Annual Report 1999

National Centre in HIV Social Research

The University of New South Wales
Annual Report 1999

National Centre in HIV Social Research

The National Centre in HIV Social Research is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care through the Australian National Council on AIDS and Related Diseases (ANCARD) and is affiliated with the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences at The University of New South Wales.
Contact details

Copies of this Annual Report or any other NCHSR publications may be obtained by contacting:

National Centre in HIV Social Research
Level 2, Webster Building
The University of New South Wales
Sydney NSW 2052 AUSTRALIA

Telephone: (61 2) 9385 6776
Fax: (61 2) 9385 6455
nchsr@unsw.edu.au
www.arts.unsw.edu.au/nchsr/


© National Centre in HIV Social Research 2000
# CONTENTS

1 The NCHSR 7
   Director’s Report 8
   NCHSR Scientific Advisory Committee 11
   Staff 12

2 NCHSR Research 14
   Mapping Risk Practice 14
   Negotiating the Medical Field 19
   Exploring Cultural Dynamics: Risk & Health 21
   Understanding Health Knowledges & Practices 24

3 Links 27
   Committees & Editorial Boards 27
   Professional Journals 29
   The Communications Project 30
   Collaborations 30
   Colloquia 31

4 Education & Training 32

5 Publications 36

6 Funding 41
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACON  AIDS Council of NSW
AFAO  Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations
ANCARD  Australian National Council on AIDS and Related Diseases
ARC  Australian Research Council
ARCSHS  Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society
NAPWA  National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS
NCHSR  National Centre in HIV Social Research
NCHECR  National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research
NHMRC  National Health and Medical Research Council
PLWHA  People Living with HIV/AIDS
RAC  Research Advisory Committee, Australian National Council on AIDS and Related Diseases
VAC  Victorian AIDS Council
1 THE NCHSR

The National Centre in HIV Social Research (NCHSR) was established in 1990 by the Commonwealth Government to undertake a program of social research related to HIV. Since that time its focus has broadened to include hepatitis C (HCV) and sexually transmitted infections (STI).

Research Priorities

The NCHSR’s major research priorities are:

1. To conduct research that contributes to the management of HIV, HCV and related diseases in the most affected communities

2. To conduct studies of the shared, everyday understandings of sexuality, sexual practice and illicit drug use, with particular reference to the normative structures and cultural and sub-cultural understandings that inform those practices

3. To conduct studies of the individual, interpersonal and cultural impact of HIV, HCV and related diseases on those directly affected, their carers and their communities; and to identify the strategies and health care models appropriate to deal with that impact

4. To identify the individual, interpersonal and societal characteristics that contribute to prevention strategies; and to identify the barriers to their adoption by those at risk of HIV, HCV and related diseases

5. To conduct studies of the social and personal aspects of the conduct of clinical trials including vaccines, and
6. To conduct research into the personal, social, economic and cultural impact of HIV, HCV and related diseases.
1999 was an exciting year for the National Centre in HIV Social Research marked by our move to the University of New South Wales. In February we took up residence in our new offices in the refurbished Robert Webster Building at UNSW. We were warmly welcomed by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Professor John Ingelson and by the then head of the Research Office, Mr Peter Cook. At our official welcoming ceremony, Mr Chris Puplick, Chair ANCARD, paid tribute to Macquarie University for its years as host to the National Centre.

Almost the entire staff of the National Centre in HIV Social Research and all our post-graduate students took part in what has been a very successful move. I would like to thank the University of New South Wales—in particular, Professor Ann Daniel—the Review Committee, and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care for making the move possible. I would also like to thank each and every staff member of the NCHSR for his or her individual effort and good humour in making the move remarkably painless.

The move has meant the strengthening of ongoing collaborations and the development of others—with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR) and the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC). We are also building links with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the Faculty of Life Sciences, the Faculty of Medicine and the University more generally through our membership on Faculty Committees, the co-supervision of PhD students, our guest lectures and our colloquium series.

1999 was also a year of staff enhancement and consolidation. Dr Catherine Waldby from Murdoch University was appointed to the position of Deputy Director, Planning, and Dr Marsha Rosengarten was appointed to take up the position as Research Fellow on the Clinical Markers study. Dr Sean Slavin, who worked with us as a researcher in 1998, was successful in attracting an NHMRC post-doctoral research
fellowship to research the culture of injecting drug use. Also working in the drugs research area, Dr Lucy Zinkiewicz was appointed as a Research Fellow late in 1999.

On the post-graduate front, we welcomed three new PhD students—Limin Mao, Annette Houlihan and Michelle Imison. We celebrated with Dr Anne Grunseit, who was awarded her PhD in 1999, and with Graeme Storer, who submitted his thesis on male sex work in Thailand late in 1999.

The NCHSR published a number of important papers and reports in 1999. I single out two reports for comment. The first was *HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases: Annual report of behaviour 1999*. This report complements the Annual Surveillance Report of the NCHECR, and together they inform government of the state of play with regard to HIV and HCV incidence and prevalence and, since 1999, changes in risk practices associated with the transmission of these diseases. The second report—*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sexual Health Promotion Initiatives in New South Wales*—is the first of a number of reports researched and written with members of Australian Indigenous communities. As well as thanking the Aboriginal workers on the project, I thank NSW Health, in particular Jenny Heslop, for making this research report possible.

