The National Centre in HIV Social Research (NCHSR) is in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales. It is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.
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Since its establishment in 1990 by the Australian Government, the National Centre in HIV Social Research (NCHSR) has undertaken a program of social research related to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), sexually transmissible infections and hepatitis C.
NCHSR’s major research priorities are to:

- conduct research that contributes to the management of HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases in the most affected communities
- 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 subcultural understandings that inform those practices
- identify the strategies and health care models appropriate to deal with the impact of HIV, hepatitis C and sexually transmissible infections
- identify effective prevention strategies and barriers to their adoption by those at risk of HIV, hepatitis C and sexually transmissible infections
- conduct research into the personal, social, economic and cultural impact of HIV, hepatitis C and sexually transmissible infections
- conduct studies of the social and personal aspects of the conduct of clinical trials, including vaccines.
About NCHSR

NCHSR was established in 1990 at the University of Queensland, with Professor Beverley Raphael as Director. A unit of the centre, devoted mainly to HIV prevention among gay and other homosexually active men, was also established at Macquarie University. In 1995 the unit at Macquarie University and a group of researchers at La Trobe University in Melbourne (some of whom were researchers in what became the Australian Centre for Sex, Health and Society [ARCSHS]), became the National Centre in HIV Social Research with me as its director. In late 1998 NCHSR moved into the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales and ARCSHS became an independent research centre.

In its various guises and over time NCHSR developed and extended its research program into two major areas: HIV and STI research with a focus on sexuality and sexual practice, and hepatitis C research with a major focus on drug use. It also developed a program of research in Indigenous health, and an international program focused mainly on the Asia-Pacific region. Since 1998 NCHSR has strengthened its links with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR) in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of New South Wales. NCHSR and NCHECR provide the Australian federal and state government health departments with up-to-date information on the epidemics of HIV and hepatitis C, and on sexual and drug injection practices among populations at risk.

NCHSR research has contributed to:
- a detailed understanding of how specific sexual and injection drug use practices, particularly in relation to pleasure, intimacy and risk, are related to characteristics of the individual, such as knowledge and attitudes, and are produced with reference to sociocultural factors
- the development of innovative methodologies for recruiting hard-to-reach populations at risk of HIV and hepatitis C
- the documentation of the adoption by members of affected populations of a number of key risk-reduction strategies in response to HIV and hepatitis C transmission risk
- changes in the priorities of educational programs and to whom they are targeted, through timely monitoring of trends in risk practices and associated factors over time
- maximising the effectiveness of medical interventions to reduce transmission risk and enhance treatment and care by investigating people’s relationships with the health sector.

As 2007 was my last year as Director of the National Centre in HIV Social Research, I will spend some time reflecting on NCHSR and my time at the centre.

Director's report

Professor Susan Kippax was appointed Director of the National Centre in HIV Social Research in July 1994 after serving as Deputy Director from 1990. She retired from the Director's position in 2007.

Since 1985 Professor Kippax 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, including 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. She is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia.

Since 1998 NCHSR has strengthened its links with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR) in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of New South Wales.
Importantly in 2007, in responding to increases in HIV infections across Australia, but especially in Victoria and Queensland, NCHSR played a key role in informing government and affected communities of the likely causes of these increases via a ‘think tank’ of researchers, policy makers and other experts convened by the New South Wales Department of Health. The results of this process illustrated in very tangible ways the value that sustained investment in social research has had for understanding and responding to Australia’s evolving HIV epidemic. NCHSR contributed to the think tank in several important ways, specifically through detailed re-examination of our behavioural surveillance data, but also through a detailed review of policy and prevention processes in different Australian states. The results of the think tank have been widely disseminated within Australia. They will also provide the content of a special issue of the journal *Sexual Health* to be published in 2008, to bring the findings of this analysis to the attention of a wider international research audience.

The funding NCHSR has received from competitive grants, as well as from federal and state governments, has grown appreciably. This funding in 2007 supported a staff of over 30 full-time researchers whose publication record has been exemplary.

In 2007 NCHSR continued to supervise doctoral students; to enrol students in an MA by Research in Health, Sexuality and Culture in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences; and to build on the Clearinghouse launched in 2005. The Clearinghouse provides access to Australian research resources relating to HIV, hepatitis C and associated risk practices. It is a searchable web-based database of journal articles, conference presentations, policy documents, educational materials to aid in the prevention of HIV and hepatitis C, and media information; the media section is supported by the archives made available by Associate Professor Leong Chan at the College of Fine Arts, UNSW, and Dr Raymond Donovan, Visiting Research Fellow at NCHSR. The Clearinghouse enables the sharing of resources across various government, community and research organisations, and facilitates existing and developing partnerships in the field.

As well as contributing to relevant conferences in Australia and overseas, NCHSR also continued to play a role in the Health and Human Rights Initiative at the University of New South Wales, the Centres for HIV and AIDS Research Initiative (5-CHARI, made up of representatives from Australia, Brazil, Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom) and the Global HIV Prevention Working Group.

In 2007 there were a number of staffing changes. We said goodbye to Juliet Richters who took up an appointment as Associate Professor in the School of Public Health and Community Medicine at UNSW and Lorraine Yap who moved with her; to Kylie Valentine who went to the Social Policy Research Centre, also at UNSW, and to Suzanne Fraser and Kane Race who took up lectureships at Monash University and the University of Sydney respectively. They will all be missed but I know will continue to collaborate with former colleagues at NCHSR. We also said goodbye to Shanley Chong, Hédim Santana and a number of administrative staff: Joseph Lopes and Christina Rofe, who had served NCHSR well over a long period of time, and Keith Ricketts who was with us for eight months during 2007. Our Community Liaison Officer, Michael Salter, left to fully immerse himself in his PhD studies. Joanne Bryant, Maude Frances and Christy Newman also left us briefly, Joanne and Christy on maternity leave and Maude on secondment to the UNSW library for six months. We welcomed a number of new staff onto the international team: researchers Angela Kelly, Jason Lee and Cammi Webb, and International Programs and Policy Manager Louisa Minney. We appointed Loren Brener, Peter Hull, Yvonna Lavis and Pol McCann as researchers and Baden Chalmers as our new Community Liaison Officer. Sophie McDonald was appointed Librarian and Carolyn Eccles, Claire Fielding and Michael Keogh also joined the library staff. We have also welcomed Imogen Da Silva, Business Manager, and Nalini Krishnan About NCHSR
and Nirvan Morrison as administrative support staff.

