

Chronic Disease Care in the USA: a visitor's perspective

University of California, San Francisco.

From August to December 2009 I had the good fortune to have a sabbatical as visiting professor at the Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of California, San Francisco. The focus of the sabbatical was on prevention and management of chronic diseases in primary care and I was located with Professors Tom Bodenheimer and Kevin Grumbach who are well known internationally for their work in this field and on improving primary care. It was a time of heated debate about health care reform which has since culminated in the passing of President Obama's reform package by Congress. The extent to which the package will address the enormous problems in the American health care system remains to be seen. What is clear however is that despite the huge expenditure on health services, on many tests the US health care system performs poorly. On a population basis, outcomes for people with chronic diseases are inferior to many other countries including Australia.

So why go and study chronic disease care in the US – except perhaps to learn what not to do? The answer is that in amongst the hotchpotch of health care services and financing arrangements that proliferate across the US there are examples of highly functional and innovative approaches to providing chronic disease care. Best known is Kaiser Permanente

(www.kaiserpermanente.org) which is a big provider on the west coast but with virtually no presence in the east of the country. Kaiser has approximately 8.5 million members across eight states, runs about 30 hospitals and many more health care centres, and employs or contracts thousands of staff including

many family physicians. In its unique position as both the payer and provider of services Kaiser is able to use both insurance data and clinical data systems to track system performance and proactively address issues of quality. The health service elements of Ed Wagner's chronic care model¹ – self management support, delivery system design, decision support and clinical information systems - have very much influenced the systems approach adopted by Kaiser.

Over the last fifteen years this has included case management programs (often nurse-led) for those near the top of the Kaiser pyramid but increasingly has also been focused on strengthening the systems used in routine primary care. This means active "panel management" where data systems are examined to identify patients either not receiving care or not treated to target. This is linked to both "outreach" where patients are invited to attend for care and "inreach" where patients when requesting an appointment or during an attendance are offered extra services which they need but may not have been specifically requesting. Preventive care and self management support are included in this approach. The systems approach includes an

electronic health record called Health Connect that covers about 3.2 million Kaiser members and can be used by all providers in the organization. There is also a process of actively making use of clinical practice guidelines and where possible adapting them into protocols that can be used by non physician staff.

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Kaiser is not alone in developing systems for better quality care – many of the same features are part of the concept of the “patient-centered medical home” model² which has been the subject of an evaluation by a team at the Group Health Cooperative (www.ghc.org) in Washington State. Another example of well organised and integrated service delivery models is the Geisinger Health System (www.ghc.org) in Pennsylvania.

So there are interesting and innovative models for chronic disease in the US, some of which could be used to inform our thinking here in Australia. Unfortunately for the US it is a case of both the best and the worst co-existing. While some people get access to state of the art chronic disease prevention and management, in the absence of a health care financing system that provides universal coverage, others get close to none. The success or otherwise of Barack Obama’s attempts to address that issue remain to be seen.

References

1. www.improvingchroniccare.org
2. Reid RJ, Fishman PA, Yu O et al., *Patient-Centred Medical Home Demonstration: a prospective, quasi-experimental, before and after evaluation*. Am J Managed Care 2009; 15: e71-e97.

Nick Zwar

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to this April edition of the AAAPC newsletter and thank you very much to everyone who has contributed. This newsletter highlights some of the big issues affecting primary health care and general practice at the moment. Thanks to Nick Zwar for sharing some more of his experiences from his US sabbatical and congratulations to Danielle Mazza on completion of her NICS Fellowship. We continue our feature on books of interest to or written by members of AAAPC.



I am now looking forward to the Primary Health Care Research Conference in Darwin which promises to be an exciting meeting. Hopefully we will learn more about the plans for the next phase of PHCRED funding as well as active discussion about the current reform agenda in Australia. As usual there will be a busy AAAPC program of events including the AAAPC dinner at Hanuman which my new Lonely Planet guide recommends as its pick of the Darwin restaurants.