The staff also presented papers and posters at a number of international conferences including the 10th International Conference on the Reduction of Drug Related Harm in Geneva in March, the 10th Conference on Social Aspects of AIDS held in London in June, the 4th AIDS Impact Conference in Ottawa in June, the 5th International AIDS in Asia and the Pacific Conference in Kuala Lumpur in October, and, in Australia, at the 11th Annual Conference, Australasian Society for HIV Medicine held in Perth in December.

We had a number of national and international visitors. Dr Masako Kihara from the Kanagawa Cancer Center Research Institute in Yokohama stayed with us for four weeks to exchange information on behavioural surveillance methods. She has recently completed a study on the impact of the introduction of the oral contraceptive in Japan. The NCHSR is planning to develop an ongoing collaboration with Dr Kihara and strengthen our ties with social epidemiologists in Japan. We were also visited by Dr Heather Worth from the University of Auckland’s Department of Women’s Studies, who came to work with Dr June Crawford for three weeks comparing Australian Male Call...
96 and NZ Male Call/Waea Mai Tane Ma data. Other visitors to the NCHSR included Dr Jonathan Elford from the United Kingdom and Mr Roy Cain from Canada. Among those who gave colloquia were Professor Victor Miniciello from Public Health at the University of New England and Dr Chris Forth from the History Department of the Australian National University.

The NCHSR’s major expansion in research was in the area of injecting drug use and hepatitis C research. We were successful in attracting an NHMRC grant to research initiation of drug injecting and transition to injecting among users of illicit drugs. We also attracted funds from New South Wales Health to research methadone injecting and hepatitis C education in schools (with the NSW Department of Education and Training), and from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care to examine cocaine use in the Sydney party scene. This consolidation in HCV research has led to collaborations with the National Centre in Epidemiology and Population Health (NCEPH), the Kirketon Road Clinic, and the NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA).

In 1999 the NCHSR became a member of the newly formed Australian HIV Vaccine Initiative. As a result, Dr Van de Ven and I are Chief Investigators in a proposal to the National Institute of Health (United States) to develop and trial a new HIV vaccine in Australia and Thailand. The NCHSR’s innovative involvement in the study emphasises that vaccine initiatives must be developed alongside effective HIV prevention, treatment and care, and will minimise social harms associated with the trialing of HIV vaccines.

This research effort has been facilitated by the advice and help of the members of the Scientific Advisory Committee: I thank them for their support for the National Centre in HIV Social Research during this, our first year at the University of New South Wales.
NCHSR SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The NCHSR is advised by the Scientific Advisory Committee.

Chair

Professor Ann Daniel, Sociology, The University of New South Wales

Members

Professor Dennis Altman, Politics, La Trobe University
Mr Alan Brotherton, Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations
Mr Geoff Honnor, National Association for People Living with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA)
Professor John Kaldor, National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, The University of New South Wales
Professor Susan Kippax, National Centre in HIV Social Research
Associate Professor Wendy Loxley, National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University of Technology
Mr Eamonn Murphy, HIV/AIDS & Hepatitis C Section, Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care
Dr David Plummer, Australian National Council on AIDS and Related Diseases (ANCARD)
Professor Doreen Rosenthal, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society
Dr Sheila Shaver, Social Policy Research Centre, The University of New South Wales
Professor Mary Sheehan, Social and Preventative Medicine, University of Queensland
Professor Bryan Turner, Sociology, Cambridge University
Ms Nuala Higgins, Secretary to SAC.
STAFF

Professor Susan Kippax, Director

Professor Kippax was appointed Director of the National Centre in HIV Social Research in July 1994 after serving as Deputy Director from 1990 to June 1994.

Dr Kippax graduated from the University of Sydney in 1968 with a BA Hons (Class 1) in Psychology. In 1970 and 1971 she held a Rhodes Travelling Fellowship to Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford and was awarded a PhD (Social Psychology) from the University of Sydney in 1972.

Since 1985 she has worked almost exclusively on researching the impact of HIV and AIDS on individuals and communities, and on documenting social and psychological responses to the epidemic among homosexually active men and heterosexuals as well as those living with HIV and AIDS. Her other major research interest concerns emotions, where her work has uncovered some of the processes in the social construction of emotions and illustrates the advantages of ‘memory-work’, a method that has been used in researching sexuality. Dr Kippax’s duties include the supervision of doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers.

Other members of staff in 1999 were:

Deputy Directors

Paul G Van de Ven, BEd, MA, PhD
Catherine Waldby, BA (Hons), PhD

Research Fellows

Kane Race, BA(Hons), LLB Marsha Rosengarten, BA, Grad.Dip.Comm., MA, PhD
Juliet Richters, BA, MPH Sean Slavin, BA (Hons), PhD–NCMRC Fellow
Erica Southgate, BEd Sasho Lambevski, MA, PhD–ARC Fellow
Research Officers

Max Hopwood, BA(Hons)
Stephanie Knox, BSc, BA(Hons)
Angela Song, BMed, MPH
Elizabeth Wakeford, BA(Hons)

Research Consultants

June Crawford*, BA(Hons), PhD
Jeanne Abelson, BA(Hons), PhD

Non-contract Research Staff

Grant Mistler, BA
Loren Brenner
Gary Smith*, BA(Hons)
Deborah Blair
Ricardo Abusail

Administrator

Nuala Higgins, BSc(Hons), MFS, Dip.Mgt.

