

Medical Education Unit Research

School of Medicine, University of Western Sydney

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Welcome from Professor Ian Wilson

Welcome to the first MEU Research newsletter.

The Medical Education Unit was founded in November 2005 when I was recruited to be its director. As we have established the medical school and implemented the medical program, the MEU has had a major service role for the staff and students. It has always been my intention to establish a unit that also has a strong focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning and research. The innovative program at UWS provides an ideal opportunity to undertake high quality research in medical

education. Support from the School of Medicine, the College of Health & Science and UWS has enabled us to implement an interesting program of research. Academic staff are developing their research skills and a number of projects have commenced.

We have also developed effective relationships with other centres of educational research expertise. We have particularly good relationships with the Centre for Educational Research and the School of Nursing. Please look through this newsletter and explore our

website (see page 3), and if you are interested in any aspects of our research, please feel free to contact us.

We are always keen to undertake collaborative research and to assist beginners in preparing and implementing their research proposals.

Ian Wilson

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MEU

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Newsletter

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Research Grant Success

Congratulations to the MEU team for their recent success in winning the following research grants. See page 2 for details of more current research projects undertaken by MEU members.

» **Renewing the curriculum to more effectively accommodate clinical rotation**

Grant: Australian Learning and Teaching Council, 2008, \$219,924.00

Researchers: Prof James Dalziel (Macquarie University), **Dr Bronwen Dalziel** (UWS), Ms Leanne Cameron (Macquarie), Prof Rufus Clarke (Macquarie), Assoc Prof Tim Shaw (University of Sydney), Dr Gregor Kennedy (University of Melbourne), Dr Iain McAlpine (La Trobe University), Rotation Development Team (UWS), and Assoc Prof Rachel Ellaway (Northern Ontario School of Medicine)

» **Integrating problem-based-learning, lecture and practical knowledge using simulation**

Grant: UWS School of Medicine Seed Funding Grant, 2008, \$101,000

Researchers: **Dr Janet Chan** and **Prof Ian Wilson** (UWS)

» **Keeping pace: a critical longitudinal analysis of the psychosocial determinants of seeding success in educating home-grown doctors for regional communities**

Grant: Australian Research Council Discovery Project (DP0988136), 2008, \$235,000

Researchers: Prof Rhonda Craven (UWS), **Prof Ian Wilson** (UWS), and Dr Alex Yeung (UWS)

Current Research Projects

Our current research projects cover a range of innovative areas in medical education.

» **Selecting medical students**

David Harding (PhD student), Barbara Griffin (College of Health & Science), **Ian Wilson**, and Neville Yeomans (School of Medicine)

David Harding, supervised by Ian Wilson and Alex Yeung (Centre for Education Research), along with Barbara Griffin and Neville Yeomans has been developing and researching the use of multiple mini-interviews in the selection of medical students to the UWS program. David's thesis is exploring the process in great detail and we now realise that what has been developed is innovative and world leading. During this process Barbara Griffin has led the research of various aspects of the program.

» **Using simulation to teach basic pathophysiology**

Janet Chan, Ian Wilson

Funded by School of Medicine

Simulation has been used extensively to teach medical students clinical skills. In this project we are exploring the use of simulation to teach basic physiology and pathophysiology in the early years of the course. The Simulation facility is currently being fitted out and the research will start in 2009.

» **Assessing the competence of Master of Clinical Psychology students**

Leanne Humphreys (PhD student, School of Psychology), **Ian Wilson**, and Rocco Crino (School of Psychology)

Funded by Australian Psychology Association (NSW Branch)

This project focuses on developing and validating an innovative approach to assessing the clinical competence of Master students in clinical psychology.

» **Recognition and response to distress in medical student peers**

Catherine Leahy (PhD student, University of Adelaide), Ray Peterson (University of Queensland), **Ian Wilson**, Anne Tonkin (University of Adelaide), Deborah Turnbull (University of Adelaide), and Jonathan Newbury (University of Adelaide)

Funded by beyondblue

This project focuses on a medical student's ability to recognise distress in peers and how to respond to the distress. The project is nearing completion.

