Primary Health Care Research Evaluation and Development Program

Business Plan 2005

Developing a culture of research-aware and research-oriented practitioners

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Vision Statement
for Flinders Primary Health Care Research Evaluation and Development Program (Flinders PHC RED):

Developing a culture of research-aware and research-oriented practitioners

The Flinders University Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation and Development (PHC RED) Program aims to use a ‘whole-system approach’\(^1\) to increase the research capacity of primary health care providers, consumers and students, and to provide leadership in developing a research-aware and research-oriented culture in primary health care.

Guiding Principles of Flinders PHC RED

1. Initiate and drive a change process that recognises the value of research and evaluation skills and the value of development of these skills in primary health care providers.

2. Develop, encourage and implement excellence in research and evaluation skills within Flinders University Department of General Practice, within the network of primary health care practitioners, within all stakeholder and consumer groups, as indicated in Figure 2, and within the training and educational facilities of the Flinders Medical School.

3. Contribute to primary health care service delivery and development by reflecting current and local priorities in areas of health, and to ensure that education and research opportunities reflect the needs of all stakeholders, including consumers, practitioners and policymakers. This also recognises the importance of promoting partnerships between practitioners and health services.

Executive summary

2005 will be a year of consolidating initiatives to build on and strengthen our existing capacity building strategies, activities and infrastructures. As shown in Figure 1a, Flinders PHC RED will maintain its two main approaches to capacity building in 2005: at the local level in the Department of General Practice through the activities of the PHC RED team and at a community level through the services and activities of the SARNet research network. The major impact in 2005 is of an effective 1FTE staff reduction due to cessation of the services we have been able to provide using underspend monies. Therefore our enthusiasm to provide services according to increasing demand outweighs the funding to provide same and we have to plan to maintain core business while awaiting the results of the evaluation and the progress of funding beyond 2005.

At the local level, planned activities for 2005 fall into four key areas. First, the continued supervision and mentoring of the two PHC RED RDP Fellows (research officer and occupational therapist), our NH&MRC PhD candidate and the 15 ongoing bursary and up to 11 writing grant holders. Second, participation in capacity building research by PHC RED team members. This will include publishing a major national research and evaluation skills and aspirations survey of GP registrars and a state based survey of GP supervisors, and the SARNet member survey. These activities will have priority for completion and into press by end 2005. We will continue our recently approved exit evaluation of our fund holders due for completion in 2005/2006. Third, we will continue our successful dissemination of research and evaluation activities and training through the biweekly seminar series and training events. Finally, we will continue to foster the publication record and dissemination skills of the PHC RED team writing group, the RDWA writing group and the writing group for Department of General Practice staff.

Flinders PHC RED heavily promotes multidisciplinary activities, and as such the strategic activities that we employ aim to continue in supporting sustainable partnerships that will progress multidisciplinary Primary Health Care research in Australia.

At a community level, activities will build on the success of SARNet (the South Australian Primary Health Care Research Network). As of January 2005 the official membership was 383, but feedback from member organisations indicates that information disseminated via the network e-Alert is forwarded to an estimated audience of closer to 1,000 primary health care practitioners, researchers, students and consumers across South Australia.

Network-related activities in 2005 will focus on providing training and facilitating increased communication between SARNet members. Training will be provided in topic areas identified from the SARNet needs-analysis survey administered in 2003 and from client demand. We will focus on netting evidence, critical appraisal and systematic reviews. We will look for a collaborative approach for further workshop delivery with Flinders University for example on qualitative research, and project management.
Executive summary cont.

In 2005 we will seek to have SARNet events incorporated into a schedule of events provided by the state-based collaboration, thereby increasing access of PHC stakeholders to our training opportunities in multiple locations across the state. We will strongly support and assist to deliver the state based event, state based evaluation skills training and the intensive research and evaluation training course for Indigenous Primary Health Care researchers currently in Phase 1 (see state report).

Communication between SARNet members will be continued by the SARNet on-line discussion forum and private/closed member areas. The on-line discussion forum aims to provide a virtual meeting place for members to post questions, share information and discuss ideas. This service specifically aims to facilitate and foster research and evaluation skills development and collaborations in rural and remote areas where access to training events and mentoring support may be limited. Associated monthly and ongoing themes will continue in areas of demand as judged by member traffic on the site. These theme areas provide the opportunity for focussed communication around a specific topic area or methodology. Where groups require closed sections for a particular reason for example a research course or for a research group this can be provided as in 2004, there is increasing demand for this service.

