

If you are interested in applying for an academic post but are not sure where to start or need help coming up with an idea for a research project, then please free to read the list of current research projects at both the University of Melbourne and Monash University.



## Current research projects

### Chronic Disease

#### **PEACH study - Patient Engagement and Coaching for Health: an intensive treatment intervention for patients with Type 2 Diabetes in disadvantaged communities**

Principal Investigator(s): D Young, J Furler, C Walker, M Vale, J Best, L Segal & T Dunning

Total Grant: \$499,263

Awarded by: National Health and Medical Research Council

Duration: 2005-2008

Summary Paragraph: This project is a cluster randomised controlled trial that aims to determine the effectiveness of a patient-focused method for chronic disease self-management (COACH program) in order to achieve intensive treatment goals for Type 2 Diabetes in a general practice setting.  
[www.peach.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.peach.unimelb.edu.au)

#### **Stepping up: Perceptions of insulin initiation in general practice**

Principal Investigator(s): J Furler, C Mathieson & F Duffy

Total Grant: \$24,994

Awarded by: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners National Research Committee, Cardiovascular Research Grant in General Practice

Duration: 2007-2008

Summary Paragraph: The aim of this study is Type 2 Diabetes (T2D) is very common, and causes a lot of illness in the community, particularly from complications related to heart and blood vessel diseases. There are good clinical guidelines for managing T2D, and mostly it is managed in general practice. Evidence suggests more people should be on insulin treatment

and that they ought to begin this earlier in the course of diabetes as a way of preventing complications. Yet despite this, it seems that small numbers of people with T2D progress to insulin treatment either early enough or at all. Our qualitative interview study aims to understand more clearly the reasons behind this by exploring the perceptions of GPs, patients and diabetes educators about the process of initiating insulin in general practice.

**Cardiovascular risk factors amongst Indo-Australians with Type 2 Diabetes: are there any evidence-based gaps in management?**

Principal Investigator(s): M Hussain, M Pirotta & N Sulaiman

Total Grant: \$24,750

Awarded by: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

Duration: 2006-2007

Summary Paragraph: The aims of this project are to explore any gaps in evidence based management of Type 2 diabetes amongst Indo-Australians and GPs' perceptions and awareness of ethnic and lifestyle risk factors of Indo-Australian patients.

**A peer-led self-management diabetes prevention program for Turkish and Arabic speaking communities**

Principal Investigator(s): N Sulaiman, D Young, J Furler, J Best, E Hadj, M Graco, D O'Connor & S Hunt

Total Grant: \$44,900

Awarded by: Diabetes Australia

Duration: 2005-2006

Summary Paragraph: The aim of this study is to develop and evaluate a culturally appropriate intervention to prevent Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) in the Turkish and Arabic speaking communities. These communities have a high prevalence of risk factors for diabetes, including obesity and physical inactivity and a high prevalence of T2DM and impaired glucose tolerance.

**Hospital Admission Risk Program: Evidence-based Asthma Model Project**

Principal Investigator(s): N Sulaiman, C Winter, ST Liaw, W McDonald, A Bourke, M McKinnon & K Thitchener

Total Grant: \$645,480

## **Mental Health**

### **The diamond cohort study- examining depressive symptoms in primary care**

Principal Investigator(s): J Gunn, H Herrman, G Gilchrist, K Hegarty, M Kyrios & D Pond

Total Grant: \$549,500

Awarded by: National Health and Medical Research Council

Duration: 2007-2009

Summary Paragraph: This study builds upon the NHMRC funded Diagnosis, Management and Outcomes of Depression in Primary Care (*diamond*) - a longitudinal study. The aim of this project is to explore the patient characteristics and health service use patterns of patients who experience persistent major depression with patients who experience a single episode of depression in a 3-year period.  
[www.diamond.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.diamond.unimelb.edu.au)

### **Women's Evaluation of a randomised controlled trial for Abuse and Violence in General Practice (WEAVE)**

Principal Investigator(s): K Hegarty, J Gunn, A Taft, G Feder, J Astbury & S Brown

Total Grant: \$654,525

Awarded by: National Health and Medical Research Council

Duration: 2007-2009

Summary Paragraph: This study will evaluate a brief counseling intervention for abused women attending general practice using a randomised controlled trial. The primary aim of the intervention is to increase abused women's safety behaviours and planning and improve their mental health and quality of life.

