South Australian Community Health Research Unit

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 2006
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Foreword

In April 2005, SACHRU administration and governance transferred to Flinders University. The South Australian Department of Health has a contract to fund Flinders University to run SACHRU, through the faculty of Health Sciences. In consequence, planning and reporting requirements to the Department of Health have changed and SAHCRU is now required to prepare an annual plan and a bi-annual performance report. In line with this change SACHRU’s annual report to stakeholders now covers the calendar year.

This is the report for the 2006 calendar year.
Role

The South Australian Community Health Research Unit (SACHRU) strives to enhance health and wellbeing in South Australian communities. It does this by assisting community health and primary health care agencies and groups to undertake and use the findings from research and evaluation to make services more effective in maintaining and improving the health of their 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.

SACHRU is partly funded by the South Australian Department of Health (DH) and administered by Flinders University (FU) to provide a primary health care research and evaluation service for community health services and related agencies and groups that are funded by the DH in metropolitan and country South Australia.

The Role of SACHRU is to:

- assist the DH and service providers to determine needs and priorities for community and primary health care research and evaluation
- develop research and evaluation methodologies suitable for use in a primary health care setting
- design and conduct primary health care research projects
- obtain and manage externally funded research grants and consultancies in community and primary health care
- disseminate research and evaluation findings
- contribute to academic excellence in CH research
- provide research and evaluation support to community and primary health care workers in relation to research, evaluation and primary health care development
- monitor and disseminate Australian and overseas research relevant to primary health care policy and practice
- undertake critical appraisal of policy and programs relevant to primary health care.

Key Directions 2005-09

1. Contributing to the health reform agenda through evaluation of PHC implementation and development
2. Researching the social, economic and environmental determinants of health and well-being and how these form a program logic for human services interventions including social inclusion strategies
3. Researching the dynamics and outcomes of primary health care and population health approaches to health promotion and illness prevention
4. Ensuring the transfer of research knowledge relating to primary health care from research to policy, planning and practice and promoting its uptake
5. Increasing workforce capacity to undertake research and evaluation and gain confidence and skills in contributing a PHC perspective to the health reform agenda
Advisory Committee

Since its formation in 1991, SACHRU has been supported by an Advisory Committee, which meets every three months. At each meeting, the SACHRU Director reports on activities and progress, and seeks advice on various management matters including workshop programs and planning days. An Executive consisting of the Chair and Deputy Chair can be called upon for matters requiring urgent attention.

2006 Membership

Ms Adair Garrett (Chair) Central Northern Adelaide Health Service representing Community Health Centre CEOs

Ms Rachel Ambagtsheer Central Northern Adelaide Health Service representing a Metropolitan Community Health Service

Ms Bernadette Roberts Women’s Health Statewide representing Women’s Health Services

Dr Helen van Eyk representing the Director, Strategic Planning and Research Branch, Department of Health

Mr Richard Hicks Noarlunga Health Services representing a Metropolitan Community Health Service

Dr Frida Cheok Central Northern Primary Health Care Service representing a Metropolitan Community Health Service

Ms Terry Stewart Aboriginal Health Division, Department of Health representing Indigenous Health

Mr Kevin Eglinton Hills Mallee Southern Regional Health Service, representing Regional Country Community Health Services

A/Prof Libby Kalucy representing the Dean, School of Medicine, Flinders University

Ms Cheryl Wright Inner Southern Community Health Service representing a Metropolitan Community Health Service

Associate Professor Jan Paterson representing the Executive Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Flinders University

Staff Nominee This position is filled by rotation. Staff nominees for 2006 were: Angela Lawless, Catherine Hurley, Gwyn Jolley, Rebecca Ramm and Kate Biedrzyck
**Staff Members**

As at December 2006

**Director**
Professor Fran Baum B.A. (Hons.), Ph.D.
(also Head, Department of Public Health, Flinders University)

**Senior Research Officer**
Michael Bentley B.Sc. (Maths), Grad.Dip. (Health Admin. & Info. Systems)

**Senior Research Officer**
Gwyn Jolley
B.Sc. (Hons.), Post Grad.Cert. Ed., Grad.Dip. OH, MSc (PHC)

**Senior Research Officer**
Angela Lawless
B.App.Sc. (Speech Pathology), Grad.Dip. PHC

**Research Officer**
Catherine Hurley B.A., B.Soc. Admin., Grad.Cert.PHC, (Research & Evaluation)

**Research Assistant**
Laura Winslow
B.A (Aboriginal Affairs Administration)

**Research Officer**
Rama Ramanathan
BSc (Biol) Hons, Grad Cert (Public Health), MPH

**Research Officer**
BSc (Biomedical), Grad Dip (International Public Health)

**Personal Assistant**
Robyne Ridgeway

**Information Officer**
Rebecca Ramm
BA (Multimedia Studies), Grad.Dip. (Information Studies)

**Administrative Assistant**
Patricia Lamb
Director’s comments

In 2006 SACHRU contributed significantly to ‘thinking’ for the health system through its continued work in social health research and evaluation. This ‘thinking’ happens through our core projects, the work conducted on national-competitive research grants and the evaluations we conduct for community based services. In each of these categories of work we have the opportunity to reflect on the contribution that different forms of activity make to the health of the population. Our aim is always to develop our thinking and reflection on the health system in partnership with key policy and practice players in the health system. As ever our approach is underpinned by the perspective that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of care and that truly upstream prevention is of most value.

Our externally funded research grants last year included an NH&MRC project considering the impact of neighbourhood environment on health and equity which exemplified our focus on upstream determinants of health. In 2006 a series of policy workshops were conducted with practitioners and policy makers to examine the results from our survey work in four Adelaide post-code areas with contrasting socio-economic profiles. We found that while economic status was an important determinant, one relatively less well-off suburb performed well on measures of neighbourhood well-being. Our consultations with policy people and practitioners suggest this reflected good social planning a decade or so ago.