We welcomed a number of visitors in 2007 including our Visiting Fellows: Professor Peter Aggleton from the United Kingdom, Professor Harm Hospers from the Netherlands and Professor Ian Lubek from Canada.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Loren Brener, Jeanne Ellard, Max Hopwood and Pol McCann, all of whom were awarded their PhDs in 2007; Carla Treloar and Heather Worth who were promoted to Associate Professor; and Joanne Bryant and Asha Persson who were successful in their applications for promotion to Research Fellow positions.

I also take this opportunity to thank everyone with whom I have worked over the past twenty or more years; it has been a very important and rewarding part of my life. When I think of you all, I think in terms of ‘partnership’, partnership that has made the Australian response to HIV and hepatitis C so robust and so successful. I thank the members of that partnership: government health department officers who, with very few exceptions, have been extremely supportive, open-minded and prepared to take the risk to support research when the immediate pay-off was not at all obvious, and those from public health—clinicians, general practitioners and specialists, epidemiologists and nurses—who, although somewhat sceptical of social science, have also been supportive, open-minded and cooperative. Working with public health has not been without its challenges but the challenges have generally produced new insights, good research, new ways of seeing. I also thank the non-government organisations and all who work for them, the educators and the policy makers. It was they who first came to ask for help in 1985 and it is they who have taught us all so much about the importance of working reflexively, of taking up the position of the ‘other’, of seeing the world from the point of view of the gay man, the sex worker, the injection drug user, the person with AIDS. Their courage in the face of the epidemic has been and continues to be a source of inspiration and intellectual energy to all researchers.

I also thank my academic colleagues from a range of disciplines—sociology, political science, psychology, linguistics, cultural studies, anthropology, law and education—in a number of countries. I thank those with whom I have worked at NCHSR and at the ‘other’ national centre (NCHECR), at ARCSHS, the Health and Human Rights Initiative, the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine, the Sax Institute, the University of New South Wales and other universities in Australia, particularly Macquarie. I also thank those with whom I have worked from Brazil, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the US, and particularly those from the Institute of Education, University College London, from the University of Toronto in Canada and from the Centre for the Study of AIDS at the University of Pretoria in South Africa.

Finally, I welcome the new Director of NCHSR, Professor John de Wit from the University of Utrecht, the Netherlands, who will take up the position in July 2008, and very warmly thank Associate Professor John Imrie for taking on the role of Acting Director from August 2007.
Scientific Advisory Committee

NCHSR is advised by the Scientific Advisory Committee, a group of experts from social science, public health and non-government organisations. Its major role is to oversee NCHSR’s research, including its annual work plan.

Chair

Emeritus Professor Sheila Shaver, formerly Director, Social Policy Research Centre, The University of New South Wales

Members

Professor Ian Anderson, Director, Centre for the Study of Health and Society and VicHealth Koori Health Research and Community, School of Population Health, The University of Melbourne

Dr Janet Chan, Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, The University of New South Wales*

Professor James Donald (ex-officio), Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, The University of New South Wales*

Mr Simon Donohoe, Manager, National Education Team, Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO)

Ms Sharon Flanigan, Director, Hepatitis C & HIV/AIDS Section, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing*

Ms Karen Fox, Director, Hepatitis C & HIV/AIDS Section, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing*

Professor Annette Hamilton (ex-officio), Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, The University of New South Wales*

Associate Professor John Imrie, Acting Director, National Centre in HIV Social Research, The University of New South Wales*

Professor John Kaldor, Deputy Director, National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, The University of New South Wales*

Professor Susan Kippax, Director, National Centre in HIV Social Research, The University of New South Wales*

Professor Pranee Liamputtong, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, La Trobe University

Professor Martyn Lyons, Associate Dean – Research, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, The University of New South Wales (attends in lieu of the Dean)*

Ms Sharyn McGregor, Director, Hepatitis C Section, Targeted Prevention Programs Branch, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing*

Ms Angela McKinnon, Director, Hepatitis C Section, Targeted Prevention Programs Branch, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing*

Ms Angie Madden, Executive Officer, Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL)

Associate Professor Lisa Maher, Head, Viral Hepatitis Epidemiology and Prevention Program, National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, The University of New South Wales*

Professor Jake Najman, Professor of Sociology, The School of Social Science, The University of Queensland
Professor Marian Pitts (ex-officio), Director, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University

Dr John Rule, Manager, HIV Living/International Unit, National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA)

Professor Daniel Tarantola, NewSouth Global Professor in Human Rights, The UNSW Initiative for Health and Human Rights, The University of New South Wales

Associate Professor Carla Treloar (observer), Deputy Director, National Centre in HIV Social Research, The University of New South Wales

Ms Helen Tyrrell, Executive Officer, Australian Hepatitis Council

Associate Professor Catherine Waldby, International Research Fellow, Department of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Sydney

Dr David Wilson, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for International Health, Curtin University of Technology

Associate Professor Heather Worth (observer), Deputy Director, National Centre in HIV Social Research, The University of New South Wales

*part-year
Staff

Director (until August 2007) and Professor
Susan Kippax, BA(Hons), PhD, FASSA

Acting Director (from August 2007), Head, HIV program, and Associate Professor
John Imrie, BA(Hons), MA, MSc, DipLSHTM, PhD

Head, International program, Deputy Director and Associate Professor
Heather Worth, BA, MA(Hons), PhD

Head, Hepatitis C program, Deputy Director and Associate Professor
Carla Treloar, BSc(Hons), PhD

Head, Sexual Health program, and Senior Research Fellow
Juliet Richters, BA, MPH, PhD*

ARC Australian Research Fellow, and Senior Research Fellow
Robert Reynolds, BA(Hons), PhD, Master of Counselling

Research Fellows
Augustine Asante, BA(Hons), MSocSci, PhD
Suzanne Fraser, BA(Hons), PhD*
Martin Holt, BSc(Hons), MSc, PhD
Henrike Kömer, BA(Hons), DipEd, MA, PhD
Limin Mao, BMed, MEdAdmin, PhD
Christy Newman, BA(Hons), PhD
Patrick Rawstorne, BA(Hons), MA, PhD
Iryna Zablotska, MD(Hons), MPH, PhD