### **RE-ORDER - Re-organising care for depression and related disorders in the Australian primary health care setting**

Principal Investigator(s): J Gunn, K Hegarty, R Hurworth, G Gilchrist, D Pierce, F Griffiths, G Blashki, K Griffiths, C Dowrick, D Pond, C Mihalopoulos, M Kyrios & H Herrman

Total Grant: \$867,005

Awarded by: Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute

Duration: 2005-2008

Summary Paragraph: The RE-ORDER project is aimed at re-examining the way in which people

experiencing depression are cared for in the community. The research aims to: apply complexity theory and the model of the complex adaptive system to our existing research data gathered from patients and practitioners in order to identify the minimum specifications for effective primary mental health care, to put these minimum specifications into practice and monitor the impact on patient and practice outcomes.

[www.reorder.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.reorder.unimelb.edu.au)

### **Optimising the Primary Mental Health Care Workforce in Australia**

Principal Investigator(s): G Blashki, J Gunn, C Mihalopoulos & J Pirkis

Total Grant: \$194,939

Awarded by: Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute

Duration: 2006-2007

Summary Paragraph: The study aims to develop an evidence based policy relevant report on how best to optimize our primary mental health care workforce in Australia.

### **What is the place of generalism in the 2020 primary care team**

Principal Investigator(s): J Gunn, R Kokanovic, C Pope & J Lathlean

Total Grant: \$194,991

Awarded by: Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute

Duration: 2006-2007

Summary Paragraph: Over the past one hundred years, the Australian health care system has been founded on a generalist approach. This research will involve a systematic synthesis of existing evidence to identify the strengths and limitations of a generalist approach. The synthesis will be used to inform policy and practice.

### ***diamond* Consortium**

Principal Investigator(s): J Gunn, H Herrman, K Hegarty, G Blashki, J Richards, P Chondros, D Pond, M Kyrios, A Diamond, I Wilson, B McGrath, C Riess, J Pirkis, I Ozols, T Dawson, D Howard, J Lumley, S Brown, R Small, A Taft, J Fisher, H Rowe, M Annells & R Nunn. The *diamond* Consortium currently has over 67 members.

Total Grant: \$450,000

Awarded by: *beyondblue* The Victorian Centre for Excellence in Depression and Related Disorders

Duration: 2004-2007

Summary Paragraph: The Consortium brings together a multi-disciplinary team with not only expertise in complex primary care and mental health research and evaluation across the lifecycle, but also clinical expertise and links to other service providers to build mental health research and service capacity in Victoria. Consortium members will work in partnership to coordinate and communicate research activities across organisations (community, health and government) and research groups in order to identify and develop models of care that provide better health outcomes for people experiencing depression.  
[www.diamond.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.diamond.unimelb.edu.au)

**Reducing Suicide Risk in Men Through General Practice (The SIM Study)**

Principal Investigator(s): G Blashki, J Pirkis, J Gunn, J Kroschel, I Ozols & J Day

Total Grant: \$99,943

Awarded by: *beyondblue* The Victorian Centre for Excellence in Depression and Related Disorders

Duration: 2006-2007

Summary Paragraph: This study aims to develop a training course on the assessment and management of suicide risk in men who present to general practice and to evaluate the impact of this training on GP knowledge, attitudes and competence in the assessment and management of suicide risk in men.