This report also contains a description of the community based evaluations that SACHRU does with a wide range of agencies across South Australia. This activity enables us to determine ways in which this complex work, often offered to some of the least healthy people in our community, succeeds and what would make it more effective. The report demonstrates the range and value of this type of work.

It is well recognised that our world is increasingly global. That is also true of SACHRU’s work. This year SACHRU provided the project management (lead by Angela Lawless) and was one of the hosts of the international conference of the International Society for Equity in Health. As you will see from the report that follows, the event was a considerable success and resulted in some of the world’s top equity researchers coming to Adelaide, including Prof. Barbara Starfield, one of the leading global primary health care researchers. Our globalization also is evident as we are partners to a successful international research grant application on comprehensive primary health care, led by Canada and South Africa. In 2007 this research will really get underway and SACHRU will play a key role, starting with an international review of literature and continuing in 2008 with a contribution to training programs and an international series of primary health care evaluations.

This report also demonstrates that SACHRU continues to develop its Aboriginal health research, led by Michael Bentley who has been working with Aboriginal health teams to develop appropriate research and evaluation. SACHRU is also involved in an NH&MRC-funded study of Indigenous health and well-being in Adelaide which is looking at social capital, racism and health. All this work is greatly helped and supported by our link to the Co-operative Research Centre in Aboriginal Health.

2006 continued to be a period of significant change and disruption for community health services. There was significant change of executive staff, a change of Minister and a decision that the newly established Regional Boards would be abolished. We know from our research on governance and primary health care that many community health workers are apprehensive about the future of their sector, especially the aspects of their work that have always made it the cutting edge of primary health care – the social action and community development approaches to tackling health issues. We hope that our work in documenting this vital aspect of the health sector will play some role in ensuring that the unique contribution of community
health is acknowledged and valued by the broader health system. Once again this work is the upstream, often invisible work that prevents problems before they turn up in the emergency departments of our hospitals.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of SACHRU’s Advisory Committee for their support in this period, especially Adair Garret, our Chair, and Bernadette Roberts, our Deputy Chair. Andrew Stanley, Helen van Eyk and Heather Petty (SA Department of Health) have, as ever, been supportive as our funders. Prof. Roy Goldie (Executive Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences) has supported SACHRU events and the full incorporation of SACHRU into Flinders University. Most crucially I would like to thank all of SACHRU’s staff for their commitment and dedication to the Unit’s work. You are all vital to the important work SACHRU does!

Fran Baum
Director
Research & Evaluation Projects

Evaluation of Comprehensive Primary Health Care
Staff involved: Fran Baum, Angela Lawless, Gwyn Jolley

Planning and stakeholder discussion for the next major core funded research project ‘Evaluation of Comprehensive Primary Health Care’ has started. This project will focus on the evaluation of the establishment and early work of two comprehensive primary health care facilities in South Australia at Aldinga and Woodville. The over-arching aims of the proposed study are to develop a valid and robust set of criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of a model of health service delivery known as Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC), and secondly, the specifically developed evaluation framework will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the two newly established CPHC centres. An Expression of Interest application to the NHMRC entitled ‘Evaluating the effectiveness of Comprehensive Primary Health Care in local communities’ was unsuccessful and this has had an impact on the scope of the project for 2007. An application to the NHMRC Project Grants scheme will be submitted in March 2007 to assist in longer term funding for this study and to dovetail with the successful international research grant described below.

Teesdale-Corti Global Health Research Partnership Program
Fran Baum and two international advisors are members of a consortium of researchers and practitioners involved in CPHC research and practice. The consortium has secured funding through the Teesdale-Corti Global Health Research Partnership Program to consolidate at a global level existing knowledge, create new knowledge, develop new research capacity, and lay the ground for a global network of practitioner, civil society, policy and academic actors involved in CPHC thus adding significant value to country-based work. The expression of interest submitted by the group was short listed and Fran Baum attended a meeting of the international investigators in Cape Town at the end of June 2006, to plan the full application. The funding was confirmed in December 2006 and the project will commence in the first half of 2007. A paper on this project was presented by Fran Baum (with David Sanders) at the Global Forum for Health Research in Cairo in October 2006.

Australian Health Inequities Program
Staff involved: Fran Baum

The AHIP program continued in 2006 with $2.4 million of funding over 5 years from NHMRC. AHIP brings together researchers from a range of disciplines including public health, labour market economics, housing and geography, to address health inequities and analyse policy and program strategies that aim to reduce them. AHIP is headed by Professor Fran Baum, Department of Public Health (Flinders University) and also involves Associate Professor Anne Kavanagh, Key Centre for Women's Health (University of Melbourne), Professor Andrew Beer in the School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management (Flinders University) and Professor Sue Richardson, Director of the National Institute of Labour Studies (Flinders University). Links with AHIP are beneficial to SACHRU in that it enables the Unit to keep up on the latest thinking in health inequities research.
Health inequities remain a significant feature of Australia’s health profile. AHIP examines the complex causes of such inequities, including the contribution of our housing, employment, social connections, the places people live in, and perceptions of our environment. This information is already contributing to debates about what level of inequities are acceptable in a country such as Australia and, most importantly, provide guidance to government, service providers and community groups about how to improve the quality of people’s local environments and reduce the health differences between different groups of Australians. This happens though annual retreats at which SACHRU researchers are present.

On 14 September 2006, following the International Society for Equity in Health Conference, the Australian Health Inequities Program (AHIP) convened a one-day conference on Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to Health Inequities Research at Union House, University of Adelaide.