Research Officers
Andrew Frankland, BA, MCrim
Peter Hull, BPsych(Hons)*

Research Assistant
Camellia Webb, BA, BSW(Hons), MDVST*

Research Consultant
June Crawford, BA(Hons), PhD

Visiting honorary staff
Peter Aggleton, BA, DipEd, MEd, MA, PhD
Raymond Donovan, BA(Hons), PhD
Harm Hospers, MSc, PhD
Ian Lubek, BA (Hons), PhD

Business Manager
Imogen Da Silva, BSc(Hons), GradCert
Finance and Accounting*
New staff

Loren Brener, Research Associate

Loren was appointed in April 2007 to coordinate the qualitative arm of the Aboriginal Patterns of Cancer Care study. She also remains involved in studies addressing stereotyping and stigmatisation of, and discrimination against, injecting drug users and people with hepatitis C. This work focuses specifically on the implicit and explicit attitudes of health care workers towards people with hepatitis C and how such attitudes affect delivery of care. With a background in social psychology, Loren is particularly interested in research that uses mixed methodologies, i.e. both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, in order to best understand the phenomenon under study.

Angela Kelly, Research Associate

Angela has been appointed team leader of the Strengthening HIV Social Research in PNG project, in which ten research cadets from Papua New Guinea are learning to conduct qualitative and quantitative social research. She and the cadets are based at the PNG Institute of Medical Research at Goroka in the Eastern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea. Angela's research interests include the social impacts of antiretroviral therapy, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, violence against women, and women's experiences of HIV testing. Before taking up this position with NCHSR, Angela lived in Beijing, China, where she was an HIV educator at You An Hospital.

Yvonna Lavis, Research Associate

Yvonna joined NCHSR in April 2007 to coordinate the quantitative arm of the Hepatitis C Treatment Decisions project, which is investigating the social, personal and clinical factors that come to bear on making decisions about treatment for hepatitis C. She also inherited leadership of the Big Day Out study, which examines patterns of illicit drug use among young people attending music festivals. Yvonna has a background in cognitive psychology and is interested in decision-making processes and selective attention.

Jason Lee, Research Associate

Jason works in the International program. He is currently implementing the national behavioural surveillance survey in Timor Leste among sex workers, men who have sex with men and uniformed personnel. He has a strong background in clinical research and public health. His main research interest is the impact of gender and cultural influences and traditions on sexual health and HIV.
Pol McCann, Research Associate

Pol joined NCHSR in October 2007 to work on the hepatitis C vaccine project. His role is to coordinate and conduct focus groups with injecting drug users and members of the peak bodies that represent them. The data collected in this study will be used to help in the design of clinical trials for a hepatitis C vaccine, if Sydney were to be chosen as a trial site. Pol recently completed his PhD in the School of Health at the University of New England. His research area was the impact of homophobia on heterosexual Australian men’s ideas of gender. While completing this degree, Pol worked at the National Centre in HIV Clinical and Epidemiological Research as an interviewer on the Health in Men and Positive Health projects.

Cammi Webb, Research Assistant

Cammi joined the International program in August 2007. She has worked in the HIV sector for six years as a project officer for the International Program at the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine and a counsellor at the Kirketon Road Centre in Kings Cross, Sydney. She has undergraduate degrees in social work and sociology, and a Master’s degree in international development. She is currently a PhD candidate at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, The University of Sydney. Her research interests are in international health, human rights and post-conflict development. At NCHSR she is contributing to a study in Timor Leste examining the links between political violence, sexual violence against women, and HIV vulnerability, and assisting in the development of an operations manual for NCHSR’s international work.

Imogen da Silva, Business Manager

Imogen has a degree in business management and a postgraduate qualification in finance and accounting. She joins us from the University of Technology, Sydney, where she was Finance Manager for the Faculty of IT. During her four years at UTS she developed an interest in the research side of operations and managed more than 70 research projects, the majority of which were funded by the Australian Research Council. Originally from the UK, she has more than fifteen years’ experience in business administration gained from a variety of senior administrative positions within private industries overseas.

Baden Chalmers, Community Liaison Officer

Baden was appointed in November 2007. He is responsible for facilitating the dialogue between NCHSR and both the HIV and hepatitis C health sectors. He represents NCHSR on various community working groups and committees, and coordinates the dissemination of findings of relevant projects back to these communities. Baden has a strong background in the HIV sector. He was formerly the Senior Group Work and Peer Education Officer at ACON and also took on other roles in HIV community work. Baden is also a postgraduate student at NCHSR. His research interests are sexual health, particularly among gay men’s sexual subcultures, and the impact of sexual health interventions on the individual and the group.
Louisa Minney, Manager, International Programs and Policy

Louisa was appointed to the International program in November 2007. She is an experienced and trained program manager, with over 15 years’ experience in managing, evaluating and training across the private and public sectors in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and the Pacific. She has worked in the field on bilateral and multilateral programs in both a development and humanitarian aid context, including in disaster relief. Before coming to NCHSR, Louisa spent four years developing and implementing program/project design monitoring and evaluation courses and workshops. She has also worked as a consultant to NGOs on monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of aid.

Sophie McDonald, Librarian

Sophie holds a Master’s degree in information and knowledge management with a background in arts and social research. As NCHSR Librarian, Sophie is responsible for developing and maintaining the library collection, dissemination of NCHSR publications, managing website content, reference enquiries, interlibrary loans and database development. As an information professional, she supports the principles of open-access publishing and enjoys providing quality information services to researchers working in the areas of HIV and hepatitis C.

Carolyn Eccles, Research Information Officer

Carolyn began work at NCHSR in March 2007. She works closely with the NCHSR Research Resource Manager in the construction of an online relational database incorporating Australian social research resources, policy documents, media reportage and health promotion campaign material relating to HIV and hepatitis C. She graduated from UNSW with a Bachelor of Arts (English) in 2007 and is now completing a Graduate Certificate in Writing at UTS.

Nalini Krishnan, Finance Officer

Nalini has a degree in science and a diploma in education. She joined NCHSR as Finance Officer in December 2007, coming from the Faculty of Medicine where she worked as Client Services Accountant. For the previous seven years she was at the University of Auckland. Nalini finds each new initiative in the field of finance both challenging and rewarding and enjoys managing the finances of the Centre.