**Re-ORDER (Re-organising care for Depression & Related Disorders in the Australian Primary Care Setting) - Tasmanian and Cross Cultural Component**

Principal Investigator(s): J Gunn, R Kokanovic, C Dowrick, H Herrman, E Hansen & J Furler

Total Grant: \$273,051

Awarded by: Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute

Duration: 2006-2007

Summary Paragraph: This study builds upon the **re-order** project, which aims to inform a change in the way we think about, organise and deliver depression care in Australian primary care. This phase of the study will elicit views on the influence of cultural factors in determining the personal experience, interpretation and clinical presentation of depression, in order to develop culturally appropriate primary care service models.

**Diagnosis, Management and Outcomes of Depression in Primary Care (*diamond*) - a longitudinal study**

Principal Investigator(s): J Gunn, H Herrman, K Hegarty, G Blashki, D Pond & M Kyrios

Total Grant: \$456,438

Awarded by: National Health and Medical Research Council

Duration: 2004-2007

Summary Paragraph: The *diamond* study aims to explore the patient, practitioner and systems factors affecting the diagnosis, management and outcomes of depression in Australian primary care. Patients will be recruited to this year long longitudinal study via 30 general practices across Victoria.  
[www.diamond.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.diamond.unimelb.edu.au)

### **Future medical decision-making for older people**

Principal Investigator(s): K Robins-Browne & K Hegarty

Total Grant: \$15,676 (GPET); \$9,983 (RACGP)

Awarded by: General Practice Education and Training (GPET); Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)

Duration: 2004-2007

Summary Paragraph: The project aims to describe the knowledge and attitudes of general practice patients, aged 65 years and over, to plan for future medical decision-making. These are plans people make expressing their preferences for or against particular treatments which come into effect if they are temporarily or permanently incompetent and unable to express a treatment preference.

### **Consumer evaluation of intervention guidelines for intimate partner abuse and depression in general practice**

Principal Investigator(s): K Hegarty, A Taft, G Gilchrist & R Parker

Total Grant: \$50,000

Awarded by: *beyondblue* Victorian Centre of Excellence in Depression and Related Disorders

Duration: 2006

Summary Paragraph: The study aims to evaluate the international consensus partner abuse guidelines on whole of family care in general practice from a consumer perspective and describe how partner abuse affects women's development of depression and perception of their mental health care in the primary and secondary sectors. A qualitative approach will be used with focus groups and interviews of survivors of partner abuse.

### **Disclosure and attitudes to lesbians: outcomes in General Practice (DIALOG)**

Principal Investigator(s): R McNair, K Hegarty & A Taft

Total Grant: \$4,996

Awarded by: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

Duration: 2004-2006

Summary Paragraph: DIALOG is designed to develop an understanding of the doctor-patient relationship that forms between non-heterosexual women and their usual general practitioner, in particular, the issue of whether disclosure of lesbian sexuality within the consultation occurs and whether disclosure or not effects the doctor-patient relationship and the perceived quality of care.

**Management of Depression in general practice 2 project (MOD2)**

Principal Investigator(s): H McGarry, K Hegarty, J Gunn, M Pirotta, C Johnson, G Blashki, D Pierce & C Wu

Total Grant: \$7,000

Awarded by: *diamond* Consortium

Duration: 2005-2006

Summary Paragraph: This project aims to explore the methods general practitioners use to treat people with depression and whether they have changed, particularly since the introduction of government initiatives aimed at improving mental health care. The project focusses on changes in the number of GPs trained in mental health care, whether the use of psychological treatments has increased and whether training influences use of these treatments.

**Managing alcohol issues in general practice: how prepared are Victorian GP registrars?**

Principal Investigator(s): P Grinzi

Total Grant: \$5,271

Awarded by: General Practice Education and Training

Duration: 2005-2006

Summary Paragraph: The project aims to answer the question, "How well equipped are our future GPs to manage patients with alcohol-related problems?"

**Primary Care Evidence-Based Psychological Interventions (PEP)**

Principal Investigator(s): G Blashki, G Meadows, S Davidson, L Piterman, B Tonge, F Judd, D Clarke, H Piterman, J Gunn, A Diamond, A Tylee, G Groom, S Duncan, B Forde & H Morgan

Total Grant: \$300,000

Awarded by: *beyondblue* The Victorian Centre for Excellence in Depression and Related Disorders

Duration: 2004-2006

Summary Paragraph: The PEP study aims to better understand how psychological interventions can be integrated into general practice, how best to train GPs in Cognitive Behavioural Strategies, whether patients benefit in terms of objective clinical measures and how consumers and carers experience psychological care provided by their GPs.

