

2000 Dissertations

Catherine Cameron Supervisors: Sandi Pirozzo & Leigh Tooth

Long-term care of younger people with severe acquired brain injury: Appropriateness of aged care facilities

Abstract

This study investigates the current prevalence of people below the age of 65 years with severe acquired brain injury living in aged care facilities in Queensland, and assessed the appropriateness of this accommodation option. The results indicate over 200 people in this client group live in aged care facilities and that such accommodation does not meet their specific and complex needs. Recommendations are given for public health policy and service planning provision.

Carol Christie Supervisor: Maria Donald

"PEACE BUILDERS": a community approach to violence reduction in schools: An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Program in One Public Primary School in the Greater Brisbane Area

Abstract

This case study evaluates one long-term, school and community based violence reduction program - PeaceBuilders. The problem of violence, factors that contribute to the problem and potential solutions to the problem are discussed. Although the study results cannot be generalised to other schools, the author concludes the PeaceBuilders program fits the literature parameters for a potentially effective behaviour-change intervention.

Gwen Brown Supervisor: Melinda Service

The effectiveness of asthma education in schools

Abstract

This study involved an evaluation of a whole school community approach to asthma management in schools. A "knowledge" intervention was used in an experimental research model which included teachers, asthmatic students and their peers. Findings indicate that there was an increase in both students' knowledge, such as trigger factors, and teachers' knowledge, for example taking medication prior to sport or activities.

Nghiem Doan Supervisor: Suzette Porter

An Investigation into the Barriers to Oral Health Care for Adult Vietnamese in Brisbane South Health Region

Abstract

This dissertation examines the barriers to oral health care in the Vietnamese community of Brisbane South Health Region. The findings highlight a number of significant issues such as cost, lack of perceived need and language barriers. This study has provided an insight into the needs and perceptions of the Vietnamese community in Brisbane and supports findings of a similar study in Melbourne. Some recommendations for removing or minimising these barriers are explored.

Cate Duggan Supervisor: Peter O'Rourke

Playing it safe: A preliminary food safety research project

Abstract

This study was undertaken to determine the current knowledge and practices of food handlers in voluntary organisations, the types of environmental settings being utilised for the preparation and serving of food and the perceived need for further information or education. The study identified problem areas in the preparation of food within voluntary organisations and made a number of recommendations for decreasing the incidence risk of food borne disease.

Sophie Dwyer Supervisor: Associate Professor Don Stewart

Integrating public health: exploring models of local practice

Abstract

This study explores issues related to current approaches to the development of public health programs in Australia. In particular it investigates the strengths and limitations of single purpose programming, for example on a disease or risk factor basis, and concepts of integration across the areas of effective program delivery, program sustainability and multiple determinants/multiple outcomes. Using a case study approach, two holistic programs are selected - health promoting schools and municipal public health planning - to explore the proposition that holistic approaches to public health practice provide an effective alternative to single purpose programs. While they may make good use of resources, be sustainable, provide a response to health inequalities and can incorporate interrelated health determinants into program design, the evidence is mixed, or lacking, in terms of whether these models improve on single-issue health programs.

Haydee Forster Supervisor: Mr Peter Davey

'Development of a Municipal Green Waste Management Framework for Use When Developing a Green Waste Strategy for Local Government'

Abstract

This study provides a summary of the green waste processing methods available worldwide and on this basis, presents a framework for a green waste management system at the municipal level. Links between environment and health are systematically identified and presented in an environment and health effects matrix.

Maria Hauengue Supervisor: Associate Professor Don Stewart

Environmental health priority setting in Mozambique: Maputo City as an example.

Abstract

The combination of poverty, natural disasters and civil war has led to a wide range environmental health issues becoming increasingly problematic in Mazambique. This study uses qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate what these needs are and how they should be prioritised. Results indicated that the core of all environmental concerns in Maputo City were related to urbanisation and its consequences. Three priority needs were established: housing, water supply and sanitation facilities. The results of the study have been integrated into the next Environmental Action Plan for the city.

