



CURTIN HEALTH

Highlights and Happenings | May 2011



WORLD FIRST PATIENT BLOOD MANAGEMENT SYSTEM COULD SAVE MILLIONS

A Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute created Patient Blood Management (PBM) System will enable health researchers to see where and how blood is used in Western Australia, potentially saving millions of dollars.

Initial work by the WA Patient Blood Management project team showed that there was no routine system in WA allowing the reporting of where and why blood was used and the clinical outcomes of its use.

Research Fellow Aqif Mukhtar, of the Centre for Population for Health Research, said without a mechanism in place to track and regulate the way blood was used, incidences of inappropriate blood transfusions could

regularly go unchecked, wasting a precious health resource.

"We found that during 2010, 17 per cent of total transfusions in all WA Metropolitan Public Hospitals were inappropriate according to NHMRC guidelines," Mr Mukhtar said.

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) guidelines regarding the use of blood state that a transfusion carried out on a patient with a haemoglobin (Hb) count of over 70g/L is inappropriate unless the patient is unstable and actively bleeding. Normal haemoglobin levels for adult males range from 130 to 180 grams per litre for men and approximately 120 to 160 grams for women.

"Not only are inappropriate transfusions potentially dangerous, they are also costly," Mr Mukhtar said.

"If we multiply 4,050 inappropriate transfusions with an average of

two Red Blood Cell (RBC) units per transfusion, this amounts to 8,100 inappropriate RBC units.

"With a direct cost of \$350 per RBC unit, this represents an expenditure of \$2.835 million that could have been saved."

During 2009, the team set up a concept model of a PBM data system and evaluated the outcomes of a PBM intervention at Fremantle Hospital.

Mr Mukhtar said there were three main objectives in the model; to decrease the incidence of inappropriate transfusions to patients – particularly patients with a Hb above 100g/L; implement single unit transfusion instead of multiple unit transfusion; and develop an electronic PBM database to assemble data on current patterns of blood to use at the pilot hospitals.

Single unit policy is based on the concept that in stable patients, doctors should start with a single unit transfusion and then assess the necessity of subsequent units.

"As a result of the PBM intervention at Fremantle Hospital, the proportion of single RBC unit use has gone up from 18 per cent to 26 per cent," he said.

"Despite an 8 per cent increase in the patient activity, there was a 5 per cent reduction in the RBC usage during the intervention period.

"During 2010, only 12 per cent of transfusions at Fremantle Hospital were inappropriate compared with an average of 17 per cent across all the WA metropolitan public hospitals."

Following the success of the pilot scheme at Fremantle Hospital, plans are being developed to include all WA state hospitals, the strategy to better utilise limited blood resources, improve patient outcomes and reduce costs. **CH**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR



IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the Pro Vice-Chancellor | **p2**

Curtin University appoints Professor of Psychology | **p3**

Nurse leaders conferred as adjunct associate professors | **p4**

WA's first occupational therapy school celebrates 50 years | **p5**

Green tea may prevent adult incontinence | **p6**

Seeking better outcomes for Indigenous Australians in care | **p7**

Indigenous health boosted | **p8**

CHIRI team receives Alzheimer's grant | **p9**

Obesity in childhood leads to poor posture and back pain | **p10**

Study to record benefits of traineeships and apprenticeships | **p11**

Social work graduates named in inaugural WA Women's Hall of Fame | **p12**

Medical Science graduate scoops three awards | **p13**

Curtin student awarded \$50,000 MARCSTA scholarship | **p14**

Australian rock star graduates in nutrition | **p15**

Kristy named as finalist in 2011 WA Youth Awards | **p16**

Health Sciences students shine in summer research cadetship program | **p17**

Curtin social work student awarded Hazel Hawke scholarship | **p18**

Caught on camera | **p19**

New appointments | **p20**

Watch this space | **p21**

The academic year is well underway and over 1800 health sciences students received a headstart on teamwork as they embarked on Australia's first fully integrated interprofessional (IPE) education curriculum. The leading program is being well received by students and staff alike. One staff member said that they had thoroughly enjoyed the collaborative experience stating that they had learned a lot from their colleagues in terms of their professions, teaching tips and styles. And one of our students said that it was interesting to learn why it was so important to work as part of a healthcare team to achieve the best outcomes for clients.

I have received a lot of positive feedback in relation to the update presentation for the proposed Curtin medical school, thank you everyone for attending. We will continue with our communication initiatives to keep everyone informed of developments as they happen. Current information on the project can be found on the Department of Medical Education's website: healthsciences.curtin.edu.au/teaching/medical_education.cfm

As always our outstanding researchers have been leading the way to advance health and wellbeing around Australia and the globe. They have been making a difference in the obesity, alzheimers and Indigenous health arenas to name a few.

It was great to see five social work graduates named in the inaugural WA Women's Hall of Fame – what an achievement. Congratulations to **Kristy Tomlinson**, a former graduate and now part of the health sciences interprofessional education team, who was nominated in the 2011 WA

Youth Awards. Well done to **Amy Faugno**, a graduate of the Medical Science degree who received three prestigious medical science industry awards during Pathology week.