**Substance-Using Mothers and depression: a Multi professional InTervention (SUMMIT)**

Principal Investigator(s): S Nicolson, G Gilchrist, P Moore & M Galbally

Total Grant: \$50,000

Awarded by: *beyondblue* Victorian Centre of Excellence in Depression and Related Disorders

Duration: 2006

Summary Paragraph: The pilot study will interview pregnant drug users pre and postnatally about their experience of care and their perception of care needs, undertake case studies with their service providers to ascertain barriers and facilitators to care and review the literature on interventions to reduce depression among pregnant drug users. The findings from the research will inform the development of an inter-professional intervention to reduce depression among drug-dependent pregnant women.

**Youth health**

**Health risk screening and counselling of adolescents in primary care: a cluster randomised controlled trial**

Principal Investigator(s): L Sanci, A Shiell, G Patton, J Pirkis, K Hegarty, E Patterson, P Chondros & S Sawyer

Total Grant: \$10,000 (Stream 2), \$553,531 (Stream 3)

Awarded by: Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute

Duration: 2005-2008

Summary Paragraph: This research program will address the strategic priority of innovation in organisation and linkages within the primary health care sector in relation

to preventive health care for young people.

**Health risk screening of adolescents in primary care: a cluster randomised controlled trial**

Principal Investigator(s): L Sancı, J Pirkis, S Sawyer & G Patton

Total Grant: \$499,752

Awarded by: Australian Health Minister's Advisory Committee - Priority Driven Research Program

Duration: 2005-2010

Summary Paragraph: This study will test a primary care intervention aimed at reducing harm to young people from high-risk behaviour. It involves a general practice system for screening youth aged 13 to 24 years for health risks, such as tobacco, alcohol and other substance use, dangerous driving, unprotected sex and mental disorders, and providing counselling or referral options.

**PANACHE - Practice Nurse Adolescent Clinics for Health Evaluation**

Principal Investigator(s): K Hegarty, R Parker, L Sancı, E Patterson, G Patton & C Pearce

Total Grant: \$90,294

Awarded by: Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute

Duration: 2006-2007

Summary Paragraph: This study will provide evidence on the acceptability of practice nurse led clinics to general practitioners, young people and their parents as well as practical information (economic and organisational) about setting up and running these clinics.

**Development and testing of a tool to identify youth at risk of sexually transmitted infections in primary care**

Principal Investigator(s): L Sancı, M Chen, S Sawyer, D Mazza, J Hocking, M Wills & D Henning

Total Grant: \$83,295

Awarded by: Department of Human Services

Duration: 2006-2007

Summary Paragraph: This research will result in the development of a tool that can be used in primary care to identify youth at risk for sexually transmitted infections. The tool will be applicable to a wide range of primary care settings and it will be evaluated for its acceptability and its effectiveness at increasing screening for chlamydia.

**Re-orientating general practice towards preventative mental health care for adolescents, utilising the practice nurse: a pilot study**

Principal Investigator(s): L Sanci, K Hegarty, E Patterson, J Pirkis, S Sawyer & G Patton

Total Grant: \$75,000

Awarded by: *beyondblue* Victorian Centre of Excellence in Depression and Related Disorders

Duration: 2006

Summary Paragraph: The objectives of this study are to design and pilot: firstly, a practice nurse led intervention for improving the pathways to care for youth at high risk of depression or related disorders; and secondly, a continuous quality improvement cycle for achieving the organisational change necessary to support preventive mental health care for youth in the general practice setting.