Nirvan Morrison, Administrative Officer and Receptionist

Nirvan joined NCHSR in December 2007. She comes from a background in art and graphic design, but over many years has interspersed these activities with administrative roles, most recently in the Attorney-General’s Department. At NCHSR she has general administrative responsibilities and is the welcoming face at the front desk.
Research at the National Centre in HIV Social Research falls into five broad areas:

- Mapping risk practice
- Negotiating the medical field
- Exploring cultural, social and political dynamics
- Health knowledge, policy and practice
- International studies.

More information about the following studies and selected findings are published in our Annual report of trends in behaviour.
Mapping risk practice

The studies listed under this category are all concerned with the mapping of safe and unsafe practices—both sexual and drug use practices. All the studies examine sexual and drug use practice with reference to the interpersonal and social lives of the populations under study. They explore the meanings of practice and the determinants of risk, enabling researchers to monitor practice and reliably assess changes in risk over time.

The interaction between sexually transmissible infections and HIV infection in homosexual men

Kippax, Imrie, Mao and Zablotska

The aim of this study is to determine the independent effect of sexually transmissible infections (STIs) on the incidence of HIV in a community-based cohort of homosexual men who were initially HIV-negative. In examining the interaction between HIV and STIs, we will determine the prevalence and incidence of bacterial STIs (including chlamydia, gonorrhoea and infectious syphilis) and viral STIs (including herpes simplex virus [HSV] Types 1 and 2, and HIV). We will also determine the behavioural and demographic risk factors for acquiring each of these STIs, trends in their incidence and prevalence, the proportion of cases that are symptomatic, and the range and type of associated clinical symptoms. This study is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. Our collaborators are ACON and the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, also at the University of New South Wales. Considerable progress has been made in the study during 2007 and peer-reviewed papers have been published.

Gay community periodic surveys

Zablotska, Frankland and Imrie

The gay community periodic surveys are funded by state and territory health departments and conducted jointly by NCHSR and the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research in collaboration with state AIDS councils. The first periodic survey of gay men's sexual practice was conducted in Sydney in February 1996 and the survey has been repeated every six months since then. Gay community periodic surveys are now conducted regularly in other states as well, annually in Melbourne and Brisbane, every other year in Adelaide and Perth, and every three years in Canberra. In 2007 these surveys took place in Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and twice in Sydney (in February and August).

These data provide useful monitoring of self-reported HIV status and changes in the sexual practice and drug use of gay men. The results of each survey are presented in an individual report. In 2007 these were standardised so that each state report is now directly comparable with every other. NCHSR also continued to produce and distribute brochures to provide feedback to study participants on the Sydney and Queensland survey data. These brochures were jointly produced by NCHSR, ACON and the Queensland Association of Healthy Communities. Discussions are currently taking place with other states about introducing similar initiatives.

Periodic surveys of drug use among young people

Bryant and Treloar

Monitoring of drug use among young people is largely limited to secondary school surveys from which older youths are excluded, or large population surveys that tend to underrepresent people who live in unstable situations, such as young
people. This project complements those other surveys by collecting data on the
drug use of young people who attend music festivals, young people who are
beyond school age and in a changeable time of life. Annual surveys of young
people recruited from music festivals (mainly the Big Day Out) provide data on
their recent licit and illicit use of drugs, their knowledge of how hepatitis C is
transmitted, their attitudes to drug use and the contexts in which they use. The
first round of data collection was carried out in January 2004; the most recent,
in January 2007 at the Big Day Out in Sydney, was the fourth time data has
been collected. Extensive planning was undertaken during 2007 to expand data
collection to Queensland and Victoria in 2008.

Australian longitudinal study of health and relationships
Richters

This study follows a nationally representative group of Australians over their
lifetimes, documenting the natural history and patterns of health and relationships,
using telephone interviews. Among other areas, the study explores reproductive
and sexual health behaviours and attitudes, the formation of relationships and
changes in them, health status and behaviour, and family demographics. Over
8000 people were recruited into the study, of whom 96% agreed to be followed up
over time. This project is funded by the National Health and Medical Research
Council and is based at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society
at La Trobe University in Melbourne.

Sydney women and sexual health
Richters

This is a study of women in contact with Sydney gay and lesbian communities,
based on a self-complete survey questionnaire that has been handed out every two
years since 1996 at gay and lesbian community events such as Mardi Gras Fair Day.
It was initiated by staff at ACON (the AIDS Council of NSW) in order to inform
health promotion programs for gay and lesbian drug users and for women partners
of bisexual men. ACON staff approached NCHSR for help with the design of the
survey instrument and the analysis and reporting of findings. Since then, the project’s
aims have broadened beyond that of ascertaining risks of transmission of HIV and
other blood-borne viruses, extending to wider issues of lesbian sexuality and health
(use of dental dams, smoking, Pap smears and domestic violence). As well as resulting
in scholarly publications, for example on the complexities and contradictions of sexual
behaviour and identity, this project has had practical outcomes for ACON policies
regarding safe sex and other topics for community health promotion.

Sexual health and attitudes of Australian prisoners (SHAAP)
Richters and Yap

The Sexual Health and Attitudes of Australian Prisoners study, carried out in
conjunction with the Centre for Health Research in Criminal Justice, combines
qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to learn more about the
patterns of sexual contact within jails and the physical and institutional structures
and practices that prevent or enable sexual coercion. When complete, the
quantitative study will have recruited 2000 men and 400 women from jails in
Queensland and New South Wales and will compare the sexual health and
related behaviours of prisoners from each state. This research includes the
implementation, for the first time, of innovative research survey strategies inside
jails, using the latest communication and Bluetooth wireless technologies. The
study’s qualitative component uses fieldwork in prisons and in-depth interviews
and discussion among focus groups to find out more about the social and cultural
dynamics of sex and sexual violence in jail. The study addresses the sexual health,
atitudes and behaviours of members of society, who, even when they are out of
jail, tend to be less likely to respond to surveys. It will also make practical
recommendations for the prevention of sexual assaults in prison.
Survey of knowledge, risk practice and access to services among Aboriginal people in New South Wales

Worth and Bryant

This project aims to assess levels of knowledge, risk practice and access to health services in relation to sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and blood-borne viruses among Aboriginal people aged 16 to 30 in New South Wales.

In 2007 we obtained approval from the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council to carry out a cross-sectional pilot study at the Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout Carnival in Lismore in October. We also trialled the use of handheld computers as a way of gathering data. Most (97%) of the participants used the handheld computers to complete the questionnaire and were comfortable doing so. The advantage of using handheld computers for data collection is a saving in data entry costs.

