



From the President

AHPA in Cairns: a terrifically successful conference was enjoyed by over 500 people in beautiful sunny Cairns in April this year. This was AHPA's 20th National Conference and as one AHPA member told me – "AHPA has had some good conferences with some terrific moments – but this one in Cairns was probably the best yet." Big claim. One supported by a Victorian member who should know because he was involved in organising last year's conference in Melbourne – he said he was confident that their conference in Melbourne last year would be hard to beat but he confided to me that he 'tipped his hat' to Queensland!

For that success a huge thank you must go to Kirsty Pickering, President of AHPA's Queensland Branch, and the Queensland Management Committee for their tireless efforts, skills and energy in making it all happen. Kirsty has that enviable personality that is calm, cool and collected under pressure – she makes managing, organising and running a conference with everything happening and on time look like it is as easy as a stroll in the park. Anyone who has organised a conference or even a seminar for that matter knows how far from the truth that is! So Kirsty to you and your team – all passionate, committed and skilled volunteers – I'm taking this opportunity on behalf of the AHPA Board to publicly thank you all – very well done and done very well.

This edition of *Update* is dedicated to that conference with articles and information on the conference highlights as told by many including our member scholarship winners: Tania Hanzar, Cheryl Dewhurst, Emily Raso, Amy Dellit, Tracey Stringer, Amy Johnson, Libby Foster and Petrina Nettlefold.

For me there were many speakers to enjoy and learn loads from including Professor Ronald Labonte skyped in from Canada to enlighten us on how global processes affect our daily lives; our own inimitable Professor Fran Baum on how and why we should avoid lifestyle drift in Australian health policy and practice; Professor Alan Shiell who fortunately for us has been

enticed back from Canada and is now the CEO of the new Centre for Excellence in Intervention and Prevention Science at Monash University in Victoria. From his research on the economic evaluation of social interventions designed to promote health and reduce inequalities, Alan presented us with the price of social justice and why it is important that we know. Professor Frank Oberklaid stressed the importance of early childhood development as the building blocks for healthy individuals and healthy communities and provided us with many tools and resources to enable us all to advocate and work more effectively towards healthy childhoods for all children. The importance of education as a determinant of health is well known so it was great to hear Ned David present on his work, as Manager of Strategic Initiatives Bound for Success Torres Strait, aimed at improving life opportunities for all students in the Torres Strait.

A very special highlight for me was Professor Paul Pholeros' presentation and work. Paul, an architect by trade, is the Director of Healthabitat NSW. The way he and Aboriginal individuals and communities learn and work together to ensure, safer, healthier, better functioning housing is laudable and exemplary. You can find out more about Healthabitat by visiting <http://www.healthabitat.com/>

An innovative and very popular interactive tea and lunch break activity was the *Social Determinants Think Tank* sponsored by AHPA's New South Wales (NSW) Branch and conducted by Eric van Beurden and Annie Kia from North Coast Health Promotion in NSW. This workshop was based on complexity science and wicked problems – not wicked as in evil but in complexity – problems of health inequity and climate change ilk – and they are wicked in that they cannot be easily solved by traditional linear, analytical approaches. The Think Tank yielded a rich field of ideas that Eric and Annie are writing up. The report will be sent to conference participants to thank them for contributing their ideas and solutions. As well the report will be posted on AHPA's

website. So as they say – watch this space ... or better still watch out for this report on the AHPA website – www.healthpromotion.org.au – it will be at that site soon.

At the conference, AHPA's Ray James Memorial Award of \$1000 was announced and won by Jillian Adams, Maxine Molyneux and Lucy Squires for their paper *Sustaining an obesity prevention intervention in preschools* published in AHPA's Health Promotion Journal of Australia (2011:22(1)). Congratulations Jillian, Maxine and Lucy. Also congratulations to the runners up, Husna Razee, Hiddep van der Ploeg, Ilse Blignault and colleagues for their article *Beliefs, barriers, social support, and environmental influences related to diabetes risk behaviours among women with a history of gestational diabetes (2010:21(2))*. To be in the running for next year's award you need to be a financial member and you need to publish in AHPA's Health Promotion Journal of Australia – so start writing and get those articles in.

