

School of Population Health 2003 Annual Report to Faculty



Section 1: Head of School Report

The year 2003 was a milestone year in the short history of the School of Population Health because it saw the consolidation of the majority of the School's Centres and Units into two closely related buildings. Although the School was established in 2001, it took substantial planning, negotiation and time to identify, fund and fit-out our new premises. From 11 different sites across Melbourne, we are now down to our excellent new premises at **207 Bouverie St** (Photo below - left: School Administration and Executive, Centre for the Study of Health and Society, Program Evaluation Unit, Centre for International Mental Health, Diabetes Vaccine Development Centre, and our MCRI collaboration Vaccine and Immunisation Research Group) and our other major locations at **723 Swanston St** (top right: Centre for Genetic Epidemiology and Epidemiology and Biostatistics Unit), **The Royal Women's Hospital** (bottom right: Key Centre for Women's Health in Society), and **Melbourne Sexual Health Centre** just across Lincoln Square on Swanston St (not shown).

In moving to these new locations, we acknowledge the traditional owners of the land upon which the School of Population Health now conducts its business, the Wurundjeri people and the Kulin nation. This acknowledgement has special significance for us, and that is demonstrated by the School's commitment to Koori health, and to Koori leadership and participation in our research, in our teaching, and in our contribution to Koori community development.



Most important to the establishment of the School were Richard Larkins (former Dean of MDHS), Stuart McIntyre (Dean of Arts), William Hart and others in Victoria's Department of Human Services. Warwick Anderson (now at University of Wisconsin at Madison in the US) and David Dunt with input from others contributed to the development of the model. The Department of Human Services provided generous support to assist the establishment and operation of the School.

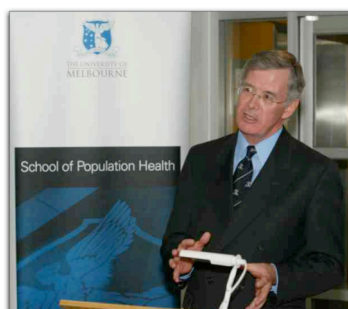
Encouragement, collaboration and support came to us from Gordon Clunie as Richard Larkin's predecessor as Dean, James Angus (Richard's successor), from Rob Moodie of VicHealth, and Melbourne University colleagues Jim McCluskey, Daine Alcorn, Jim Best, Graham Brown, Glenn Bowes, Joan McMeeken and Kim Bennell, Colin Masters, Judith Parker, Doris Young, Peter Deutschmann of AIHI and many others. Ian Anderson and Doreen Rosenthal, as School Deputy Heads have been especially important for their wise counsel and support. Collaboration and infrastructure support from Bob Williamson and Anne Cronin of Murdoch Children's Research Institute and Dale Fisher at Royal Women's Hospital have been crucial.

Highlights of 2003

- In 2003, our research budget was over \$12 million, and we produced over 93 refereed journal articles, 1 book and 14 major reports.
- The Diabetes Vaccine Development Centre was established within the School of Population Health in 2003. The DVDC is a joint initiative of the National Health and

Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and the New York based Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF). The DVDC has as its mission, to accelerate the development of one or more vaccines that would prevent or delay the progress of early onset diabetes, aiming to have clinical proof of concept in 3 – 5 years, with the studies conducted to a standard acceptable to an industrial partner. Although officially launched by the then Federal Minister for Health, Senator Kay Patterson and the Chief Scientific Officer of the JDRF, Dr Robert Goldstein in mid March, 2003, the DVDC did not commence effective operations until the newly appointed CEO, Dr David Irving, took up his position in late May. The DVDC is governed by a Board representing its major stakeholders, the NHMRC and the JDRF and including internationally recognized scientists with expertise in the fields of diabetes and commercial vaccine development. The Chair of the Board, Dr Hugh Niall participates actively with the Executive team of Dr David Irving (CEO) and Ms Mary Joy Gleeson (Centre Liaison Manager) in the day to day operational activities of the DVDC. Following a project review in March of last year, two leading projects were identified. While it had been envisaged that both projects would be initiated by the end of 2003, both were delayed for various reasons. Activities to date have therefore focused on negotiations aimed at resolving the issues. Following project reviews conducted in March of this year (2004), it was apparent that both projects had made significant progress and it is anticipated that the DVDC will be able to enter into agreements with these partners within the next 6 months.

