



diamond Consortium
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Newsletter # 8
September 2006

'Diagnosis, Management & Outcomes of Depression in Primary Care'- Building capacity in primary mental health care research and evaluation

DIAGNOSIS, MANAGEMENT AND OUTCOMES OF DEPRESSION (DIAMOND) LONGITUDINAL STUDY - UPDATE

It is hard to believe that less than twenty months ago the *diamond* Longitudinal Study got underway. In that time, 30 GPs have facilitated the screening of almost 18,000 patients for depressive symptoms across the State. 791 general practice patients with depressive symptoms are currently taking part in the follow-up phase of the *diamond* study. Data collection is ongoing and will continue until early 2007. This great response has been possible due to the support of the GPs, their practice staff, and the study participants.

We look forward to presenting the preliminary results from the *diamond* study on **Friday 8 December 2006** (see the notice below for further information).

This presentation will be an opportunity to share some of the findings and discuss the implications of this research. We look forward to seeing you all there.

In the meantime, here are some quirky *diamond* study facts you may not have known!

Did you know...

- The total number of kms travelled to practices by the *diamond* study team (3,317km)
- The number of variables that will be collected by the end of data collection (3.5 million)
- The number of surveys that will be processed (21,955+).

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **8 December 2006**– Research Higher Degree Student event. Rooms 223 & 228, Level 2, 200 Berkeley St, Carlton. 10am- 1.00pm
- **8 December 2006**– Presentation of results from the *diamond* longitudinal study. Lecture Theatre, Ground level 200 Berkeley St, Carlton. 2.00- 5.00pm
- A lunch will be held for those attending the student event & the presentation from 1-2pm in the Seminar rooms, Ground level, 200 Berkeley St, Carlton. **RSVP: 7 November 2006** to Miranda Hindle on mhindle@unimelb.edu.au or (03) 8344 7449.

BEYONDBLUE VICTORIAN PARTNERS BREAKFAST

On 23 August 2006, Professor Jane Gunn and Dr Grant Blashki attended the *beyondblue* Victorian Partners Breakfast where they presented on the work of the *diamond* Consortium and on the PEP study respectively. The audience of 100 people included the Inaugural Chair of *beyondblue*, the Hon Jeff Kennett, the Victorian Health Minister, the Hon Bronwyn Pike as well as members of parliament, health professions, researchers, consumer and carer representatives, NGO representatives and *beyondblue* partners and management. The presentation, which was one of few, was very well received and showcased the great work that the *diamond* Consortium and the PEP project continue to do in 2006.

FAREWELL AND GOOD LUCK, VANESSA!

It is with sadness that the *diamond* project team farewell Ms Vanessa Madden (right), a Senior Research Assistant on the project. Vanessa has been working at the Department of General Practice for the past four years on various research projects, but most recently on the *diamond* longitudinal study. In September, Vanessa is moving to work at the University of Florida as a Research Support Officer, evaluating a state-wide program on health care for children with life-threatening illnesses. Thank you for all your hard work, Vanessa– best of luck in the US!



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

MEMBER PROFILE

PROFESSOR DIMITY POND

Professor Pond (pictured) is Professor of General Practice and Head of the Discipline of General Practice at the University of Newcastle. As well as teaching and researching, she continues to work 2 sessions a week in the general practice clinic she has worked in for over 20 years.

Professor Pond started out her research life as a project officer for the RACGP, working on dementia research in a retirement village. Subsequently she noticed that a lot of the village residents were suffering from depression, and moved on to do a PhD on this topic. A lot of her research at UNSW in the 90s and later at Newcastle has had a mental health focus – including mental health and the elderly, PTSD in the elderly and mental health in the unemployed.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The World Psychiatric Association (WPA) will hold its International Congress from **28 November – 2 December 2007** in Melbourne. There will be a primary care stream. Registration opens **30 November 2006**.

The abstract closing date for *Symposia and Workshops* is **30 November 2006**. The abstract closing date for *Free Papers and Posters* is **30 April 2007**. See www.wpa2007melbourne.com for more information.

CONSORTIUM MEMBERS AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

diamond Consortium members have been busy recently presenting on their work at various international conferences. In July 2006, Professor Helen Herrmann, from the Australian International Health Institute (AIHI) at the University of Melbourne, attended the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) Conference in Istanbul, Turkey. Professor Herrman delivered a key lecture on 'Cross-cultural studies on depression in primary health care'. Helen's talk was well attended by many international mental health researchers.