Over the past few months we have also welcomed new staff to the team including a newly appointed Professor of Psychology, **Professor Martin Hagger**, who joined us from the University of Nottingham in the UK in April. Professor Hagger brings a wealth of experience in the social and health psychology field. Many of you would have already been introduced to our new Student Equity Advisor, **Veronica Dolman** who joined the team in March – a warm welcome to you both.

We also appointed a new Dean of Students – **Professor Clare Pollock**, former Head of the School of Psychology and Speech Pathology. Professor Pollock is a strong leader and in this senior position will focus on the student experience ensuring the best possible quality experience and outcome for health sciences students – congratulations. **Associate Professor Cori Williams** is currently acting as the Head of the School of Psychology and Speech Pathology.

Finally, I'd like to congratulate the **School of Occupational Therapy** on their special milestone this year – they are celebrating 50 years of educational firsts in Western Australia. Over 2,500 graduates have passed through the Schools doors. Its staff, students and graduates have made a difference both in education and research improving the wellbeing and quality of life of individuals, families and communities.

Professor Jill Downie
Pro Vice-Chancellor

CURTIN UNIVERSITY APPOINTS PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

A leading social and health psychologist from the UK has been appointed as Professor of Psychology at Curtin University.

Professor Martin Hagger will drive research and innovation in the School of Psychology and Speech Pathology, developing research solutions that can improve the health and wellbeing of Australians.

The new appointee is recognised as an international leader in the area of social and health psychology having undertaken vital research in the field for more than a decade. His research interests centre around solving social problems by changing attitudes, particularly those related to health and health-related behaviour.

“ ... What was particularly attractive was the strong research focus on ‘health’ ... ”

Before joining Curtin University he was a Reader and Associate Professor in social and health psychology at the University of Nottingham. He is editor-in-chief of *Health Psychology Review* and *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, associate editor of *Stress and Health*, and editorial board member of five other international peer-reviewed journals.

Professor Hagger said that he was extremely excited to be joining an ambitious, innovative university in Australia.

“It was clear when I stepped foot on Curtin soil that it was a University that is going places,” Professor Hagger said.

“It has a keen research focus with the vast majority of academic staff involved in ground-breaking research.



What was particularly attractive was the strong research focus on ‘health’ and the potential for collaboration with other faculties, schools and institutes across Curtin’s multiple campuses.”

Head of the School of Psychology and Speech Pathology, Associate Professor Cori Williams, said that the University were delighted about the appointment.

“Professor Hagger was selected from a strong field of candidates and will provide excellent academic and research leadership in the School and across the University.”

Professor Hagger commenced in the position in April 2011. **CH**

NURSE LEADERS CONFERRED AS ADJUNCT ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS



Professor Philip Della, Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Stephen Carmody, Maha Rajagopal and Professor Jill Downie, Pro Vice-Chancellor Faculty of Health Sciences.

The School of Nursing and Midwifery recently recognised two outstanding nurse leaders by conferring the honour of Adjunct Associate Professor on Stephen Carmody, Silver Chain's General Manager of Health, and Maha Rajagopal, Royal Perth Hospital's Director of Nursing and Patient Support Services.

The two prominent Western Australian health leaders were appointed in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the health arena in Western Australia and for

their close relationship with Curtin University.

Professor Jill Downie, Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Health Sciences said the University were delighted that the experienced health professionals had accepted the honorary positions.

"Mr Carmody's nursing career is exceptional. He has held a number of prominent positions in the health arena including Director of Nursing at St John of God Hospital. He was awarded the Australian Public Health Association Award for Excellence and a WorkSafe Gold Award," Professor Downie said.

"Similarly Maha Rajagopal has held several senior nursing positions

including Acting Area Director of Nursing for South Metropolitan Health Services. She is an outstanding nurse leader who has demonstrated a strong visionary approach achieving excellent results and has continuously strived to improve the quality of patient care.

"The University is proud to be associated with the duo. Their extensive background in health and leadership qualities will strengthen our position as a leading provider of health education in Western Australia."

The titles were conferred at a nursing and midwifery leadership event held on Tuesday 3 May 2011 at Curtin's Bentley campus. **CH**

WA'S FIRST OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SCHOOL CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

In the 50 years since the School of Occupational Therapy was formed its staff, students and graduates have performed educational firsts and carried out groundbreaking research that have improved the wellbeing and quality of life of individuals, families and communities.

More than 2,500 graduates have passed through its doors including the Hon Helen Morton MLC, the WA Minister for Mental Health and Disability Services, who graduated in 1969, and Carolyn Webster who graduated in 1963, who is currently the Manager of Community and Regulatory Services for the Shire of Wagin and has been the President of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists.

In 1961 the first Australian School of Occupational Therapy officially opened in Western Australia with nine students. It was known as the Royal Perth Hospital School of Occupational Therapy and offered a three-year Diploma in Occupational Therapy.

In 1969 the School merged with the Departments of Speech and Physiotherapy at the Western Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT), which is today known as Curtin University, to form the Department of Therapies, and relocated to Shenton Park.

Current Head of School, and past graduate, Professor Lorna Rosenwax said that the School had been leading the way in occupational therapy for many years.

"In 1983 we were the first to introduce a driving clinic for adults with brain damage and a paediatric clinic for children. In 1987 we opened WA's first hand clinic," Professor Rosenwax said.