Administrative Officer

Janet Rutkauskas*
Sahar Behman*

Communications Officer

Aldo Spina, BEd

Publications & Public Relations

Susan Geason*, MA

Resource Centre Manager


* Part year  ´Part-time
2 NCHSR RESEARCH

Research at the National Centre in HIV Social Research falls into four broad areas:

1. **Mapping Risk Practice**
2. **Negotiating the Medical Field**
3. **Exploring Cultural Dynamics: Risk and Health**
4. **Understanding Health Knowledges and Practices.**

I: Mapping Risk Practice

The studies in this category map safe and unsafe practices, both sexual and drug use practices. One of the studies described below—The Sydney Men and Sexual Health study—is a longitudinal study; the remainder are repeat cross-sectional studies or ‘snap shot’ studies. While the snap shot studies of drug use and the national sex survey provide base-line data on risk associated with sexual and drug use practices, the longitudinal and repeat cross-sectional studies allow researchers to monitor practice and to reliably assess changes in risk over time.

All studies examine sexual and drug use practice with reference to the interpersonal and social lives of the populations under study. Thus the meanings of practice are explored, and in the case of the longitudinal study, the determinants of risk are identified.
Sydney Men and Sexual Health (SMASH)

During 1999, the NCHSR continued to survey Sydney gay and homosexually active men in the SMASH cohort despite the fact that funding was increasingly difficult to secure. In the light of funding restrictions, the methodology was changed from face-to-face interviews to mail-out, self-complete questionnaires. Recruitment and surveying have now ceased, but there are plans to re-establish an active cohort in the near future subject to funding. The SMASH study was carried out by NCHSR in collaboration with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR).

Time frame: 1992-1999
Principal investigators: Professor Susan Kippax, Professor John Kaldor (NCHECR)
Funding: In 1999, NSW Health.

Periodic Surveys

The periodic surveys of Sydney gay men’s sexual practice have been conducted every six months since they began in February 1996. Data have also been collected in a number of other major centres in Australia—namely Melbourne, Brisbane/Gold and Sunshine Coasts/Cairns, Adelaide and Perth. Sample sizes range between 500 in Adelaide and 2,300 in Sydney. Data are collected on the sexual practice of men recruited from a range of sex venues, social venues and sexual health clinics as well as from annual gay events such as the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Fair Day. These data provide useful monitoring of changes in the sexual practice of gay men; they do not, however, provide detailed data on sexual and other practices nor on the interpersonal and socio-cultural contexts of risk. The periodic surveys have also provided summary data on drug use among these men. They are carried out by the NCHSR in collaboration with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR).

Time frame: 1996–
Research staff: Dr Paul van de Ven, Stephanie Knox, Garrett Prestage (NCHECR)
Funding: Research staff costs, NCHSR; remaining costs met by State health departments.
Sydney Asian Gay Community Periodic Survey

This first periodic survey of Asian gay men in Sydney was conducted at the end of 1999. The data will complement those from the Sydney Gay Community Periodic Survey. Some additional information such as ethnic community involvement and sources of HIV/AIDS information was collected. A report will be released early in 2000. The survey is carried out by NCHSR in collaboration with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time frame:</th>
<th>1999-2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal investigators:</td>
<td>Dr Paul van de Ven, Garrett Prestage (NCHECR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td>Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Australian Study of Health and Relationships

This is a national study of men’s and women’s sexual health, behaviour and attitudes, in which 20,000 randomly selected people aged between 16–59 are being interviewed. Questions focus on sexual relationships, sexual practice and sexual health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time frame:</th>
<th>1999–2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal investigators:</td>
<td>Dr Chris Rissel, Central Sydney Area Health Service and Dr Anthony Smith, ARCSHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Investigator:</td>
<td>Juliet Richters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td>Research staff costs, NCHSR; remaining costs met by NHMRC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

University Student Surveys

This study began in 1988 at Macquarie University. It has surveyed first-year students in Behavioural Sciences or Psychology in the first two weeks of each year, with the exception of 1999, when the students were surveyed in the ninth week of the first semester. The study, which repeated one that recruited a random sample of students aged 18 to 35 years from the University of Sydney, found little difference between the
HIV-knowledge and sexual practice of students from the two universities. The data have provided a valuable resource for mapping the sexual practices and HIV and HCV
knowledge of young students over an important period of time. The survey was repeated in July 1999 with Sociology students at the University of New South Wales.

Time frame: 1988–
Research staff: Juliet Richters, Angela Song
Funding: NCHSR.

Initiation and Transition to Injecting Drug Use among Young People

The study aims to document the history of the initiation and transition to injecting for a range of current injectors 25 years and under, and the relationship between the circumstances of the initial injecting episode and current risk practices with respect to transmission of hepatitis C. The study is original in its focus on transition and initiation and the multiple contexts in which these take place; the range of networks to be studied; the varieties of drugs studied; and the exploration of the interpersonal, subcultural and physical contexts in which young people inject drugs. It has the potential to identify sites for intervention and suggest effective methods for educating people about hepatitis C and preventing its transmission. The study represents a partnership approach to HCV social research with a collaborative arrangement formed between researchers, educators and clinicians—Macquarie University, Kirketon Road Clinic and the NSW Users & AIDS Association (NUAA).

Time frame: 1999–2000
Research staff: Dr Lucy Zinkiewicz, Erica Southgate
Funding: NHMRC Special Initiative Grant.