The opening session, Getting a Team Together and Working Well, was presented by Professor Ron Labonte, Director, Globalization and Health Equity Research Unit, University of Ottawa, Professor Sue Richardson, Director, National Institute of Labour Studies, Flinders University, and Professor Fran Baum, Head, Department of Public Health, Flinders University. The speakers analysed issues round the formation of a multi-disciplinary team and strategies to sustain the team’s commitment through the inevitable difficulties and changes encountered in long-term research projects.

The following session, Findings from the Mitsubishi Project Team, provided an overview of the impact of the closure of the Mitsubishi factory on individual workers, their family members and the broader community in the southern suburbs of Adelaide. The panel comprised Holli Thomas, Fran Baum and Fiona Verity from Flinders University, with comments coming from Tony Woollacott, Strategic Planning and Analysis, SA Department of Health.

The concluding sessions explored Methodological and Epistemological Challenges that confront a multidisciplinary team and Translating Multi-disciplinary Research into Policy. Not surprisingly, the sessions provoked spirited discussion and prompted a range of stimulating questions from the floor.

The impact of the retrenchment of Mitsubishi workers on affected workers, their families and communities

Staff involved: Fran Baum, Gwyn Jolley, Lisel O’Dwyer

Senior Research Officers Lisel O’Dwyer and Gwyn Jolley are involved in a project examining the impact of retrenchment on Mitsubishi workers on their health, housing status and labour force position and the implications for human services, policies and practices. The SA Department of Health ‘Health Services Research and Innovation Program’ and the Australian Research Council are funders of this research. The project is multidisciplinary, drawing together researchers from community and public health, housing studies, geography,
labour studies, and social administration. It is being led by Professors Fran Baum (Public Health and SACHRU), Andrew Beer (Southern Research Centre of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Sue Richardson (National Institute of Labour Studies) and Dr Fiona Verity, School of Social Administration and Social Work. Dr Anna Ziersch, Dr Lareen Newman and Dr Guangyu Zhang from the Department of Public Health are also contributing to the research.

The retrenchment of approximately 1000 permanent workers from Mitsubishi Motors (Australia) Limited’s (MMAL) Lonsdale foundry and reduction of activities at Tonsley Park is expected to have a significant impact on the lives of retrenched workers, their families and communities. Southern Adelaide is vulnerable to the effects of restructuring because it has an under-developed industrial base with few large employers in the region and a weaker entrepreneurial culture when compared with other parts of Adelaide. There are also significant pockets of low income and relative deprivation and associated poor health outcomes, and high rates of youth unemployment in the region. Social services are already under considerable pressure and some health services, such as general practitioners, are in short supply compared with the rest of Adelaide.

The research is a longitudinal study exploring mental and physical health, disruption of social networks, prospects for re-employment, attributes and behaviours of the workers that are associated with good outcomes, demand for social and health services, levels of housing stress and impact on children and young people. The research findings will inform policy and service development to help South Australians better prepare for large-scale employment changes in the future.

The research has 5 key objectives:

1. To track the changing effects of job loss over the critical transition period.
2. To conduct detailed investigations with sub-samples of the above populations
3. To study the impact of job losses on the children of retrenched workers
4. To assess the perceived impact of job losses on the region by service providers
5. To provide policy recommendations based on the above research. The research outcomes of the project will identify the most effective re-employment strategies of retrenched workers and what services were valuable in assisting them.

Planned data collection includes a series of three quantitative interviews over two years with retrenched workers, and qualitative interviews with a sub-set of respondents will also be conducted in at two stages. In addition, an initial focus group with children of affected workers was held and data from this informed interviews with approximately 20 children about their perceptions of what the changes have brought to the family. A survey of health and community services in the region and a follow up forum have also been completed to help in assessment of the impact on service organisations. It is hoped that this information will help in service planning for the region and for other areas facing similar job losses. Further consultation with community service providers is planned.

In 2006, the second and third wave of survey interviews were completed (n~370) and two rounds of in-depth qualitative interviews with a small group (n~40) of these workers is nearing completion. The survey interviews and in-depth interviews have been conducted in 3 stages – before job loss, six months later, and 18 months later. Responses will be compared with the adult male metropolitan Adelaide population through the SA Health Monitor. An enormous volume of data has been collected and the research team is coming to grips with the challenges of analysis and writing within a multi-disciplinary approach.
Experience from the first round of interviews indicates a diversity of responses, though many workers are indicating stress levels above their normal experience. Higher levels of mental health distress, and lower levels of sense of control and hope for the future, were evident in the retrenched workers when compared to a randomised sample of men in Adelaide. Social activity and connectedness also appeared to be reduced in at least half the respondents.

A forum for local human service providers was held in early November, facilitated by Gwyn Jolley and Fiona Verity (Dept of Social Work, Flinders University). At the forum, the attendees were updated on the project findings to date and their input sought on the impacts on services and communities and the policy implications arising. It was confirmed that the data collection processes used by agencies is not in sufficient detail to enable a direct link between client attendance and previous employment at Mitsubishi or recent job loss. Service providers expressed the view that, while there did not appear to be an immediate increase in demand, this could become more apparent with time. Policy implications raised included the need for greater transparency about what assistance was available to retrenched workers.

A community forum was held on 9th November, attended by approximately 30 people, mostly ex-Mitsubishi workers. Prof Andrew Beer, Prof Fran Baum and Gwyn Jolley presented some of the findings from the first stage of the data analysis. Audience members were encouraged to ask questions and contribute their ideas and thoughts to the discussion.

A research symposium, supported by Flinders University and held on 29th and 30th November, gave an opportunity for the Flinders research team and researchers from the United Kingdom to come together. Researchers and key stakeholders were able to present and discuss the Mitsubishi study findings in comparison to a similar study of automotive plant closure in the UK.

We would like to acknowledge the support of Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd in conducting this research and in helping to arrange contact with the workers.