- Successful tender for a new VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Social Wellbeing that is being established in 2004. This will bring VicHealth support of \$900,000 per year for the next 5 years and then further support over the subsequent 4 years as the Centre moves towards independence from VicHealth.
- Successful review and high commendation of the VicHealth Koori Health Research and Community Development Unit within CSHS.
- Appointment of Professor Jeremy Anderson, Foundation Chair in Epidemiology and Biostatistics.
- Appointment of Professor Doreen Rosenthal AO as Director of the KCWHS and Deputy Head of School of Population Health following A/Professor Ian Anderson's initial two-year rotation in that role.
- The EBU moved to 723 Swanston St and this has led to increased collaboration with CGE. The major new developments within the EBU arise from success in two major NHMRC project grants awarded to Dr Shyamali Dharmage and Professor Anderson, respectively. Thorough re-evaluation of current EBU teaching program, with particular emphasis on post-graduate epidemiology teaching, with a view to developing a new strategic plan for epidemiology teaching over the next two years.
- A new Scientific Advisory Committee for the KCWHS was established under the chair of former State Government Minister Ms Caroline Hogg and met for the first time in August 2003.
- After 12 years together, the Program Evaluation Unit and the Health Economics Unit (of Monash University) returned to their respective universities and the Centre for Health Program Evaluation, which was the overarching organisation, ceased to exist from 30 June 2003. The two units continue to undertake collaborative research and teaching activities.
- NHMRC Population Health Career Development Awards to Dr Jane Pirkis and Dr Margaret Kelahe, both of PEU. Dr Kelahe was also awarded a Victorian Health Promotion Foundation Public Health Research Fellowship which provides a valuable supplement to her NHMRC award.
- Dr Jane Pirkis co-authored the National Mental Health Plan (2003-2008), which will guide national mental health policy developments in Australia for the next five years.
- Dr Shyamali Dharmage (EBU), NHMRC post-doctoral training award.
- Successful transfer of administrative home of Melbourne Sexual Health Centre to Bayside Health (Alfred Hospital) under Professor Kit Fairley.
- Aboriginal Health CRC established in new form from 1 July, with A/Professor Ian Anderson as Research Director.



School of Population Health at a glance

- 101 PhD students of whom 27 were new enrolments in 2003.
- 247 award coursework students, including 130 new students in 2003.
- 140 Master of Public Health students, including 63 new in 2003 (12 new from overseas).
- 25 Postgraduate Diploma and Master of Social Health students (16 new in 2003).
- 40 Postgraduate Diploma and Master of Epidemiology students
- 31 Postgraduate Certificate, Diploma and Master of Biostatistics students
- 11 Master of International Health students (9 new from overseas).
- SPH local postgraduate student enrolments (expressed as EFTSU) have increased by 56% between 2002 and 2003. Most growth occurred in the Master of Public Health program, with a 143% increase in local enrolments.
- Research income \$12.38 million (ranked first in Faculty)

Publications – DEST profile

Centre/Unit	2002	2003	% Change
	Total (Weighted)	Total (Weighted)	
CGE	4.56	6.66	46%
PEU	2.57	3.99	56%
CIMH	0.00	0.92	
CSHS	10.80	16.08	49%
EBU	1.02	1.35	33%
KCWHS	22.05	18.17	-18%
Sexual Health Unit	1.81	4.67	159%
Total	42.80	51.84	21%

Note: 2003 figures un-audited & may change before submission to DEST

Photo Legend: Images from the official launch of the School of Population Health at 207 Bouverie St, 14 August 2003. (from top), Professor Alan Gilbert, Vice-Chancellor; Professor Richard Larkins, former Dean of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences; Professors Gilbert and Larkins jointly unveil the plaque to signify the launch; Professor Terry Nolan, Foundation Head, School of Population Health; (left to right) Professors Larkins, Gilbert and Nolan, Dr Robert Hall, Chief Health Officer, Victorian Government's Department of Human Services, and Professor James Angus, Dean, Faculty of MDHS.