"In 1988 former Head of School, Jo Barker, became Australia's first Professorial Chair in Occupational Therapy. We were also pioneering in postgraduate research courses offering WA's first Master of Applied Science in 1978.

"In 1975 the School initiated OT Abroad – an international fieldwork placement program for our students.



1961 - First School of Occupational Therapy at Royal Perth Hospital

It later became known as 'Go Global' and received a competitive Australian award from the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) in 2010 for innovation in learning and teaching."

Occupational therapy staff are continuing to provide leadership in occupational therapy in Australia and across the world by responding to the changing needs of society. In 2011 it opened new \$9 million state-of-the-art teaching and research laboratories for its students. These facilities have the potential to revolutionise the way its students learn.

"Much has been achieved in the last five decades; this is testament to the passion and dedication of the School's lecturers, researchers and graduates," Professor Rosenwax added.

"This success could not have been achieved without the support of the occupational therapy profession, our clinical placement partners and the wider community all of whom have contributed to our legacy in their own way." **CH**



1964 – first seven graduates of the three-year Diploma in Occupational Therapy



1975 – OT Abroad commences – students visit India for the first time

GREEN TEA MAY PREVENT ADULT INCONTINENCE

A Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute researcher has found drinking green tea may help alleviate Urinary Incontinence (UI) in middle-aged and older women.



“... results showed that those who drank four or more cups of green tea daily were significantly less likely to suffer from urinary incontinence ...”

renal injury associated with abnormal glucose-related oxidative stress in diabetic nephropathy.

UI is a distressing condition and a costly problem for middle-aged and older people. Up to 35 per cent of the population aged 60 and over are estimated to suffer from UI, with women twice as likely to suffer from the condition as men. With around 50 per cent of nursing home admissions relating to UI, it is a serious problem worldwide.

A cross-sectional study in Finland reported that consumption of certain foods and beverages can affect the prevalence of UI and lower urinary tract symptoms. Age, gender, obesity and smoking are also established risk factors.

“We would now like to undertake a population-based prospective cohort study to confirm the benefits,” Professor Lee said.

“But, as part of a preventative strategy, we recommend that women replace their consumption of other beverages, such as coffee, with green tea.”

The study was recently published in the leading journal *Neurourology and Urodynamics*. ^{CH}

“The difference between green tea and black tea is that the former is a non-fermented product,” Professor Lee said.

“Both teas are produced from the leaves of *Camelia sinensis*, but green tea has undergone far less oxidation during processing, and it has far less caffeine,” he said.

Of the principal chemical constituents of green tea, epigallocatechin gallate, or EGCG, is the most active polyphenol. Previous research has shown EGCG to be mainly responsible for the inhibitory effect of green tea on urinary stone formation.

EGCG has been demonstrated to cause a dose-dependent decrease in urinary bladder cancers. Another experimental study showed that green tea could reduce glucose levels and

Professor Andy Lee, collaborated with a Japanese research team to examine the effects of green tea consumption in a cohort of Japanese women aged between 40 and 75.

While UI was a problem for 28 per cent of participants, the results showed that those who drank four or more cups of green tea daily were significantly less likely to suffer from the condition.

SEEKING BETTER OUTCOMES FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS IN CARE

A group of Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute researchers have been awarded a \$20,000 grant to develop a protocol for health service providers to better engage with Indigenous clients.

The West Australian Cancer and Palliative Care Network Research and Evaluation Unit grant was awarded to the group from the WA Centre for Cancer and Palliative Care, directed by Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Dr Shaouli Shahid.

Indigenous Australians have the poorest health status of any identifiable group in Australia as a result of a range of communicable and chronic diseases.

According to Dr Shahid, recent improvements in cancer treatment and palliative care, and the reduction in cancer mortality rates in Australia overall have not led to improvements in cancer outcomes for Indigenous people.

The problem may lie in a variety of unaddressed issues for Indigenous patients and carers, who commonly miss out on optimal palliative care.

“Many Indigenous Australians have a lot of mistrust towards the existing health system, so that is a big barrier itself,” Dr Shahid said.

“Also, many Aboriginal people live in remote areas, where they have limited access to pharmaceuticals, so infrastructure is a big issue.

“Communication is also a big issue. Whereas the Western approach may be to look at health from a biological point of view, Aboriginal people often have a more holistic approach to looking at health.

“There are also very few Indigenous staff to administer care.”

Dr Shahid previously undertook research into Aboriginal cancer patients and families’ views and understandings of palliative care and their experiences accessing palliative care services.

This latest study will build on Dr Shahid’s earlier research to form a comprehensive picture that could inform future policy decisions in this under-researched area.

Indigenous Australians have higher incidences of smoking-related cancers, are less likely to access cancer screening, are diagnosed at a more advanced stage. They tend to have poor continuity of care, lower compliance with treatment, lower five-year survival rates and lower utilisation of palliative care services. **CH**



INDIGENOUS HEALTH ISSUES BOOSTED

A new radio show launched on Perth's only Indigenous radio station, Noongar Radio, is boosting awareness in the Indigenous community about important health issues across Western Australia.



Indigenous health professionals participate in the project.

The Wanginying health show, established in October 2010, is just one of the outcomes of the Aboriginal Health Communications Project (AHCP) initiated by Curtin University health researchers.

