



## Football United's Festival for Hope

**F**ootball United was founded by the School's convener of Health Promotion, Anne Bunde-Birouste, in 2006 as the basis for her PhD thesis. In addition to her thesis work and an ARC Linkage grant awarded in 2008, the program continues to flourish. Thanks to its hard working and enthusiastic team it has succeeded beyond imagination in its impact both within the communities, nationally and internationally, and particularly in its capacity to promote UNSW. It provides disadvantaged and under resourced communities with University skills, expertise and resources. It enhances existing strengths of academics and students to forge capacity within local communities and across national and international boundaries.

The program has received both Faculty and UNSW awards for Community Engagement in 2009. In addition it received a FIFA award for national engagement resulting in an invitation to send a delegation to the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

Football United was one of only thirty-two teams invited to participate in the 2010 Football for Hope Festival, an official event of the FIFA World Cup. This event is a highlight of the global

Football for Hope Movement and a celebration of the power of football and the positive impact it has on community development.

Football United's ethos of engagement and empowerment was extended throughout its preparation for the Football for Hope festival, from the initial selection process into the preparation period.

Anne Bunde-Birouste says: "Since the selection of only 4 boys and 4 girls for the 'Hope team' would engage only a tiny proportion of Football United participants, Football United made the process of choosing the team as important as the team itself, and to make this process as inclusive as possible."

Football United made sure that no students would be disadvantaged due to their level of English language skills or access to resources by getting support from schools for translation services and student volunteers to work with students on their applications.

Anne says: "A key element of the participatory process was the voting process in November 2009. Teachers, coaches, students and participants

from various projects and programs of Football United voted for the Hope Team members. In this process all were asked to keep in mind that the team that went to South Africa on behalf of Football United was to be made up of young people who are mature, open minded, interested and who embody everything that Football United is about."

These efforts are part of Football United's capacity building initiatives

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## ► Festival For Hope

and the Hope Team's trip to Canberra, and the chance to play against the Parliamentarian team in Canberra was a great opportunity for the Hope Team to highlight its initiatives to the country's policy and decision makers.

### Nurturing the Hope Team

Football United organised regular weekly training programs and residential training camps for its team. It was during the first camp that the team members baptised their team the 'Hope team'. During training the Hope team was offered opportunities to train and play with high level football representatives, such as the national youth women's team, NSW State Premier League players, with mentoring from some of Australia's current and past national football stars. Support was provided from the Golden Gold group, which offered their synthetic field as a training venue free of charge. The training program included not only football skills but also personal development, self-confidence, communications training and self-esteem building.

Football United believes that its leadership programs assist its members in their lives beyond football, while contributing to the organisation's sustainability, which in combination with improving its football content will increase the organisation's credibility and relationships within the broader Australian football community. Noticeable results from the leadership development efforts were evident during the final week when each team member gave formal presentations as their schools gave them going away assemblies. They are seen as role models among their peers and the preparatory works for their presentation at the assemblies helped them but also helped their peers to understand more about why and how they are accessing opportunities.

People with high profiles from political, social, business, academic and sport met together at the Hope team's send-off party immediately



From top to bottom: 1. The Hope team in front of the Festival for Hope Peace mural; 2. Enthusiasm abounds for Hope team members Melvin, Yom, Teresa and MD; 3. Celebrating arrival in South Africa by thanking flight sponsor Emirates

prior to their departure. The two weeks in South Africa were divided into one week of workshops for the team, and a second week of a global tournament.

The team members connected with youth from diverse background, some who live in villages with no running water or electricity.

Anne says: "Football United implements best practices in the field of Social Development through Football. Its Hope team represents the many symbols of football for positive social change in the areas of Health Promotion, Peace Building, Children's Rights & Education, Anti-Discrimination & Social Integration and the Environment. Another example of football's magic power to bring people all together, and the SPHCM's example of effective participatory research in action."