Finally, this newsletter depends on the enthusiasm of AAAPC members wanting to share their experiences and successes with colleagues. Thank you and please keep sending me your news!

**Sarah Dennis, Centre for Primary Health Care
and Equity, UNSW**

Mission & Goals

Formed in 1983, AAAPC aims to promote & develop the discipline of general practice through:

- Encouraging originality, questioning & exploration of ideas within teaching & research environment.
- Providing a forum for exchange of information & ideas.
- Encouraging shared academic activities.
- Fostering & supporting career development in academic general practice.
- Supporting the continuing development of academic general practice

The AAAPC newsletter is published in April, July and December each year and welcomes letters to the editor and also reviews and articles about issues of general interest to the membership.

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Visit our website: www.aaagp.org

Attention Members

As a member of AAAPC, you have access to a wealth of information from amongst over 180 members!
Anytime you have information to share or a question to ask, just email: members@aaagp.org

AAAPC PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL 2010

I hope all those involved are slowly recovering from their battles with the new NHMRC RGMS and that your academic lives are returning to some sort of normality again. Welcome to the autumn edition of the AAAPC newsletter and thanks as always to Sarah Dennis and Kitty Novy for pulling it together so elegantly.

While the health reform debate has shifted its focus recently to hospitals and away from primary health care, I fear this may have inadvertently delayed decisions about the future PHCRED Strategy. The messages received from the Department of Health and Ageing reflect their desire to closely align the new Strategy with the national primary health care strategy. As President of AAAPC I have continued to express our concerns to the Department about the delay in announcing the future PHCRED Strategy and the implications it has for the many departments who rely on this important



source of funding. I only hope that they are not waiting the announcement of the primary health care strategy.

I am pleased to see a growing use of our AAAPC distribution list as an electronic forum for debate about academic primary care. Recently we have observed some interesting and sometimes fiery debate about the Ed Bateman saga and his assertion that he owns the term 'Primary Health Care'. There

has also been useful discussion about the Fields of Research terminology and poor representation of primary health care. We aim to progress this latter topic by holding a special meeting at the PHCRIS conference in Darwin as it is not quite a straightforward as it may appear. I invite other members who have a burning issue they wish to raise ignite debate through our electronic forum.

Finally, the call for nominations for the Charles Bridges-Webb Medal has been made. This important award was established to formally recognise AAAPC members who have made and will continue to make internationally recognised contributions to teaching or research in general practice and primary care. We look forward to receiving your nominations.

Prof Jon Emery

BRIDGES-WEBB MEDAL

To strengthen our commitment to fostering and supporting career development in academic general practice, AAAPC has created the Bridges-Webb award. This award is to recognise AAAPC members who have made and will continue to make international standard teaching and/or research contributions to academic activities in the general practice environment.

One award will be made annually, selected by a panel of 3 (at least one member from the executive) appointed by the President. If the nominees are deemed by the panel not to meet the criteria or be of sufficient standard then they are at liberty not to make an award. The award for 2010 will be presented at the AAAPC Annual Dinner at the Primary Health Care Research Conference

Financial members will be called to nominate potential awardees through email distribution list at least 6 weeks before the Medal is due to be awarded. The nomination should include a statement outlining how the nominee meets the prize criteria. Nomination is via online at

www.aaagp.org/BridgesWebb_medal.htm and will close on 29 May 2010 .

Criteria:

- (1) Current financial member
- (2) A significant contribution to the academic environment of general practice teaching and or research to an international competitive standard
- (3) Continuing in this environment and likely to make further contributions.