Methadone Injectors in NSW

This study aims to document the phenomenon of methadone injection in rural and urban areas of NSW, and seeks to understand the personal, cultural and economic reasons that create the context for this. A survey is being administered to 200 current methadone injectors at three selected geographic areas. It is gathering data on existing methadone injecting practice and includes demographics, questions on initiation, contexts of injecting, risk practices and health issues related to injecting, particularly in
light of the withdrawal of large barrels and butterflies from public needle and syringe programs. Thirty-five in-depth semi-structured interviews are being conducted, and blood spot samples are being collected in the rural setting.

This is a collaborative study between the NCHSR, NCHECR and the National Centre in Epidemiology & Population Health (NCEPH).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time frame:</th>
<th>1999–2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research staff:</td>
<td>Erica Southgate, Geetha Isaac Toua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td>NSW Health.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cocaine Use and Risks for HIV and HCV Transmission among Injecting Drug Users in the Sydney Party Subculture**

This ethnographic study aims to map injecting drug use (IDU), particularly cocaine injectors, and social/sexual networks of the Sydney queer party scene; and explore risk practices, both injecting and sexual, that occur within them. It examines the contexts and dynamics related to transmission of HIV and HCV in the inner-Sydney party scene; document the composition of IDU networks in the inner-Sydney party subculture; investigates the roles network members play in relation to injecting activity; identifies crossover of IDU networks, particularly the function of women in IDU networks; investigates and documents the degree of sexual mixing in the subculture and the degree to which ‘safe’ sexual practice is sustained; and examines the impact of cocaine use on levels of competency and injecting practice among ‘hidden’ networks of injecting drug use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time frame:</th>
<th>1999–2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research staff:</td>
<td>Erica Southgate, Grant Mistler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td>Research Advisory Committee of ANCARD.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SWASH: Sydney Women and Sexual Health**

SWASH is a questionnaire survey of women’s sexual practice and injecting drug use, conducted first in Sydney in February 1996 and every two years since then. It surveys women in contact with the gay and lesbian community recruited from Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Fair Day and a range of other social and community venues and groups. Sample size was 585 in 1996 and 774 in 1998. The questionnaire has been further revised, with extended questions on lesbian sexual practice, blood awareness and hepatitis A, B and C, for administration in February 2000. A joint study of the AIDS Council of New South Wales and NCHSR, it is run with assistance from the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR).

| Time frame:     | 1996–          |
| Research staff: | Juliet Richters |
| Funding:        | NCHSR, NCHECR  |

**2: Negotiating the Medical Field**

This aspect of NCHSR research focuses on negotiation of the medical domain and, more particularly, on living with HIV and HCV, and on patient-doctor discourse within the clinic. Its objectives are to develop a description of ways in which ‘patients’ understand and negotiate medical and non-medical treatment regimens; monitor uptake of treatments and document barriers to health, and analyse the ‘talk’ between providers and recipients of health care in order to improve communication.

**Positive Health (pH) Study**

Conducted in collaboration with NCHECR and ARCSHS, this cohort study of PLWHA in New South Wales and Victoria studies treatment uptake and compliance and the experience of living with HIV and AIDS. It aims to document treatment and therapy uptake and use, other health management strategies, and dosing practice; to understand lack of treatment uptake and difficulties of adherence to drug regimens, and to monitor
changes in treatment and therapy uptake and use and dosing practice over time. In
1999 the study recruited 427 PLWHA and administered the first round of
questionnaires. Papers have been presented at the ASHM conference in Perth and
submitted to the 13th International AIDS Conference in Durban.

Time frame: 1999–2000
Research staff: Kane Race, Angela Song
Funding: NCHSR.

Living with HIV, Health in Context

This qualitative project investigates how ambulatory gay men using Highly Active
Antiretroviral Therapy negotiate ‘patient’ and ‘well’ identities, and how the spaces of
the medical consultation and the everyday world are traversed in the practices
associated with adherence—namely dosing, routine health monitoring and episodic use
of health services. Three rounds of data-collection were completed in 1999 and
revealed significant differences in styles of response to side effects, doctor-patient
relationships, and meanings of treatment over time.

Research staff: Kane Race, Elizabeth Wakeford
Funding: NCHSR.

The Role of Clinical Markers in Gay Men's Sexual Relationships, Sexual
Practice and Negotiation: Scientific and Embodied Knowledges

This study is investigating the relationship between clinical markers and gay men’s
assessment of risk when engaging in casual sex and/or in regular relationships. Of
particular interest is the impact of anti-retroviral treatments on the assessment of risk. In-
depth interviews have been conducted with HIV-positive and HIV-negative gay men
from Sydney and Brisbane/Gold Coast, including those in serodiscordant and
seroconcordant HIV-positive relationships.

Time frame: 1999–2000
Research staff: Dr Marsha Rosengarten
Clinical Markers in the Lives of Homosexually-Active Indigenous Men in Sydney

This extends the above study to Indigenous Australians living with HIV and AIDS.

Time frame: 1999–2000
Research staff: Professor Susan Kippax, Dr Marsha Rosengarten
Funding: NCHSR.

Compliance Supportive Communication Project

This collaborative study with the University of Sydney and the University of Western Sydney investigates those aspects of patient/general practitioner communication which facilitate the ability of PLWHA to comply with complex treatment regimens. Through a description of linguistic and communicative acts in the clinical encounter and a comparison of doctors’ and patients’ accounts of particular consultations, the analysis aims to identify a number of successful strategies or techniques for the negotiation of information and treatment processes that support compliance. Late in 1999, after consultation with key informants in the field, a number of interviews with HIV GPs were completed.