## Advances in Public Health and Health Services Research at UNSW Symposium 2010

The second Annual Symposium on "Advances in Public Health and Health Services Research at UNSW" was held on May 7 2010 at UNSW. We showcased the most exciting elements in research from the School and its affiliated Research Centres: The Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity; The Centre for Clinical Governance Research in Health; The Centre for Health Informatics; The National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research; and The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, which together form the strongest concentration of expertise and capacity in population health and health services research in Australia. The day ended with an awards ceremony, with prizes presented by the Dean, Professor Peter Smith. Prize winners were:

- Peter Baume Public Health Impact Prize - Prof Louisa Degenhardt
- Highly Commended for Peter Baume Public Health Impact Prize - Prof Maree Teeson
- Best Peer Reviewed Publication - Dr Anthony Newall
- Young Investigator Prize - Dr Holly Seale
- Conjoint Researcher of the Year - Prof John Kaldor
- PhD Prize - Dr Joanne Travaglia
- Outstanding Contribution to Teaching and Learning - Dr Alison Rutherford
- Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching - Martha Lourey Bird; Dr Husna Razee
- Excellence in Postgraduate Teaching - A/Prof Mary-Louise McLaws; A/Prof Glenda Lawrence
- Innovation and Leadership - Anil Singh-Prakash
- Support for Research Outcomes - Damian Harkin
- Support for Teaching Outcomes - Christine Rousselis
- Overall All Rounder (teaching & research) - Dr Meredith Makeham

Congratulations to all of the prize winners and thanks to everyone who made the day a success.

# Postgraduate coursework programs attract increased enrolments



Alan Hodgkinson

A major recent success story for the School is the popularity of our postgraduate coursework programs. In particular, the combined Master of Public Health / Health Management program (MPH/MHM) has grown from 11 students in 2008 to nearly 150 students in 2010. The MPH/MHM is a 1.5 year program which brings together the School's unique expertise in public health and health services management.

The original UNSW Master of Health Administration (MHA) was the first postgraduate health administration program in Australia and began in 1956 with support from the Kellogg Foundation (USA). It was the only program of its kind for many decades, and as it was taught primarily by distance education our graduates can be found in virtually every health service in Australia and the Pacific region. The program was run for many years by the School of Health Services Management which combined with the Schools of Community Medicine and Medical Education to form the current School of Public Health and Community Medicine. At the time of the merger, key researchers from the School of Health Services Management formed what has become the Australian Institute of Health Innovation, the leading research centre for health services research in Australia. Institute staff continue to contribute to

key components of the postgraduate teaching program, with their research informing their teaching.

Alan Hodgkinson, deputy head of SPHCM, says: "In 2005, with changes in staff and our student profile we embarked on wide consultation with employers, students and graduates, and audited comparable programs both locally and internationally seeking examples of best practice. Subsequently, the MHA was realigned with graduate attributes designed to prepare health managers to meet the challenges of a complex and rapidly changing health sector, and renamed the Master of Health Management."

Following the revision of the MHM, the Master of Public Health (MPH) was also restructured with graduate attributes developed to enable graduates to meet the challenges facing population health. The core component of the new MPH was reduced, acknowledging the widely differing needs of the public health workforce, while maintaining rigor in key attributes. The program also reflects the School's strength in Infectious Diseases, Global Health, HIV/AIDS, Indigenous Health, Health Promotion and Primary Health Care.

This year, to harness the depth in International Health expertise in the School, the Master of International Public Health (MIPH) was launched, under the guidance of Professor Richard Taylor, and already has over 30 students enrolled.

Alan says: "Each of the three programs has proved attractive to prospective students, however, the fastest growth has been in the combined programs: Master of Public Health/Master of Health Management (zero to 92 students in 2 years, and over 20 students enrolled in the first year of the combined MHM or MPH and MIPH)."