A convenience sample of 130 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander attendees, 16 to 30 years old, was obtained over three days of the carnival. Results were in the process of being analysed at the end of 2007 and consent had been obtained from the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council to conduct the survey again during the next major Aboriginal event in New South Wales, Yabun.

Pharmacy needle and syringe survey 2007: hepatitis C risk and access to sterile injecting equipment in pharmacies in south-east Sydney

Bryant, Hopwood, Brener, Hull and Treloar

Little is known about an estimated significant proportion of injecting drug users who do not access equipment and information from needle and syringe programs, but instead use pharmacies for this purpose. An exploratory study was conducted in 2006 which combined qualitative and quantitative methods to explore and critique commonly held assumptions that appear in published research regarding access to injecting equipment and information about harm. This study showed that a considerable proportion of people attending pharmacies for Fitpacks were engaging in injecting practices that put them at risk for acquiring or transmitting hepatitis C and HIV, and that those at suburban pharmacies were potentially at increased risk. In 2007 additional funding was obtained from NSW Health to expand this study to include other areas in New South Wales. Quantitative data were collected from 36 pharmacies in metropolitan and regional areas of the state, which generated a sample size of over 700 participants. A report of the study is due in the latter part of 2008. It is also envisaged that this research will be expanded to include a national sample.

Negotiating the medical field

The studies listed here are concerned with the interface between health/illness and clinical practice. They include surveys as well as studies focused on in-depth explorations of embodied responses to medical practice and/or the social production and construction of meaning and practice.

Positive Health: HIV-positive men who have sex with men

Zablotska, Kippax and Imrie

The Positive Health study is an open cohort study of HIV-positive gay and other homosexual men living in New South Wales. The study focuses on HIV testing and markers of health, treatment and care, sexual practices and attitudes, sexual
health testing and other issues. A major goal of the study is to assess the lived experience of HIV-positive people over time. Participants are recruited in clinics and community groups of HIV-positive people in urban and rural settings and are interviewed annually. In 2007, the last year of data collection, the study recruited 230 participants and testing for sexually transmissible infections was offered to all participants for the third consecutive year. Expanded data analyses are being carried out and publications submitted to journals.

This study has been conducted in collaboration with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and the National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS. Reports from this study are available on the NCHSR website.

Primary health care project on HIV and depression
Kippax, Mao, Newman and Körner

This project involves a comprehensive qualitative and quantitative assessment of the prevalence, nature, self-management and clinical management of depression among gay men and people living with HIV/AIDS. Its objective is to develop recommendations for clinical management and self-management of depression in the context of general practice. The project findings will be used by the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM) to update education programs for s100 general practitioners, and by the Clinical Research Unit for Anxiety and Depression to develop a self-management module for depressed HIV-positive gay men. Both quantitative and qualitative data have been collected from general practitioners, and men who attend their clinics, in Sydney, Adelaide and the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales.

The first phase of data collection was completed in 2006. Preliminary results from the first round of in-depth interviews with 16 s100 prescribers at six clinical sites in Sydney, Adelaide and a rural, coastal town in New South Wales were presented at the 2006 annual Australasian Society for HIV Medicine Conference and the 2007 AIDS Impact Conference in Marseilles. By the end of 2007 the second phase of quantitative data collection was completed with three groups of male patients (gay men with HIV, gay men without HIV, and heterosexual men) who attended the same six GP clinics. The final qualitative phase, comprising around 35 interviews with gay men self-identified in the clinic survey questionnaire as depressed, will be conducted between February and April 2008. A staff member of the National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS completed a six-week internship with the Consortium for Social Policy Research on HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases in 2007 and worked with Dr Limin Mao on this project.

The Straightpoz study: heterosexual men and women living with HIV
Persson

The aim of this study is to identify and explore issues significant to men and women living heterosexually with HIV in New South Wales.

The Straightpoz study is a qualitative longitudinal study to explore the experiences of living with HIV of heterosexual men and women with HIV and their sero-negative partners in New South Wales. The study is conducted in collaboration with Pozhet, the Heterosexual HIV/AIDS Service NSW. This study, the first of its kind in Australia, explores experiences of living with HIV that are specific to this group, as well as experiences specific to men, women and serodiscordant couples respectively. The first round of interviews was completed in 2005, focusing on diagnosis, identity, stigma, disclosure, relationships, sexuality, social connectedness and contact with services and the broader positive community. A second round of interviews was completed in 2007, focusing on issues around health and treatments, interactions with health professionals, sexual practices, sexual health and understandings of sexual risk and transmission. A third and final round of data collection is planned for 2008/09.
The findings of this research study provide a basis for considered development of appropriate service provision for those living heterosexually with HIV and will also increase understanding of the intersections of sexuality, gender and illness. The first report on this study was launched in late 2006. Other publications and dissemination of findings continued throughout 2007. A second report will be launched at the end of 2008.

**Who’s calling? An analysis of calls made to the Pozhet info-line from 1993 to 2007**
Zablotska and Persson

HIV-positive heterosexuals in Australia often experience HIV in relative secrecy because of the stigma attached to having the virus. This makes it difficult for them to find out about and to access support. Pozhet was established in 1993 to address the particular needs of HIV-positive heterosexuals. One of the services it offers is an information phone line. Since the establishment of the info-line, there has been an average of about 400 callers each year. In 2007 the data from call records collected from 2003 to 2006 were systematically reviewed by a trained coder and re-entered using a new caller record form. All incoming calls in 2007 were also registered using the new record form. In 2008, the data from these systematised records will be analysed quantitatively to glean information about the needs of HIV-positive heterosexuals and their partners, friends and families. Findings from this study will assist Pozhet and other service providers to plan better health care and support for heterosexuals with HIV. In 2008, funding will be sought for data analyses and production of feedback materials.

**Barriers to HIV testing among people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds**
Körner, Asante and Kippax

This project investigates the reasons for delayed HIV testing among people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The project has two components, one quantitative, the other qualitative. The quantitative component collects demographic and socio-economic data, along with data about people’s use of health services, attitudes towards HIV and perceptions of stigma. These will be linked with the patients’ HIV-related clinical data to identify patients who were diagnosed late and the reasons for their late diagnosis. The qualitative component follows up the survey and approximately 20 HIV patients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are interviewed. These interviews explore in depth some of the issues covered in the survey, in particular issues relating to patients’ use of health services. Ethics approval for the project was obtained from the UNSW Ethics Committee and area health services. Data collection was completed in 2007. The project will be completed in 2008.