Suzanne Gleeson
National President

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'Take home messages' – lessons from Keynotes

At this year's conference we were privileged and honoured to be graced by the presence of many formidable minds in health promotion. Here are some of their 'take home' messages to enlighten and inspire your practice...

- The need to embrace economics as a tool for health promotion. Although economic methods don't have a way of counting equity, they can give a breakdown of interventions to address inequality. Economics can shine light on the costs of not tackling the social determinants of health, and point to the opportunity cost of government decisions.
- Policies that address the circumstances and impacts of the early years are the most effective solution to inequity. Positive and effective child development has the highest intervention effectiveness and lowest cost. The best way to improve the schools is to improve environments children are in prior to attending school. By promoting the perspective that 'child development is economic development' the benefits could be more readily understood and accepted by wider society.
- There needs to be a re-framing of health promotion arguments and messages that hit the target in discussions with decision-makers and the wider population.
- "Why treat people without changing what makes them sick?" - a sentiment reiterated throughout the AHPA National conference, but most prominently by Professor Gavin Turrell. Professor Turrell spoke on the final day of the conference, discussing "The Bio-Physiological Consequences of Socioeconomic Inequality and the Preventative Role of Health Promotion". I found Professor Turrell's examination of victim blaming to be of particular interest, including the idea that choice is not free, but constrained by social and economic factors during the life course. I have encountered many health professionals who hold strongly to the belief that individuals are responsible for their own health, a dominant ideology. Of course we all hold some level of responsibility for our individual choices, but these choices are strongly influenced by a myriad of factors, including environmental, social, economic and biological influences. These factors form the 'determinants of health' and the theme of this year's conference.
- Frank Oberklaid spoke on one of these determinants, that of the environment, and the impact of these care-taking environments on childhood brain development. I found Oberklaid's discussion of the extreme sensitivity of children aged 0-6 years to their environment to be fascinating, including the way in which protective and risk factors can positively and negatively impact brain development and considerably influence educational achievement. Oberklaid referred to a paper written by Heckman & Masterov (2005), "The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children" and the paper's conclusion that, the best way to improve the schools is to improve the quality of the early environments of the children that attend them. Oberklaid's discussion reinforced the importance of investment in early childhood development and will considerably influence the way in which I plan and develop interventions regarding this demographic. To read Heckman and Masterov's paper visit http://jenni.uchicago.edu/human-inequality/papers/Heckman_final_all_wp_2007-03-22c_jsb.pdf
- The presentation from Alan Shiell regarding the growing role of health economics as a resource for arguing for investment in health promotion and preventive health approaches. The reference to "The Town With No Poverty" was also great as it actually demonstrated the effectiveness of addressing the distribution of wealth on health outcomes.
- Professor Fran Baum and her presentation about the lifestyle drift in health policy. This presentation identified the need for all health promotion practitioners to take a more proactive approach to advocating for upstream health policy and resources allocated to support action in this area as well.
- Professor Fran Baum further spoke about the need to 'avoid lifestyle drift' and move away from social marketing and behavioural change programs such as those currently being used by governments. There is a need to focus on addressing the 'causes of the causes' which includes action outside of the health sector.
- Alan Shiell spoke about the world of health economics and its relationship with health promotion interventions. Alan provided the example of the Assessing Cost-Effectiveness (ACE) in Prevention report, a large 5 year study that was funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), which assessed 123 illness prevention measures to identify those which will prevent the most illness and premature deaths and that are best value for money. Alan pointed out that it is extremely difficult to judge the success of health promotion interventions on one measure though, as generally, successful interventions tend to utilise a range of strategies and be evaluated by more than one outcome measure.
- Paul Pholeros spoke about his work with Healthabitat, an organisation that has worked to improve the living environment and health of Indigenous people in many areas of Australia, and how grassroots action on a social determinant such as housing can have long lasting impact on the health of individuals and the wider community.
- Michael Sparks spoke about the importance of local action on the social determinants of health, and how global ideas and frameworks need to be translated into action at the local level in order to ensure genuine and long lasting effects. Health is more than a physical state and is strongly influenced by social and physical environments. It is not merely the absence of disease. Action for change is needed because health care systems still predominantly focus resources on acute illness to individuals. To make fundamental improvements in health equity and tackle inequalities, medical care is without doubt necessary but is insufficient. A balance between curative and preventative action within our health services is required. As health professionals we need to be continually advocating and consider key strategies to move our health systems to an upstream approach.
- Social and economic factors are a major determinant of health inequity, with people experiencing socio economic disadvantage generally having more risk factors, poorer health outcomes and higher rates of overweight, obesity and illness. The question we need to consistently ask ourselves within our work is why treat people Without changing what makes them sick. Health behaviours cannot be tackled by focusing solely on the individual, due to the influences in the social, physical and economic environment. Therefore it is important to have in place the right policy, continually strengthen partnerships both government and non government and continually advocate for an upstream approach that supports and creates environments that make it easier for all to access.

