

Editorial We are pleased to report that AHIP has made significant advances over the period since our first newsletter in terms of new staff, international links and progress with our research initiatives. We have been joined by two new post-doctoral staff on the Flinders team – Dr Guangyu Zhang, who is with us for 2006 while Dr Anna Ziersch is on parenting leave, and Dr Lareen Newman who has joined us from the University of Adelaide.

AHIP staff were pleased to welcome Prof. Sir Michael Marmot to Flinders. He was invited to present the John Chalmers Oration but also very kindly agreed to take part in a seminar on how the southern area of Adelaide had taken action on the social determinants of health in the past twenty years and what is planned for the future. The presentations were made by key players from health and local government in the southern area, all of whom have a research links with Flinders. Thus AHIP's aim of furthering and developing partnerships with industry for the purposes of determining which policies and interventions are likely to contribute to reducing health inequities was advanced by this seminar. Sir Michael was complimentary about the action in the South and made some insightful comments at the end of the seminar.

The Melbourne team have been instrumental in the one day workshop on gender and health inequity. An aim of AHIP is to examine the complexity of factors contributing to health and inequities. The conundrum posed by gender is that while women are more likely to live in poverty, they live longer than men, despite the evident link between poverty and health status. Exploration of this issue will continue to be a focus of AHIP's research agenda.

AHIP is also planning a one day conference on multi-disciplinary research on health inequities. This conference has two overseas speakers – Prof. Ron Labonte and Prof. Barbara Starfield – and will also allow showcasing of the multi-disciplinary work conducted by the AHIP team. The day will be packed full but we are confident it will be stimulating and provoking thought about research designed to contribute to reducing inequities. Lareen Newman and Patricia Lamb are in charge of the organisation and have been doing a wonderful job on this, especially considering they are both new to AHIP and really had to hit the deck running!

AHIP team members are very busy conducting a wide range of research. Browsing our AHIP website and newsletter will demonstrate the productivity of our team in terms of publications and research grants.

Finally, planning for AHIP's annual retreat is underway. This will take place in Geelong (the retreat alternates between South Australia and Victoria). We are very pleased to welcome two visitors to this retreat – Prof. Sally McIntyre one of the UK's top researchers on health inequity who has a wealth of experience in researching policies to reduce health inequities, and Dr Dorothy Broom, from the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health at ANU, who is an expert in both qualitative research and gender and health. As was the case with last year's retreat its main aim is to review the activities of AHIP, plan for the coming year and, perhaps most crucially, to engage policy makers in thinking about the ways in which research on health inequities can be put into practice. We anticipate that the retreat will be attended by active researchers on health inequities and policy makers and practitioners with an interest in health inequities.

Finally, we congratulate Anna Ziersch on the birth of her son Eamon and look forward to welcoming her back to AHIP later in the year.
Fran Baum, August 2006

AHIP Events

Coming Event: The 2006 Australian Health Inequities Program Retreat

This year, the AHIP annual retreat will be held at the Waterfront Campus of Deakin University in Geelong from 13th to 17th November.

The purpose of the retreat is to bring together the AHIP team to plan collaborative activities and develop methodological approaches with input from national and international researchers. Invited researchers include Prof. Sally MacIntyre, Head of Social and Spatial Patterning of Health Program at the University of Glasgow, and Dr Dorothy Broom, Senior Research Fellow from the Australian National University.

The retreat also includes a seminar program in which AHIP research will be profiled. On Tuesday November 14th there will be a 'Work and Health' session. Speakers will include Dr Dorothy Broom, Associate Prof. Anthony LaMontagne from University of Melbourne and Prof. Sue Richardson and Prof. Andrew Beer from AHIP. On Wednesday November 15th a 'Local Environments and Health' Session will be held. Speakers will include Prof. Sally MacIntyre, and from AHIP, Prof. Fran Baum and Associate Prof. Anne Kavanagh.

Invited researchers, policy makers and practitioners will have the opportunity to get together with the AHIP team on Tuesday 14th November at the retreat dinner, also to be held at the Waterfront Campus Geelong.

If you are interested in attending the retreat please contact Fran Baum or Anne Kavanagh with details of why you are keen to attend. (For contact details see page 3).

Social Determinants of Health Seminar with Prof. Sir Michael Marmot

On 15th June, Flinders University hosted a seminar on the social determinants of health in the Southern Region of Adelaide. Prof. Anne Edwards, Vice-Chancellor, Flinders University, welcomed Prof. Sir Michael Marmot WHO Commissioner on the Social Determinants of Health and 50 invited guests, including Members of Parliament and Local Government, John Chalmers, and staff from Flinders University, Flinders Medical Centre and community representatives.