**Governance and Primary Health Care**

*Staff involved: Gwyn Jolley, Fran Baum, Angela Lawless, Catherine Hurley, Tuesday Udell*

The aim of the study is to begin an assessment of the impact of the new regional health structure in southern metropolitan Adelaide on commitment to, and implementation of, primary health care (PHC), including allocation of resources. The study addressed the questions: What is the most effective way to organise health service governance in order to promote and strengthen primary health care as a key focus of the health system? How does a change in health service governance affect the position of primary health care in relation to acute care health services?

Methods involved collection of base-line data, face-to-face interviews and focus groups with key informants and document analysis. Interview and focus group data were collated and analysed to produce a table of key themes, goals and potential indicators for PHC. Interview respondents and other stakeholders were invited to a forum to get consensus on a vision for PHC in the region for the next 3–5 years. Comments and suggestions were collated and used by the research team to revise the final PHC Goals Framework.

The report from stage one of this research - Governance and Primary Health Care in Southern Metropolitan Adelaide - is now completed and available from SACHRU’s website at [link]

The following were suggested as necessary factors to bring about reform:

- Resources and funding mechanisms linked to reform and a willingness to reallocate resources to achieve a PHC focussed system
- Clearer population and health data for the region
Recruitment, training and workforce development that supports the re-orientation to PHC by increasing health professionals’ understanding of public health and community strategies

Breakdown of professional barriers and hierarchies within the health workforce

Challenges to the collection of baseline data included:

- deciding what ‘counts’ as PHC eg. resources provided to general practice to build community-based chronic care programs with the aim of reducing avoidable hospital admissions
- changing structures eg the drug and alcohol service is now administered by the regional health service but was previously a separate service provider.
- different ways of recording data eg community health services use different ways to record and present data on workforce and service provision; in 2003 the state data collection program changed; inconsistencies between budget and service data from different sources
- data not able to be made available to the project eg. minutes of Board meetings, level of unmet need

Stage 2 of this research, funded by a University Industry Collaboration Research Grant scheme of Flinders University, has enabled us to continue into 2006 and to extend the study to two other health regions in Adelaide. Changes within the SA health system have increased the relevance of this research but have also resulted in difficulties in recruiting interview respondents. We plan to use the latest round of interviews to refine the Goal Framework for PHC developed in Stage 1, and then invite wider input via an interactive website. The outcome should be a PHC Framework that clearly articulates goals and strategies for a strengthened PHC system, along with specific and measurable indicators that health services or researchers can use to assess progress over the next 5 – 10 years.

Unfortunately, our application to the Australian Research Council Linkage Projects for a grant to continue this research was unsuccessful. This means that the opportunity to evaluate the reform agenda in South Australia from a primary health care perspective over the longer term is unlikely.
Evaluation Report Writing Template and Assessment Tools
Staff involved: Gwyn Jolley, Fran Baum, Catherine Hurley

The report from the project What works? A systematic review of the evidence for the effectiveness of community health in Adelaide (2005) concluded that, while a large amount of evaluation activity occurred in Adelaide community health services, limited resources and skills meant that the quality of reporting was variable. The template and assessment tools are aimed at increasing consistency and relevance outside the reporting agency of evaluation efforts. This is turn should help to establish evidence for the effectiveness of community health services and the primary health care approach in the current climate of reporting ‘evidence-based’ practice.

SACHRU therefore undertook to develop an evaluation report writing template for community health workers, and to identify or design tools to assess achievement in the primary health care principles of equity, community participation and working in collaborative partnerships.

The final version of the report writing template is now available on the website [link]. The assessment tools are currently being developed and should be ready for piloting in early 2007.

Urban Locational Disadvantage and Health
Staff involved: Fran Baum

Throughout 2006 the team from the Location, Social Capital and Health (LSCH) project has been holding consultative workshops with community representatives and policy makers to discuss the research findings from the study. LSCH is a four year National Health and Medical Research Council funded project which has been examining the ways that local neighbourhoods can have an impact on the health of its residents, in particular in terms of the role of social capital. LSCH is a collaboration between SACRHU, and the Department of Public Health and School of Environment and Population Studies at Flinders University. As part of the project four case studies have been conducted in postcodes within the Local Government Areas of Onkaparinga, Playford, Burnside and Prospect. Residents within these areas were asked about their experiences of living in their neighbourhood through questionnaires and interviews, with a small number also asked to take photographs of what they liked and didn’t like about their areas. Community groups within each area were also surveyed and a food basket survey was also undertaken. In the consultative workshops preliminary results from these case studies were presented and discussed. A community report incorporating the outcomes from these workshops will be published in 2007. Please see our webpage for further information: http://som.flinders.edu.au/FUSA/PublicHealth/locationhealth.htm

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Urban location and health project
Staff involved: Fran Baum, Michael Bentley, Laura Winslow

This project, funded by the NH&MRC, is being conducted by the Department of Public Health by a team consisting of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous public health researchers. This project involves working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in different urban locations across Adelaide to look at ways to best promote healthy neighbourhoods. The project seeks to gather information about where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live and how this influences our health.

In order to gain a range of perspectives from Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people living in different parts of Adelaide, the project will specifically focus on five postcode-based areas in Port Adelaide, Burnside-Prospect, Playford and Onkaparinga.
The project has three major research aims

- To investigate the determinants of locational differences in health as they relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Adelaide.
- To explore the dynamics of the production of health inequities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the five post-code areas.
- To contribute to culturally safe policy development designed to reduce health inequities within urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

It is hoped that the outcomes of this project will provide:

- Improved knowledge of the underlying social and economic determinants of health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Better understanding of the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in suburban Australia, especially in regard to experiences of racism and the ways in which these experiences affect our health.
- Knowledge to improve the quality and content of policies and programs that seek to improve Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander health.
- Development of the skills, knowledge and competence of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander researchers.

