

diamond Consortium Colloquium for Research Higher Degree Students

On Thursday February 9, the *diamond* Consortium hosted its first event for 2006; 'The *diamond* Consortium Colloquium for Research Higher Degree Students'. The Colloquium brought together 18 research students conducting research in the area of depression and related disorders in the primary care setting, from Victoria and interstate and 13 academics and Consortium members. 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, the *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.

Before the event, all students were invited to submit an abstract on their studies and were given the opportunity to present in either a morning or an afternoon session. In the morning the following students presented their research:

- Dr Cate Howell (The University of Adelaide) presented "*A review of recent Australian and UK primary care mental health initiatives & a survey of Australian GP experiences of primary care mental health*"
- Dr Parker Magin (The University of Newcastle) presented "*The use of Complementary and Alternative Medications (CAM) in skin diseases: considerations for the psychological effects of skin diseases*"
- Ms Joanne Rayner (La Trobe University) presented "*An exploration of parent-daughter relationships and depression in adulthood within the social context of treating tall stature in adolescent girls over three decades*"
- Dr Dagmar Haller-Hester (Murdoch Children's Research Institute, the Royal Children's Hospital) presented "*The role of illness beliefs in the identification of youth emotional distress in general practice*"

Over lunch, students exchanged ideas and met others who wished to be involved in the *diamond* Consortium's Research Higher Degree Student Network. In the afternoon, students made presentations in two small groups. The group on the '*Conceptual basis of depression*' was led by Professor Chris Dowrick (The University of Liverpool, UK) and Dr Kathy Griffiths (The Australian National University), and 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; "*(the) opinion of academics and other students on my work and feedback I got after my small group presentation (was the most useful)*".

Dr Caroline Johnson (PhD candidate, The University of Melbourne) facilitated the discussion on what the Network could offer research higher degree students researching depression and related disorders. 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, with advice from the Network, for late 2006.

All students who completed an evaluation form stated that they enjoyed the day, felt the Colloquium was well organised and presented a good opportunity to meet other students with similar interests, and were interested in participating in future events for research higher

degree students. Overall, it was a great day and turnout, with positive feedback from students; *“thank you – an enjoyable, varied and relaxed day!”*, *“thanks for organising the day”*, *“thank you for the opportunity to attend”*, *“I would be very happy if we could meet again next year”*.

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