Overall, the preliminary data for 2010 shows that there are over 700 local

## "The fastest growth has been in the combined programs: Master of Public Health / Master of Health Management"

students enrolled in the postgraduate programs in the School, and 121 international students, continuing an upward trend since 2006. The most noticeable change in enrolments is the variety in the backgrounds for international students. This year we have students from North and South America, Europe, Asia, South-East Asia, Africa, the Middle-East and the Pacific and this has helped create a vibrant learning environment

With the steady growth in enrolments we have been taking on new staff and we look forward to further strengthening of our teaching, and ongoing development of our programs.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on the School's postgraduate programs can be obtained from the SPHCM Postgraduate Office or the website:

**Master of Public Health:**

Phone: +61 2 9385 2507

Web: [www.sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/SPHCMWeb.nsf/page/PH](http://www.sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/SPHCMWeb.nsf/page/PH)

**Master of Health Management:**

Phone: +61 2 9385 1699

Web: [www.sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/SPHCMWeb.nsf/page/HAHSM](http://www.sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/SPHCMWeb.nsf/page/HAHSM)

**Master of International Public Health:**

Phone: +61 2 9385 1928

Web: [www.sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/SPHCMWeb.nsf/page/IPH](http://www.sphcm.med.unsw.edu.au/SPHCMWeb.nsf/page/IPH)

**Combined Degree - Master of Public Health / Health Management:**

Phone: +61 2 9385 1928

Web: [www.handbook.unsw.edu.au/postgraduate/programs/2010/9047.html](http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au/postgraduate/programs/2010/9047.html)

Email: [postgrad-sphcm@unsw.edu.au](mailto:postgrad-sphcm@unsw.edu.au)

# Human Resources for Health Hub Update

Currently in its second year of operation, the Human Resources for Health Hub is welcoming a new Director, Professor Richard Taylor, who takes over the reins from A/Professor John Hall. The Hub is well on track to becoming the key reference point for Human Resources for Health (HRH) in the Pacific region. Extensive work has been carried out in the form of situational analysis and stakeholder consultation to determine priority work programs. In addition to addressing these knowledge gaps, the Hub has established a number of mechanisms, such as an Annual HRH Forum, for disseminating information to its growing network.

## Leadership and Management Capacity Development

The Hub's Leadership and Management Capacity program of work, led by Dr Augustine Asante, is currently taking on a slightly unconventional approach to problem solving in that it is focused on documenting leadership and management practices that contribute to the high performance of district health services.

Where traditional approaches have leaned towards identifying problems and analysing what is not working, the Leadership and Management product team is focused on what is working. In particular, Dr Asante is documenting the important steps that district managers take under difficult circumstances to keep things functioning. The Hub is implementing this work program together with its in-country partners – the Centre for Health Service Management, University of Gadjadara in Indonesia and the School of Management at the Divine Word University in Papua New Guinea (PNG). It is expected that this product will lead to improved health system performance by strengthening leadership and management capacity at the district level in Indonesia and PNG. It is also expected to stimulate debate about 'home-grown' solutions to health-system performance issues in the respective countries.

The Leadership and Management research team is also discussing a



partnership with the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) in Amsterdam and exploring external funding opportunities that will enable the expansion of the study to other countries and districts.

## Health Worker Migration

Dr Augustine Asante is now the Principal Researcher on the Health Worker Migration (HWM) program, taking over from John Hall. In collaboration with the Fiji School of Medicine, the project seeks to identify approaches to managing the migration of skilled health personnel in the Pacific region and reinforcing efforts in both source and destination countries to better manage and monitor the mobility of health workers. The next step of the project will be to conduct a situational analysis of HWM in six Pacific Island countries to explore and document the evidence on a range of issues with the view to informing the development of policy options.

## Public Health Emergencies

Work on Human Resources and Public Health Emergencies (PHEs) is well underway and is the newest addition to the Hub's research. Led by Professor Anthony Zwi, with the support of Lisa Thompson (Project Officer) and Joao Martins (Research Associate) the team has commenced identifying activities and organisations involved in responding to PHEs in priority countries in Asia and the Pacific region, and has also started a more systematic review of the literature available so as to feed into a discussion document.

Eight 'Stories and Strategies' reports are being produced in parallel – all with the involvement of actors and researchers with intimate knowledge of the issues under debate. These will highlight the human resources dimensions in various stages of the disaster cycle (mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery) and in a wide range of different settings (conflicts, post-disaster, epidemics) and countries (Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Samoa, Burma, Australia, Indonesia (Aceh), Papua New Guinea or those with a more general regional focus).