Gilbert Gallaher is the project manager with Michelle Ah Matt as Administrative Assistant. Laura Winslow commenced in August 2006 as a Research Assistant. Interviews are underway and the project will run until August 2008.

Social Capital and Public Policy: How social capital can inform public sector interventions to improve health and reduce inequalities

Staff involved: Fran Baum

This research is funded primarily by the Australian Research Council Linkage Fund with contributions from each of the Industry Partners: Department of Health, Arts SA, City of Onkaparinga, and Department of Justice.

The project aims to develop a greater understanding of the concept of social capital and the way it has been and may best be used by policy makers to reduce economic and health inequalities. In particular, this project seeks to understand the ways in which social capital can affect policy outcomes in Australia and to provide insights into how the principles of social capital can inform policy and practice. By closely examining existing initiatives (that embraced social capital as their framework), the investigators seek to understand in more depth the strengths and challenges of these kinds of projects as well as their health related outcomes. The findings are to be translated into a pragmatic tool for the policy makers and practitioners advising them of the value of social capital principles in reducing social and health inequities.

As of December 2006 we are in the final stages of data analysis (stage 2). The data collected comes from extensive interviews and focus groups with program managers, community development workers and community members. The three case studies chosen for the project are: (1) Blair Athol Community Capacity Building Project (Department of Health), (2) The Parks Helix project (Arts SA), (3) Yangara Reserve Redevelopment and Community Capacity Building Project (City of Onkaparinga).

The PhD scholar has finished interviewing key decision makers and community-based workers about their perception of social capital and its usefulness in their work and started analysis of these data.
International Society of Equity in Health conference
Flinders University was host to the very successful Fourth International Conference of the International Society of Equity in Health in September this year. The overarching theme of the conference was *Creating Healthy Societies through Inclusion and Equity*. Indigenous health was a major focus of the conference and a second complementary theme examined the use of arts and community cultural development in promoting health and equitable outcomes.

SACHRU was a convening partner and both SACHRU and the Department of Public Health at Flinders were very much involved in the whole conference process providing SACHRU with opportunities to raise its profile both locally and internationally. Angela Lawless was the Conference Manager, and Patricia Lamb, Leigh Kennedy and Margaret Robinson all contributed significantly to the conference organisation. Michael Bentley hosted a site visit for international visitors to Murray Bridge and the Coorong exploring aspects of Aboriginal health and culture. Fran Baum chaired the local organising committee and was a member of the Conference Scientific Committee. Many other staff members contributed to various aspects of the planning and program.

Over 230 participants from more than 25 countries were welcomed to the conference by Kaurna elder, Auntie Josie Agius and the Minister for Health, the Hon. John Hill. Fran Baum welcomed participants on behalf of the local organisers. The three day conference featured over 115 presentations and 8 workshops. SACHRU was well–represented with researchers presenting three well-received papers in a session on Community Practice and Action. The program and presentations are available at http://www.iseqh.org/conf2006_01_en.htm Fran Baum convened a workshop on the work of the Commission for the Social Determinants of health and Angela Lawless convened a workshop on Child Health. Fran also collaborated with Hugh Stretton and Lionel Orchard in a “conversation” regarding creating equitable societies. Gwyn Jolley and Angela Lawless chaired proffered paper sessions. The informal networking and information-sharing opportunities were also important in creating new opportunities for collaboration.
Healthy Ageing - Nutrition Project

Staff involved: Gwyn Jolley

SACHRU was approached in 2004 to undertake a formative evaluation of the Healthy Ageing – Nutrition Project. The project received funding under the Human Services Research and Innovation Program (HSRIP) and aimed to:

1. increase awareness and knowledge of the food and nutritional needs of older people among community, carer and professional groups
2. increase knowledge and skills in early identification of nutritional risk by the use of simple assessment and screening tools
3. increase the use of appropriate nutrition early intervention strategies
4. increase intersectoral collaboration in addressing food and nutrition needs among organisations and groups who support healthy ageing.

Evaluation methods included two rounds of interviews with the ten participating organisations, three interviews with the project manner, a focus group with the project reference group and analysis of project documentation.

The final report was prepared and presented to the project management group in April 2006, and a summary of the evaluation was presented at the final stakeholder meeting for the project in May.

Social Determinants of Aboriginal Health

Staff involved: Fran Baum, Michael Bentley

Fran Baum, with support from Michael Bentley, is one of the Program Leaders for the Social Determinants of Health program of the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health (CRCAH). A Program Outline and Summary have been developed and Michael Bentley presented (along with Vanessa Harris, CRCAH Program Manager) on these at the CRCAH Research Symposium in Adelaide in November.

The Program goal is to develop a more detailed understanding of the social determinants of Indigenous health and of the interventions that are effective in improving health status through action on social determinants. Social determinants are taken to include housing, education, social networks and connections, physical infrastructure, barriers to access to health services, racism, employment and law enforcement and the legal and custodial system.
On 6 June 2006, Fran Baum and Michael Bentley attended a National Roundtable on the Social Determinants of Aboriginal Health. The meeting, held in Adelaide and hosted by the CRCAH, brought together a number of organisations with the aim of informing the research agenda for the Social Determinants program. Aboriginal organisations, government representatives and industries such as mining provided valuable insights into issues such as employment, housing, education and justice.

Further information on the Program is available at www.crcah.org.au.

**Evaluation of the Experiences and Health Needs of Aboriginal People affected by Imprisonment in South Australia**
*Staff involved: Michael Bentley*

SACHRU is providing research support for the analysis of in-depth interviews and report writing components of this evaluation, being conducted by Nunkuwarrin Yunti. We are using an action-research-based evaluation approach, working closely with the cultural consultant and project manager at Nunkuwarrin Yunti in developing criteria to achieve rigour and relevance of the process and findings of in-depth interviews conducted with Aboriginal participants. SACHRU is managing the data entry, analysis and supporting the report writing.