Time frame: 1999–2000
Research staff: Kane Race, Elizabeth Wakeford
Funding: NSW Health.

Living with HCV

This study aims to gain an understanding of people’s experience of living with hepatitis C. Areas to be investigated include: the effects of a positive HCV diagnosis, interactions with health professionals, sources and meanings of support and quality of life issues. Qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection will be employed.
3: Exploring Cultural Dynamics: Risk & Health

These studies focus on the cultural and social contexts of health and risk. The first focuses on masculinity as the cultural site of risk production, for example; and the second examines a number of different drug-using subcultures. The remaining studies are concerned with the interpersonal and discursive production of risk practices.

Masculinity, Mortality and Risk

The study examines the interface between masculinity, risk and experience of premature mortality predominantly in middle-class men living in Sydney and Melbourne. This interface is explored in relation to sexuality, relationship status, position in the labour market and experience of death and with reference to stages in life course. The study employs quantitative and qualitative methods of social research. In 1999, a total of 1400 men from both cities completed a comprehensive survey. The research team started analysing the quantitative data, preparing the empirical and theoretical ground for the qualitative interviews to be conducted in 2000. Approximately, 20-25 men will be interviewed in each city. The study is a collaboration between NCHSR and ARCSHS.

Research staff: Dr. Sasho Lambevski, Prof Susan Kippax, in collaboration with Michael Bartos and ARCSHS
Funding: Staff costs, NCHSR; other costs, ARC Large Grant.
The Social and Cultural Meanings of Injecting Drug Use

This project seeks to understand and document the social contexts and cultural meanings associated with injecting drug use in culturally distinct groups of people. It will investigate the change in route of administration from non-injecting to injecting and explore whether this is a linear progression. It will investigate the social and cultural context in which these changes in route of administration occur; investigate ‘initiation’ into drug use cultures, in particular, IDU cultures; and explore the extent to which distinct (injecting and non-injecting) cultures of drug use exist. It will further investigate the social and cultural characteristics of drug injection as well as the meanings associated with the use of particular drugs across the different IDU populations. A body of anthropological knowledge will be developed to inform and direct future public health efforts to curb the spread of hepatitis C and HIV among IDUs and to provide specific suggestions for possible public health interventions.

Time frame: 1999–2003
Research staff: Dr. Sean Slavin
Funding: NCHSR, NHMRC.

Sexual Negotiation

This study explores the norms and expectations of sexual encounters, especially first encounters between new or casual partners. It is based on interviews with multi-partnered adults in Sydney (heterosexually and homosexually active). It centres on how people conceptualise particular sexual practices, what they like, how they get (or don’t get) what they like in sexual encounters, and their perception of what is expected of them by others in terms of sexual ‘performance’ or other criteria. Analysis compares respondents’ sexual aims, preferences and practices with the categories of practice currently used in questionnaire research, and also tests the adequacy of the sexual script approach to the social construction of sexual practice.

Research staff: Juliet Richters
Funding: NCHSR.
**Seroconversion Study**

This case-control study, begun in 1995, recruits men who have recently seroconverted to HIV. One of its major aims is to identify the determinants of seroconversion; the other is to document and analyse the discursive understandings of risk as they are used in the men’s accounts of what they believe to be the seroconversion event. To date approximately 80 seroconverters have been interviewed. The study is a joint project of the NCHSR and the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR).

- **Time frame:** 1995–
- **Research staff:** Professor Susan Kippax
- **Funding:** NCHSR, NCHECR.
**Post-exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)**

Begun late in 1998, the PEP study aims to provide an estimate of the demand for PEP and to describe the reasons for requesting it. Another aim is to provide a parallel to the Seroconversion Study in its documentation and analysis of the discursive understandings of risk as they are used in the individual accounts of the perceived risk event. This study is a collaboration between the NCHSR and the NCHECR.

- **Time frame:** 1998–
- **Research staff:** Professor Susan Kippax
- **Funding:** NCHSR, NCHECR.

**4: Understanding Health Knowledges and Practices**

These studies are more applied than those preceding, and focus on evaluation and needs assessment. In particular, they are concerned with levels of health knowledges and modes of education and health promotion delivery in Australia, South-east Asian and South Asian countries.

**UNAIDS Study of Sexual Health Education**

This study documents school-based sex and HIV/AIDS education policies in a number of East and South-east Asian countries. It aims to document sex and HIV/AIDS policies, existing curriculum guidelines and teaching materials, the quality of existing education in terms of models and approaches, frameworks in which the education takes place, and the training of teachers. The project will also explore the feasibility of monitoring school-based sex and HIV/AIDS education over time.

- **Time frame:** 1999–2000
- **Research staff:** Prof Susan Kippax, Gary Smith
**School Students’ Knowledge of Hepatitis C**

This study will document NSW high school students’ knowledge and understandings of hepatitis C and their risk perceptions and practices. It will provide invaluable input for the development of suitable teaching and learning materials for use with secondary students. It is being carried out in collaboration with ARCSHS and the NSW Department of Education and Training.

