

Editorial

Firstly, I would like to wish all the readers of our newsletter a very happy and healthy New Year and hope that it will be a year in which steps towards the pursuit of a more equitable society are taken.

Certainly the stage is set for a year in which policy developments happen thick and fast if the first three weeks of our new Labor Government are anything to judge by. One of AHIP's central aims is to engage with policymakers about how research on health inequities can be used to inform policy and we certainly look forward to doing that through 2008. Our 2007 AHIP Retreat also contributed to this aim. Our overseas visitor, Prof Margaret Whitehead, one of Europe's leading thinkers on policies to reduce health inequities, really challenged us to consider the ways in which research can be made relevant. Our Australian visitor A/Prof Gavin Turrell demonstrated how important good epidemiological data is to understanding the dynamics of health inequities.

For me an important part of the year has been my role as Commissioner on the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health. This involved me in three Commission meetings, the first of which, held in Geneva, enabled us to meet with the incoming Director General of the World Health Organisation, Dr Margaret Chan, and to hear of her commitment to social determinants. The second meeting was held in Vancouver and featured a report back from the Adelaide Symposium on the Social Determinants of Indigenous Health. My team in Adelaide together with the Co-operative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health worked long and hard to make this meeting happen and it was great to be rewarded when three Indigenous people (including Australia's Prof Shane Houston) reported the findings from the Symposium to the Commission. In October the Commission met in Beijing and confronted first hand the ways in which rapidly developing economies pose particularly challenging issues for social determinants. We were glad to have the Chinese Government make a commitment to joining the work of the Commission and openly state that social considerations have to go hand-in-hand with economic ones. The Commission also met in New Orleans (a meeting I was unable to attend) and one of the outcomes was the establishment of a US National Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, funded by the Robert Wood's Foundation.

Finally, I would like to foreshadow an event which will provide a strong focus on health equity in 2008. On the 10th-11th July 2008 Flinders University and the Co-operative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health will co-host the Fulbright Symposium, at the National Wine Centre in Adelaide. We were selected to do this by the Australian-American Fulbright Commission. The title of the event is "Healthy People, Prosperous Country" and confirmed keynote speakers to date are Prof Sir Michael Marmot (Chair, Commission on the Social Determinants of Health) and Dr David Satcher (16th US Surgeon General). We will be calling for expressions of interest from those who wish to attend and hope to have an audience from the multiple sectors that affect the social determinants of health.

I hope that all readers have a restful break over the holiday season and we look forward to working with you in the New Year.

Fran Baum
Lead Investigator



Flinders
UNIVERSITY



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

AHIP Retreat 2007

In conjunction with the annual AHIP Retreat, a Public Policy Day is held to encourage engagement between researchers and policymakers. This event was held at the Art Gallery in Adelaide on Thursday 1st November and was attended by around 70 guests. The day was split into two half-day focus topics.

The morning session focus was "Public Policy & Social Inequalities in Health" and was chaired by Professor Paul Worley (new Dean of the School of Medicine at Flinders University). Special guest Margaret Whitehead gave a presentation on "*What Kinds of Evidence do Policymakers need to Address Social Inequalities in Health*". This was followed by presentations by AHIP Investigators Fran Baum, Anne Kavanagh and Rebecca Bentley on "*Why Social Capital Matters to Policy to Address Health Inequities*", and "*Place Matters for Health: For Whom? In What Context? On What Scale*". These were followed by discussion from an invited panel consisting of Monsignor David Cappo AO (Commissioner for Social Inclusion in SA), Assoc Prof Gavin Turrell, and Dr Chrissie Pickin (Department of Health, Victoria).

The afternoon session was on "Work, Housing & Health in a Globalising World". The guest presentation was given by Gavin Turrell on "*Occupation and Health in Australia: Temporal Trends, Gender Differences and Policy Implications*". AHIP Chief Investigators Sue Richardson and Andrew Beer presented on "The Changing Workplace as a Public Health Issue", and "The Housing Careers of Persons with a Disability: Implications for Housing and Health Policy". The session was chaired by Mr Danny Broderick (SA Department of Health) and was followed by lively discussion with the audience.