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Danielle Mazza

Associate Professor Danielle Mazza (Dept of General Practice, Monash University) celebrated the completion of her National Institute of Clinical Studies (NICS) – Hospital Contributions Fund (HCF) Fellowship at a graduation ceremony held at the Health Services Research Conference in Brisbane in Nov 2009. The NICS Fellowships which have now become NHMRC TRIP (Translating Research into Practice) Fellowships provide support and training for future leaders in knowledge translation, the science and practice of evidence implementation. These prestigious awards are acknowledged for their contribution to training a cohort of professionals within Australia who can provide leadership in health and medical research translation and implementation. The focus of Danielle's NICS Fellowship was the implementation of preconception care guidelines in general practice.

Danielle is continuing her research in implementation of preventive care with several new research projects funded in the last year. These include:

- an NHMRC partnerships project looking at implementation of guidelines to prevent cardiovascular disease led by Mark Harris on which Danielle is a CI
- a project looking at age, gender and sociodemographic issues involved in patient perceptions of preventive care in general practice

Associate Professor Danielle Mazza and Professor Paddy Phillips.



- a project developing an intervention to improve rates of HPV vaccination.

Danielle is also looking forward to the publication of the second edition of her textbook, *Women's Health in General Practice* which is scheduled for August 2010 after the first edition sold out nationally and internationally.

Details of the NHMRC TRIP Fellowships can be found at www.nhmrc.gov.au/fellows/types/granttype/career.htm#6

Although the deadline for 2010 applications has passed it is well worth reading and planning for 2011.

Primary Care Conferences Dates for your diary

National Conferences

Australian Practice Nurse Association

6-8 May 2010, Gold Coast QLD

www.corporatecommunique.com.au/apna/

PHC Research Conference

30 June - 2 July 2010, Darwin www.phcris.org.au/conference/2010/index.php

2010 GPET Convention

8-9 September 2010, Alice Springs

GP'10, The conference for General Practice

6-9 October 2010, Cairns QLD

International Conferences

Scottish School of Primary Care Conference

27-28 April 2010, Crieff, Perthshire www.sspc.ac.uk/

events/sspc_conference2010.htm

2010 International Conference on Support for Self Management of Health

11-13 May 2010, University of Stirling, Scotland.

www.2010icssmoh.com/index.php

19th WONCA World Conference

19-23 May 2010, Cancun, Mexico

www.wonca2010cancun.com/

5th World Conference of International Primary Care Respiratory Group

26-29 May 2010, Toronto www.ipcrg-toronto2010.org/

38th NAPCRG Annual Meeting

13-17 November, 2010 Seattle, Washington

Penny Abbott

Penny Abbott is a GP working at the Aboriginal Medical Service Western Sydney and as a visiting GP within Justice Health. She is currently completing a Researcher Development Fellowship with the Discipline of General Practice, University of Sydney, under the PHCRED (Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation and Development Research Development) Program. She has particular interest in chronic disease, Aboriginal health promotion and medical education.



What do you do?

I am a GP at the Aboriginal Medical Service Western Sydney. Embarrassingly, I have to admit I have been there for 18 years, despite my youthful appearance. It has been an evolving, supportive, challenging and interesting workplace with great colleagues and a forward thinking leadership. I have clinical, administrative, health promotion, GP registrar teaching and research roles there. My health promotion and research interests are mainly in the area of chronic disease, especially diabetes, heart disease and hepatitis C. The latter interest area has come about through also working for many years as a visiting GP with Justice Health, where the majority of my patients have Hepatitis C.

What attracted you to academic life/research?

Early in my career I decided to take some time off to travel and took a job as a Research Fellow with what was Sandoz Pharma in Basel, Switzerland. One of my tasks was to do literature reviews around drug side effects for the Sandoz Drug Monitoring Centre. I enjoyed it and considered pursuing research as part of my career, but got discouraged by how hard it was to get my (truly fascinating) work published.

However during 10 years of working in the Aboriginal community-controlled sector I

increasingly realised how important research is. In particular, I felt we needed more grass roots level evaluation, research and dissemination of the results of the health promotion activities we undertake in Aboriginal medical services. After completing an MPH with the University of NSW to get me up to speed, I went on to do an RDP with the PHCRED Program in 2007-2008. This provided the skills, confidence and network I needed to start up as a GP researcher. At the moment I am managing a couple of research projects at the AMS, as well as a project promoting timely immunisation for young children.