Philomena Taylor City of Onkaparinga, Prof. Fran Baum, Prof. Sir Michael Marmot, Richard Hicks Healthy Cities Noarlunga

Speakers from State and Local government joined Prof. Sir Michael Marmot, in a seminar that charted the action taken on the social determinants of health in the Southern Region of Adelaide.



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Capacity Building

Congratulations to:

Dr Anna Ziersch who has been promoted to Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Public Health at Flinders University; and

Dr Emma Baker who won the early career researcher prize for the best paper at the Australasian Housing Researchers Conference in June for her paper "Improving Outcomes of Forced Residential Relocation: The Development of an Australian Tenant's Spatial Decision Support System (SDSS)".

Introducing New Team Members



Dr Lareen Newman joined AHIP as a Research Fellow in early April 2006. She has recently completed her PhD in Social Science at the University of Adelaide, supervised by Prof. Graeme Hugo and Associate Prof. Barbara Pocock. Prior to her PhD, Dr Newman worked at the Australian Bureau of Statistics. She brings to AHIP experience in both quantitative and qualitative research methods and a strong interest in population and public health, including social and physical access to services and primary health care, and social, cultural, psychological and spiritual influences on health and well-being and adjustment to major life events. Lareen is currently involved in organizing the AHIP One-Day Conference in September, conducting and analyzing interviews for the Mitsubishi Project, and reviewing of each State/Territory health department's key documents to see to what extent they aim to reduce health inequities.

Dr Guangyu Zhang joined AHIP in July 2006 as a Research Fellow. Guangyu completed a Masters degree in Sociology at Oxford and a PhD in Demography at ANU. During his PhD candidature he worked as a research assistant to world-class demographer Prof. Jack Caldwell. His expertise is in the analysis of large survey data and he is currently working on the NHMRC Location and Health project and Mitsubishi project. Most recently Guangyu has published a paper on data quality and fertility estimation in China in the prestigious international journal *Population and Development Review*.



Rebecca Ramm is an Information Officer for the Department of Public Health and SACHRU. She provides desktop publishing and web support to AHIP. She is responsible for creating the AHIP website and promotional material for AHIP, including the newsletter and brochure for the up-coming one-day conference.

Patricia Lamb is an experienced administrator having worked at Flinders University for approximately 15 years in various roles. She is currently providing administration support for the Australian Health Inequities Program, an ARC Social Capital Linkage grant and the International Society for Equity in Health grant.



AHIP International collaboration on evidence for comprehensive primary health care

AHIP international collaborators, Prof. Fran Baum, Prof. Ron Labonte (University of Ottawa) and Dr David Sanders (University of the Western Cape, South Africa) met in Cape Town in June to develop a research application for the Canadian Teadale Corti grant scheme on comprehensive primary health care. The grant will involve researchers from Australia, South America, South Africa and India. It will use a capacity building scheme to develop community based research skills designed to contribute to an evidence base for primary health care. The group's Letter of Intent has been short listed and the outcome of the grant round will be known by the end of 2006.



Prof. Fran Baum with AHIP international collaborators in Cape Town.

First National Conference on Gender and Health Inequalities

The First National Conference on Gender and Health Inequalities, organised by the AHIP team at the Key Centre for Women's Health in Society, the University of Melbourne, was held on 22nd June 2006 in Melbourne. This event, attended by over 100 people was the first time in Australia that expert international and local speakers came together to present ideas and research findings on gender and health inequalities. Issues of work, globalisation and poverty, health service use, historical perspectives, place and social policy as they relate to gender and health inequalities were among the topics covered in the program.



Prof. Ichiro Kawachi at the Gender and Health Inequalities Conference.

The conference brought together academics from diverse disciplines and sectors whose understandings of gender and health inequalities were informed in very different ways. The conference was highly innovative in building a body of knowledge about gender and health inequalities that broke down current disciplinary and sectoral silos. Speakers included Prof. Ichiro Kawachi (Harvard Centre for Society and Health), Dr Dorothy Broom (ANU National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health), Prof. Garry Dowsett (La Trobe University), Prof. Ruth Fincher, Prof. Janet McCalman and Dr Shelley Mallet from the University of Melbourne. Two AHIP lead investigators, Prof. Sue Richardson and Associate Prof. Anne Kavanagh, spoke at the conference.