Interviews have been conducted and analysis is underway with a report to be completed in 2007.

**Effective Data for Aboriginal Health Project**
*Staff involved: Michael Bentley*

Although there is a wide range of data available on Aboriginal health, there is a deficiency of understanding as to what “effective data” means within the Aboriginal Health worker context. The purpose of this project is to develop an understanding of and framework for effective data for Aboriginal health service providers in the Hills Mallee Southern region.

The project will take a collaborative participatory approach with SACHRU working with a dedicated Aboriginal project officer in the Hills Mallee Southern region. The project has established a small reference group to advise on progress and act as a reflective group for considering emergent findings in the process. In doing so, the project will maintain a flexible approach to the understanding and development of effective data for Aboriginal health.

Focus groups with Aboriginal health service providers and interviews with individual managers and workers have been conducted and the next step is the development of a data framework for Aboriginal Health in the Hills Mallee Southern Region.

**Self-management & prevention of diabetes in Aboriginal Heath**
*Staff involved: Michael Bentley*

SACHRU, in conjunction with Paul Laris and Associates has worked with Central Northern Adelaide Health Service to develop a process for program development and evaluation of the Self-Management & Prevention of Diabetes in Aboriginal Health Strategy.

We used a three-stage process with all key stakeholders to reflect on the program processes, and develop common views about process and purpose before attempting to measure outcomes in much detail. The consultancy has enabled the program to be “evaluation-ready” and has built the framework of an evaluation plan.
Health Service Utilisation and Linkage Project  
*Staff involved: Michael Bentley*

A research project team with members from Flinders and La Trobe Universities and the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council has developed a four month project that represents the developmental first stage (Stage 1) of a larger research project (Stage 2) that aims to increase understanding about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s use of services with a particular focus on identifying salient community and family level cultural and psychosocial factors that influence appropriate access and use (including non-use) of existing health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in urban and peri-urban areas. Stage 1 will determine the most appropriate and feasible methods and approaches for gaining this type of information from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in urban and/or peri-urban locations.

Stage 1 aims to increase understanding and agreement about how to approach research into patterns of service utilisation (including non-utilisation) by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in urban and peri-urban locations in ways that are both effective and culturally safe, and to facilitate extensive involvement of key stakeholders.

The key objectives are:

- To review current evidence in this area; including methodology
- To bring together potential research collaborators to explore the issues in detail and seek wider agreement to the most feasible approach
- To develop a full research design and budget (Stage 2) to be presented to the CRCAH Board for approval.

A literature review has been commissioned and will be completed in January 2007. A stakeholder workshop and Stage 2 development will follow.

Peer support project  
*Staff involved: Catherine Hurley*

Baptist Community Services has been funded by the South Australian Government to run a Peer Support Project. The project aims to develop a system for the education and employment of peer support workers (people living well with a mental illness) to work alongside mental health services in providing peer specialist activities such as coaching for life skills, self management and relapse prevention. Peer support workers will be recruited and employed in mental health services while attending training one day per week for a year. Peer support workers, trainers, peer mentors and the stakeholder reference group will be part of the evaluation processes.

This is a state-wide project with peer workers to be trained in both metropolitan Adelaide and county SA. SACHRU has been contracted to conduct the external evaluation of the project using a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures. The project will run from February 2006 to early 2008.
Big Brother, Big Sister

Staff involved: Angela Lawless, Catherine Hurley

The YWCA’s Big Brothers Big Sisters program is based on the simplicity and power of friendship. Children need to feel valued and important and to have a special friend who listens and spends quality time with the child. The program assists young people aged 7-17 years old who are isolated and need additional adult support and friendship. A 1995 impact study of the program in the US found that the children in the program were: less likely to use illegal drugs, less likely to use alcohol, less likely to skip school and interacted better with their families, than children outside the program.

Angela Lawless and Catherine Hurley will be evaluating the program over the next 2 years. The evaluation aims to establish the effectiveness of the program by measuring the children’s behaviour, social relationships and mental behaviour over the course of the program. It will involve in-depth interviews with some of the Mentor-Children pairs as well as questionnaires to all children in the program.

Y-Express

Staff involved: Catherine Hurley

In May this year, SACHRU undertook to work with the YWCA to evaluate its youth service, Y-Express based in Victor Harbor and servicing the Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island. Y-Express provides counselling, group work and community development to young people with the objectives of addressing and diverting them from drugs and drug-related harm, building self-esteem, resilience and imparting life-skills. They provide counselling and group programs in local high schools and after-school activities such as an art group. Y-Express also works on community activities including training and providing peer support workers for the annual ‘Schoolies’ festival and drug debates with local high school students in Drug Action Week. SACHRU is undertaking analysis of data already collected on Y-Express programs and also conducting interviews and focus groups with former clients and other agencies dealing with young people in the area. We are also providing training to Y-Express staff to enable them to undertake their own evaluation and data analysis and reporting in the future. The project is due for completion at the end of August.

Child2Teen

Staff involved: Angela Lawless

SACHRU is working with the City of Onkaparinga to examine issues for children aged 8-12, exploring the evidence about “what works” for this age group and considering the applicability of these findings to the local context. The project was initiated by the City of Onkaparinga in response to widespread anecdotal evidence of: children disengaging from traditional community forums, difficulties for agencies in developing age-appropriate activities and a range of problem behaviours being reported. Many problems previously thought to be the province of the teen years appear to be occurring in younger age groups.