David King Supervisor: Robert King

Understanding depression: beyond the Biomedical Model

Abstract

This study comprised of a literature review of the evidence regarding aetiology, classification, epidemiology and treatment of depressive disorders. All of the domains that constitute the biopsychosocial model were investigated as a basis for testing the hypothesis that a biomedical approach, or any domain in isolation, is inadequate for fully understanding depression. An integrative, explanatory, conceptual model was developed, based on supportive evidence that can better inform the clinical encounter.

Carolyn Ann Lang Supervisors: Adele Green & Rachel Neale

Sun protection during outdoor activities in summer and winter in a Queensland community

Abstract

This study examined the sun protection behaviours in an adult sample of the Nambour community in South East Queensland, and determined how these behaviours varied by type of outdoor activity and by season. Nested within the Nambour Skin Cancer Prevention Trial, 300 people were randomly chosen to participate. The findings are presented with concluding public health recommendations.

Nada-Marie Martinek Supervisor: Ernest Hunter

Primary mental health care: A conceptual basis for mental health policy within a public health framework

Abstract

Worldwide, governments are acknowledging the urgent need to address the social and financial burdens of rising mental health problems and disorders on individuals, families, communities and nations within public health policy frameworks. This study reviews the policy history, literature and other information sources of the 1980's and 1990's to map the sociohistorical perspectives of primary mental health care. Policy implications are discussed and the parameters of a conceptual basis for primary mental health care for public mental health policy in Australia are provided.

David MacLaren Supervisor: Eberhard Wenzel

Kastom and Health: A Study of Indigenous Concepts of Health and Appropriate Health Care within Kwaio, Malaita, Solomon Islands.

Abstract

This dissertation analyses Indigenous concepts of health within East Kwaio, Malaita Province, Solomon Islands. This group, although having the opportunity to follow the line of 'development' of the rest of the Solomon Islands, have made deliberate choices to maintain their cultural autonomy. The conflict between modern medical care based predominantly on a Western medical paradigm, and traditional kastom (custom) based on Indigenous cosmological boundaries and spiritual paradigms, is analysed. Recommendations have been made to minimise the hegemonic processes that dominate health care within this area.

Simon Murray Supervisors: Chris Del Mar & Peter O'Rourke

Development of an instrument for investigating the use of antibiotics for respiratory tract infections by General Practitioners

Abstract

The overuse of antibiotics by Australian General Practitioners for respiratory tract infections (RTI's) is a major public health problem, incurring significant monetary cost and aggravating antimicrobial resistance to antibiotics. This study examined general practitioner beliefs of prescribing antibiotics. The author concludes that if the results of this pilot are confirmed in a larger study, erroneous doctor beliefs in the effectiveness of antibiotics for RTI's is one of the causes of the overuse of antibiotics.

Susan Maree Mylne Supervisor:

Pilot study: "Foot Ulceration Assessment Record" - a foot ulceration assessment and documentation record developed for diabetic foot ulcerations.

Abstract

This study involved identification and investigation of the problem of assessment and documentation of neuropathic and neuro-ischaemic foot ulcerations; it then involved the development of an assessment and documentation record (FUAR); and finally involved pilot implementation using a case study approach to investigate implementation issues with preliminary reliability checks. The study was conducted in consultation and collaboration with Princess Alexandra Hospital and, after testing in the ward, it is concluded that the process of developing and piloting the FUAR has led to a brief, user-friendly comprehensive wound assessment and documentation tool with the potential to deliver information considered essential to best practice.

Maria Nepel Supervisor: Associate Professor Don Stewart

An evaluation of the Diploma in Health Education (DHE) program at the University of Goroka in the Eastern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea, from the perspectives of the graduates and the stakeholders: a case study.