**Periodic survey of knowledge and perceptions of HIV and the use of HIV services among people from priority CALD communities in New South Wales**
Körner, Asante and Kippax

The aim of this study is to investigate knowledge and perceptions of HIV and the use of health services among the general populations of four ethnic communities in Sydney that have a high prevalence of HIV infection: the Thai, Cambodian, Sudanese and Ethiopian communities. The study investigates people’s knowledge and use of health services in Sydney; patterns of movement between Australia and their country of birth; knowledge about and perceptions of HIV, including HIV transmission and living with HIV; and the manner in which people living with HIV are perceived within these four communities, including their experiences of stigma and discrimination. Data collection was completed in 2007. The project will be completed in 2008.
National treatment service users project, Phase 1
Bryant, Holt and Treloar

This project is conducted through a partnership between NCHSR and the Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL). The project evaluated the opportunities for, attitudes towards and barriers to consumer participation in the planning and delivery of Australian drug treatment services. The inclusion of health service consumers in the planning and delivery of health services has become the norm in many areas of health service delivery in Australia, such as mental health. However, it is unknown to what extent this has occurred within drug treatment services. The project used a cross-sectional design and structured interviews to collect data from a randomly selected sample of 64 service providers and a convenience sample of 179 consumers in Western Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. Consultations with relevant consumer organisations and other key stakeholders were also conducted. Data collection was completed in mid-2006. Findings were presented at the Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and Other Drugs Conference in Cairns in November 2006. In 2007 two academic papers were submitted to a peer-reviewed journal and are scheduled to be published in early 2008. A report on the project will be released by AIVL in 2008. The second stage of the project was developed and began in mid-2007 (see National treatment service users project, Phase 2, below).

National treatment service users project, Phase 2
Bryant, Ellard and Treloar

The aim of this study is to implement the specific recommendations of Phase 1 of the Treatment Service Users Project. These are to evaluate the suitability and impact of a consumer participation program within various drug treatment settings and to convene a workshop to bring together key stakeholders with the purpose of developing a nationally agreed definition and model of consumer participation to be used at the policy and service delivery level.

Phase 1 of the National Treatment Service Users Project showed that there was a high level of support from service users and providers for implementing a consumer participation program within drug treatment services. Phase 2 will evaluate the feasibility of operating a consumer participation program within drug treatment settings. Five treatment services will be selected to participate in a four- to six-month demonstration project. Qualitative data will be collected from staff and consumers of each service at the beginning and end of the demonstration period to ascertain the perceived suitability and impact of the consumer participation program. Data collection and preliminary data analysis will take place in 2008. This study is a partnership between NCHSR and the Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League.

Intimate technologies
Race

The focus of this study is the negotiation of matters of intimacy, pleasure, shame, experimentation, danger and consumption in the context of medical practice. This project was funded through a Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Faculty Research Grant in 2006 and, after several interviews with general practitioners, it was decided that the community debate around crystal methamphetamine was an appropriate focus for the research. Materials were gathered from the gay media for analysis in 2007 and a manuscript based on this analysis, entitled Exceptional sex: how drugs have come to mediate sex in gay discourse, has been prepared.

UNSW hepatitis C vaccine initiative: knowledge of and willingness to participate in vaccine trials
Treloar and McCann

This large project was funded from the UNSW Strategic Research Fund and includes social and epidemiological studies, clinical studies and laboratory-based
immunology and virology studies. The component conducted by NCHSR involves a qualitative investigation of the knowledge of hepatitis C vaccine trials among people who inject drugs, and of the factors that would influence their decision to take part in such a trial. Data for this project are sourced from injecting drug users, representatives of services tailored to people who inject drugs, and medical staff involved in their health care. Participants’ knowledge about hepatitis C and its potential impact on the lives of injecting drug users was ascertained, as was their knowledge of and perceptions about vaccine trials. This phase of the project will extend into 2008.

An investigation into the factors influencing the decision about whether or not to take up treatment for hepatitis C
Lavis, Bryant, Hopwood and Treloar

This project uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to determine the factors that influence people’s decisions about whether or not to undertake treatment for hepatitis C. A quantitative survey will elucidate factors relating to knowledge and perceptions of treatment and its impact on everyday life. A qualitative interview, which will seek to explore in detail the issues raised in the survey schedule, will be developed. The project focuses on two broad groups of people with hepatitis C: current and former injecting drug users and people with bleeding disorders. The project method and instruments were developed in 2007 and data will be collected in 2008.

Exploring cultural, social and political dynamics

These studies focus on the cultural, social and political contexts in which health and risk are practised. Most of these projects have been established and driven by their investigators in response to theoretical or conceptual concerns in the various social science disciplines that inform the NCHSR research program. Projects listed under this theme are diverse, covering a wide range of topic areas around sexual practice and illicit drug use, the interpersonal and discursive production of risk practices and health-seeking activities, and the global, social and economic determinants and impacts of HIV and hepatitis C. Among them are books in the process of being written and published, often developed from ‘strategic’ projects.

The role of the internet in building social capital among homosexually active men: virtual communities in HIV prevention
Kippax, Worth, Rawstorne and Holt

This study investigates whether the internet increases social capital among men who have sex with men (MSM) by building social connections and a sense of belonging; and whether such ‘virtual’ communities facilitate the uptake of internet-based HIV prevention and other health promotion messages and their translation into safe sex practice. The study will also assess whether an online methodology is useful for reaching men living in rural and remote areas, and whether the methodology could replace or complement the current print-based periodic surveys of gay men in major cities. Social capital comprises features of social organisation
such as civic participation, norms of reciprocity and trust in others that facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit, including health and well-being. The study explores the potential benefits as well as harms to those homosexually active men who use the internet to access health information, meet sexual partners and build friendships that affirm gay identity and community inclusion.

In 2006/07 a pilot questionnaire was designed and conducted online. The pilot study successfully recruited 503 participants over 11 weeks, and a number of reliable scales to measure social capital were developed from the pilot study data. A poster of findings from the pilot study was presented at the AIDS Impact Conference in Marseilles in 2007. In the second half of 2007 the main study questionnaire was developed, and a website to host the questionnaire (www.e-male.com.au) was commissioned. After the main survey questionnaire was finalised and tested, recruitment strategies were developed and refined. The main survey will be launched in February 2008 and it is anticipated that over 2000 men will participate.

