



**diamond Consortium**  
[www.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.unimelb.edu.au)

Newsletter # 6

March 2006



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

## DIAMOND CONSORTIUM COLLOQUIUM FOR RESEARCH HIGHER DEGREE STUDENTS

The *diamond* Consortium Colloquium for Research Higher Degree Students was held on February 9, 2006. The Colloquium brought together 18 students, from Victoria and interstate, conducting research in the area of depression and related disorders in the primary care setting. Thirteen academics and Consortium members also attended. The objective of the day was for students to meet each other and to present and discuss their research.

The day began with Dr Gail Gilchrist, *diamond* Consortium Co-ordinator, outlining the Consortium's main activities – communication, research program, seed funding and capacity building; and highlighting the Consortium's commitment to nurturing the careers of young researchers and research students in the area of depression and related disorders in the primary care setting.

In the morning, four students presented their research. Then, in the afternoon, students made presentations in two small groups. The group on the *'Conceptual basis*



Jo-Anne Rayner presents on her studies

*'of depression'* was led by Professor Chris Dowrick (The University of Liverpool, UK) and Dr Kathy Griffiths (Australian National University). The group on *'Complexity science'* was led by Dr Frances Griffiths (The University of Warwick, UK) and Professor Dimity Pond (The University of Newcastle, Australia). These visiting UK and Australian academics and mental health services experts offered students useful feedback on their presentations. Many students found these small groups the most useful part of the day.

Dr Caroline Johnson (PhD candidate, The University of Melbourne) facilitated the discussion on what the Network could offer students. The consensus was that the Network should

facilitate *"knowledge, networking, dissemination and support"*. Since the Colloquium event, an e-list for network members has been established, and another event is being planned for late 2006.

Overall, it was a great day and turnout with positive feedback from students; *"thank you – an enjoyable, varied and relaxed day!"*, *"I would be very happy if we could meet again next year"*.

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If you are interested in research on depression and related disorders in primary care and wish to be part of the Network, contact Ms Miranda Hindle on +61 3 8344 7449 or email [mhindle@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:mhindle@unimelb.edu.au).



Students discussing their studies with academics

## RE-ORDER PROJECT LAUNCH

The APHCRI funded **re-order** (Re-organising care for depression and related disorders in the Australian primary health care setting) project and project website were launched on 7 February 2006 by Prof Nicholas Glasgow, Director of the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute (APHCRI) and A/Prof Jane Gunn. The Launch was attended by all the

Australian and international project investigators, and a number of stakeholders, including representative of *beyondblue*, VicHealth, General Practice Divisions Victoria, RANZCP, the Victorian DHS, the Australian Psychological Society, primary mental health teams and various Melbourne universities. The night was deemed a great success!

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Seed and capacity building grant applications close **31 May 2006** see [www.diamond.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.diamond.unimelb.edu.au) for more information.
- Visit [www.parc.net.au](http://www.parc.net.au) for information on the Primary Mental Health Care Australian Resource Centre (PARC).



The re-order team



## DIAMOND STUDY UPDATE

The *diamond* study will explore the patient, practitioner and systems factors affecting the diagnosis, management and outcomes of depression in the primary care setting, and is the first study of its kind in Australia to map the pathways to and from primary care for people experiencing depression. Recruitment of 30 GPs throughout Victoria was completed in December 2005. Postal screening of 17,581 patients from these 30 GPs (approx 600 from each GP) for depression is now complete. 43.6% (7,668/17,581) of the screening surveys were returned. 1,794 patients scored 16 or more on the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale indicating they were 'probably depressed', of them 1,008 (56.2%) were interested in hearing more about the study and to date, 790 have completed a baseline survey and consented to participating in the 12 month longitudinal study. Baseline interviews have been conducted with the majority of the cohort (n=728). Given the staggered nature of recruitment, follow up is ongoing. Funding was received from the **re-order** project to undertake 12 month telephone interviews with the cohort to gather verbal accounts of the experience of the care they have received for their emotional health. These interviews began in January 2006 and 84 have been conducted to date. The *diamond* research team are busy analysing data and preparing papers on the screening and baseline results. Visit [www.diamond.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.diamond.unimelb.edu.au) for more information.



## INTRODUCING PARC

The *diamond* Consortium would like to welcome the Primary Mental Health Care Australian Resource Centre (PARC) as a new member of the *diamond* Consortium. PARC is based at Flinders University, Adelaide.

Some of PARC's key roles include:

- Knowledge harvesting/management, circulation of info among divisions of

general practice.

- Providing research, evaluation and information services to Australian Primary Mental Health Care.

PARC has various information databases on primary mental health care activities and research.

For more information on PARC, visit [www.parc.net.au](http://www.parc.net.au) or contact Eleanor Jackson Bowers (08) 8204 5917.

## MEMBER PROFILE

**DR GAIL GILCHRIST**, PhD, is a Senior Research Fellow on the *diamond* study and the *diamond* Consortium Co-ordinator. Gail previously worked in public health and addiction related research in Glasgow, Scotland for over 10 years, before joining the Department of General Practice at the University of Melbourne in June 2004. Her research interests include co-existing mental health and substance use, gender, prostitution, and evaluation. She is primarily employed to co-ordinate the *diamond* study and the work of the Consortium, however she is also a chief investigator on the **re-order**, WEAVE and SUMMIT projects (see below for more details).



Dr Gail Gilchrist

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- General Practice & Primary Health Care Research Conference, Perth- 'Optimising Impact' **5-7 July 2006**. See [www.phcris.org.au/conference/index.php](http://www.phcris.org.au/conference/index.php) for more information or email [sheri.millar@flinders.edu.au](mailto:sheri.millar@flinders.edu.au)
- World Psychiatric Association International Congress, Melbourne. **27 November-2 December 2007**

## THE SUMMIT PROJECT

Substance-Using Mothers and depression, a Multi professional InTervention (SUMMIT), is a *beyondblue* VCoE funded project. Chief investigators on the project are Dr Susan Nicolson (Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne), Dr Gail Gilchrist (Department of General Practice, The University of Melbourne), Dr Paddy Moore, Dr Megan Galbally and Dr Sheila Mulvey (The Mercy Hospital for Women). Jacqui Cameron has recently begun working on the project as a research assistant. In-depth qualitative interviews with maternal drug users, pre and postnatally, about their experiences of care and their perception of care needs and pathways to diagnosis and management of depression are being conducted. Case studies will take place with their care providers to examine barriers and facilitators of care for the maternal drug users in the study. The project is also systematically reviewing the literature on effective service provision for maternal drug users, especially in relation to reducing depression. Triangulation of the above stages will inform the development of a feasible, collaborative and evidence-based view of what services should comprise for maternal drug users to reduce depression. Thereafter, focus groups with patients involved in pre and post natal interviews will ascertain the acceptability of the model to the original participants. An expert panel has been established to inform the development of the model. The expert panel consists of representatives from general practice, Psychiatry, Obstetrics, Psychology, Vic Aboriginal Health Service, Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre, Social Work and consumer representatives from postnatal depression consumer groups, and drug user consumer groups.

## DO YOU HAVE ANY RESEARCH OR BEST PRACTICE YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH US?

Contact: Miranda Hindle on (03) 8344 7449 or e-mail [mhindle@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:mhindle@unimelb.edu.au)