The next AHIP Retreat and Public Policy Day will be in Victoria towards the end of 2008.



L-R: Fran Baum, Sue Richardson, Gavin Turrell, Margaret Whitehead, Andrew Beer, Anne Kavanagh



L-R: Gavin Turrell, Monsignor Cappo, Chrissie Pickin

Inside this issue

AHIP Team Retreat.....	2
Introducing AHIP'S PhD scholars.....	2
Work in progress.....	2
Awards.....	2
Grants and recent publications.....	3
Watch out for.....	4
Out and About.....	4

AHIP Team Retreat

The AHIP Team came together for their annual retreat this year for 3 days in South Australia's Barossa Valley. This event is held to reflect on the year's completed research and to plan new collaborative activities with input from national and international researchers. The team of 14 from Flinders University and Melbourne University were joined by international visitor Professor Margaret Whitehead from the University of Liverpool (UK)'s WHO Collaborating Centre for Policy Research on the Social Determinants of Health, and by national visitor Associate Professor Gavin Turrell from Queensland University of Technology. Margaret presented to the team about her own research team's work in the UK and on links between public policy and the social determinants of health and health equity. Gavin presented on "issues relevant to policy in reducing socioeconomic inequalities in cardiovascular disease". The team benefited greatly from discussions with the two visitors about how to better translate health inequities research into policy and how health equity gets onto government agendas



The AHIP Team and Retreat Guests

L-R: Anne Kavanagh, Sue Richardson, Laurence Lester, Helen Scherer, Anna Ziersch, Emma Baker, Gavin Turrell, Fran Baum, Andrew Beer, Margaret Whitehead, Rebecca Bentley, Lareen Newman

Awards

AHIP Chief Investigator **Fran Baum** was recently awarded Life Membership of the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA). AHIP Team Investigator **Lareen Newman** was awarded the John Lewis Silver Medal for Excellence in PhD Research by the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia.



L-R: President Nicholas Newland, Dr Lareen Newman and Prof Fay



L-R: Prof Mike Daube (PHAA President), Pat Anderson, (Chair of the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health), Fran Baum

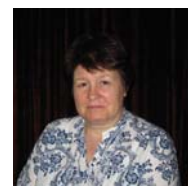
Introducing AHIP'S PhD Scholars



Jo Flavel



Kathryn Browne—Yung



Janet Adkins

Over the last year AHIP has taken on 3 new PhD scholars at Flinders University to research in the areas of Work & Health, Social Location & Health, and Housing & Health:

Jo Flavel is based in the National Institute of Labour Studies and is researching the impact of health on lifetime earnings, labour force experience and retirement. By examining the relationship between poor health and labour market outcomes over the life course, her project aims to determine the extent to which accumulating disadvantage associated with poor health influences the degree of income and health inequities post retirement.

Kathryn Browne-Yung is based in the Department of Public Health and is exploring the comparative experience of low income individuals living in advantaged and disadvantaged areas.

Janet Adkins is based in the school of Geography, Population and Environmental Management and is researching whether precarious housing affects health through psychological stress due to the absence of control

AHIP at Flinders are currently offering another PhD scholarship to work on health aspects of the project on Redundancy in the Automotive Industry,.

Work in progress

Special Issue, Australian Journal of Social Issues

In June 2006, Anne Kavanagh and Rebecca Bentley with others from the Key Centre for Women's Health in Society held the *First National Conference of Gender and Health Inequalities* in Melbourne. Gender has been relatively absent in research, policy and practice in relation to health inequalities in Australia. AHIP sought to redress this gap by bringing together leading academics from sociology, economics, epidemiology, anthropology and history to reflect on how we might understand gender inequalities in health and the various contexts in which they are manifest. Speakers included Professor Ichiro Kawachi from the Harvard School of Public Health, Dr Dorothy Broom from the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health and Professor Janet MacCalman from the University of Melbourne amongst others. We are publishing some of the papers from the conference, along with additional papers on gender and health inequities, in a special issue of the *Australian Journal of Social Issues* to be published in March 2008.