We will add a new function to the SARNet website in the form of a searchable member database in 2005.

A highly successful initiative in the past three years has been the provision of targeted capacity building bursaries of up to $5000, awarded on a competitive basis through SARNet. The number of applications is steadily increasing, as is the quality, such that not all applications of high quality and interest can be funded. In addition, the mentoring and supervisory roles associated with bursary recipients increases the workload of the program manager considerably and we have budgeted to continue this role at 0.8 FTE and continue the role of program consultant (casual) as a formal part of our budget. The latter role is essential in supporting and mentoring bursary holders and providing general advice and support to early career PHC researchers and writers. The bursary initiative is highly successful in meeting the aims of the PHC RED program in our region as it is in the PHC RED program in the Spencer Gulf. We are committed to finding ways to support the growing interest in participating in, and initiating PHC research in SA, however current funding is limiting the potential of this activity. We have forward planned the 2004 – 5 bursary holders so that all holders will have adequate time and support to complete in 2005 prior to funding cessation on the present contract. Therefore we will not offer any further bursary rounds in 2005, new 2005 holders being confirmed in advance in November 2004.
Executive summary cont.

Flinders PHC RED employs a range of communication strategies, as listed in Figure 3, to ensure participation by all stakeholder groups identified in Figure 2. All SARNet members will continue to receive monthly e-Alerts of training opportunities, funding rounds and up-dated web-based resources, together with a quarterly newsletter.

Communication with other stakeholders is achieved via letter, email, telephone conversations and face-face meetings. We will continue to work hard on dissemination and marketing of PHC RED/SARNet in conferences, newsletters and peer-reviewed publications. For example in 2004 we achieved over 2300 direct promotional contacts by various means including face to face, flyers, email and invitations.

The content of the 2005 Flinders PHC RED Business Plan was developed in detailed consultation with the Flinders PHC RED Advisory Committee who met on 29th November 2004 and the draft business plan was ratified at a meeting by teleconference in 2005.
Figure 1: Flinders PHC RED capacity building strategies
Figure 2: Flinders PHC RED core staff and affiliations

State-based collaboration
- Flinders University Dept of General Practice
- Adelaide University Dept of General Practice
- Spencer Gulf Rural Health School

Multidisciplinary alliances
including
- Individual practitioners
- Divisions of General Practice / SADI
- Departments of Nursing & Midwifery
- Centre for Allied Health Research (Uni SA)
- SA Community Health Research Unit (SACHRU)
- Australian Centre for Evidence-Based Clinical Practice (ACEBCP)
- DATIS

Interstate associations
- Greater Green Triangle University Department of Rural Health (VIC)
- Centre for Remote Health (NT)

Core PHC RED Group
- Director
- Program Manager
- SARNet Research and Development Officer
- SARNet Coordinator
- SARNet IT support
- Program Consultant

Academic associations
- Flinders Centre for Epidemiology and Biostatistics
- PHC RIS

Research Fellows
- 2 appointments annually (0.1 FTE)

Students
- PhD candidate (NHMRC)
- Academic registrar (GPET)

Consumer groups
- Individuals, support groups and consumer organisations
**Figure 3: Communication strategies**

- SARNet & PHC RED websites
- State-based collaboration website
- PHC RIS website
- Newsletters, eg SARNews, GPInfonet
- Letters to individuals and groups
- On-line discussion forum
- Opportunities at training events, seminars, conferences, and SARNet events
- Personal communications

*Increased capacity*
Strategic Objectives 2005

The Flinders PHC RED specific objectives\(^2\), as stated in the Strategic Plan are to:

1. Raise the profile of research, evaluation and development in primary health care
2. Develop the research and evaluation skills of primary health care providers, students and consumers
3. Encourage a multidisciplinary approach to research and evaluation in primary health care
4. Develop and foster collaborative links with and between primary health care organisations
5. Enhance the research, evaluation and development infrastructure for primary health care providers
6. Raise the profile and quality of the Department of General Practice in research, evaluation and development
7. Help achieve an evidence-based culture in primary health care
8. Contribute to setting priorities for primary health care research and evaluation directions and policy at a national level