The QUICKIE study
Holt, Race and Bernard

The Qualitative Interviews Concerning Key Issues and Experiences (QUICKIE) project is a two-year study (from 2006 to 2008) funded by NSW Health. Each year around thirty sexually active, community-attached gay men are interviewed in Sydney about their relationships, sex and drug practices, engagement with social scenes, health and well-being, experiences of clinical services, and personal, political and social views. In providing an annual qualitative snapshot of ‘ordinary’ gay men’s lives, the project complements data from NCHSR's behavioural surveys. Each year QUICKIE interviews have a special focus. In 2006/07 men’s perceptions of HIV in Sydney were explored, and the changing significance of HIV from the perspectives of both HIV-negative and HIV-positive men was considered. Most participants felt that HIV had declined in significance and visibility in Sydney, particularly since the advent of antiretroviral treatments. A related issue was the changing perception of gay community in Sydney. Many participants believed that the idea of a small, unified gay community had given way to a looser, more fragmented engagement with traditional aspects of Sydney gay life (such as the commercial scene of bars and clubs). While most participants still strongly and comfortably identified as gay men, many were ambivalent about being too heavily involved in gay community activities.

A report of the 2006/07 survey findings will be published in early 2008, and the second round of QUICKIE interviews will also be conducted at this time. In 2008 the special focus of QUICKIE interviews will be sexually transmissible infections and the perception of health risks.

The making of HIV and heterosexuality in the mainstream Australian print media
Newman and Persson

This project was funded by a UNSW Faculty Research Grant to explore the role of the mainstream media in the production and circulation of social and cultural knowledge about HIV, and as an important source of information about HIV for the broader population in Australia, those not explicitly targeted by HIV prevention campaigns.

The results of this short project include: a review of the Australian and international literature available on HIV and the media; an electronic archive of the full text of all newspaper articles relating to HIV published in The Sydney Morning Herald from 2000 to 2005; a basic content analysis of these articles (date, author, genre and topic); and an in-depth discourse analysis of selected articles, focusing on themes, metaphors and narratives. Two peer-reviewed publications were drafted and have been accepted for publication in 2008 in Sociology of
Comparing the role of takeaways in methadone maintenance treatment in New South Wales and Victoria

Kippax, Treloar and Fraser

New South Wales and Victoria have very different policies concerning 'takeaway' methadone (methadone consumed at home rather than on clinic or pharmacy premises). This three-year project, funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council, compared these two policy environments by interviewing methadone clients, dosing nurses, dispensing pharmacists, prescribing doctors and drug policy makers. It also investigated the social and cultural meanings given to takeaways by clients and workers, and the circumstances under which diversion of methadone to street sale takes place. The purpose of this study was to better understand the significance of takeaways to clients and workers, and to provide recommendations for future policy.

This highly successful project was completed during 2007. A number of refereed journal articles have been published. The report of the project was launched at the Australasian Professional Society for Alcohol and Drugs Conference in Auckland in November 2007 and the book from this project will be published in 2008 (see below).

Substance and substitution: methadone subjects in liberal society

[book]

Fraser and Valentine

Prescription of opioids to heroin addicts is often derided as an absurdity. Clients themselves describe methadone as 'liquid handcuffs', and clinics in Australia and elsewhere are highly visible sites of contention. Yet clinical and evaluation research demonstrate that methadone maintenance programs are effective for many people and the continued existence of the programs indicates productive approaches to understanding the management of addiction. To date, however, methadone has attracted comparatively little attention from social sciences and humanities scholars. Yet, in its role as oft-maligned substitute for a similar yet highly illicit substance, and in its combination of pharmacological, interpersonal, psychological and legal factors, methadone offers fascinating insights into contemporary tensions and contradictions around the production of the proper, law-abiding, 'stable' subject of liberal society. In 2007 the last chapters of this book-length study were written and the whole manuscript finalised for publication. Entitled Substance and substitution: methadone subjects in liberal societies, the book will be published in 2008 by Palgrave.

The real deal in hepatitis C prevention: automatic influences on injecting behaviour

Treloar

Phase 1 of this project involved collecting video recordings of clients injecting at the Sydney Medically Supervised Injecting Centre and then conducting interviews with these clients after they had reviewed the video footage of their injecting episode. Phase 2 of the project, funded by NSW Health, began in 2007. A series of focus groups was held with people who inject drugs. In these groups, participants reviewed the video material and findings of Phase 1 with the aim of developing peer education messages to use within their injecting networks. Participants trialled these messages within their networks and then attended subsequent groups to discuss the effectiveness of these messages and modify the interventions. The goal of this project was to develop effective hepatitis C prevention messages as well as to provide data for the development of a peer education model for blood-borne virus prevention among people who inject drugs.
Pleasure consuming medicine [book]

Race

This is a study of how discourses that regulate the use of drugs, specifically compliance and drug abuse, provide an avenue for the exercise of power in consumer society. The study uses historical, critical and textual methods, and the observations of participants, to examine how queer practices have reframed these dominant discourses to create new practices of care and service delivery. A book based on the research will be published by Duke University Press in 2008.

How to think about sex [book]

Richters

The aim of this book is to address the gap between cultural studies and biomedical approaches to conceptualising sexuality. Mutual misunderstandings between scientific and interpretive approaches to understanding sexuality are not exclusive to the study of sex but are general problems in the philosophy of the social sciences. This book will provide a coherent resolution to these conceptual and philosophical issues, using topics of broad social interest (What makes an act ‘sexual’? When is sex immoral? What causes homosexuality?) as the basis for arguing for a social constructionist approach within a realist framework.

Living with uncertainty: creating the postmodern self in contemporary Australia [book]

Reynolds

The aim of this study is to gauge how well individuals are negotiating the uncertainties and choices of postmodernity. What are the opportunities and dangers of postmodern life? What strategies are Australians formulating in an era of dissolving truths? What are the distinctive pressures and stresses of inhabiting a post-traditional world? Above all, how well equipped are contemporary Australians to find answers to the postmodern question: how are we to live?