Dr Gail Gilchrist, from the Department of General Practice at the University of Melbourne, attended the 17th Annual Conference on the reduction of drug related harm in Vancouver, Canada from 30 April– 4 May 2006. Dr Gilchrist presented on 'Hazardous drinking among patients attending Victorian General Practice (preliminary results from the *diamond* screening survey).'

Professor Jane Gunn, Chair of the Consortium, attended the International Society for Affective Disorders (ISAD) 2006 Conference, in Lisbon, Portugal from 3–6 March 2006 where she made a presentation on 'Depression as a chronic and disabling experience. The *diamond* study: A longitudinal study of depression in primary care in Victoria, Australia'. The conference was also attended by Professor Christopher Dowrick (University of Liverpool, UK), whose symposium presentation was entitled 'Is depression a chronic illness?' Abstracts of both Jane and Chris' presentations were published in the March 2006 edition of the Journal of Affective Disorders.

Professor Gunn was more recently a keynote speaker at the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (RNZCGP) Conference which ran from 10-13 August 2006. Her two presentations were entitled 'P.S...Mental Health' and 'Mental Health Care in Primary Care– Problem Solving Therapy'.

Professor Gunn will also be attending the North American Primary Care Research Group (NAPCRG) Annual Conference in Tuscon, Arizona, USA from 15-18 October 2006. A poster presentation will be made on the re-order project, entitled 're-order– a methodology for engaging stakeholders in re-organising the response of Australian primary care to depression'. A/Prof Kelsey Hegarty, a *diamond* Consortium member from the Department of General Practice at the University of Melbourne, will also make a presentation at the conference on 'Can we predict which women in general practice will have experienced partner abuse?'



ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE RE-ORDER PROJECT

The *diamond* Consortium would like to congratulate Prof Jane Gunn, Dr Renata Kokanovic, Prof Chris Dowrick, Prof Helen Herrman, Dr Emily Hansen (Department of General Practice, University of Tasmania) and Dr John Furler for winning Stream 5 Extension Funding for the re-order project from the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute (APHCRI). The extension of the project is named 'Extending re-order (Re-organising care for depression and related disorders in the Australian Primary Care setting) – Tasmanian and cross cultural component'. The proposed study builds upon the existing

Stream 3 re-order project, which aims to inform a change in the way we think about, organise and deliver depression care in Australian primary care in a way that is directly relevant to policy and practice. re-order uses a proactive evaluation framework and action research methods to lead to innovation in the organisation and linkages within primary care for the management of depression and related disorders. The proposed Stream 5 work addresses culture, equity and crosses geographical boundaries. The cross-cultural component reflects the diversity of the Australian population and proposes work in an area that is usually neglected (depression in CALD groups).

WORLD PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION (WPA) CONGRESS 2007

The World Psychiatric Association (WPA) and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) invite you to its Annual Congress, to be held in Melbourne from 28 November– 2 December 2007. The theme of the event is *Working Together for Mental Health: Partnerships for Policy and Practice* which embraces all concerned and associated with mental health. It invites attendees to consider the latest scientific research findings, as well as share experiences and emerging solutions across geographical and cultural boundaries. This congress will bring together the perspectives of clinicians, researchers, allied health professionals, consumers and carers. It will be a truly international Congress with a gathering of the world's leading experts from diverse mental health fields with 20 keynote speakers from around the world already confirmed. This will be the most significant and important mental health congress held in Australasia. Prof Jane Gunn is organising the local Scientific Program Committee, advising on the primary care stream. The Congress will offer a scientific program consisting of 19 streams and key areas, including integration of mental health, general health and social services, policy development, primary care and mental health, innovative comprehensive diagnostic models and women's mental health, to name a few. The dates for submission of abstracts, free papers and posters are listed in the front of this newsletter. Registration for the event also opens on **30 November 2006**. It would be great to see many Consortium members there!

For further information on the Congress and the other Streams available, please see

www.wpa2007melbourne.com

[DO YOU HAVE ANY RESEARCH OR BEST PRACTICE YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH US?](#)

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