For each broad objective, strategies, activities, and performance indicators are detailed on the following pages. Details of the intended expenditure associated with these activities is presented in the accompanying 2004 budget document

\(^2\) Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing draft objectives
Flinders PHC RED Business Plan 2005

Objective 1. Strategic activities

To raise the profile of research, evaluation and development in primary health care

1. Continue to consult with the advisory group regarding the development of the Flinders PHC RED Program,
2. Continue to promote our research network (SARNet) to all primary health care practitioners, including allied health, consumers, rural groups and students
3. Contribute to published literature
4. Create and advertise a searchable database of member research skills and interests for discussion forum members

Performance indicators

- Minutes of twice yearly advisory group meetings
- Continued advertisement of SARNet to all affiliated groups shown in Figure 2, with particular focus on allied health, rural groups and consumers using strategies outlined in Figure 3
- Up to date SARNet membership database
- Latest versions of PHC RED and SARNet website including page hit counters
- Searchable database of member research skills and interests
- Article on primary care research issues for peer reviewed journal submitted or published
- Article to GP Infonet or similar submitted or published
- Quarterly SARNet newsletters for electronic distribution continued

Objective 2. Strategic activities

To develop the research and evaluation skills of primary health care providers, students and consumers

1. Continue to use our research network, SARNet, to promote the participation of individuals and groups in research and evaluation activities including promotion of funded opportunities to develop research capacity at all levels
2. Continue to facilitate access to existing education and training opportunities, where relevant, in conjunction with the State-based collaboration
3. Provide workshop training events in research and evaluation skills through SARNet using Flinders PHC RED staff and in conjunction with external agencies where relevant and practicable
4. Support, promote and assist in delivery of the annual State-based research and evaluation capacity building event
5. Continue communication with GPET and APHCRI in follow up of the national registrar skill and aspirations and GP supervisor survey
6. Continue to mentor research and evaluation activities of individuals and groups with especial focus on 2 RDP fellows, 15 ongoing bursary and up to 11 writing grant holders mentored to completion in 2005 in line with contract
7. Promote and facilitate postings to SARNet on-line discussion forum
8. Continue three Writing for Publication groups: PHC RED team,
Objective 2.  

RDWA and Department of GP

9. Promote national PHC RED/NH&MRC fellowships and support any resulting applications, where relevant

Performance indicators

- SARNet membership and demographics
- Monthly eAlerts
- Program of SARNet events and records of attendance
- Record of SARNet and Flinders PHC RED website use
- Number of SARNet members participating discussion forum and access to Forum areas
- Advertisement and record of the uptake of SARNet-funded writing grants
- Record of significant requests for assistance
- Written description of outcomes of all funded opportunities
- Continue new exit evaluation of fund holders
- Completion of SARNet members’ research capacity and training needs study for publication
- Completion of registrar research skills and attitudes study, in both regional GPET consortia in South Australia and through GPET nationally for publication
- Completion of GP supervisor skills study for publication
- Establishment of mentor relationships with individuals and groups, on needs basis, numbers and description and outcomes of those mentored
- Summary of output from three Writing Groups
- Record of numbers of manuscripts, abstracts and articles published by PHC RED staff and Department staff in University approved DEST database in 2004
- Conference abstract to GP&PHC conference 2005 submitted, and conference attended
- PHC RED fundholders abstracts and presentations
**Objective 3.**

To encourage a multi-disciplinary approach to research and evaluation in primary health care

**Strategic activities**

1. Promote SARNet membership to all affiliated groups shown in Fig. 2, utilising the range of Communication Strategies listed in Fig. 3
2. Foster development of multidisciplinary groups networking and discussion through SARNet on-line discussion forum
3. Use SARNet events to provide opportunities to discuss multi-disciplinary collaborations in project and grant applications, and continue to mentor SARNet funded bursaries for multi-disciplinary groups and research active practices
4. Promote other funded research opportunities to multidisciplinary groups
5. Actively promote partnership of multidisciplinary groups in research as appropriate

**Performance indicators**

- Maintenance of register SARNet members
- Description of disciplines represented in SARNet membership list
- Searchable database for forum members
- Advertisement of sources of funding via SARNet website
**Objective 4.**

To develop and foster collaborative links with and between primary health care organisations