The AHCP, funded by a \$308,000 grant from Healthway, was established to research issues surrounding the representation of Indigenous health issues in the Western Australian news media. It aimed at evaluating how media could be more effectively utilised by the Indigenous health sector to generate positive and accurate media coverage about Indigenous people and their health.

Consultation and collaboration with the Aboriginal health sector and Indigenous and non-Indigenous media professionals, resulted in the development of a media skills training program. The program aimed at enhancing key Indigenous health professionals' use and engagement

with the news media, and developing collaborative partnerships with journalists.

Project Manager, Verity Leach, from the Aboriginal Health and Education Research Unit (AHERU), Curtin Health Innovation and Research Institute (CHIRI), says the initiative was successful and that the whole team were thrilled about the creation of the radio show.

"We made some inroads with mainstream media and the fact that participants established a dedicated health show on Noongar Radio was an unexpected but terrific outcome," Ms Leach says.

“ ... the program is creating awareness about health topics such as breast and cervical cancer ... ”

"Noongar Radio is popular in the Indigenous community and broadcast to people that will directly benefit from the radio show and any health advice provided.

"The health program is creating awareness about different health topics such as breast and cervical cancer, diabetes and heart health."

Other positive outcomes from the AHCP include an increased number of media contacts in the Indigenous health sector, a positive engagement between AHCP participants and journalists, and a number of Indigenous articles were published in newspapers as a result of the training.

The project was led by Professor Sandra Thompson, AHERU, CHIRI, Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health; Associate Professor Alexandra McManus, Centre of Excellence for Science, Seafood and Health, CHIRI, and Adjunct Professor Ross James, School of Public Health. Ms Verity Leach project managed the initiative. **CH**

CHIRI TEAM RECEIVES ALZHEIMER'S GRANT

Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute researchers have been awarded a National Health and Medical Research Council Project Grant to undertake a study of drug treatment regimes and survival outcomes for Western Australians with Alzheimer's.



“... we need to increase our understanding of how many Australians are living with dementia ...”

The project was awarded a \$180,970 grant for two years, and will use Australian population linked health data.

The study, headed up by Dr Renate Zilkens, Research Fellow at the Centre for Population Health Research (CPR), will study patterns of care and outcomes for people with Alzheimer's.

“We need to increase our understanding of how many Australians are living with dementia,” Dr Zilkens said.

“Present estimates are derived from meta-analysis of largely European studies.

“Australian policy makers also lack details on how Australians with dementia are managed within the healthcare sector, making strategic health care planning problematic.”

The research will provide critical data for strategic sustainable

healthcare planning and assist in the development of dementia-specific healthcare.

“The study will examine the use of prescription drugs, the survival experience from time of first supply of Alzheimer medication and the identification of inequalities in accessing medications,” she said.

Western Australian's with Alzheimer's disease will be identified through prescription records of Alzheimer medications in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) database. Each person's PBS records will be linked to their hospital and, if available, death record. No person-identifying data will be released to researchers.

Medication and hospital use will be studied from when they start on Alzheimer medication. By linking health data, the study will show how long Australians live (on average)

with Alzheimer's after starting their dementia medication. The project will provide critical information for strategic sustainable health care planning and assist in the development of dementia-specific healthcare policies.

The project previously received funding from Alzheimer's Australia in the form of a \$90,000 Research Fellowship, with Curtin contributing an equal amount in a matched -funding arrangement.

Alzheimer's disease accounts for 70 per cent of all dementia types and is typically a slow, degenerative disease. Australia is heading towards an epidemic of Alzheimer's disease, with direct healthcare costs due to Alzheimers predicted to be \$6 billion this year. **CH**

OBESITY IN CHILDHOOD LEADS TO POOR POSTURE AND BACK PAIN

Being overweight as a child and adolescent can lead to poor postures linked to back pain, according to new research by the Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute, the School of Physiotherapy and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research.

The research team compared the Body Mass Index (BMI, a common benchmark for obesity), of 1,373 children from the long-term Raine Study over a period of 12 years (from the age of three to 14) with specific standing postures measured at age 14.

Results showed there was a clear relationship between BMI and posture.

Four main posture groups were defined – neutral, flat, sway and hyperlordotic. These were categorised by angular measurements of the pelvis and spine of the teenagers photographed from side on.

“We found that teenagers with higher BMI were more likely to stand with non-neutral postures, placing more strain on the spine and increasing the risk of back pain”, Dr Anne Smith, Senior Lecturer at the School of Physiotherapy said.

“This relationship between BMI and spinal posture is concerning, as it suggests increasing load on the spine over the growth period may change the structure of the spine.”

The findings also indicated that BMI tracks fairly steadily from early life through to adolescence.

