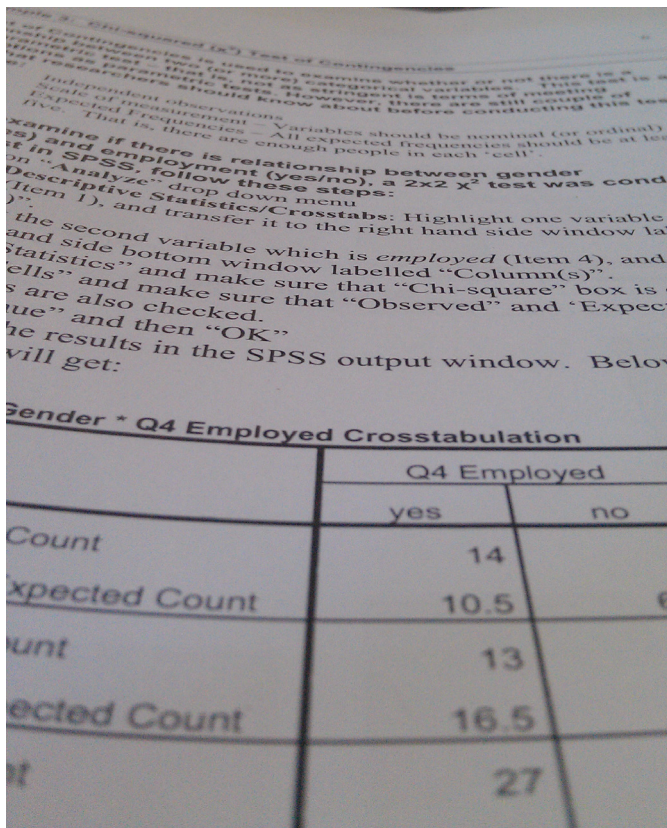
At this stage the project is in a pilot study phase. This phase will assess the feasibility – in terms of duration, acceptability and level of difficulty—of administering a screening test for health-literacy to a patient population diagnosed with chronic disease (i.e. hypertension and/or diabetes).

Benefits of the project

This study aims to generate evidence of direct importance to the Illawarra population by addressing issues of health care delivery for patients with poor health literacy skills who tend to be the older and more vulnerable community members. This has the potential to impact upon the primary/secondary care interface through reduced preventable hospital admissions brought about by improved chronic disease management in primary care.

This interesting project requires relatively little extra work for the GPs involved. If you would like to participate we would warmly invite you to contact Bridget Dijkmans-Hadley for more information.

News and Events



ISPRN Research Development Workshop-report writing and grant application writing

Date: Saturday, 24 November 2012, 8:30am-1:00pm

Venue: The Sebel Harbourside Kiama, 31 Shoalhaven Street, Kiama

ISPRN is hosting a half-day research development workshop. The aim of the workshop is to build research capacity by developing participants' knowledge of report and grant application writing as well as providing an opportunity to network with others interested in primary health care research.

Who?

Members of ISPRN including: GPs, practice nurses, practice managers and Graduate School of Medicine honorary clinical academics. Numbers are limited so book early!

How Much?

The network will pay for the forum registration costs for all delegates (including meals), for two staff member from each practice.

RSVP: Email isprn-enquiries@uow.edu.au with your details if you are interested in attending the workshop or phone 42215819: by 9th November 2012.

PHCRIS eBulletin:

<http://www.phcris.org.au/publications/ebulletin/index>

Project AIR's 6th Annual Conference on the Treatment of Personality Disorders: Guidelines-based practice

9 November 2012-10 November 2012

McKinnon Building, University of Wollongong

For more information please contact Kelly Hutchison, Project Assistant, on the details below:

Tel: (02) 42981571, Email: info-projectair@uow.edu.au

Inaugural IHMRI Population Health Symposium

Monday 3 December 2012, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

University of Wollongong

For more information please contact Dr Karyn Ridgway on the details below:

Tel: (02) 42528949, Email: ihmri-research@uow.edu.au

Current practices involved with ISPRN

Region	Number of Practices Involved in ISPRN
ACT	3
Illawarra	8
Mudgee	1
Murrumbidgee/Riverina	9
Shoalhaven	7
South Coast	1
Southern Highlands	3

LEARN MORE

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