Any tips for others?

I think that becoming engaged with other primary care researchers and developing links at the university level is quite inspiring and the way to go when starting out - It's certainly a way to meet great people!

AAAPC MEMBERS AT MEETINGS



PHCRED Queensland Research Informing Policy Forum: building on success

Despite the downpour, over one hundred participants attended the 3rd Annual Research Informing Policy Forum hosted by PHCRED Queensland in Brisbane on 2 March. The event attracts a wide range of professionals working in primary health care from private, public and non-government agencies. This year the focus was on building greater inter-sectoral approaches to improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders.

Vicki Murphy, the Assistant Secretary, Service Access Programs Branch of the Primary & Ambulatory Care Division, gave the keynote address and outlined the key principles of reform on the eve of the Hospital and Health Care Reform Strategy announcement, the largest initiative since the inception of Medicare. Other speakers also outlined their expectations of the potential impact of the imminent reform package. Speakers including Director-General of Queensland Health, Mick Reid and Director of the Queensland Social Services Council outlined their priorities for closer professional collaborations with the primary health care sector.

Ms Murphy highlighted some of the difficulties faced by policy-makers trying to locate research on primary health care that is relevant to the Australian context. Clearly

integrating every piece of research into policy or practice is impossible and impractical but that working in partnership to determine priorities and shared interests seems a sensible approach.

Continuing the theme of translating research into policy Dr Nick Lennox, Murray Watt (MP) and Dr Cindy Shannon, all provided examples of how research is incorporated into policy when the drivers for action align. They talked about opportunity, political timing and traction that may emerge from collaborating across sectors.

Themes raised in the Forum for future research collaborations were workshopped. Professor Richard Murray (JCU) described this as an important undertaking that reflected the resource and opportunity investment of the Forum. He said that he believed the event was a hallmark of the collaborative activities in PHCRED Queensland and by including a commitment to developing a rapid research summary on themes that emerged from the day was one tangible outcome that captures our commitment to building the Primary Health Care evidence base.

Lily Cheung, Communications Officer,
PHCRED Queensland, lcheung@usc.edu.au

THE 2010 PRIMARY HEALTH CARE (PHC) RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Primary health care research and health reform: Improving care.

Primary Health Care Research Conference

Register Now as the Early bird registration closes May 14th 2010.

AAAGP Distinguished Papers

AAAPC will again be selecting two distinguished papers to be presented during the AAAPC plenary session. We received 29 abstracts with each being reviewed by 2 reviewers from the AAAPC committee.

First Time Presenters

If you are presenting a paper for the first time you are eligible to be judged by the AAAPC research prize committee. The person judged as preparing and delivering the 'Best Paper Presentation' will receive a certificate and a Book Voucher valued at \$250. The award will be announced at closure of the conference.

If you wish to be judged for this prize please download and complete the form below and fax or post back to AAAPC. Upon receipt of confirmation of receiving your form you will be deemed 'included' in the list of nominees. [AAAPC First time presenter registration form](#)

www.phcris.org.au/conference/2010/prizes.php



Darwin Convention Centre

AAAPC POSTER RECEPTION

AAAPC have sponsored the poster reception on Wednesday from 5–7pm. Join us for drinks and nibbles as you view posters and chat with the authors.

AAAPC AGM

Our AGM will be held at 5.00pm on Thursday 1 July. All members are encouraged to attend.

HOD BREAKFAST MEETING

All HODs of General Practice are invited to attend a breakfast meeting on Wednesday 30 June, 7.45am. Agenda items will be requested.

AAAPC ANNUAL DINNER

Will be held on Wednesday 30th June 7.30pm

AAAPC PLENARY

AAAPC: Plenary 2 9:00am on Thursday 1 July. The AAAPC Distinguished Papers will be presented during this plenary session.