SCHOLARSHIP FEEDBACK

Each year the Australian Health Promotion Association offers scholarships through each Branch to assist Health Promotion Practitioners to attend the national conference. This year we asked them to reflect on what they learnt and share this with the members....

Top professional highlights:

- Professor Ronald Labonte, "Punching to the Midriff: How Globalisation Processes Affect Our Daily Health". Professor Labonte reminded us that working in ways that address globally pressing issues, which push for better conditions for people beyond Australia's shores, also has positive implications for our population, and the global population.
- Networking – this opportunity to meet so many practitioners from other states was invaluable.
- The conference will impact the way in which I carry out health promotion work in the future in a number of ways. The breadth of information covered resulted in a considerable expansion of my health promotion knowledge and I will reflect on lessons learnt, time and time again, as it continues to influence the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs in which I participate.
- Reinforcement of the importance of the work that we, as health promotion professionals, undertake in preventing disease. There will never be enough health professionals to treat all the people that require it, thus we must work upstream to keep people healthy, rather than to treat them once they become ill.
- I am proud to be part of a progressive organisation and look forward to continuing to work with the AHPA towards positive change for Australian people.
- The presentations demonstrating that systemic change is possible and how it can be achieved (e.g. Health in All Policies work in SA) were particularly useful, although it would have been great to hear even more about the processes and approaches they used.



Michael Sparks

- Learning more about the role of health economics in the argument for investment in health promotion and that work is now being undertaken to demonstrate the cost of not actioning the social determinants of health. It is encouraging that there may soon be resources available to support the economic argument for health promotion as well as the moral argument (Marmot).
- Michael Sparks, keynote speaker – A framework for local action. The further upstream we work in health, the greater number of lives we will affect.
- The posters gave a great overview of the wonderful work implemented throughout Australia.
- Many of the concurrent sessions were able to highlight the barriers and enablers of their projects in which lessons learnt can then be integrated into my work projects. Key contacts made will also help in the roll out of future projects.

International influences from the conference – how can these influence Australian health promotion practice?

- Health needs to be incorporated into all global policies.
- Continue to work with best practice at the local level, always addressing health problems at the deepest structural roots possible.
- Support the work of colleagues and civil society organisations struggling to push more systemic reform policies at the state and national levels.
- International agreements, especially with countries of the South, should incorporate respect for the local biodiversity, as well as sustainable development.
- Actions that workers "in the midstream" can take:
 - Communicate with politicians;
 - Contribute to evidence-based body of work;
 - Evaluate well;
 - Work carefully on the context of the community;
 - Link communities with groups and networks working towards social justice, etc – this may give them context and purpose.
- A summary checklist (offered by Michael Sparks) on practice:
 - Commit to equity;
 - Think broadly about activities and settings;
 - Blend population and targeted approaches;
 - Long term commitment and perspectives;
 - Workforce development;
 - Use what works (effectiveness);
 - Use and contribute to the evidence;
 - Connect upstream and downstream;
 - Evaluate what you are trying to change.
- It sounds like there are many learnings that can be taken from Canada's experience in relation to the systemic changes that need to take place to really change the social factors that influence people's health.
- We need to be considering an ecological perspective in thinking about obesity. Considering food processing, food marketing, advertising, transport modes and options, recreation options and patterns and physical work demands rather than looking at individual behaviour change.