**Time frame:** 1999–2000  
**Research staff:** Dr Paul Van de Ven  
**Funding:** NCHSR, NSW Health.

**Scale Development—HIV Treatment Scepticism/Optimism**

This study focuses on the development of a scale to measure optimism-scepticism in the context of current treatments. In 1999 a reliable 12-item scale was developed to provide a measure of scepticism/optimism with regard to the likelihood that those with low viral load will transmit HIV. The scale will be used in future surveys both in Australia and overseas. A network of researchers from Europe, the UK, the USA and Canada has been established to trial a number of items and provide comparative data.

**Time frame:** 1999–2000  
**Research staff:** Dr Paul Van de Ven  
**Funding:** NCHSR.

**Social and Health Impact Study: Wentworth Area Health Service Needle and Syringe Program relocation**

This study assessed the social and health impact on injecting drug users, service providers and others such as residents, traders and the council of the relocation of Wentworth Area Health Service (WAHS) Needle and Syringe Exchange Program from a
fixed primary outlet to a mobile service. It used qualitative methods such as focus groups, in-depth semi-structured interviews and field-work to gather information.

- **Time frame**: 1998-1999
- **Research Staff**: Erica Southgate, Deb Blair
- **Funding**: Wentworth Area Health Service

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sexual Health Promotion Initiatives in New South Wales

The study documented the sexual health initiatives in Aboriginal communities throughout New South Wales to define projects considered successful by Aboriginal sexual health workers and members of Aboriginal communities. Sexual health workers employed at Aboriginal sexual health projects in both the government and non-government sectors were interviewed and were also asked to fill out a two-page self-report survey. The report will be used as a resource for promoting best practice based on research evidence. The study was carried out in collaboration with the Academic Unit of Sexual Health, Sydney University, NSW Health and the Aboriginal Health Research Council. A small reference committee comprising members of the AHRC, NSW Health (Aboriginal Health), Sydney Hospital/University and AFAO advised it.

- **Time frame**: 1998-99
- **Principal investigators**: Gary Smith, Dr Desmond Perry, Michelle Cutmore, Troy Combo
- **Associate Investigators**: Prof Susan Kippax, Jenny Heslop, Prof Adrian Mindel, Malcolm Mitchell
- **Funding**: NSW Health, AIDS & Infectious Diseases Unit.
3 LINKS

The NCHSR has established relationships with other research institutions, universities, government bodies and non-government organisations and the community. These are listed below.

Committees & Editorial Boards

Members of the National Centre in HIV Social Research serve on the following committees:

International/National

- Centre for Sexual Health and HIV Studies in the Wolfson School of Health Sciences: Thames Valley University, London, Board of Advisers (Kippax)
- Research Advisory Committee, ANCARD (Kippax)
- Clinical Trials and Treatments Committee (CTTC), ANCARD (Kippax)
- Vaccines Working Group (Kippax)

State/Community

- NSW Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS (Kippax)
- AFAO/NAPWA Education Team Steering Committee (Race)
- NSW Health: Sexual Health Advisory Committee (Kippax, Richters)
- AIDS Council of NSW Liaison Committee (Kippax)
- AIDS Council of NSW, ACON Education Strategy Group (Southgate)
• AIDS Council of NSW/NSW Health/AFAO Liaison Committee (Spina)
• AIDS Council of NSW, Sydney & Western Sydney: Evaluative Investigation of Fun and Esteem, Reference Group (Southgate)
• AIDS Council of NSW, Sydney Women and Sexual Health research project: Management Committee (Richters)
• Cairns Gay Community Research Project Advisory Committee (Rosengarten)
• Central Sydney Area Health Service HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases Strategic Plan Research and Planning Working Group (Spina)
• Community Education Workforce and Training Research Project Advisory Committee (Spina)
• FPA Health NSW Ethics Committee (Richters)
• Hepatitis C Council of NSW: Medical Advisory Panel (Kippax)
• HIV/AIDS and Constructs of Gay Community: Inner Sydney Advisory Committee (Southgate)
• HIV/AIDS Libraries Network (Frances)
• North-side Gay Men’s Research Project Reference Committee (Southgate)
• NSW Health: HIV Study Grants Seminars Program (Van de Ven)
• NSW Users and AIDS Association: Tribes Funding Committee (Southgate)
• Settlement Neighbourhood Centre, Redfern Aboriginal Warriors: Who Needs Drugs Project, Steering Committee (Southgate).
Professional Journals

NCHSR staff members edit professional journals/newsletters and book series and sit on editorial boards.

NCHSR Editors

- Venereology (Richters co-editor)
- *Culture, Health and Sexuality* (Kippax, co-editor)
- BioFutures, BioCultures book series, Routledge, (Waldby: editor)
- *Australian Psychology Society’s Division of Research and Teaching (DRAT) Newsletter* (Zinkiewicz, editor)

Editorial Board Members

- *AIDS Care* (Kippax)
- *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* (Richters)
- *Reproductive Health Matters* (Richters)
- *Sexualities* (Kippax)
- Venereology (Kippax)
- *Critical InQueeries* (Waldby)
- *Journal of Medical Humanities* (Waldby)
- *Health: An interdisciplinary journal for the social study of health, illness and medicine* (Waldby)
The Communications Project

The Communications Project encourages collaboration between researchers and health educators who work with gay men and people living with HIV/AIDS to ensure that new research findings are incorporated into the health promotion interventions. Skills development and research report-back workshops are being run for health educators and consultative and collaborative activities are being encouraged to ensure that researchers understand the needs of government and community. As part of the project the NCHSR publishes a quarterly newsletter and has developed its own website—www.arts.unsw.edu.au/nchsr. Subject to further funding the project intends to develop relationships with health educators who work in hepatitis C and illicit drugs. The project, which began in January 1999 and will continue till June 2000, has been carried out by the NCHSR Communications Officer, Aldo Spina. It is funded by the NCHSR and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care.