Section 2: School of Population Health Committees and Staffing

School of Population Health Principal Committees

		Chair
Management & Resources		
	DPH Executive	Prof Terry Nolan
	Strategic Planning	Prof Terry Nolan
	Communication & Dissemination	Prof Jeremy Anderson
	Finance & Resources	Prof Terry Nolan
	Information Technology	Dr David Irving
	Centre Administrators	Mr Mark Raphael
	EHS	Prof Terry Nolan
	Social Affairs	Ms Jenny Burchill
Academic		
	Higher Degree Research	Dr Mark Jenkins
	Postgraduate Studies	Dr Catherine Bennett
	Undergraduate Studies	Dr Marilys Guillemin
	Research	Prof Terry Nolan
	International Affairs	A/Prof Harry Minas
	Health Ethics Advisory Group	Prof Jeremy Anderson
	General Practice Liaison	Prof Jeremy Anderson

Staff numbers

	Academic & Research	General	Total
School Administration	2	10	12
Centre for Genetic Epidemiology	26	9	35
Centre for International Mental Health	3	3	6
Centre for the Study of Health and Society	31	3	34
Diabetes Vaccine Development Centre	0	2	2
Epidemiology and Biostatistics Unit	9	1	10
Key Centre for Women's Health in Society	16	3	19
Program Evaluation Unit	18	2	20
Sexual Health Unit	3	0	3
Total	108	33	141

Resignations of Academic Staff

- Associate Professor Stephen Farish (Epidemiology and Biostatistics Unit) resigned to take up a position in the Department of Medicine (St Vincent's Hospital) in February 2003.
- Dr Jisheng Cui resigned from his research position in CGE to take up a new position at CSIRO in Mathematics and Statistics in September 2003.

Section 3: Teaching and Learning

International Mental Health Leadership Program (iMHLP)

Thirteen Fellows from a number of South East Asian countries came to Melbourne for 4 weeks in March and two weeks in July as part of the International Mental Health Leadership Program conducted by the Centre for International Mental Health. Two fellows were sponsored by WHO, Geneva. Two Australian students and nine of the iMHLP fellows enrolled in the Master of International Mental Health course and are due to graduate in 2004.

New Advanced Medical Science Unit

The Centre for the Study of Health and Society has developed a new AMS unit, Social Health, to complement its popular existing unit, Medical Humanities. The overall objectives of the new unit focus on issues of health and health care in their social context. Social health research investigates issues such as:

- how people in the community understand their medical conditions;
- how patients experience various forms of medical treatment, including hospitalisation, surgery, medication, visiting a GP, and so on;
- the ways in which doctors understand and interact with their patients;
- how doctors are influenced by the social, cultural and institutional context of medicine;
- medical students' experience of medical education; and
- people's use and understanding of complementary therapies.

Students in the Social Health Unit usually undertake a project involving some form of data collection or fieldwork, such as conducting interviews or focus groups, or doing structured observation. Projects of this sort require ethics approval, and training in the ethics approval process is part of the unit.

Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Professor Jeremy Anderson and Dr Lyle Gurrin have developed and written a new Introductory Statistics course for Masters of Public Health students. Dr Gurrin has written new courses in Bayesian Statistics for the Masters of Biostatistics, and in Multivariate Statistics for Masters of Public Health. Professor Anderson has taken on responsibility for medical undergraduate teaching in Evidence-Based Practice from Professor Don Campbell, when he left the Royal Melbourne Hospital to move to Monash University. Further development of this program, including extension into the pre-clinical medical undergraduate curriculum and enhanced integration with clinical teaching, will occur over coming years. Unit staff remain actively engaged in the review and development of Health Practice teaching.

Women's Health

Short Courses and Professional Development training were offered in:

- Adolescent Health Program Planning, 27 January – 14 February
- Psychological Practice in Women's Health, 24 – 28 February
- SAGRIC Indonesian Women's Health and Family Welfare Project Study Tour, 14 – 25 July
- Health Program Planning and Evaluation, 14 – 17 October
- Gender and Reproductive Health, 17 November – 2 December
- Masters/Graduate Diploma of Women's Health, Intensive (for Japanese Health Professionals) in Women's Health, Oyama Japan, August 2003.

Health Services Evaluation

Jenni Livingston is working on the development of a multimedia teaching and learning module in the area of Evaluation of Mental Health Programs and Services. This project is in partnership with the Centre for Rural Mental Health and LaTrobe University, Bendigo and St Vincent's Mental Health Service. The module is designed for both award course and non-award workplace-based course use.