The Australasian Housing Researchers Conference run by The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute's (AHURI) Southern Research Centre

The Australasian Housing Researchers Conference, run by The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute's (AHURI) Southern Research Centre was held from the 19th to the 21st of June 2006 at the South Australian Art Gallery. It brought together more than 100 leading academic, public sector, non-government organisations and consultant researchers to discuss the sorts of issues and questions that keep housing researchers engaged. The conference was opened by Keynote Speaker Hugh Stretton, drawing upon his recent book *Australia Fair*. As part of the conference, New Zealand researchers joined Australian researchers to discuss research focussed upon Housing, Health and Policy. Prof. Andrew Beer as conference convener and Dr Emma Baker from the AHIP program presented at the conference.

Recent Publications

Arthurson, K., **Ziersch** A. & Long, V. 2006. Community housing: Can it assist tenants to develop labour market skills? *Just Policy*, 39, pp. 13-22.

Baum, F., 2006, Social capital and indigenous health. Chapter in Carson, B. Bailie R (Eds.) *Social Determinants of Indigenous Health*, Melbourne, Allen & Unwin.

Kavanagh, A.M., Bentley R., Turrell G., Broom DB. & Subramanian SV. 2006. 'Does gender modify associations between social capital and self-rated health?' *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 60, pp. 490-495.

Kavanagh A.M., Turrell G. & Subramanian S.V., 2006, Does area based social capital matter for the health of Australians: A multilevel analysis, *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 35, 3, pp. 607-13

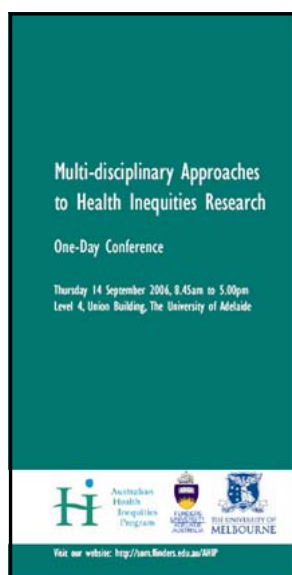
Turrell G., **Kavanagh**, A.M., & Subramanian S.V., 2006, Area variation in mortality in Tasmania (Australia): the contributions of socioeconomic disadvantage, social capital and geographic remoteness. *Health and Place* 12, 3, pp. 291-305.

Turrell G., & **Kavanagh** A.M., 2006, Socio-economic pathways to diet: Modelling the association between socio-economic position and food-purchasing behaviour, *Public Health Nutrition*, 9, 3, pp. 375-83.

King T., **Kavanagh** A.M., Jolley D., Turrell G. & Crawford D., 2006, Weight and place: a multilevel cross-sectional survey of area-level social disadvantage and overweight/obesity in Australia, *International Journal of Obesity*, 30, 2, pp. 281-7.

The 4th Biennial Conference for the International Society for Equity in Health (ISEqH) Will Be Held in Adelaide

The ISEqH 4th international conference will be held at Adelaide University from September 11th to 13th. The overarching theme for the conference reflects the central role of social, political, and economic determinants in creating health. There are over 100 presentations scheduled from various regions plus a keynote address by Dr Shane Houston, special plenaries, and workshops. It is a major gathering of health inequity researchers and an important event for AHIP to enable networking with main health inequity researchers from around the world.



One-Day Conference on Multi-disciplinary Approaches to Health Inequities Research

The Australian Health Inequities Program (AHIP) will be running a full day conference on Thursday 14th September 2006, following the ISEqH conference. The seminar will be held at the University of Adelaide from 8.45 to 5.00pm.

The process of multi-disciplinary research and findings from multi-disciplinary teams researching health inequities will be the focus of the day. Prof. Ron Labonte, Director of the Globalisation and Health Equity Research Unit, Institute of Population Health at the University of Ottawa will be the key presenter. He will be joined by other prominent speakers from around Australia. Further information and registration forms are available on the web at: <http://som.flinders.edu.au/AHIP>

AHIP's new website

The new AHIP website is located at <http://som.flinders.edu.au/AHIP>. The website contains information about AHIP and the people involved, and also has links to key documents and research about health inequities and the social determinants of health. Information about the up-coming conference and future events are also listed. Free copies of the AHIP newsletter can be viewed online and registration for subscription to the e-newsletter is also provided. We will add further information to the AHIP website within the next few months so ensure you check back regularly for updates.