A meeting of all those working on Stories and Strategies will be held in the second half of this year to review draft reports, refine them and plan a book or special issue of a journal to highlight the issues and debates uncovered through this initiative. However, the group is also looking to using online media to keep issues rolling. The team has already set-up a LinkedIn network for those involved with this area of work to share insights and is currently exploring other social bookmarking and web-based knowledge-management mechanisms, all of which will help feed the Hub's own KnowHEG strategy (see below).

The PHEs group looks forward to working with Australian-based humanitarian relief agencies and is developing the links to enable this to be mutually productive.

## Maternal, Neonatal and Reproductive Health Personnel

Heading up the Maternal, Neonatal and Reproductive Health (MNRH)

## ► HRH Hub Update

research area is Dr Angela Dawson who has produced the first comprehensive review of community MNRH providers, which also provides a snap shot of the community-level approaches and current practices in 10 different countries. Dr Dawson is currently documenting ways to improve cross-sectoral collaboration in adolescent sexual and reproductive health. She has commenced a scoping exercise in Sri Lanka where she is looking to document successful examples of cross-cadre collaboration to better inform human resource policy guidelines. This pilot study will also be used to determine the feasibility of a large-scale study, but there are already plans to replicate this program in the Solomon Islands later this year.

### The KnowHEG Project

The Hub has been working in conjunction with the University Library to develop an electronic gateway (KnowHEG), which will benefit all health researchers and practitioners, but especially policy and decision makers involved in HRH in the Pacific region. Broadly speaking, the KnowHEG repository is a storage place for the wide variety of knowledge collected and generated by the Hub, including peer-reviewed publications and grey literature. However, later phases of development also aim to incorporate virtual and interactive tools that will provide the Hub's community with the ability to network, contribute to the repository and discuss issues regardless of location.

Another unique feature of this resource is that it brings together vital knowledge on HRH in the Pacific for the first time in the one environment. Key to the success of this resource will be the Hub's ability to engage its community into using the system and contributing their own knowledge. As such, the Hub has appointed a Knowledge Manager, Ms Denise Quay, and a Communication Officer, Ms Michelle de Souza, who will help review and manage the knowledge-dissemination and stakeholder-engagement processes. The Hub has developed an initial shell and is undertaking some testing and enhancements with the view to launching the first release later this year.

## ANZAME Postgraduate Student Prize

Dr Asela Olupeliyawa, a PhD student in the School, has been awarded the 2010 Australasian and New Zealand Association for Medical Education (ANZAME) Postgraduate Student Prize. This prize was instituted in 2005 in recognition that the student members of ANZAME were often full-time post-graduate students performing invaluable research in the area of health professional education. It is awarded to a student in a post-graduate health professional course whose course work relates to education in their area of health care.



Asela is a medical graduate from Sri Lanka. He joined the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, as a lecturer in Medical Education in 2008. His research interests include the learning environment, student assessment and medical professionalism. He is enrolled as a PhD candidate in Medical Education at the University of New South Wales. His supervisors are Dr Chinthaka Balasooriya, A/Prof Chris Hughes and A/Prof Anthony O'Sullivan. The title of his thesis is *An assessment strategy to drive learning of collaborative competencies essential for an intern*.

Asela says: "This research project aims to identify the collaborative competencies that are critical for safe and effective performance of interns, and to develop a focussed and effective assessment method to support students as they develop these competencies. Collaborative competencies are critical for interns, as they have significant implications for patient safety. Furthermore, teamwork is identified as an area of difficulty for interns. Therefore it is essential to develop collaborative competencies required for clinical practice in medical students, as they make the transition to internship."

Asela has reviewed the literature on collaborative competencies for healthcare professionals to gain a better understanding of their

relevance to an intern, and this was published last year as a review paper in the *South East Asian Journal of Medical Education*. He has then conducted semi-structured interviews with clinical supervisors and focus group discussions with final year medical students at UNSW and at the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, to further explore the competencies for an intern, and related assessment needs of medical students. Stage appropriate competencies important for an intern were identified in this study, especially in the clinical contexts of patient handovers, consults, after hours work and emergency situations. The focus groups also identified that students valued assessment of these competencies in the clinical setting, with opportunities for improvement through feedback. Asela presented these findings at the ANZAME conference held in July.