**Current research projects**

Anstey K, Booth H, Brown L, Browning C, Butterworth P, Byles J, Cumming R, Harding A, Healy J, Luszcz M, Mitchell P, Steel D. **Learning how to age well from Australian Longitudinal Studies of Ageing** NHMRC/ARC

Bigby C, Iacono T, Torr J. **“Alzheimer's disease and Down syndrome - Pathways of care”** Alzheimers Australia Research Limited.

Browning C, Green S, Harris C, McKenzie J, Mortimer D, O'Connor D, Workman B. **Evidence-based care of people with dementia** NHMRC

Browning C, Kendig H. **Functional ageing, health and services (FAHS): A longitudinal outcomes study** NHMRC

Browning C, Kendig H, O'Connor D, Sims J, Thomas S. **Health and service pathways in older Australians** NHMRC

Browning C. **Literature Review of Factors Predictive of Successful Ageing**  
Department of Human Services

Davis R, Hamilton D, Iacono T, Koritsas S. **“Depression in people with intellectual disability”** Beyond Blue: the national depression initiative

Davis R, Iacono T, Keleher H, Koritsas S, McVilly K, Walkley J, West D. **“The development of a Health and Wellbeing Survey for People with an Intellectual Disability”** Department of Human Services (Victoria)

Dixon JB, Piterman LA, Wake MA. **Developing and implementing best practice in the detection, assessment and management of childhood obesity in general practice**, NHMRC

Feldman S. **Long term marriages and healthy successful aging**. Fleur Spitzer

Georgeff MP, Campbell DA, Schmidt HW, Thompson S, Webb GI. **“Intelligent Collaborative Care Management”** Australian Research Council.

Green S, Mazza D, O'Connor DA, Ellen J. **Research into patterns of care in gynaecological cancers** Cancer Australia.

Joyce C. **“Primary health care in Australia: what is its scope and what is the role of the nurse?”** National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC),

Kiropoulos L. **“Multicultural information on depression online (MIDonline): Development of an IT resource to improve depression literacy and assist in pathways to mental health care for people of CALD background”** Beyond Blue: the national depression initiative.

Krum H, Piterman L, Stewart S, Tonkin A. **“A randomised trial of telephone support for chronic heart-failure patients without access to home management programs”** National Heart Foundation of Australia.

Lawson, M, Spike, N. **“The Medical Education Study: Surveys, focus groups and interviews with students and recent graduates”** Department of Education, Science & Training.

Ling M, Pier C, Schattner P, Wainer J. **“The VMA GP registrar well-being study”** Victorian Metropolitan Alliance.

Mazza D. **“Increasing periconceptual folate use by improving the delivery and take up of preconception care”**. Shepherd Foundation

O'Connor M, Schattner P, Smith M. **Improving 'after hours' palliative care planning in urban and rural Victoria** Dept of Health and Ageing

Piterman L, Davis S, Jones K, Piterman L, Davis S, Jones K. **“The Prospect Project”** Servier Laboratories (Aust) Ltd Pty.

Piterman L, Thomas S. **“Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation and Development (PHCRED) Strategy”** Department of Health and Ageing.

Sanci L, Chen M, Sawyer S, Mazza D, Hocking J, Wills M & Henning D. **“Development and testing of a tool to identify youth at risk of sexually transmitted infections in primary care”**. Department of Human Services, Victorian Government

Scott A, Joyce JM, Humphreys JS, Guyonne R, Kalb J. **Understanding the dynamics of the medical workforce to improve NHMRC**

Spike N. **“Determining the utility of the mini-clinical evaluation exercise as a summative assessment tool of clinical competence: A multi institutional perspective”** General Practice Education and Training.

Thomas S. **“Problem Gambling Risk and Protective Factors Project”** Department of Justice.

Thomas S. **“Problem gambling research and treatment centre”** Department of Justice.

**“CDM-Net A Broadband Health Network for Transforming Chronic Disease Management”** This is a CDM-Net (Chronic Disease Management) aims to trial a new approach to the management of chronic disease by demonstrating the use of broadband-based health services for monitoring and supporting care management. Monash Department of General Practice is involved with the research and evaluation component of the project; contact persons are Piterman L, Jones K.