Abstract

This study investigates the extent to which the DHE is seen to equip graduates with adequate and appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes to function with efficiency and effectiveness as professional health promotion educators and in-service coordinators and trainers. Using a qualitative methodology, the study found that the DHE failed to provide graduates with the necessary attributes. While a number of strengths were identified, such as the availability of a wide range of qualified staff, the study provides a number of recommendations for improving the current program.

Azette Rafei Supervisors: Dr Eberhard Wenzel, Prof Rod Simpson

'A Critical Literature Review of Existing Federal and State Greenhouse Gas Policy Incorporated within a Case Study of Greenslopes Private Hospital, in Light of Current Public Health Teachings'

Abstract

In addition to a review of state and federal greenhouse gas policies, this dissertation addresses the reasons why effective global warming policies are needed and why effective public health policies are difficult to formulate. It provides a case study of the measures taken by a private hospital relating

Thesese Rey-Conde Supervisor: Sandi Pirozzo

Evidence-based care for long term therapy of post myocardial infarction patients

Abstract

Coronary heart disease is the most common cause of death in Australia, with increased risk of sudden death in those with known coronary heart disease. This study is a systematic review of long term post myocardial infarction care and an evaluation of RCT's, with the purpose of establishing guidelines for the care of post myocardial infarction patients. Practice guidelines for use by General Practitioners were developed and are presented.

Adrian Reynolds Supervisor: Eberhard Wenzel

Review of the role and Performance of the United Nations in Supporting Member States to Develop more Effective and Socially Just Approaches to Drug Policy and Intervention.

Abstract

This dissertation analyses the role and performance of key United Nations Agencies in International drug policy. It is argued that many drug policies may be responsible for substantial inequality, human suffering and injustice. Case studies are presented from several countries including Australia. Recommendations are given for both the United Nations Agencies and Australia.

Philippa Rokkas Supervisor: Penny Webb

Travellers' Health: Perceived Risks, Advice Sources Accessed and Health Protection Strategies Employed before Travel

Abstract

The huge growth in international travel and tourism is producing an associated increase in, and diversity of, Australian travellers requiring health advice and protection. This crosssectional study investigates the pre-travel perceptions of health risk and health protection methods employed by Australians travelling overseas from Brisbane International Airport. A random sample of 240 individuals was surveyed and data analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The results indicate there is a clear need to strengthen the research and knowledge base of all individuals connected with the travel industry and the health profession.

Mouzinho Saide Supervisor: Associate Professor Don Stewart

The process of decentralisation of human resource management in the health sector in Mozambique: the impact and experiences from Nampula Province from 1996-1998. Are better practices possible?

Abstract

In Mozambique, as in many countries, decentralisation of the main decision-making centre to local and provincial levels is regarded as an important means of achieving more equitable distribution of

health care and as a means of achieving better management practices aligned with local priorities and needs. This qualitative study examines this contention in terms of the management of 'basic' and 'elementary' nurses. Surveys of provincial health managers and review of core policy documents indicate that decentralisation must be accompanied by adequate planning, policies, strategies and procedures in a comprehensive effort to involve all the health care stakeholders, including local communities.

Hassan Saleheen Supervisor: Warren Stanton

Variations in the levels of sun exposure among young children attending day care

Abstract

This study investigates variation in the levels of sun exposure among young children attending four Day Care Centres in the Central Brisbane District. The results indicated that on average, the levels of UVR (ultraviolet radiation) exposure received by the children were insufficient to induce an erythral effect. However this was dependent on certain conditions such as time of day of exposure and length of exposure. The results of this study have implications for the development of policy for sun safe activities in Day Care Centres

Debbie Scott Supervisor: Fran Boyle

The effects of participation in a case-control study on the families of children with Ewing's Sarcoma

Abstract

This study investigates people's experiences of participation in a research interview that focused on a sensitive and painful topic: their child's diagnosis with Ewing's Sarcoma, an often fatal cancer of the bone and soft tissue that is most predominant in young boys. The study was conducted in response to concerns raised by ethics committees about the potential harm for families participating in such research. The main finding was that despite the pain involved, most felt participation was a worthwhile and often even beneficial experience. This study of research participation is important for public health research from ethical and methodological perspectives.

