21 Years of Community Health Research in South Australia: 1984 - 2005

The South Australian Community Health Research Unit (SACHRU) strives to enhance health and wellbeing in South Australian communities.

SACHRU undertakes and advocates for primary health care research and evaluation which:
- Focuses on issues of equity
- Takes a social view of health and wellbeing
- Has implications for policy and practice
- Involves, and is responsive to, all relevant players
- Is independent, rigorous and has academic excellence
- Is disseminated widely and in appropriate ways
The early years: 1984 - 1990

SCHRU was established in February 1984 at Morphett Vale CHC, with three research staff and a half time clerical assistant. By 1985, SCHRU had already expanded and gained additional grant funding. The Noarlunga Community Health Survey led to the Noarlunga’s Health: Apathy or Action report & Noarlunga Health Issues Day 1986. A strong relationship with Southern Domiciliary Care & Rehabilitation Service began, with shared projects & research staff.

1987...

NCHRU was established in 1987. SCHRU obtained a grant from NHMRC for Marion, Brighton, Glenelg Community Health Needs Assessment. SCHRU played a key role in the successful submission for establishment of Healthy Cities Noarlunga which started in 1987 as one of three national pilot projects. We have built strong links with HCN, including an evaluation in 1990 and serving on the management committee continuously since its inception.

1990...

Fran was awarded the Catherine Helen Spence Scholarship. Fran travelled to Europe and Canada to study Healthy Cities projects. On her return she reported ‘much of Australian community and public health thinking and practice leads the world’.

‘Readers of this report will notice the disparity between the listing of staff of the Unit and the listing of the products of the Unit: the one is short and the other long. It stands as a testimony to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Unit and Dr. Baum its Director. I doubt there is any more productive Research Unit for its size in health services in the country. Those who are used to reading its reports will also be aware that the products have not only quantity but quality in an area which is new and uncharted.’

Deane Southgate, Associate Professor, Fifth report of the SHCRU, February 1990
Expanding: 1991 - 2000

1991...
Planning Healthy Communities manual produced.
SACHRU established as state-wide service in December 1991.

1993...
Launch of Neporen1 report

1995...
Launch of Health For All by Hon Don Dunstan

1996...
Research Matters in Practice Conference.

1998...
Community-Based Health Promotion posters & book

Richard, Helma and Fran

Staff photo

Maryanne Martin

Health Development & Social Capital, Building Healthy Communities
The 21st Century & Beyond

2000...
Completed two projects for CDHAC—Performance indicators in Community Health (with FU & La Trobe) & Health Services & Community Participation (with FU).

2000 - 2001...
Planning & Evaluation Wizard

2003...
Launch of Investing in Community Health by Minster Lea Stevens and announcement of revitalisation of Primary Health Care Policy

2005...
SACHRU’s governance moved to Flinders University

2004...
Celebrating the news of AHIP

If Only Numbers Count launch

Stacey Masters

Launch of What works?

Charlie Murray

Jim Birch, Helen van Eyk & Gwyn Jolley