**Strategic activities**

1. Continue to facilitate and develop strategic collaborative links with affiliated groups as shown in Fig. 2, in particular, Divisions of General Practice and state based organisations, and with the new larger State-based PHC RED Collaboration

**Performance indicators**

- Contribution made to the state-based collaboration links
- Program of SARNet event(s) with opportunities for organisations to meet and discuss potential areas of collaboration
- Continued development of relationships with regional Divisions, South Australian Divisions of General Practice Inc. (SADI)
- Collaborations sought with and involvement of PHC RED staff offered to research and evaluation groups eg Divisions, SADI, number of opportunities identified and outcomes
- Continued involvement of Southern Division of General Practice representative and other stakeholders on Flinders PHC RED advisory committee
- Continued exploration of areas for further collaboration with and between rural groups (in conjunction with state activities)
Objective 5.

To enhance the research, evaluation and development infrastructure for primary health care providers, students and consumers.

Strategic activities

1. Further develop infrastructure and resources section of SARNet website and Flinders PHC RED library.
2. Maintain staffing infrastructure to support and mentor RDp fellows, SARNet bursaries and writing grant holders.
3. Maintain and enhance PHC RED and SARNet websites, including links to relevant sources of national and international expertise and PHC RIS website.
4. Secure further physical resources and space for PHC RED activities, if required.
5. Continue to offer expertise to registrar research grants activities nationally by acting as member of GPET Registrar Research and Scholarship Committees.
6. Continue to act on the National Standing Committee - Research [NSC-R] of the RACGP.

Performance indicators

- Continued employment of core PHC RED staff (Figure 2). Specifically, Director, Program Manager and PHC RED consultant.
- Membership list and activities of SARNet as in Objectives 1 & 2.
- Advertisement of local research and evaluation resources.
- Numbers of Fellowships, bursaries and writing grants mentored and see Objective 2 for outcomes.
- Website presence of PHC RED and SARNet and links.
- Number and type of physical resources secured including space, computer hardware and software.
Objective 6. To raise the profile and quality of the Department of General Practice in research, evaluation and development

Strategic activities

1. Continue to manage and support PHC RED Department fortnightly research seminar program
2. Mentor new Researcher Development Program fellows and encourage fundholders to continue formal research education including Masters and PhD candidature
3. Advertise and support applications for PHC RED initiated NH&MRC Primary Health Care Postgraduate - Research Scholarships
4. Continue to supervise PhD candidate on NH&MRC grant
5. Encourage staff to publish in relevant literature and offer support to Departmental staff in completing manuscripts, articles, abstracts, competitive grant applications, scholarships and awards especially through Department writing group
6. Present Flinders PHC RED outputs at national GPPHC conference and at other relevant forums where possible, including annual state event
7. Monitor supervisory capacity in Department for higher degree students and encourage suitably qualified to do basic training requirements

Performance indicators

- Seminar series organised within Department, nature of Program, speakers attracted and attendance
- Progress of Researcher Development Program Fellows
- Number of supported applications for PHC RED/NH&MRC Primary Health Care Postgraduate - Research Scholarships, if applicable
- Progress NH&MRC-funded PhD student
- See Objective 2 for documentation of departmental publication
- Department Writing group output
- Attendance of eligible staff at supervision workshops and number of staff qualified to supervise higher degree students
Objective 7. Strategic activities

To help achieve an evidence-based culture in primary health care practice

1. Continue to develop appraised links to evidence-based sites through SARNet website (all links screened for content and applicability to members)
2. Continue to develop the new Primary Health Care Journals section on the SARNet website
3. Continue to provide SARNet training events in netting evidence, critical appraisal and provide a new workshop on systematic reviews
4. Notify SARNet members of relevant capacity building opportunities offered by local providers through State Collaboration website

Performance indicators

- Invitation to SARNet members and Divisions to events and notification of relevant external events
- Program of SARNet events (see Objective 2)
- Website links from SARNet website to evidence-based sources
- PHC journals section of website
Objective 8. To contribute to setting priorities for primary health care research and evaluation directions and policy at a national level.