Asela is currently validating the behavioural indicators for a new assessment instrument among clinical supervisors in Australia. The assessment is being designed based on these behaviours and will incorporate the best aspects of assessment methods described in the literature.

### Future directions

Asela says: "The assessment instrument will be trialled among senior medical students at UNSW. The psychometric properties of the new instrument will be measured. The Preparation for Internship (PRINT) term at UNSW will be used as a proxy setting for evaluating the educational impact."

# UNSW Initiative for Health and Human Rights

After five successful years the UNSW Initiative for Health and Human Rights (IHHR) will be sun-setting into an informal network. The UNSW IHHR staff were sad to say goodbye to the SPHCM in July but will leave with a positive reflection on all that this cross-disciplinary research and education initiative has achieved. The UNSW IHHR was the only cross-faculty academic entity in the world dedicated to advancing health, human rights and development. Over its five-year life span, the UNSW IHHR has achieved considerable strides in research, policy development, education and service and communication.

The UNSW IHHR stimulated important field-based and policy research; disseminated its findings, concepts and methods amongst policy and decision makers and supervised research undertaken towards Doctoral degrees, Independent Learning Projects and Master's theses.

In October 2009, the UNSW IHHR successfully co-hosted, with the Central Commission for Popularization and Education of the Communist Party of Vietnam, a landmark International Conference to examine the interface of health, development and human rights which was held in Hanoi, Vietnam. The IHHR UNSW has sustained close collaboration resulting from this activity with its Vietnamese partners, the UN and other international agencies, foundations, non-governmental organisations and academic institutions. Additional activities undertaken in Vietnam over the last eighteen months include two workshops and a Research Symposium.

In the field of education and training, the progress achieved by the UNSW IHHR was reflected by the creation of a very popular post-graduate education program on health, development and human rights which drew on the collective knowledge and expertise of faculty members across the UNSW. This activity alone has ensured that the next generation of Australian and international students will continue to pursue a more holistic approach to global issues.



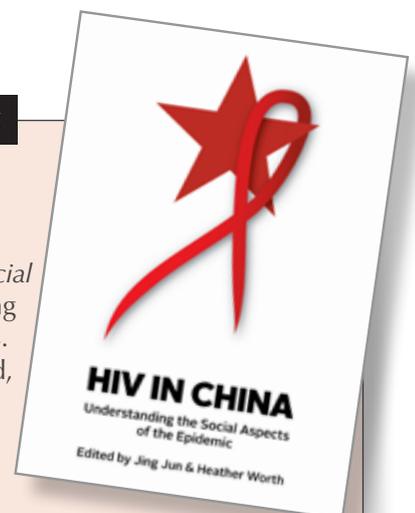
International and UNSW course participants – 2009 Intensive Course on Health, Development and Human Rights

The UNSW IHHR has also been active in the propagation of its approaches and methods through lectures and workshops offered within the UNSW, other academic settings in Australia and beyond. The UNSW IHHR has ensured a wide dissemination of information through a variety of media, including professional journals and books, and media targeted at the larger public. Within the few years of its existence, the UNSW IHHR has achieved top ranking globally in web-based searches related to health, development and human rights.

In light of these achievements, the increased recognition of this area of research and its implications for the future it was felt important that the UNSW IHHR should not totally disband. The initiative is therefore grateful that Professor Anthony Zwi, the convener of GlobalHealth@UNSW, based at the UNSW School of Public Health and Community Medicine, and colleagues from other Faculties, have agreed to sustain UNSW IHHR within an informal network to ensure that the progress it has made continues. Professor Tarantola will remain involved in this effort remotely as a Visiting Professorial Fellow to UNSW.

