

## VicReN Recruitment News

Welcome to the VicReN e-bulletin, the first for 2008. In this issue we want to know what you want from us, and would love to hear from you about your research—to share, inspire and make a difference.

Recent waves of recruitment throughout October—December 2007 have been successful in locating GPs genuinely interested in research. Building a sustainable and thriving network does not depend simply on getting every primary care practitioner to join. It depends on recruiting those who really see the value of a network in spurring relevant and high-quality primary care research. Whilst to date we have focussed on GPs, largely because they have a stronger culture of research than practice nurses, we will now also target the recruitment of practice nurses and practice managers, as well as other allied primary health care practitioners. We still have a long way to go to move out of general practice and from the Melbourne metropolitan region to truly become a Victoria-wide network, but we are certainly encouraged by the response to our network so far:

To date, VicReN comprises of:

- 4 University of Melbourne academic staff
- 22 General Practitioners
- 10 Practice Nurses
- 1 Practice Manager

We warmly welcome all new members and trust that together we can make a network that makes a satisfying difference in our daily practice and for the delivery and quality of primary care.

If you would like to nominate any of your colleagues to VicReN, please direct them to contact Melinda Soós at [msoos@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:msoos@unimelb.edu.au). The membership form will be posted on the updated VicReN website shortly.

*Do you have research results or are currently undertaking research that you'd like to tell us about? Share it by having it published in our forthcoming issues!*

## What do YOU want from VicReN?

In order for us to help you build your research skills capacity, we need to know your needs.

VicReN wishes to establish what you see as your priority areas of need when it comes to your research skills.

We realise that it may be 5, 15 or 35 years since you last learned anything about research, or were involved in a research project. Perhaps you have never undertaken a research project and want to learn more.

We've been able to learn quite a bit about your research skills and experience from the completed membership forms and as such, wish to expand on that to get a fuller picture on what we need to do at our end to meet your needs. We have created a *VicReN Research Needs Analysis* form which will be attached to the February e-bulletin. In the meantime, please consider the research skills you'd like to build and the best learning format for you.

## weave project launch

Piloting of the **weave** project commenced in January. We find out what it's all about...



The **weave** project (Women's Evaluation of Abuse and Violence Care in General Practice: a Cluster Randomised Controlled Trial) is the first international trial of its kind to evaluate the impact of a multifaceted general practice intervention. The intervention involves screening for intimate partner abuse, educating health providers, and brief counselling for abused women and on abused women's safety behaviours, quality of life and mental health. Funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council, and based at the Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne, the study is currently recruiting GPs to participate in the trial. If you are interested in joining us in working out how to improve the management of domestic violence in general practice, or would simply like to hear more about **weave**, please contact Lorna O'Doherty on 03-83443369 or email [l.odoherty@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:l.odoherty@unimelb.edu.au).

## VicReN Events Update

Here's a brief outline of recent VicReN events:

- Meredith Temple-Smith and Melinda Soós presented a talk at the General Practice Victoria CPD Coordinator Network on 3 December entitled "Supporting GPs in Research: The VicReN Experience." Since then, a specialised VicReN newsletter and information on the network have been specially developed and will be disseminated to all GPs through the Divisions CPD Coordinators in early 2008.
- Meredith Temple-Smith and Melinda Soós presented a seminar to the APNA practice nurses at the GPCE Conference on 18 November entitled "Practice-Based Research Networks: Getting Started in Research." Feedback from practice nurses attending the event presentation evaluated the presentation using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree): "if my learning needs for the session were met" scored 4.2, "if the session was relevant to my practice" scored 4.6 and "if the speaker/s presented clearly and logically" scored 4.4. We are pleased that nurses do feel research is relevant to them.
- The events aroused interest in the network and resulted in several new members. If you know of any events, organizations or publications at which VicReN could be showcased, please let Melinda Soós know.

## VicReN Research Update

Registered nurses: are you looking to pick up some extra hours?

The Department of General Practice has several studies which require registered nurses to work on a casual basis to undertake research with consenting participants. Remuneration for time will be made dependent on individual study funding and in all cases, paid training will be provided.

- **The Detection and Management of Dementia in General Practice** requires nurses to visit study participants in their own homes to perform memory assessments and the 75+ Health Assessment.
- **Weave Project** requires nurses to perform telephone interviews of study participants who are surviving or are recent survivors of intimate partner violence.

We have other opportunities through the Department of General Practice. If you would like to get involved in these or other research projects, please contact Melinda Soós using the details listed below.

Exercise and Type 2 Diabetes Study: do you have patients who might benefit?

Researchers at The University of Melbourne are conducting a 4-week exercise training study in patients with type 2 diabetes. Healthy patients with type 2 diabetes aged 35 to 60, who do not currently partake in endurance exercise training, are needed to participate in the study. The studies involve pre-participation screening, cycling exercise on a stationary ergometer, blood tests and muscle and fat sampling by needle biopsy. For further information please contact: Ms. Sophie Yeo, 8344 5851 or on [syeo3@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:syeo3@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au)

## National Institute of Clinical Studies: Translating Research into Clinical Practice and Policy

**NICS Evidence-Practice Gaps Report Volumes 1 & 2 are available on their website, providing concise, updated, and easy-to-read information on many clinical topics important to medicine, including general practice.**

If you've ever wondered if research results really do get translated into clinical practice and policy, the National Institute of Clinical Studies proves that they do. Established in 2000, as Australia's national agency for improving health care by closing gaps between the best available evidence and current clinical practice, NICS spurs research into 'gap' areas, develops user-friendly information for consumers, and provides links to resources, e.g. the Cochrane Library.

In each forthcoming VicReN e-bulletin, a clinical topic from the NICS Evidence-Practice Gaps Report will be highlighted. For more information about NICS, refer to <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/nics/asp/index.asp>

## Forthcoming VicReN Practice Committee Meetings

As it is most likely the first meeting will now fall to March, the next meeting will be listed in February's e-bulletin.

The meetings will be held 6:30—8:00pm in the tea room, the Department of General Practice, the University of Melbourne, 200 Berkeley Street, Carlton 3053 or at member's general practices on arrangement.

**Correction:** Dr. Clare Heal was incorrectly listed as a practice nurse in Nov-Dec e-bulletin. Many apologies for this error.

## General practitioners, practice nurses and managers: are you interested in joining VicReN?

If you would like to learn more about how VicReN can build your research skills capacity, add a new dimension to your day-to-day routine, or link you with other primary care clinicians with a genuine research interest, or if you know of fellow clinicians who are, don't hesitate to contact Melinda Soós for more information on (03) 8344 3392 or via [msoos@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:msoos@unimelb.edu.au)