» **Development of high quality on-line learning packages for medical education**

James Dalziel (Macquarie University), **Bronwen Dalziel, Development teams** (School of Medicine) et al.

Funded by Australian Learning & Teaching Council

The School is currently developing on-line learning packages for Years 3 to 5 of the course. The project is designed to develop these to the point where they are of exceptional quality.

» **Medicine in Context**

Ian Wilson, Hilary Bambrick (Population Health), Louella McCarthy (School of Medicine), Tim Wills (School of Medicine), and **Roslyn Weaver**

Medicine in Context is an innovative program to be established in Year 3 in 2009. It will give students extensive exposure to community services and general practice. The project will explore the impact of the program on students' attitudes to community health service.

» **Learning approaches across health & science courses (LASAC)**

Yenna Salamonsen (School of Nursing), Ragbir Bhathal (Engineering), Cheang Khoo (Biomedical and Health Sciences), Jane Koch (Nursing), and **Ian Wilson**

Funded by Education Research Grants in Health & Science (ERGHS)

This project investigates the learning approaches and stress levels of students and their relationship to academic performance across five selected health and science units.

Please contact us for more information about any of these current research projects or if you would like to discuss future projects.

Our current research projects cover a range of innovative areas in medical education

For more information please contact us

To keep up to date with the latest MEU research news and developments, please email Roslyn to join the mailing list, at r.weaver@uws.edu.au

“Home-grown doctors to meet home-grown needs”



Acting Prime Minister Julia Gillard speaks at the official opening of the UWS School of Medicine building

Make sure you visit our new website for regular updates and latest MEU news

MEU Team News

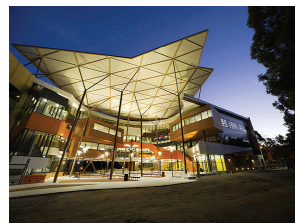
- **Ian Wilson** was re-elected to the Committee of Management of the Association for Health Professional Education (ANZAME) and was also re-elected vice-president.
- **Janet Chan** has recently spent time at the Institute for Medical Simulation based at the Center for Medical Simulation, Boston (partners with Harvard-MIT Health Sciences and Technology). See our next issue for the full report.
- **Roslyn Weaver** was recently appointed to the position of Research Officer in the MEU.
- **Ian Wilson** was recently appointed Chair of the Research Subcommittee of the Undergraduate Medical Schools Admissions Test consortium.

Acting PM opens School of Medicine building

The new School of Medicine building at the Campbelltown Campus of the University of Western Sydney was officially opened by the Acting and Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, on Monday 17 November, 2008.

Ms Gillard, who is the Minister for Education, Employment, Workplace Relations and Social Inclusion, spoke of the importance of the School of Medicine to the community of Greater Western Sydney, saying that the School of Medicine would provide “home-grown doctors to meet home-grown needs”.

The School of Medicine aims to actively contribute to medical science, the delivery of medical services and the health of people regionally, nationally and globally. By assisting in the medical workforce growth in NSW and the retention of doctors in Greater Western Sydney, the School plans to enhance the quality and accessibility of health care across the region.



The \$50m School of Medicine building, designed by Lyons Architects, is one of the most advanced medical training centres in Australia. The building provides students and researchers with specialist teaching and laboratory facilities, including simulated learning spaces for clinical skills learning, an anatomy laboratory, problem-based learning tutorial rooms and state-of-the-art research equipment.

The final stages of the building are almost complete, with new lecture theatres due to open for the first semester of 2009.

MEU Website

The brand new MEU website is now live at:

www.uws.edu.au/medicine/som/research/medical_education

Please visit the site for regular updates and news about all the MEU research activities, grant successes, project opportunities and team news. You can find contact details for all team members and view profiles online with research interests, current projects, publications and backgrounds.

The website also has links to download the latest MEU newsletters online, released quarterly.

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MEU Staff Publications 2008

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