Collaborations

As well as its relationships with NCHECR and ARCSHS, the NCHSR has also established productive research relationships with a number of individuals.

Robert Griew, Chris Lawrence and Michael Costello, AIDS Council of New South Wales

Annie Madden, NSW Users and AIDS Association

John Howard, Psychology, Macquarie University

Jeremy Davey, Queensland University of Technology

Jan Copeland, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre

Ingrid van Beek, Kirketon Road Clinic

Gabrielle Bammer, National Centre in Epidemiology and Population Health

Adrian Mindel, Academic Unit of Sexual health Medicine, University of Sydney
Michael Kidd, Medicine, University of Sydney

Niamh Stephenson and David McInnes, University of Western Sydney

Dr Marilyn McMurchie, HIV/AIDS GP

Jenny Heslop, AIDS and Infectious Diseases Unit, NSW Health

Stephen Gallagher, Queensland AIDS Council

Barry Horwood, AIDS Council of South Australia

Tadgh McMahon, NSW Multicultural HIV/AIDS Service.

**Colloquia**

Lisa Adkins. Research School of Social Sciences, ANU. Technologies of sexual citizenship: HIV testing at work

Kathy Albury, Department of Sociology, UNSW. Clean, safe and straight: Anal sex and heterosexuality in Cleo Magazine

Alison Bashford, Lecturer, Department of Gender Studies, University of Sydney.

Lines of Hygiene: Vaccination, contagion and immunity in the nineteenth century

Peter Canavan, NAPWA. Lipodystrophy: Body image and sexuality

Chris Forth, Lecturer, Department of History, ANU. Moral contagion and crises of masculinity in historical perspective

Annette Houlihan, NCHSR PhD student. CRIME? (H)I(V)nfectious sex

Chris Jordens, PhD student, Centre for Values, Ethics and the Law in Medicine.

Witnessing: Hearing and legitimating voices

Victor Miniciello, University of New England; Graeme Storer, NCHSR and Patrick Leary, University of Western Sydney. Male Sex Work.

Juliet Richters, NCHSR. Epistemological vs cultural relativism: Issues in philosophy of social science affecting sex research
Celia Roberts, National Breast Cancer Centre. ‘But what if it works?’ Hormone replacement therapy and the problem of ageing women

Jane Ussher, Associate Professor, Centre for Critical Psychology, University of Western Sydney. Women's madness: Fact, fantasy or fiction?

Elizabeth Wilson, Research Fellow, Research Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sydney. Neurological preference: LeVay and gay brains

4 EDUCATION & TRAINING

Visitors & Associates

Dr Masako Kihara from the Kanagawa Cancer Center Research Institute in Yokohama, an epidemiologist, visited the Centre for a month in 1999. Dr Kihara, who is researching the impact of the oral contraceptive on Japanese sexual practice, came here to exchange ideas on behavioural surveillance methods.

Dr Heather Worth, Women’s Studies, Auckland University, visited for three weeks. She worked with Dr June Crawford comparing Australian Male Call 96 data with NZ Male Call/Waea Mai Tane Ma data and discussing ways of analysing data from the studies.

Lectures & Workshops

Professor Susan Kippax delivered a lecture to Psychology 104 students on results of the Student Survey of HIV-related Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviour Study, 1989-1999, Macquarie University. Dr Kippax also gave a lecture on Social aspects of prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS to specialist nurses at Sydney Hospital.
Kane Race gave a lecture—*Undetectable HIV: Constituting HIV selves and others post-crisis*—at the University of Western Sydney’s Textual Studies: Postmodernism course.

Aldo Spina and Kane Race, in collaboration with David McInnes and Niamh Stephenson from the University of Western Sydney, gave a workshop called *Taking medicine* and the clinical encounter for HIV educators at the University of Western Sydney. Aldo also collaborated with ACON Sydney and ACON Western Sydney to present *Evaluative Investigation of fun and esteem: A model of best practice workshop based peer education*.

Dr June Crawford ran a workshop for ACON reporting on Periodic Survey results. She also gave two workshops for AFAO—on behavioural research implications of HIV vaccine trials and on recent findings from the Sydney Periodic Surveys.

Juliet Richters delivered a lecture to Psychology 104 students on results of Students Survey of HIV-related knowledge, attitudes and behaviour, 1989–1999, Macquarie University.

**NHMRC Post-doctoral Research Fellow**

This year the NCHSR welcomed its first NHMRC Post-doctoral Research Fellow, Dr Sean Slavin, who has a four-year grant to research the underlying social and cultural conditions of injecting drug use.

**Postgraduate Students**

There are eight PhD students attached to the NCHSR. Seven are supervised in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and one is co-supervised in the Faculty of Life Sciences. Their projects are described below.
A NIGHT OUT WITH THE BOYS: THE DISCURSIVE AND SEXUAL PRACTICES SURROUNDING BAR-BASED MALE SEX WORK IN BANGKOK

Set in the context of the Thai HIV/AIDS epidemic, the Thai Government’s bold response to HIV/AIDS prevention and care and the recent economic crisis in Thailand, this study focuses on the discursive and sexual interactions among bar-based male sex workers in Bangkok, the management of the bars in which they work and the workers’ regular male customers.