SACHRU undertook a literature review regarding current understandings of the needs of 8-12 years olds, the evidence regarding possible approaches and possible outcomes for children and service providers. A shorter discussion paper was then developed to provide a succinct overview of the key findings. This was presented at a series of three stakeholder workshops which were held across the region. The workshops were well attended and positively received by participants. The workshops allowed local experience and knowledge to be incorporated in the final report and recommendations and thanks are extended to the participants who shared their insights, examples and expertise.
Both the literature and consultation workshops revealed 8-12 year olds are a somewhat neglected age group in terms of both policy and practice. It is hoped that this project will help to develop a strong foundation for the development of future initiatives for 8-12 year olds in the Onkaparinga region.

**Families Empowered to Act Together**  
*Staff involved: Angela Lawless*

Families Empowered to Act Together (FEAT) is a collaborative early intervention program supporting families in Salisbury North with children between the ages of 5-13 years at risk of disengaging from learning. FEAT was established in response to agencies and four schools in the region identifying the need for additional support for children and families to engage positively with schools and learning. Referrals are made to the program through the primary schools in Salisbury North.

The program has been functioning for some 18 months and the FEAT Program Advisory Group is seeking an evaluation in order to assess the implementation of the program to date, explore outcomes for participating families and contribute to service improvement. It is important that services can be confident that their programs are beneficial to participants and the wider community, that practitioners have a good understanding of what interventions are effective and why and what may cause harm. This type of evaluation evidence is important to convince decision-makers to fund or extend programmes and to contribute to a knowledge base regarding interventions that work to promote school engagement.

The evaluation is designed to track the progress of families through the FEAT program and capture the experiences and perspectives of stakeholders. In particular the evaluation seeks to allow the ‘voices’ of children and their parents regarding their experience of the FEAT program to be heard.
SACHRU conducts a seminar series throughout the year and provides workshops for individual organisations on request. A follow up to the 2005 Writing Workshop was held in February with 13 participants.

The SACHRU Workshop series was run as a week-long course from 15th – 18th May 2006. Participants could attend for one or more sessions as below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number attending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overview of SACHRU</td>
<td>15th May</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Evaluation into Practice</td>
<td>15th May</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumer Feedback</td>
<td>15th May</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Public Policy</td>
<td>17th May</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Community Health Services</td>
<td>18th May</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observational Techniques in Research and Evaluation</td>
<td>16th May</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory Action Research</td>
<td>16th May</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistics for the Quantitatively Phobic</td>
<td>16th May</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Together for Aboriginal Community Health Research</td>
<td>17th May</td>
<td>6</td>
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A series of ‘Evaluation Champions’ workforce development workshops were run with participants from Central Northern Primary Health Care Services:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number attending</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building Evaluation into Practice</td>
<td>31 Jan &amp; 1st Feb</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research methods and design</td>
<td>1st February</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research</td>
<td>8th March</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire and survey design</td>
<td>12th April</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of one-to-one services</td>
<td>10th May</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interviews and focus groups</td>
<td>14th June</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEW</td>
<td>12th July</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment tools</td>
<td>9th Aug</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quantitative evaluation methods</td>
<td>11th Aug</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accessing library resources</td>
<td>8th Nov</td>
<td>8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Other training conducted by request:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number attending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning &amp; Evaluation Wizard</td>
<td>CNAHS</td>
<td>20th March</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating for Evidence in Community Health</td>
<td>SA Country Community Health Managers Forum</td>
<td>7th July</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Logic for Primary Health Care</td>
<td>SAHS and FU Action Learning Program</td>
<td>July 2006</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Evaluation Wizard</td>
<td>Goulburn Valley CHS, Shepparton, Vic</td>
<td>3rd Aug</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Evaluation into Practice &amp; Community participation</td>
<td>Goulburn Valley CHS, Shepparton, Vic</td>
<td>3rd Aug</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity and Health</td>
<td>Glenunga High School</td>
<td>21st Sept</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Towards Global Health Equity: short course
Michael Bentley organised a three-day international short course ‘Towards Global Health Equity: From Evidence to Action’ presented by Professor Ron Labonte, Canada, and held at Flinders University, September 2006 – twenty participants (from SA, interstate, Canada and New Zealand).

Academic programs and units
SACHRU staff delivered a number of teaching and training sessions:

- Focus Groups. Qualitative Methods in Public Health Short Course, Dept Public Health, Flinders University, 6th June
- Mixing Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods - Example of Spatial Analysis of Food Outlets, Qualitative Methods in Public Health Short Course, Dept Public Health, Flinders University, 7th June
- Childhood and Public Health, Semester Topic in Graduate Studies, Dept Public Health, Flinders University, Semester One
- Qualitative Analysis. Questionnaire Design Short Course, Dept Public Health, Flinders University 4th September

Review of workforce development and training in PHC research and evaluation
Towards the end of 2006, SACHRU commissioned a review of its training program and the needs of the SA PHC workforce. The review revealed strong support for SACHRU and its services. A common theme for agencies was the need for assistance from SACHRU in change management processes and capacity building at all levels. The review is available at http://som.flinders.edu.au/FUSA/SACHRU/training.htm and will be used to guide workforce development and training program over the next two years.

PEW
The Planning and Evaluation Wizard has undergone a major update and redesign during 2006. The new version will be available on the website in early 2007.

'Research Matters' Newsletter
Newsletter ‘Research Matters’ is produced 3 times per year and distributed to local, national and international groups, agencies and individuals. The mailing list is over 1,200 and includes South Australian, Australian and international readers. The first edition for 2006, Vol 15 (1) was distributed in May and was the first public display of SACHRU’s new look. A number of appreciative comments were received. Other editions were distributed in October and December.

SACHRU Website
SACHRU’s website http://som.flinders.edu.au/sachru continues to provide information on staff, activities, workshops and publications, as well as access to the Planning and Evaluation Wizard and selected reports and presentations. During 2006 a major update of the website has been undertaken and the new design will go live early in 2007.