Strategic activities

1. Maintain effective communication and liaison with PHC RIS regarding PHC RED issues
2. Facilitate presentations from State and Federal Departments of Health in Departmental seminar program and at SARNet events to continue dialogue and mutual interaction regarding policy and research and offer such opportunities to SARNet members
3. Contribute to Annual National PHC RED Meeting

Performance indicators

- Attendance of PHC RIS representative on PHC RED business meetings
- Presentation by Department of Human Services (DHS) or Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) representative at seminar series and/or SARNet event
- Attendance at annual PHC RED University initiative meeting, contributions to meeting and related initiatives
- Continued representation of Flinders PHC RED at national forums including RACGP National Standing Committee – Research (A/Prof Liz Farmer)
### Timeline of strategic activities

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Activity</th>
<th>January - March</th>
<th>April - June</th>
<th>July - September</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.1</strong> Continue to consult with the advisory group regarding the development of the Flinders PHC RED Program</td>
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<td><strong>1.2</strong> Continue to promote our research network (SARNet) to all primary health care practitioners, including allied health, consumers, rural groups and students</td>
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<td><strong>1.3</strong> Contribute to published literature</td>
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<td><strong>1.4</strong> Create and advertise a searchable database of member research skills and interest for discussion forum members</td>
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<td><strong>2.1</strong> Continue to use our research network, SARNet, to promote the participation of individuals and groups in research and evaluation activities including promotion of funded opportunities to develop research capacity building at all levels</td>
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<td><strong>2.2</strong> Continue to facilitate access to existing education and training opportunities, where relevant, in conjunction with the State-based collaboration</td>
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<td><strong>2.3</strong> Facilitate education and training in research and evaluation through SARNet and Flinders PHC RED staff and in conjunction with external agencies where relevant and practicable</td>
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<td><strong>2.4</strong> Support and promote and assist in the deliver of the annual state-based research and evaluation capacity building event</td>
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<td><strong>2.5</strong> Continue communication with GPET &amp; APHCRi in following up the national registrar skill &amp; aspirations and GP supervisor survey</td>
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<td><strong>2.7</strong> Promote and facilitate posting on SARNet Online</td>
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<td><strong>Discussion Forum</strong></td>
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<td>2.8</td>
<td>Continue 3 Writing for Publication groups; PHC RED team, Rural Doctors Workforce Agency and Department of General Practice at Flinders University</td>
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<td>2.9</td>
<td>Promote national PHC RED/NH&amp;MRC fellowships where relevant</td>
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<td>3.2</td>
<td>Foster development of multidisciplinary groups through networking and discussion through SARNet Online Discussion Forum</td>
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<td>4.1</td>
<td>Continue to facilitate and develop strategic collaborative links with affiliated groups as shown in Fig. 2, in particular, Divisions of General Practice, State-based organisations, and with the new larger state-based PHC RED Collaboration (incl. GGT &amp; NT)</td>
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<td>5.1</td>
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<td>6.3 Advertise and support applications for PHC RED initiated NH&amp;MRC Primary Health Care Postgraduate - Research Scholarships</td>
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<td>To be advertised in accordance with NH&amp;MRC funding rounds</td>
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<td>6.4 Continue to supervision PhD candidate on NH&amp;MRC grant</td>
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<td>6.5 Encourage staff to publish in relevant literature and offer support to Departmental staff in completing manuscripts, articles, abstracts, competitive grant applications, scholarships and awards especially through Department Writing Group</td>
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<td>6.6 Present Flinders PHC RED outputs at National GP&amp;PHC conference &amp; other relevant forums where possible including annual state event</td>
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<td>7.4 Notify SARNet members of relevant capacity building opportunities offered by local providers through State Collaboration website</td>
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**Key**

- ✔️ ✔️ ✔️ ✔️: Continuous activity
- ✔️ ✔️ ✔️ ✔️: On-going and intermittent, dependent on opportunity or need
## 2005 PHC RED BUDGET ESTIMATE

### PHC RED INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL WAGES</strong></td>
<td><strong>181,403</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K Ried (Program Manager) ResB (0.8 FTE)</td>
<td>45,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus EB 5.1% (June '05)</td>
<td>2,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus Oncosts (18.8%)</td>
<td>8,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL WAGES &amp; BURSARIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>188,903</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursary x 1</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Grants x 5</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL WAGES &amp; BURSARIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>188,903</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LESS EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total non-salary (incl mobile phone costs, photocopying, posters, books, promotion material)</td>
<td><strong>21,105</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>210,008</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>