Time frame: To be completed 2000
Research staff: Graeme Storer (doctoral student), Prof Susan Kippax (NCHSR), Associate Prof Grant McCall (Sociology).

THE MEANINGS AND PRACTICE OF ANAL INTERCOURSE BETWEEN MEN

This study has two broad and related aims: to highlight the cultural notions of anal intercourse that circulate within and outside of the gay community, especially in relation to HIV and AIDS; and to explore the meanings of anal intercourse in relation to the transmission of HIV.

Research staff: Gary Smith (doctoral student), Prof Susan Kippax (NCHSR), Assoc Prof Grant McCall (Sociology).

CRIMINAL OFFENCES FOR THE SEXUAL TRANSMISSION OF HIV

The study aims to explore how criminal law addresses issues of HIV transmission and sexuality, looking at the current trend to use criminal law to regulate and punish HIV transmission risk.

Time frame: 1999–2001
Research staff: Annette Houlihan (doctoral student), Dr Catherine Waldby (NCHSR), Dirk Meure (Law).

ELECTRONIC/DANCE MUSIC EVENTS WITH MIXED CROWDS AND THEIR HEALTH ISSUES

This project aims to examine the nature of electronic/dance music events with ‘mixed crowds’ associated with Sydney’s inner west, in relation to health issues, including risk practices for the transmission of blood-borne viruses and other drug related harm.
THE POLITICAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF FOOD IN THE CONTEXT OF HIV/AIDS IN SYDNEY

This study aims to map changes in gay communities since the advent of HIV/AIDS through the ‘lens’ of food—its meanings, habits and cultures among gay men in Sydney. It will look at three distinct areas: the individual, gay community and wider society.

Time frame: 1999–2001
Research staff: Michelle Imison (doctoral student), Dr Catherine Waldby (NCHSR), Mira Crouch (Sociology).

ETHNIC AND GAY IDENTITY: HIV AND RISK PRACTICE AMONG YOUNG ASIAN MEN

The study aims to develop a theoretical model of AIDS-related behaviours targeting Asian gay men in Sydney. It will investigate several major influences on safe sex behaviours from a motivational perspective. The model will be further applied to the least-known subgroup—Asian gay men, who experience the conflicts between the host individualistic, gay culture and the original ethnic, collectivist cultures.

Time frame: 1999–2002
Research staff: Limin Mao (doctoral student), Dr Paul Van de Ven (NCHSR), Dr John McCormick (Education).

RANDOMISED CLINICAL TRIALS IN A COMMUNITY BASED SETTING WITH HIV-POSITIVE PEOPLE

This project is an analysis of clinical trials and the ways in which trial participants, clinicians, nurses, pharmaceutical industry personnel and others play out their roles in regard to them. The research also explores whether there are any differences between people who participate in trials and those who choose not to.

Time frame: 1994–2000 part-time
Research staff: Gillian Hales (doctoral student), Prof Susan Kippax (NCHSR), Prof Kevin McConkey (Psychology).
PSYCHOSOCIAL EXAMINATION OF EUTHANASIA AND ASSISTED SUICIDE

This project aims to examine the practice of euthanasia and assisted suicide, and the impact of this practice on people who assist a person to die. It focuses primarily on AIDS-related assisted deaths, though it also includes an investigation of non-AIDS related deaths and the four legal cases of euthanasia which took place under the Northern Territory Right to Die Act, 1995.

Research staff: Suzanne Bermingham (doctoral student), Prof Susan Kippax (NCHSR), Prof Ann Daniel (Sociology).
5 PUBLICATIONS

Book Chapters


Refereed Publications


**Other Publications**


**Reports**


**Surveillance Reports**


Conference Presentations


### 6 FUNDING

#### COMMONWEALTH FUNDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Funding</td>
<td>821,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Link</td>
<td>95,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine Use &amp; Risks for HCV &amp; HIV Transmission among Injecting Drug Users (1999/2000 grant)</td>
<td>47,358</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### NSW HEALTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Health Study (also Commonwealth Funding)</td>
<td>24,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Men &amp; Sexual Health (SMASH) Surveillance Report</td>
<td>21,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Gay Community Periodic Survey</td>
<td>20,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Islander Sexual Health Promotion Initiatives in NSW</td>
<td>49,448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining Contact with the SMASH Cohort (SMASH) Study</td>
<td>29,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methadone Injectors in NSW</td>
<td>79,663</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### QUEENSLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Periodic Survey of Behaviours of Gay Men</td>
<td>37,829</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### WENTWORTH AREA HEALTH SERVICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Impact Study: WHAS needle &amp; syringe exchange program</td>
<td>33,027</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### UNAIDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring Response of Education Systems to HIV &amp; AIDS in East &amp; South East Asia</td>
<td>11,242</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### ARC LARGE GRANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mortality, Masculinity &amp; Risk: Impact of AIDS on health maintenance behaviours &amp; risk taking by Australian men</td>
<td>64,994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### NHMRC ANCARD FELLOWSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Social &amp; Cultural Meanings of Injecting Drug Use</td>
<td>52,148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### NHMRC
Risks for Hepatitis C: Injecting drug use study (1999/2000 grant) 165,000