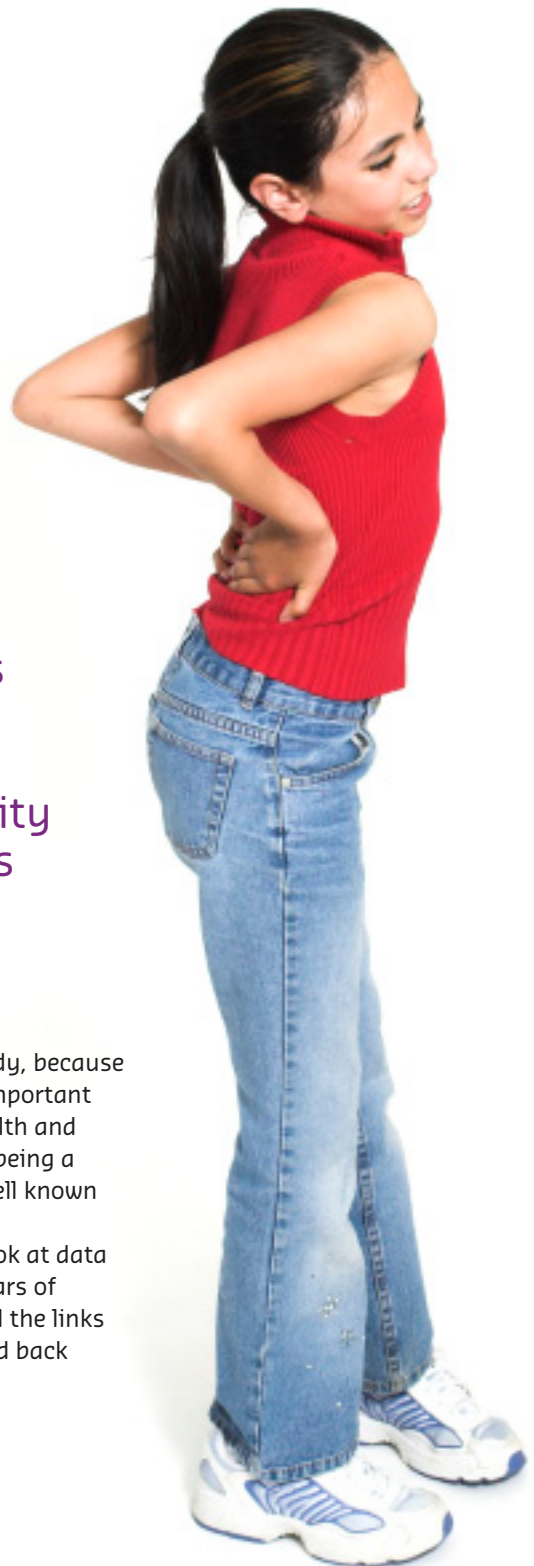
“We found that in terms of BMI for most teenagers where you are at three is where you are at 14”, Dr Smith said.

“There was just one group out of the six that had a pattern of increasing BMI.

“Our findings emphasise the importance of preventing obesity as early in life as possible.”

“This is an important study, because it highlights obesity as an important factor for bone and joint health and development, in addition to being a risk factor for many other well known health problems.

The next step will be to look at data from the teenagers at 17 years of age, to explore in more detail the links between posture, obesity and back pain. **CH**



STUDY TO RECORD BENEFITS OF TRAINEESHIPS AND APPRENTICESHIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

A new national study is to look at the social and economic outcomes for young people with a disability who complete apprenticeships and traineeships.

Researchers at the Centre for Research into Disability and Society (CRDS) in the School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work at Curtin will lead a consortium with local WA organisation EDGE Employment Solutions Inc., and the peak national bodies Group Training Australia and National Disability Services Ltd (formerly known as ACROD) to determine what positive outcomes result if someone with a disability completes an apprenticeship or traineeship.

The project will receive \$405,000 over a three year period and is one of five national competitive grants funded by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research.

Professor Errol Cocks, Director of CRDS, said while people with a disability generally have low rates of participation in traineeships and apprenticeships, when they do undertake such programs, evidence showed they completed them at similar rates as people without disability.

"It will be very useful to learn about the benefits of such training if apprenticeships and traineeships are successfully completed," Professor Cocks said.

The study will consist of two data collection methods. The first will be a survey of 300 individuals across Australia who have a disability and, to serve as a comparison group, 75 individuals without a disability who have successfully completed an apprenticeship or traineeship. The second will be in-depth interviews through case studies with 30 individuals with a disability selected from that group.

"We are hoping to identify the key social and economic benefits that have been experienced by this study group," he said.

Economic benefits may include an increase in income and career development, but also broader economic benefits to society as a

“... we believe that people with disabilities achieve better outcomes from engagement in work than relying on welfare ...”

whole, for example, decreased access to income support.

From a social perspective, the benefits are likely to reflect inclusion in community activities, and enhanced friendship and social networks that come from participation in work.

Professor Cocks said the findings would ultimately allow better strategies to be developed to encourage greater participation in apprenticeships and traineeships by people with disabilities.

"We believe the study will indicate that people with disabilities achieve better outcomes from engagement in work and earning an income than relying on welfare and undertaking alternatives to employment." **CH**



FIVE CURTIN SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES NAMED IN INAUGURAL WA WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME

To celebrate the centenary of International Women's Day in Western Australia (WA), 8 March 2011, the inaugural WA Women's Hall of Fame was established with five graduates of Curtin University's social work degree officially recognised in the prestigious honours listing.

The five unsung heroines were chosen along with 93 other hall of fame members. They were selected for their significant contribution to the WA and Australian community and economy, for being an inspirational role model to young women, and for their voluntary work, amongst other outstanding criteria.