More feedback on page 6



Conference Organising Committee



Sione Tuitahi



Paul Pholeros



Ned David and Mick Adams



Rosemarie Erben introducing 2011 Eberhard Wenzel Oratio



Tropical fruit demonstration



Panel discussion led by Gavin Turrell



Fran Baum



Tony McMichael



Conference Dinner

SCHOLARSHIP FEEDBACK

How will your learnings influence your own practice?

- The main message that I walked away with from AHPA Conference 2011 was to feel empowered to not try to work on everything – pick: What's important to you? What's appropriate to you? And work on that.
- Appreciation for all practitioners, whether it is in downstream interventions, midstream or upstream. I have a renewed appreciation for the importance of connecting with other practitioners, to achieve shared goals.
- My practice has also been influenced along the lines of understanding better the importance of early intervention. The idea that 'child development is economic development' was inspiring.
- I plan to implement better evaluation methods into my work, as a result of my learning on the importance of evaluating well, building the story and presenting well.
- I will be more open to wider methods for advocating, and prepared to do the time-consuming work to obtain the data needed - having seen how effective different tools for advocacy are in the concurrent session on Mapping Community Level Food Security to Inform Practice: Uses when Advocating and Submission Writing.
- I'm keen to try and incorporate the issue of climate change and health to potentially gain support for health promotion from non-traditional sectors and build relationships between the Departments of Health and Human Services and Parks and Environment.
- From a professional perspective, the policy context was of particular relevance to me. Policy can and does have an effect on the way in which service delivery occurs and the way in which government health budgets are allocated and priorities are set, however there is definitely a need to emphasise local delivery systems not just national policies. These in turn need to be supported by an approach advocating health in all policies and all of government action, not just policies directly related to health and health departments. Local delivery requires effective participatory decision making at the local level, and this can only happen by empowering individuals and communities. As health promoters are aware, identifying those who are in need of health care services but do not use them is difficult even though those experiencing the most disadvantage are more likely to have poorer health. It is important that health services provided to Australians are able to be used by all those who need them.
- As a key leader involved in community health I need to consider supporting my work colleagues and key partners in projects to work in an upstream, population approach focusing on the principles of Primary Health Care that emphasize "equity, participation, empowerment and deliver health promotion, that is affordable and appropriate to the local needs of the community".
- Within any downstream, mid stream and upstream work a social determinants of health perspective needs to be incorporated. It is essential to address the systemic roots of healthy lifestyles – the social determinants of health.
- The way we engage with people can make a difference; we need to be adaptable and flexible within our work and work place. Within my work role I need to advocate to other staff the need to address the determinants of health within their everyday work



Lori Lambert – 2011 Eberhard Wenzel Orator

Specific actions for Health Promotion Practitioners to consider in relation to Health Promotion and Determinants of Health – Strengthening Action?