Helen Jordan is developing a similar module on Environmental Health Services Evaluation which will also be accompanied by train the trainer support. This project is in partnership with the Department of Human Services, Latrobe University (Bendigo), Swinburne University of Technology, and the Australian Institute of Environmental Health (Vic). The EPA (Vic) and a representative of the National Environmental Health Indigenous Forum are also involved in the project.

The PEU's program to adapt face-to-face courses and subjects for on-line delivery is progressing well, with the completion of the subject Methods for Evaluating Health Services 1 by Margaret Kelaher. Cath Francis is currently documenting the on-campus subject, Health Program Evaluation 2 to add to our two other online subjects, Health Program Evaluation 1 and Health Services Research 1. Further subjects will be added to this popular array as time, funds and expertise become available. Funding for the current work on these teaching modules has been through PHERP 1 and 2 Innovation Grants.

The two short courses in Health Program Evaluation continue to attract enrolments from health professionals working in a variety of fields. The short courses provide an opportunity for very practical, workplace oriented learning about evaluation, with students also valuing access to evaluation expertise and opportunities to network. More than 35 students enrolled in the short courses in 2003 for both the on-campus and off-campus modes.

Health and Ageing Postgraduate Studies Program: The advanced subject Economic Evaluation II was offered for the second time in 2003 with 8 students enrolled. The Program Evaluation subject is due for delivery during the 2004 summer semester and the Introduction to Health Economics and Economic Evaluation subject during semester 1, 2004.

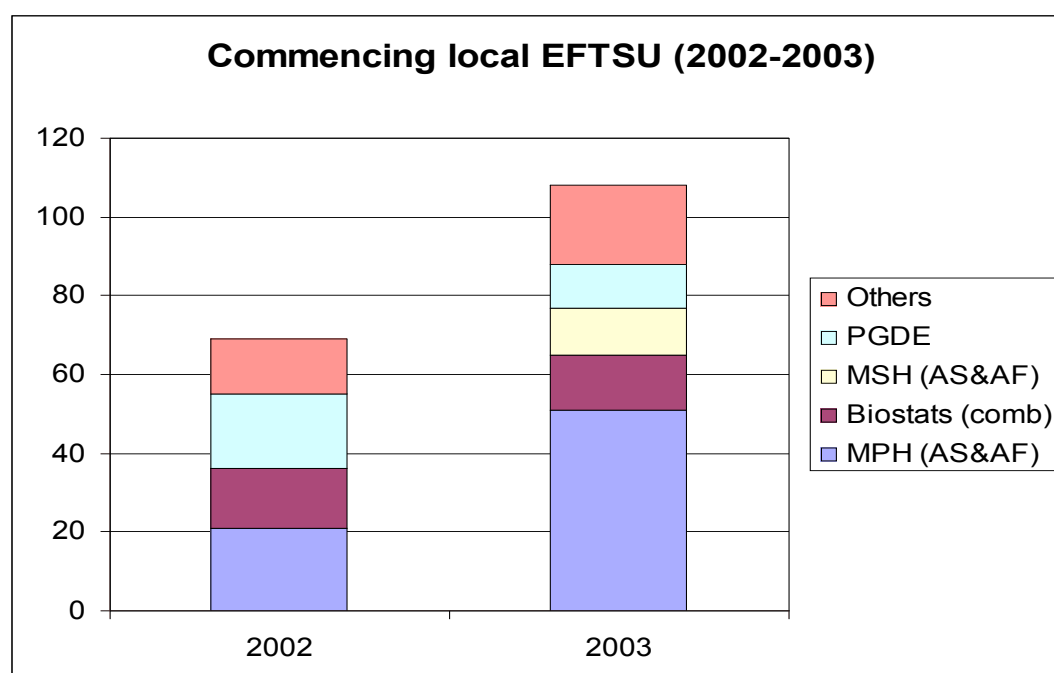
Other teaching developments: Negotiations are currently underway between the Program Evaluation Unit and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing to provide training workshops in Health Program Evaluation. These workshops are additional to the postgraduate subject in Program Evaluation delivered for the Health and Ageing Postgraduate Studies Program.

Sexual Health

The Postgraduate Certificate in Sexual Health was launched. Short course distance CDs containing courseware were sponsored by Novartis Pharmaceuticals to go to over one thousand of General Practitioners.