They include Helen Cattalini (social worker), Paddy Creevey (public servant and mayor), Lois Gatley (carers' advocate), Kay Hallahan (former parliamentarian and community advocate) and Jan McDonagh (child case worker).

A current Curtin University student, Angela Hartwig, who is undertaking a masters by research degree in the School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work, was also nominated for her work as a women's activist.

“... as an activist it's great to know that I am helping to bring about social change ...”



Angela Hartwig with His Excellency, Dr Ken Michael, Governor of WA

Angela, who has worked in the field of domestic and family violence and human rights for over 24 years, said that being nominated for the first ever women's hall of fame was a total surprise.

“I had mixed feelings about being chosen because I work with so many amazing women that are deserving in their own right,” Ms Hartwig said.

“I have come to realise that the nomination gives voice to the women's

refuge, domestic and family violence services. And as a women's activist it is great to know that I am helping to bring about social change in areas such as gender inequality, violence against women and children; and human rights.”

The 101 inaugural WA Women's Hall of Fame members were assessed by the United Nation's Women's Perth chapter and the International Women's Day steering committee. **CH**

MEDICAL SCIENCE GRADUATE SCOOPS THREE AWARDS

A medical science graduate's outstanding academic achievements have been acknowledged after scooping three prestigious medical science industry awards during Pathology Week 2011.

Amy Faugno, 21, from Geraldton, was awarded the Australian Institute of Medical Scientist's (AIMS) gold medal for most outstanding student in the Bachelor of Science (Medical Science) 2010.

She also picked up the CSL Ltd Prize for best student in transfusion science and the Australasian Association of Clinical Biochemists (AACB) WA Branch Merit Award for excellence in clinical biochemistry.

Ms Faugno, who now works at Pathwest Laboratory Medicine WA, said that she hadn't expected the awards at all.

"I feel really honoured to have received these awards, and my family are so proud. I worked really hard at university but I never thought I'd receive recognition for my work," Ms Faugno said.

"The accolades have opened doors for me and I've fortunately been selected to complete Pathwest's graduate training program. It has already provided me with invaluable practical experience, and with the rare opportunity to work at four different hospitals in the space of one year."

The awards were presented during Pathology Week 2011. A unique concept combining a week of public education, media coverage on pathology issues, and a series of events run by pathology organisations in WA.

Over 15 awards were handed out to Curtin students at a special awards dinner, presented by AIMS, Curtin University's School of Biomedical Sciences, and the AACB, with prize money varying from \$300-\$700, all kindly sponsored by industry. **CH**



CURTIN STUDENT AWARDED \$50,000 MARCSTA SCHOLARSHIP

A Bachelor of Science (Health, Safety and Environment) student from the School of Public Health has been awarded the 2011 Jim Torlach Scholarship worth \$50,000.

Bosko Jovanovic, a first-year student majoring in health and safety, will have the cost of his three-year degree covered by the scholarship.

The Jim Torlach Scholarship, established by the Mining and Resources Training Association (MARCSTA), also offers the successful awardees with rare practical employment opportunities in the mining industry. It is named in memory of James (Jim) Milne Torlach (1938-2006), who made an outstanding contribution to the improvement of safety and health in the mining industry in Western Australia.

Bosko said that his interest in health and safety was inspired when he was working and suffered a deep cut to his left hand almost losing his left thumb.

"The scary incident opened my eyes and made me realise how important it is to have effective health and safety procedures in the workplace," he said.

"I decided to specialise in this area so that I can help others learn about the importance of health and safety.

"I feel so fortunate to have received this amazing scholarship, as now I don't have to worry about financial issues and can concentrate fully on my studies. I can't thank MARCSTA enough."

The scholarship uniquely provides recipients with the chance to meet a number of influential people in the occupational health and safety business who are experts in their field. Many scholarship winners are offered employment by leading companies before they even graduate.



“ ... I feel so fortunate to have received this amazing scholarship ... I can't thank MARCSTA enough. ”

For more information about the Jim Torlach Scholarship visit scholarships.curtin.edu.au. CH

AUSTRALIAN ROCK STAR GRADUATES IN NUTRITION

Vanessa Thornton, bass guitarist with the popular Perth-based alternative rock band, Jebediah, has graduated from Curtin's School of Public Health with a degree in Nutrition.

The talented bassist said that she'd always been interested in healthy eating, wanted to set a new challenge for herself and learn something new, which is why she chose to complete a degree in the area of nutrition.

Vanessa said that she had chosen to study at Curtin University due to its excellent reputation in the nutrition arena. She said that she'd loved the student lifestyle on the Bentley campus and that her favourite subjects were biochemistry and chemistry.

"It was great to meet new people on campus who had the same interests as me," Ms Thornton said.

"I continued to play for Jebediah and provided support to the singer/song writer, Felicity Groom, whilst studying, which I did find quite challenging. But the amazing support that I received from Curtin tutors throughout the course meant I could pursue both of my passions.

"My immediate plans after graduating are all about Jebediah. But who knows one day I might fall back on my nutrition degree and maybe even consider studying further."