- Not sacrificing "progress" for listening to communities, and finding ways to work in the local community's "way."
- Greater appreciation for the recommendations of aboriginal peoples in our ways of working and connecting with people.
- Lobbying local government to take a greater interest and responsibility in health promotion for local communities.
- Assisting each other to work with methods of best practice.
- There is a strong need for all health promotion practitioners, regardless of their role/work area to advocate more and in a strategic manner on issues relating to the determinants of health. As Labonté mentioned in his presentation it is important to identify with an issue that you are passionate about and engage with it. I also believe that there is potential for AHPA, as a peak body to play a more prominent role in this area.
- In working across the spectrum all workers need to take into account all the factors that affect people's health including: physical factors, social status, cultural issues, economic situation, gender, environmental.
- Consider this: is it fair to keep pounding the issues about obesity and our fat and happy children when the most at risk often do not have access to healthy safe and constant food choices. 'Is it fair we continually make people who smoke feel like lepers? Or condemn those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds while not providing them with a chance to obtain gainful employment? These are just a few questions that can be put to staff that may challenge their thinking around the determinants of health. As public health leaders we need to continually raise the determinants of health to ensure all staff are considering them in the context of their work.
- Trying to promote health and prevent illness before it occurs. Trying to create an environment, which makes *healthy choices easy choices*. As public health leaders I believe it is essential for us to continually support staff to understand the causes of the causes.

Preview of the August issue of the HPJA

Ben Smith

The forthcoming August issue of the HPJA will again demonstrate the breadth of research being undertaken in Australia and New Zealand to improve the evidence for health promotion policy and practice

The critical role played by public policy and supportive environments will be addressed in articles concerning the sponsorship of sporting events by food and beverage companies (Kelly et al.), adherence to the Industry Code of Conduct on Body Image in major Australian magazines (Reid Boyd et al.), the provision of natural and built shade in recreation settings

by local councils in New South Wales (Potente et al), and support for smoking bans in and around workplaces (Walsh et al).

The need to find effective methods of engaging with diverse communities and tackling social inequities in health is a theme common to a number of the papers. Dr Colleen Fisher examines how community capacity building can be undertaken with refugees from a range of African countries in relation to the challenge of family violence. Dr Vanessa Rose and colleagues present insights about the development of a physical activity and social support program for Sudanese women in Western Sydney.

Lisa Franco and colleagues from the South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Health Service reports research investigating the scope for delivery of smoking cessation strategies to low income people through community service organisations.

Research will be presented that will help to inform the better targeting and delivery to culturally and linguistically diverse and indigenous communities, including risk factor screening for Australian Chinese speaking people (Cheung et al) and strategies to improve nutrition among Maori communities in northern New Zealand (Harding et al).







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2011

30 June to 3 July 2011

International Conference Ageing in the Migrant Diaspora

Flinders University, Adelaide SA
www.flinders.edu.au/ehlt/conferences/greek/research2011/

18–19 August 2011

2011 International Unity in Diversity Conference – Media, Marginality & Diversity

Held in association with 17th annual Cultural Fest
 Rydges Southbank Townsville Hotel & Convention Centre, North Queensland
<http://www.unityindiversityconference.com/>

24–26 August 2011

12th International Mental Health Conference

Radisson Resort on the Gold Coast, Queensland
www.anznmh.asn.au/conference2011/

26–28 September 2011

PHAA 41st Annual Conference

Brisbane Convention Centre, Queensland
<http://www.phaa.net.au/41stPHAAAnnualConference.php>

27–30 September 2011

8th National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Conference

Darwin Convention Centre, Darwin NT
www.natsieh.com.au

19 to 22 September 2011

National Men's Health Gathering 2011 incorporating the 6th National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Male Health Convention, the 5th National Men and Family Relationships Forum and the 9th National Men's Health Conference.

Perth, Western Australia
<http://www.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=2b7cc7f5-b090-4005-87d7-42933cd22f40>

4–5 November 2011

'Building a Child Friendly Community National Conference

Brisbane, QLD
http://www.aracy.org.au/index.cfm?pageName=events_calendar&full=0DB00A24-BB46-252D-4611AB64CEE67E68

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A4 single/double sided (Quantity supplied)
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A4 single/double sided (Quantity not supplied)
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 plus price of printing (cost recovery only)

- Bookings for advertising in the *Update* must be received two weeks prior to the deadline for submission of articles.
- Copy for inclusion must be received by the date that is the deadline for articles due to the Editor.
- Bookings for the inclusion of inserts must be received two weeks prior to the deadline for submission of articles. Contact the National Office for the information about where Inserts are to be forwarded. At least a month's notice should be given if inserts need to be printed by the Association.
- Coloured advertising – prices on application
- Prices for thicker inserts or alternate advertising arrangements can be obtained by contacting the Australian Health Promotion Association National Office – email admin@healthpromotion.org.au or phone 07 5430 2873.
- If typesetting or layout is required, additional costs will apply – please contact the Australian Health Promotion Association National Office at email or phone details above.