Postgraduate coursework local students enrolments

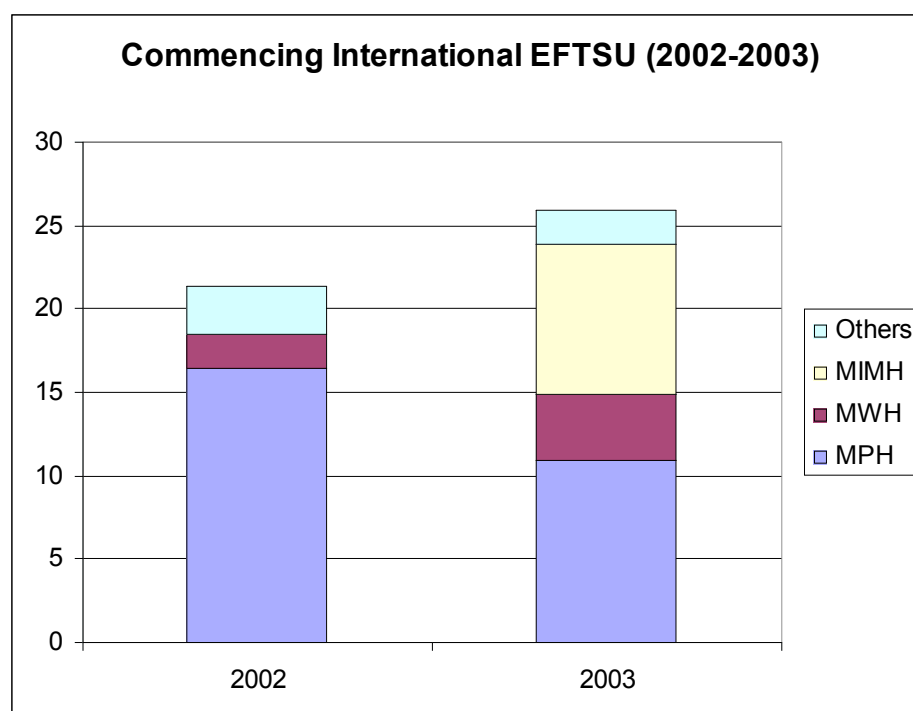
Overall, SPH local postgraduate student enrolments (expressed as EFTSU) have increased by 56% between 2002 and 2003. Most growth occurred in the Master of Public Health program, with a 143% increase in local enrolments.



Note: PGDE, Postgraduate Diploma in Epidemiology; MSH, Master of Social Health; Biostats (comb), Certificate/Diploma/Masters in Biostatistics; MPH, Master of Public Health; AS=local HECS, AF=local fee-paying.

Postgraduate coursework international student enrolments

International student enrolments also increased in 2003, despite reduced AusAID availability to our public health programs. The overall increase was largely due to the introduction of the Master of International Mental Health.



Note: MIMH, Master of International Mental Health; MWH, Master of Women's Health; MPH, Master of Public Health.

Development of SPH postgraduate academic programs

In 2003, we saw substantial consolidation of the School's academic programs, academic administration, and supporting policy. For example, formal SPH academic program policy was introduced with the postgraduate program credit policy, to be implemented in conjunction with University guidelines.

Masters by course work review

- Reviewed subject content and assessment across all SPH postgraduate programs, and allocated formal subject levels (400 to 600).
- revised all postgraduate subject outlines and learning objectives
- Subject levels used to structure academic programs, admission requirements and credit policy
- Review of course titles resulted in all but one of our graduate diplomas being re-badged as Postgraduate Diplomas

Introduction of MPH local fees

With the substantially increased enrolments seen in local MPH students in 2003, the demand saturated all available HECS places. Therefore this meant that substantially fewer HECS places would become available for the 2004 intake. To meet the anticipated demand, SPH introduced local fee-paying places to be offered in parallel with HECS places. SPH sustained the high levels of interest in the MPH program, receiving 68 applications compared with 67 in '02. SPH filled all available HECS places (n=22), and an additional 23 local fee-paying places, despite unlimited MPH HECS places being available at our partner universities.

Quality of Teaching

SPH continues to deliver excellence in teaching. In Semester 1, 2003, 80% of the 24 SPH postgraduate subjects delivered received a score of 4 or more for Question 2 on the Quality of Teaching Survey ('This subject was well taught'). A third of these scores were 4.8 or higher. The results for semester 2 were equally impressive as demonstrated in the Table.