Grants and recent publications

Successful grant applications

ARC Linkage Grant 2007 *Housing Assistance and the Life Course: Understanding the Impact of Policy Alternatives*, awarded to **Andrew Beer**, **Emma Baker** and Prof GA Wood. The research will examine the impact of government housing assistance on the health and wellbeing of low income and vulnerable households. This project will answer the question, what form of housing assistance generates the best outcomes for both vulnerable individuals and society as a whole? The research examines the benefits and risks of each form of assistance and the results will help governments develop better housing policies and establish a stronger evidence base around current programs. \$388,116.

Lareen Newman and **Fran Baum**. Social Inclusion Unit (SA Government Department of Premier & Cabinet) and WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health (2007) to conduct a Rapid Appraisal Case Study of South Australia's Social Inclusion Initiative - a 3-month project providing an overview of the origins, aims, structure, outcomes and "lessons learned" of the Initiative. The report (reference below) is Background Paper No. 10 in the Report to the Commission from the Commission's Social Exclusion Knowledge Network.

Environmental predictors of biomarkers of cardiovascular disease and diabetes. (2008-2009) **Assoc. Prof Anne Kavanagh**, Prof Neville Owen, A/Prof David Dunstan and A/Prof Damien Jolley. \$124,000

Flood, J. and **Baker, Emma**, Housing implications of social, spatial and structural change, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute.

Recent publications

Emma Baker and Kathy Arthurson (2007). Housing, Place or Social Networks: What's more important for Relocating Tenants, *Australian Planner*, 44 (4)

Emma Baker & Andrew Beer (2007). Developing a workable model of housing need: Applying geographical concepts and techniques to a problem of public policy, *Applied Geography*. 27(3-4):165-180.

Rebecca Bentley, Anne Kavanagh, SV Subramanian SV & Gavin Turrell (2007). Area disadvantage, individual socio-economic position, and premature cancer mortality in Australia 1998 to 2000: a multilevel analysis. *Cancer Causes and Control*.

Rebecca Bentley & Anne Kavanagh (2007). Looking at contextual effects through Rose-coloured glasses: interpreting contextual effect in multilevel models. *Australian Epidemiologist* 41(1):4-5.

Lareen Newman, Kate Biedrzycki, Jan Patterson & **Fran Baum** (2007). *A Rapid Appraisal Case Study of South Australia's Social Inclusion Initiative*. A report for the Social Exclusion Knowledge Network of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health (WHO). AHIP and Social Inclusion Unit (SA Govt) <http://som.flinders.edu.au/FUSA/PublicHealth/AHIP/Publications2007.htm>



Ian Anderson, **Fran Baum** & Michael Bentley (eds.) (2007) *Beyond Band-aids: Exploring the Underlying Social Determinants of Health*. Darwin: Co-operative Research Centre in Aboriginal Health (Research Monograph).

Fran Baum (2007) Dilemmas in public health research: methodologies and ethical practice. Chapter in Jenny Douglas (Ed.) *A Reader in Promoting Public Health: Challenge and Controversy*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

L-R above Ian Fran and Michael at the launch of their new book "Beyond Band-aids" at the Public Health Association Conference in Alice Springs which brings together papers from the Social Determinants of Aboriginal Health Workshop in Adelaide in July 2007.

Fran Baum (2007) Social Capital and Indigenous Health. Chapter in Carson, B. Bailie R (Eds) *Social Determinants of Indigenous Health*, Melbourne: Allen & Unwin.

Fran Baum (2007) Cracking the nut of health equity: top down and bottom up pressure for action on the social determinants of health, *International Journal of Health Promotion and Education*, XIV, 2, 90-95.

Anna Ziersch and Kathy Arthurson (2007). Social capital and housing tenure in an Adelaide neighbourhood. *Urban Policy and Research*. 24(4): 1-23.