Welcome new members

Darley, Kellie	NSW	Wuchopperen Health Service	QLD	Larking, Katie	VIC
Davies, Clare	NSW	Berry, Narelle	SA	Loria, Catherine	VIC
Ghys, Emma	NSW	Carmo, Edilene	SA	McFarlane, Leanne	VIC
Matthews, Kimberley	NSW	Casey, Luita	SA	Patterson, Andrew	VIC
O'Callaghan, Cathy	NSW	Creaser, Jane	SA	Ritchie, Patricia	VIC
Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation	NT	Graham, Caitlin	SA	Scoble, Jane	VIC
Humrick, Kylie	NT	Jarvis, Sarah Ann	SA	Slater, Colleen	VIC
Williams, Ayrle	NT	Sheppard, Gabby	SA	Stevenson, Katrina	VIC
Bebbington, Alison	QLD	Van Pelt, Penny	SA	Tafe, Victoria	VIC
Bertram, Linda	QLD	Barns, Sally	TAS	Teakle, Tara	VIC
Bligh, Anna	QLD	van Wyk, Audrey	TAS	Vass, Joanna	VIC
Bono, Marissa	QLD	Andrews, Sally	VIC	Yarrowonga Community Health Centre	VIC
Cash, Tracee	QLD	Bajayo, Rachael	VIC	Adam, Caitlyn	WA
Connolly, Belinda	QLD	Batsas-Hill, Kimberly	VIC	Baker, Samantha	WA
Fuenzalida, Lorena	QLD	Brasher, Tiffany	VIC	Barker, Amy	WA
Gardiner, Bernard	QLD	Brennan, Jane	VIC	Bayens, Sarah	WA
Horner, Judith	QLD	Caruso, Victoria	VIC	Birinxhikaj, Mimoza	WA
Johnson, Julie	QLD	Cavender, Ben	VIC	Brazier, Sarah	WA
Johnson, Rebecca	QLD	CEIPS Ltd	VIC	Corlett, Denise	WA
Lawson, Mary	QLD	Churchill, Ruth	VIC	Giblett, Amber	WA
Makepeace, Sarah	QLD	Colac Area Health	VIC	Glasfurd, Sophie	WA
Muscat, Melody	QLD	Continence Foundation of Australia	VIC	Joyce, Daniella	WA
Nash, Heidi	QLD	Darebin City Council	VIC	Ledger, Melissa	WA
Panaretos, Ellen	QLD	Delroy, Kathryn	VIC	Pestana, Jade	WA
Payne, Cynthia	QLD	Dobbins, Madeleine	VIC	Pring, Peta	WA
Rachele, Jerome	QLD	Dooley, Rachael	VIC	Riek, Abraham Chol	WA
Ringer, Erikka	QLD	Fleming, Michelle	VIC	Shaw, Katie	WA
Robinson, Erin	QLD	Fletcher, Cassandra	VIC	Sweetman, Marissa	WA
Sharpe, Kylie	QLD	Francis, Louise	VIC	Thompson, Kim	WA
Snowball, Katharine	QLD	Gatto, Catherine	VIC	Walsh, Brooke	WA
Tardent, Josephine	QLD	Johnson, Britt	VIC		
Trevillian, Stephanie	QLD	Johnson, Anna	VIC		

This issue of *Update* was edited by Louise Baldwin.

Articles appearing in the Australian Health Promotion *Update* do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Health Promotion Association. Contributions are welcome and should be sent to:

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