## HIV in China: Understanding the Social Aspects of the Epidemic

Associate Professor Heather Worth who heads the International HIV Research Group in the School of Public Health and Community Medicine is the co-editor with Professor Jing Jun, who is Director of the Social Policy Research Centre at Tsinghua University in Beijing, of a newly released book published by UNSW Press titled: *HIV in China: Understanding the Social Aspects of the Epidemic*. After China's first HIV-positive patient was reported in 1985, among those initially infected were peasants who had sold their plasma to international companies. Then it became clear that sex workers and injecting drug users were also becoming infected, and later, transient populations, ethnic groups and the poor. The realisation that HIV was a profoundly social issue had begun to dawn. It was becoming clear that the epidemic was being propelled by three main economic drivers: the blood trade, the drug trade, and the sex trade. In this unique book young Chinese scholars map some of the most important social, political and cultural characteristics of the HIV epidemic in that country. The result of a collaboration between the University of New South Wales and Tsinghua University in Beijing, *HIV in China* uncovers some hidden truths about the spread of the disease and its social impacts.



## NEW STAFF

Siranda Torvaldsen has recently joined us as senior lecturer in the Public Health Officer Training Program. Siranda's passion for epidemiology began while studying a postgraduate diploma through the School of Public Health at Curtin University, Western Australia. She then completed a Master of Applied Epidemiology (MAE), through the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health at the Australian National University.

The MAE Program was highly practical and provided two years of hands-on epidemiology experience. Siranda's field placement was in Perth, where she completed a variety of projects including a retrospective cohort study to investigate an outbreak of *Shigella sonnei* in a restaurant, an evaluation of the surveillance system for pertussis, a cross sectional survey of *Listeria* awareness in new mothers, and analyses of routinely collected data for methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* and rabies prophylaxis. Siranda says: "I thoroughly enjoyed the MAE Program, which has many similarities to the Public Health Officer Training Program. This is one of the reasons I am so excited to be involved with the Public Health Officer Training Program."

After the MAE, Siranda did a PhD on the epidemiology of pertussis, based at the National Centre for Immunisation Research in Sydney. Her PhD involved integrating varied data sources to estimate the disease burden from pertussis, developing and applying regression models to generate adjusted estimates of vaccine effectiveness and demonstrating how these could be used for ongoing estimation of vaccine effectiveness using routinely collected data.

After finishing her PhD, and in between having two children, Siranda undertook an NHMRC post-doctoral fellowship, based at the



University of Sydney, initially at the Centre for Perinatal Health Services Research and then the Centre for Overweight and Obesity. Siranda is still involved in some of this work as she supervises a PhD student who is conducting a randomised controlled trial of a community-based treatment intervention in obese adolescents.

During Siranda's time at the Centre for Perinatal Health Services Research, she undertook three systematic reviews of interventions to reduce instrumental deliveries in women with epidural analgesia, including a Cochrane Review. She also analysed data from a cohort study, using logistic regression and survival analyses, to examine the association between epidural analgesia and breastfeeding. More recently she was employed as a Research Fellow in the School of Public Health, working on web-based decision aids. Siranda enjoys teaching and has tutored and lectured in epidemiology and biostatistics for many years.

Siranda is the membership officer for the Australasian Epidemiology Association (AEA) and is part of the Organising Committee for the 2010 Conference, which is being held in Sydney on September 30 and October 1. If you would like to know more about AEA or the conference, please contact Siranda!

## Jean Martin Award

### Peter Nugus

Another success story is Peter Nugus who was awarded the prestigious Jean Martin Award for 'the best PhD in the Australian Social Sciences between 2007-2009' by the Australian Sociological Association. The award was received for Peter's PhD thesis, *The Organisational World of Emergency Clinicians*. The thesis was submitted in 2007 under the supervision of Professor Jeffrey Braithwaite in the Centre for Clinical Governance Research.

This is only the second time in the 30-year history of the award that it has been granted to a thesis in the health field. It is also the first time it has been awarded to a thesis submitted outside a core Social Science department (eg. Sociology, Anthropology).