Debbie Faulkner, Selina Tually, **Emma Baker** and **Andrew Beer** (2007) Ageing and Its Implications for Social and Planning Policy, Report on the Outcomes of Focus groups for the South Australian Ageing Atlas, prepared for Planning SA.

Out and About

You may have seen AHIP investigators presenting at various conferences, seminars and workshops:

Rebecca Bentley presented on behalf of co-authors Anne Kavanagh, SV Subramanian and Gavin Turrell at the *Australasian Epidemiological Association Conference* in Hobart in August on "Area Disadvantage, Individual Socio-economic Position & Premature Cancer Mortality in Australia 1998-2000"; she also gave a seminar presentation in May at the University of Glasgow on "Researching Health Inequities in Australia", and at the University of Melbourne on "Researching Neighbourhood Effects on Health: Why Use Multilevel Analysis".

Fran Baum and AHIP visitor Margaret Whitehead presented at the "*Breaking Through the Social Determinants of Health*" seminar organised by the SA Dept. of Health Seminar on 2nd November.



L-R: Margaret Whitehead, Fran Baum, Carmel Williams (SA Dept of Health), John Glover (Public Health Information Development Unit, University of Adelaide)

Watch out for

Prof Ron Labonte who will be visiting AHIP from Canada in February 2008. Ron will be in Adelaide for one week to talk at the *Comprehensive Primary Health Care Research and Evaluation Short Course* which is running from 18 to 22 February. Ron is also planning to spend a day with the AHIP Team.

January 2008: Release of Fran Baum's New Public Health Third Edition

The New Public Health is fully revised to reflect current changes in the theory and practice of the new public health within a global context. It provides a clear vision of what a healthy, equitable and sustainable global society would look like and what changes need to be implemented to achieve this vision.

Contact Details:

Administration -

Patricia Lamb Phone: 08 8204 5988

patricia.lamb@flinders.edu.au

Flinders University Lead Investigator -

Prof. Fran Baum Phone: 08 8204 5974

fran.baum@flinders.edu.au

Melbourne University Lead Investigator -

A/Prof. Anne Kavanagh Phone: 03 8344 7394

a.kavanagh@unimelb.edu.au

Emma Baker presented on "Generational Reform: The Health Implications of Housing Change" to the Residential Context of Health working Group at the *European Network of Housing Researchers' Conference* in Rotterdam.

Lareen Newman presented on behalf of co-authors Colin MacDougall, **Fran Baum**, Gwyn Jolley and **Anna Ziersch** on "The Health and Social Impacts of Redundancy on Workers' Children and Families" to the *Public Health Association of Australia's Annual Conference* in Alice Springs in September.

Fran Baum co-hosted a breakfast session at the *Public Health Association Conference* (Alice Springs) with Shane Houston for consultation on the interim statement from the WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health, and presented on behalf of co-authors including **Anna Ziersch** on: "Linking Social Capital, Health and Class: An Adelaide Study".

Fran Baum presented on behalf of co-authors Dorota Pomagalska, Christine Putland, Lionel Orchard, Kathy Arthurson and **Anna Ziersch** on "Social capital and health: insights from a South Australian study at the *19th IUHPE World Conference on Health Promotion and Health Education* "Health Promotion Comes of Age: Research, Policy and Practice for the 21st Century" in Vancouver in June.

Other conference presentations included:

Gallagher Gilbert, **Ziersch Anna, Baum Fran, Bentley Michael & Palmer Catherine**. (2007) 'Racism and its impact on health for urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People'. 38th Annual Public Health Association of Australia 23rd-26th September, Alice Springs.

Ziersch Anna, Baum Fran, Putland Christine & MacDougall Colin. (2007). Local neighbourhood involvement in four socioeconomically contrasting areas: What does it mean for community-based practice? Paper presented at Australian Health Promotion Association Conference, 17th National Conference, Adelaide, 1st-4th May 2007.