BRIDGES WEBB AWARD

The winner of this prestigious award will be presented at our Gala Dinner. Nominations are members only.

Annual Dinner

Will be held on Wednesday 30th June 7.30pm at Hanuman Restaurant. An exceptional dining experience not to be missed, serving a variety of Indian Thai and Nonya food. The restaurant is part of the Esplanade location close to the centre of Darwin.

Members \$100

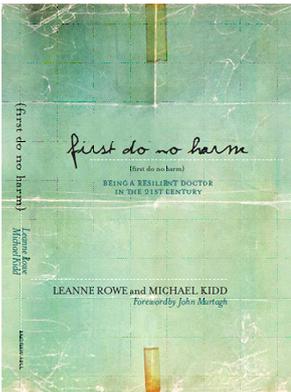
Non-members \$120

To view more

www.hanuman.com.au/hanuman_darwin.htm

In this section we aim to bring you the details of book chapters or books written and/or edited by members of AAAPC that may be of interest to you. In this issue we congratulate Sandy Jeffs, who won this year's SANE Book of the Year Award.

If you have suggestions for books to be included in this section please e-mail s.dennis@unsw.edu.au or k.novy@unimelb.edu.au



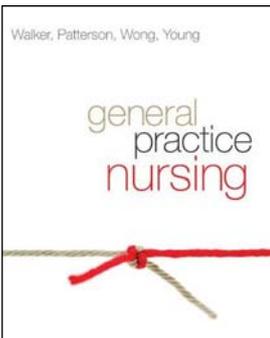
First do no harm: being a resilient doctor

By Leanne Rowe and Michael Kidd

First Do No Harm reframes the traditional doctors' rule, demonstrating that it should apply not only to patients, but also to doctors' themselves.

This book was published in August 2009. It provides medical practitioners with information and resources on strategies for self care and discusses the importance of doctors building supportive relationships.

It is published by McGraw Hill and available at: www.mcgraw-hill.com.au/html/9780070276970.html



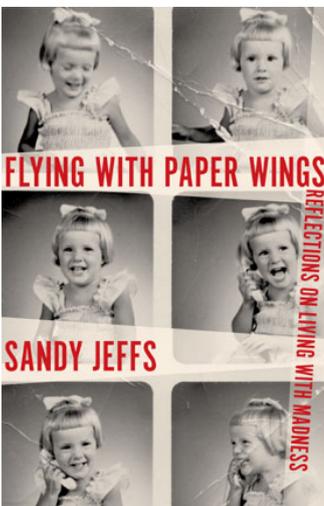
General Practice Nursing

By Lynne Walker, Elizabeth Patterson, William Wong, Doris Young

This is the first textbook developed specifically for practice nurses. The textbook offers practice nurse's information on a range of clinical and professional topics in a concise, easy to read format.

This new book offers evidence based, contextual information supported by case studies to assist nurses in applying theory to practice. To encourage reflective practice, each chapter includes questions throughout the text, testimonials, case studies and reflection questions.

It is published by McGraw Hill and available at: www.mcgraw-hill.com.au/medical/index.html



***Sandy Jeffs Flying With Paper Wings* \$32.95 (9780980665109)**

Sandy Jeffs grows up in an Australian country town in the 1950s and 60s, domestic violence ripping her family to shreds. As a student in the 1970s she comes to terms with her sexuality as part of an alternative family. With the onset of schizophrenia at age 23 Sandy's world falls apart. *Flying with Paper Wings* offers privileged insights into madness – medical, social, personal – as well as disturbing reflections on its causes and its care. It is also a story of how poetry can become a personal saviour in the face of nearly irresistible forces.

SANE Australia has announced that the 2010 SANE Book of the Year is *Flying with Paper Wings* by Sandy Jeffs. The SANE Book of the Year Award recognises outstanding Australian non-fiction titles which promote understanding of mental illness and its effect in the community. www.sane.org