Jebediah were established in 1994, together with Vanessa, the band comprises vocalist and guitarist Kevin Mitchell, drums Brett Mitchell and guitarist Chris Daymond. **CH**



KRISTY NAMED AS FINALIST IN 2011 WA YOUTH AWARDS

A speech pathology alumna was recently nominated in the 2011 WA Youth Awards.

Kristy Tomlinson, who graduated in 2007, was nominated in the Educate! Edith Cowan University Award for leadership.

Kristy was nominated for her inspirational work as a volunteer speech pathologist at an orphanage in India where she helped young people with disabilities. She also set up a charity to encourage and support future volunteer speech pathologists to explore this area.

Upon graduating Kristy established the Go Global Alumni Chapter at Curtin University, becoming its founding president, a position she still holds. She adopts imaginative and culturally sensitive approaches to address the needs of people with disabilities.

Kristy said that she felt very proud to be a finalist and very pleased that the work she had been involved in had been recognised in such a public way.

"I'm a very passionate advocate for the inclusion of people with disabilities in the community," Kristy said.

"Receiving the nomination was a huge surprise and it has been very encouraging to have other people acknowledge the importance of this cause."

Over 106 entries across eight award categories were received this year. Winners were announced at the WA Youth Awards gala ceremony on Saturday 9 April 2011, during National Youth Week.

Youth Minister Robyn McSweeney said the awards gave deserving finalists the chance to shine and demonstrate to the wider community that young people

can and do make significant and valuable contributions to society.

"The awards provide an opportunity to acknowledge individuals and organisations achieving excellence and innovation in advancing the lives of young people," she said.

The overall winner of the Educate! Edith Cowan University Award for leadership was Emerson Lievens. **CH**



HEALTH SCIENCES STUDENTS SHINE IN SUMMER RESEARCH CADETSHIP PROGRAM

Health sciences students have recently completed summer holiday cadetships with the Lung Institute of Western Australia (LIWA) providing them with the opportunity to gain valuable research experience in the field of lung disease.

Thomas Iosifidis, who completed a Bachelor of Science Medical Science in 2010, Cindy Le, who completed a Bachelor of Science Molecular Biotechnology degree in 2010, and Mirza Detanac, a current final year Bachelor of Science Molecular Genetics and Biotechnology student were selected from a competitive field of applicants from across WA.

The summer scholarships enabled the trio to work full-time over an eight-week period in research units offered at LIWA. They were all given a research project to complete under the supervision of a senior scientist.

Professor Philip Thompson, Director of LIWA, said the projects the enthusiastic group completed made a significant contribution to the overall research goals of the Institute.

"The program gives students the chance to gain experience in active research areas. Each participant chooses a project from our current research program and at the project's conclusion the student can feel confident they have helped advance our work in respiratory research," Professor Thompson said.

"This year cadetship recipients each undertook very interesting projects which included looking at the causes of lung fibrosis. They were able to document their outcomes well and their findings will be used to drive forward our research.

"Our goal with the cadetships is to encourage talented students to pursue a career in medical research. It is vital for the future of medical research in Australia to continue to attract bright and enthusiastic individuals such as Thomas, Cindy and Mirza, who can make a significant contribution to our understanding and treatment of lung diseases."

Thomas Iosifidis has enjoyed the experience so much he is now undertaking an honours project with LIWA. **CH**



Mirza Detanac, Cindy Le, Professor Philip Thompson and Thomas Iosifidis

CURTIN SOCIAL WORK STUDENT AWARDED HAZEL HAWKE SCHOLARSHIP

A Curtin University Bachelor of Social Work student has been awarded the 2011 annual Hazel Hawke Scholarship.

Diane Welsh, 36, from Warnbro, a first-year mature age student based at the Bentley campus, will receive an annual cash payment of \$1,000 each year to assist with studying expenses throughout the duration of the four-year degree.

Angela Fielding, Head of the Department of Social Work said that the grant was provided to mature age women whose finances wouldn't usually allow them to study at university.

"Hazel Hawke was recognised for her strong interest and involvement with the community and social issues relating to family, the environment and arts," Dr Fielding said.

"Hazel would be proud to know that the 2011 recipient has shown just as strong a commitment to the community here in Western Australia.

"Before commencing at Curtin University Diane worked for a women's domestic violence refuge based in Bunbury. She is passionate about helping people in the local community and once she qualifies as a social worker she will be advocating for people's rights on a daily basis."

The 2011 scholarship recipient said that she felt honoured to have received the award.



Diane Welsh, Hazel Hawke Scholarship recipient

“I’m looking forward to the opportunities that social work will provide ...”

“Studying full-time whilst supporting a family is going to be challenging financially. So I can’t thank the university enough as the monies have already helped me purchase my text books for the year and I’ve also bought a printer that is going to make a difference to my studies.

“I’m looking forward to the opportunities that social work will

provide, from empowering individuals and communities to supporting families.”

The scholarship is awarded annually on the basis of financial need, academic potential and commitment to the community and social issues. **CH**

For further information on the scholarship, visit: scholarships.curtin.edu.au.

CAUGHT ON CAMERA



PHARMACY TEAM ATTEND PSWA'S ANNUAL SEMINAR

Professor Jeff Hughes, Head of the School of Pharmacy, and Oksana Burford, lecturer in the School of Pharmacy attended the 2011 Pharmaceutical Society of WA's (PSWA) annual seminar held on Sunday 15 May at the Burswood Convention Centre.