Anne-Louise Slack Supervisor: Dr Syed Abid Naqui

Impact of a stretching, strengthening and warm-up program on workers' experience of pain or injury.

Abstract

Using an intervention study with a case control design, the objective of this research was to determine the prevalence of musculoskeletal pain and injury in the study population (243 employees of a building products company) and to establish whether a stretching, strengthening, warm-up program reduced such pain and injury. The study found that the employees experienced a high level of pain and injury, but that there was no significant change in workers' experience of musculoskeletal pain and injury that related to the stretching, strengthening, warm-up program. A number of related recommendations are made, including the importance of a good ergonomic design of the work process.

Elisa beth Stuart-Fox Supervisors: Mark Brough, Wendy Foley & Phil Harvey
Survey on traditional and bush foods in the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community in Brisbane

Abstract

This report presents the results of a consultation process within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community of Brisbane in relation to the promotion and consumption of traditional foods. Through a survey questionnaire, the current consumption patterns of traditional foods and the factors that influence these patterns were investigated. A number of conclusions were drawn and recommendations given to improve the health, nutrition, cultural and spiritual needs of Australian Indigenous people.

Deepthi Subasinghe Supervisors: Vivienne O'Connor & Penny Webb
Knowledge and attitudes to smoking among women with pap smear changes and the acceptance of an information brochure

Abstract

This study examines the level of knowledge of the association between smoking, illness, cancer of the cervix and abnormal Pap smears among two hundred women with Pap smear abnormalities attending a colposcopic clinic. The results indicated there was a greater proportion of current smokers than would be expected in the general population of the same age group, with lower knowledge of the association between smoking and abnormal Pap smears. Colposcopic clinics potentially provide an excellent intervention opportunity to encourage smoking cessation among women in the younger age group.

Zandro Tejada Supervisors: John Lowe & Sandi Pirozzo
Sun Protection Policies and strategies of State Primary Schools in Southeast Queensland

Abstract

This study evaluates the implementation of Sun Protection Policies and Strategies of State Primary Schools in Southeast Queensland. The findings of the study indicate primary schools implement sun protection strategies, despite the fact that the majority of them do not have an existing written sun protection policy. Common barriers to the use of a written policy are identified and the subsequent recommendations are provided.

Thomas Vinit Supervisors: Peter O'Rourke & Helen Longbottom
Assessment of the potential health risk on a population exposed to heavy metals along the Fly River

Abstract

Mining industries, especially open cut mines have been shown to be a source of heavy metals that are toxic to human health. This ecological study aims to describe the level of cadmium and its conjugate metals downstream from Ok Tedi mine, describe the health status of the people in the area, and to make possible associations. The author compares 1990/91 environmental data with 1981 baseline study and a 1994 independent study in the Fly River region in Western Province, Papua New Guinea.

Michelle Willis Supervisor: Warren Stanton
The dietary intake of Masters Athletes

Abstract

This study aimed to determine if the dietary intakes of Masters Athletes are adequate for meeting the nutritional requirements as recommended for individuals of similar age and activity levels. Issues such as attitudes to food and exercise and barriers to achieving better nutrition were explored. The results found the mean dietary intakes on Masters Athletes are generally over the Recommended Dietary Intakes with the exception of retinol, fibre, calcium and zinc intakes. Recommendations for dietary education are made.

Maria Hauengue Supervisor:
Environmental health priority setting in Mozambique: Maputo City as an example.

Abstract

The combination of poverty, natural disasters and civil war has led to a wide range environmental health issues becoming increasingly problematic in Mozambique. This study uses qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate what these needs are and how they should be prioritised. Results indicated that the core of all environmental concerns in Maputo City were related to urbanisation and its consequences. Three priority needs were established: housing, water supply and sanitation facilities. The results of the study have been integrated into the next Environmental Action Plan for the city.