In awarding the prize at the TASA annual conference dinner at the ANU, the chair of the panel said: "Excellence in scholarship and balanced treatment of sociological theory and research are the main criteria for deciding the Award. There is much to be said about the fascinating detail of the thesis. Importantly, however, in the view of the selection panel, Dr Nugus' thesis was seen as an outstanding contribution to Australian sociological scholarship. The panel determined that the thesis was exceptionally well organised, theoretically sophisticated and overall an interesting and well executed study. As one of the panellists noted in justifying the nomination: 'The narrative flows easily; the ideas expressed are lucid, concise and persuasive. It is a very focused work; an exemplary model in how to structure a thesis.'"

The thesis is an in-depth sociological study of Emergency Departments (EDs). Peter spent 12 months full-time observing and interviewing staff in two Sydney EDs. The thesis provides a 'behind-the-curtain' view of life working in the ED. It focuses specifically on the negotiation processes and communication skills emergency clinicians used when engaging clinicians from other departments to become involved in the care of their patient and to admit them as inpatients.

# Tribute to Debra Miller



Staff at the School were deeply saddened and shocked by the tragic and unexpected loss of their colleague and friend Debra Miller. Debra was part of SPHCM since its inception 8 years ago and has an even longer history at UNSW. She commenced at UNSW in 1998 in the Office of the Dean, and later worked in the School of Health Services Management, the School of Anatomy and the School of Medical Sciences. She was very much a part of the UNSW community, and had a wide circle of friends at UNSW who are all mourning her loss.

Professor Lisa Jackson Pulver conducted an Aboriginal smoking ceremony as a tribute to her, and her friends shared their thoughts and reflections about Deb. It was a really beautiful ceremony and highlighted to all of us how fragile and tenuous life is, and how we should not take it for granted when we have our loved ones with us. Deb was a happy and warm

person who cared deeply for the people around her, both in her professional and personal life. Here are some reflections on Deb from her colleagues:

*Deb was a close colleague but also a friend and a support to many of the staff in difficult times. She would always pop into your office as she walked by to see how life was and have a laugh. She shared about her family and we shared with her about our families. I will miss her constant presence around the school and her friendship.*

*I read the tragic news about Debra with total disbelief. A beautiful person who had time for each one of us in the School.*

*She made me laugh, we often shared a joke and stories of family, silly girlie things that made the day just that bit better. I enjoyed and feel grateful for her warmth, directness and laconic way of looking at things. She was a constant and important part of my working world and I will truly miss her.*

*Deb always had time for our Elders when they came to visit our school. She always paid attention to them and made them feel really welcome and special.*



*She was my dear friend that always made me laugh, she was someone I could trust and from the day I started at the School she made me feel welcome. I will miss her so much.*

*Debra was always ready to go the extra length to help make things work out smoothly; she was a dedicated and loving mum – so proud of her kids and happy for them and happy to share that pride with anyone who was around. She had a lovely mixture of spunk, caring and guts, and fun personality.*

*I have known Deb Miller since she joined the School and her two children and Pat were her joy – she always spoke of Pat her husband with great pride and warmth and her romance with him when she was a young woman and going to Fiji with him for the first time. We used to speak about her son's progress at school and she was very proud of his placement in an apprenticeship (out of Sydney) even though she missed him dearly. She loved clothes and we would talk about fashion at length.*

*I am sure Patrick, Jasmine and Lloyd would agree if I say that "Debra was a woman of noble character."*

*Deb was a lovely person. We worked together closely and she talked about her family she loved and adored. Her smiling face will be greatly missed.*

On behalf of the School of Public Health and Community Medicine and UNSW, we would like to express our sincere condolences to Patrick, Lloyd and Jasmine and the rest of Deb's family.

## Let's hear from you

We would like to keep in touch with former staff and students of the School. Please send your contributions to the editor, Kevin Forde: [k.forde@unsw.edu.au](mailto:k.forde@unsw.edu.au)

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The School of Public Health and Community Medicine  
The University of New South Wales  
UNSW Sydney NSW 2052, Australia  
Tel: +61 (2) 9385 2517 Fax: +61 (2) 9313 6185

CRICOS Provider No: 00098G



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