The pharmacy team were one of a number of exhibitors at the 'pharmacists' only' seminar and promoted the range of courses that are offered in the pharmacy arena including the new postgraduate certificate offered in Medication and Disease State Management.

Professor Hughes said the event was hugely successful and that the team had received lots of positive feedback about the new course and compliments about their impressive stand throughout the day. **CH**



Professor Barbara Horner, Director Centre for Research on Ageing,
Professor Colleen Cartwright and Heather Freegard

CHIRI CO-HOSTS 'END OF LIFE' PUBLIC LECTURE WITH ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA

The Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute's Centre for Research on Ageing recently co-hosted a public lecture on 'End of Life Planning for People with Dementia' with Alzheimer's Australia.

The free public lecture featured ageing and ethics in medical care expert – Professor Colleen Cartwright, Director of the ASLaRC Aged Services Unit at Southern Cross University based on the Gold Coast.

Professor Cartwright talked about issues such as palliative care, refusal of treatment, pain control, resuscitation, residential care, advanced financial planning and enduring power of attorney which were all promoted in a recently published paper written by Professor Cartwright entitled 'Planning for End of Life for People with Dementia: Part One'.

The event was held at the State Library Theatre on Tuesday 19 April. **CH**



Alan Tulloch, Director of International and Professional Education, School of Nursing and Midwifery with nurse students from Thailand.

THAI STUDENTS VISIT CAMPUS


A group of nurse students from Burapha University in Chonburi, Thailand, recently spent two weeks at Curtin's School of Nursing and Midwifery as part of a long established exchange program between the two institutions.

The students examined the Australian healthcare system, participated in classes with Curtin nurse students, visited hospitals and community healthcare settings. The collaborative study tours help to broaden the outlook of students from both countries, preparing them for nursing in the global context. **CH**

NEW APPOINTMENTS

PROFESSOR CLARE POLLOCK NEW DEAN OF STUDENTS

Professor Clare Pollock, former Head of the School of Psychology and Speech Pathology was recently appointed as the Faculty's new Dean of Students. In this senior position Professor Pollock will focus on the student experience ensuring the best possible quality experience and outcome for health sciences students.

The role will be responsible for the Faculty Student Services Office, projects related to recognition of prior learning, streamlining admission processes, attracting low socio-economic status students and developing ongoing focus groups with students. Overall Professor Pollock will be responsible for ensuring quality indicators are achieved throughout the student experience. 




ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JAYA EARNEST NEW DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES


Congratulations to Associate Professor Jaya Earnest who was recently appointed as the new Director of Graduate Studies for a two-year period. Jaya is currently Associate Professor at the Centre for International Health and will maintain this position on a 0.6FTE basis.

She has been a member of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee since 2007 and is taking on the role after Professor Jan Piek recently stepped down from the position.

Her research interests focus on the consequences of post-conflict adversity on women and youth, resilience and adaptive strategies among refugee and migrant populations and interdisciplinary cross-cultural participatory research.

In 2010, she was awarded a national award for university teaching by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC). She has worked as an interdisciplinary educator and researcher for 25 years in India, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, East Timor and Australia. 

VERONICA DOLMAN STUDENT EQUITY ADVISOR

Many of you would have already met Veronica. Veronica joined the Faculty in March of this year. She is one of six advisors at Curtin University she works collaboratively with a wide range of people in the Faculty of Health sciences to increase the proportion of students from low SES backgrounds and Indigenous backgrounds. If you have any queries she can be contacted on extension 1260 or via email: veronica.dolman@curtin.edu.au 



WATCH THIS SPACE

UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENTS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Lifelong learning and development are key to delivering the Government's vision of patient centred care in Australia. At Curtin's Health Sciences we are committed to providing education that will help health professionals to acquire new knowledge and skills, both to realise their potential and to help shape and change things for the better. As part of this commitment we will be visiting health professionals in their own work environment to talk about the range of flexible health courses and scholarships that we offer at Curtin University.

We'd love to see you at these events to talk about your education needs, we will be visiting the following hospitals this year.

SIR CHARLES GAIRDNER HOSPITAL

Tuesday 6 September 2011
9:30am – 3:30pm

ARMADALE HEALTH SERVICE

Tuesday 1 November
1:30pm – 2:00pm

ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL

Tuesday 20 September
10:00am – 2:00pm

CURTIN ROADSHOW 2011

Make your tomorrow better by visiting the Curtin Roadshow. Events will be held on 15-17 June and then again from 9 -11 August in a number of towns across Western Australia. For more information visit: curtin.edu.au/roadshow

CURTIN OPEN DAY 2011

Our annual open day will be held on Sunday 21 August 2011. To find out what is planned for health sciences this year watch this space.

HEALTH INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION (HIPE) CONFERENCE

Thursday 14 July
1:00 – 5:00pm
Haydn Williams Lecture Theatre
For more information visit:
healthsciences.curtin.edu.au/faculty/ipe.cfm



We welcome your comments and contributions. Please contact Andrea Jones, Communications and Marketing Manager, Faculty of Health Sciences, Curtin University andrea.jones@curtin.edu.au

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