Two electronic discussion lists are maintained:
- c-health (c-health@listserv.flinders.edu.au) with a membership of 323.
- healthy cities (Healthycities@listserv.flinders.edu.au) with a membership of 84.
SACHRU Publications

SACHRU's role in disseminating research and evaluation findings together with our commitment to training and support for people working in the primary health care/community health sector has resulted in the publication of the following resources:

Are You Writing an Evaluation Report? Evaluation Report Template. (2006). Approximately 300 free hard copies were distributed to community health services in SA. Other services may access via free download from SACHRU website or purchase hard copies.
Staff Development

Staff attended the following:

Writing a literature review, Flinders University, 28th April
NVIVO training, Flinders University, 27th November

Seminars and Conferences
Staff attended the following:

Change Champions Health Equity seminar, 17 February
National Primary and Community Health Network meeting. Melbourne, 6th April
10th National Health Promotion Conference (Health Promotion Dreaming: Shifting the Sands), Alice Springs, 23-26 April
Prof Baum attended three meetings of the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health (January, June and September)
Inner Southern Social Planning Alliance Forum, Group Facilitator. Unley, 5th May
Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health Social Determinants of Aboriginal Health Industry Roundtable, Group Facilitator. West Lakes, 6th June
Seminar with Sir Michael Marmot and Southern Adelaide Health Service, 15th June
Key stakeholder workshop on Primary Health Care Networks in South Australia, Adelaide, 11th July
Change Champions Seminar, Adelaide 1st September
International Society for Equity and Health Conference, Adelaide, 11th –13th September
AHIP Multi-disciplinary health research seminar, Adelaide, 14th September
Health in All Policies Conference, Kuopio, Finland, September
Public Health Association of Australia Annual Conference, Sydney, September
Global Forum for Health Research, Cairo, October
National Primary and Community Health Network. Chronic Disease Management: strengthening the PHC approach, Brisbane, 8th November
Forum on Family Violence, Health and Society ASRI, Flinders University, 20th November
The Social, Economic and Health Impacts of Restructuring in the Automotive Industry, Flinders University Symposium, McLaren Vale, 29th – 30th November
NHMRC Grant Writing Seminar, Flinders University, 18th December
Prof Baum attended three meetings of the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health (January, June and September)

Committee/group Membership

Aboriginal Health Council of SA Health Research
Scoping Study, reference group
Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, WHO
Country Primary Health Care Working Group
for the Office of Health Reform, DHS
Editorial Board, Australian Journal of Primary Health
Editorial Board, Critical Public Health
Editorial Committee, Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health
Flinders Institute of Health Research Board
Flinders University Aboriginal Health ASRI membership

Fran Baum and Michael Bentley
Fran Baum
Michael Bentley
Fran Baum
Fran Baum
Fran Baum
Fran Baum
Fran Baum and Michael Bentley
Staff Development

FUSA PHCREC Advisory Committee
Health Reform SA Coordinating Group
Healthy Cities (Noarlunga) Management Committee
Inequalities in SA – Volume II Reference Group
Inner Southern Social Planning Alliance
Making research relevant: Grant assessment processes in Indigenous research Reference Group. Project for the CRCAH
Public Health Research Advisory Committee (PHAA) - Convenor
Research Working Group, Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health
SACHRU representative to the New Health Sciences Building group
SACOSS Policy Council (to Oct 06)
SA Health and Medical Research Advisory Council
SA Institute of Population Health, Interim Steering Committee
Society and Health ASRI membership

Fran Baum
Gwyn Jolley
Gwyn Jolley
Lisel O’Dwyer
Michael Bentley
Michael Bentley
Fran Baum
Fran Baum
Michael Bentley
Gwyn Jolley
Fran Baum
Fran Baum
All research staff
Publications and conference presentations

Refereed Journals


Baum, F., Palmer, C., Ziersch, A. and O'Dwyer, L. Place Effects On Health: Challenges and Insights from a Multi-methodological and Multi-disciplinary Project. Special Issue of *Social Science & Medicine* on 'Placing Health in Context'. Revised and resubmitted


O'Dwyer, L. A. and Coveney, J. 'Availability and access to food outlets in Adelaide', *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*. Submitted and under review


Ziersch A, Baum F, Darmawan I, Kavanagh A. Social capital and health in rural and urban communities in South Australia, *Health and Place*, under review


**Peer reviewed book titles**


**Reports**


Street J, Baum F, Anderson I *Quality in Indigenous Research Grant Assessment*, CRCAH, 2006

**Invited presentations**


Publications and conference presentations


Fran Baum (2006) Invited speaker on parallel plenary session on The Social Vaccine Global Forum for Health Research, Cairo, October 30- November 2nd.

Fran Baum (2006) Invited panel member on final plenary panel Global Forum for Health Research, Cairo, October 30- November 2nd.

Conference presentations


O’Dwyer L Conceptions of neighbourhood Australasian Housing Conference June 19-21, SA Art Gallery, Adelaide.

O’Dwyer L Private rental clustering: insights from point data Australasian Housing Conference June 19-21, SA Art Gallery, Adelaide.

Administrative arrangements

SACHRU is administered by Flinders University through the Faculty of Health Sciences. Part-funding is supplied via a contract with the SA Department of Health. SACHRU is co-located with the Department of Public Health and shares some staff and infrastructure.

2005/06 Budget

SACHRU received a core budget from the DH of $483,234 for the 05/06 financial year. This funds the following positions: 0.4 FTE Director, 2.3 FTE Senior Research Officers, 0.4 FTE Information Officer and 1.5 Administration Officers.

Competitive grants, consultancies and training fees provide the remainder of SACHRU income.

Flinders University provides a financial statement to the DH on an annual basis in July for the previous financial year.