These questions will focus on a case study of a particular social group: gay men. This population is especially apposite for an analysis of the self in postmodernity. As a social category and as an individual identity, being homosexual is a relatively recent invention. The objective of this project is thus to study the everyday practices and beliefs that make up a sense of self in gay subcultures, especially as they pertain to emotional life. In 2007 the data and analysis from this project was written up as a monograph and published by UNSW Press under the title What happened to gay life?

Study of environment on Aboriginal resilience and child health (SEARCH)

Kippax

This project involves the establishing of a cohort of Aboriginal families with children aged 16 years and under to investigate over a 20-year period the causes of health and illness with a focus on physical, community and family environments. It aims to investigate the relationship between a healthy environment and a range of health outcomes in Aboriginal children and young people living in urban areas, and the impact of a community-led program on the development of healthy environments and the health of children. Information will be collected using a variety of measures including: observational measures of housing quality and safety; survey and questionnaire assessments of self-reported health, resilience, social and emotional well-being, family structure, social support and community engagement; and medical records from Aboriginal medical services. The input of NCHSR will be focused on resilience and its correlates.
In 2007 the questionnaire was designed and approval sought and gained from Aboriginal medical services. Discussions with communities indicated that within existing resource constraints it would be possible to recruit 400 families. Data collection began in late 2007; however, new recruitment strategies are being trialled to improve access to families.

**Cancer in Aboriginal people: pilot study**

*Kippax, Newman and Ellard*

A qualitative pilot study was funded by The Cancer Council Australia to develop and test research tools for a larger study on cancer in Aboriginal people in New South Wales. This pilot study established working relationships with key Aboriginal organisations, including the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council and the Coalition for Research to Improve Aboriginal Health (CRIAH). The study also designed and piloted interview schedules, built research capacity among Aboriginal researchers by employing and training Aboriginal interviewers, and developed and tested strategies for recruiting participants.

To ensure Aboriginal involvement in the data collection stage, the project team recruited and trained three Aboriginal people to work as interviewers on the project. The training process included a workshop on qualitative research and interviewing, observing experienced interviewers conducting interviews with health care workers and, alongside an experienced interviewer, co-interviewing Aboriginal people with cancer. It is envisaged that these Aboriginal interviewers will also be employed on the larger study.

In 2007, pilot interviews were conducted with five Aboriginal people with cancer (three women and two men) and eight health care workers (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) who worked with Aboriginal people with cancer. The patients and health care workers were recruited from one urban and one regional Aboriginal community controlled health service. In 2007 a paper reviewing the literature on this topic was accepted for publication in *Critical Public Health*. A final report on the initial ‘pilot’ study will be completed in early 2008.

The pilot study was conducted by a research team with experience in qualitative research, cancer research and Aboriginal health research from the School of Psychology, University of Sydney; The Sax Institute; and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine and NCHSR, both at the University of New South Wales.

This pilot study has fed into a five-year project entitled Aboriginal Patterns of Cancer Care (APOCC) (see below), which is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council in collaboration with the University of Sydney, The Sax Institute and The Cancer Council New South Wales. This project will run from 2007 to 2011.

**Aboriginal patterns of cancer care (APOCC)**

*Treloar, Newman, Brener and Ellard*

The aims of the APOCC study are to assess whether or not Aboriginal people are being diagnosed with cancer at later stages than non-Aboriginal people and, if so, to describe both the barriers to early diagnosis and access to cancer care experienced by Aboriginal people and the care that Aboriginal people with cancer are currently receiving; and to compare the level and type of care they receive with that received by non-Aboriginal people.

The research is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council on a Health Services Grant and administered by The Cancer Council New South Wales. This research consists of four phases. NCHSR is responsible for the qualitative arm of the research, which entails conducting in-depth interviews with 50 Aboriginal people with cancer, 30 carers of Aboriginal people...
Our research

with cancer and 30 health care workers who work with Aboriginal people with cancer. The qualitative arm aims to explore and understand Aboriginal people’s cancer journey using culturally appropriate qualitative research tools. The other three phases of the study are: i) a description of patterns of cancer treatment delivered to Aboriginal in-patients, using linked data from the New South Wales Central Cancer Registry and the Inpatient Statistics Collection of records of hospital admissions in New South Wales; ii) validation and expansion of the data from the analysis of the in-patient statistics by means of abstraction of treatment information from medical records at Aboriginal medical services; and iii) population-based studies of the patterns of care and pathways to diagnosis for Aboriginal people with cancer.

Health knowledge, policy and practice

This program focuses on policy. In particular it is concerned with levels of knowledge in the community about health issues, and modes of education and health promotion delivery in Australia and other countries. These activities are also aimed at strengthening the capacity of Australian and other researchers to undertake ‘best practice’ social research into HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C.

Design, modelling and evaluation of a pilot program of screening for chlamydia in general practice

Imrie

Chlamydia trachomatis is the most commonly diagnosed bacterial sexually transmissible infection in Australia. In June 2005 the Australian Government announced funding of $12.5 million over four years to increase awareness of chlamydia, improve surveillance of it and pilot a testing program. This project is the final stage of that work and will involve a controlled trial of the use of a testing register to improve the uptake and follow-up of young people attending for chlamydia testing in general practice. Approval of funding and an initial contract were agreed in 2007 and the main study will run for three years from 2008. NCHSR’s role in this project is to undertake the process evaluation that will parallel the main trial. This pilot screening project is a collaboration between NCHSR and key Australian and international experts: the Key Centre for Women’s Health and Society, the Department of General Practice and School of Population Health, all of Melbourne University; the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, UNSW; the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Bern, Switzerland; the Health Economics Unit, Deakin University, Melbourne; the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne; the Victorian Cytology Service, Melbourne; the Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Burnet Institute, Melbourne; and the Royal Women’s Hospital, Melbourne.

Consortium for social and policy research on HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases

Treloar, Worth and Whitelaw

The primary purpose of the Consortium is to build and strengthen research capacity in the intersection between academic, community and health service organisations in the area of HIV, hepatitis C, sexually transmissible infections and the harms associated with sexual practice and illicit drug use in New South Wales, and to encourage collaborative research and the formation of healthy public policy in these fields. (See page 30 for information about the activities of the Consortium in 2007.)
Our research

Making a difference: building research capacity for health interventions to improve Aboriginal health
Kippax and Brener

NCHSR will work with Aboriginal researchers to build their research skills and their capacity to engage in qualitative research. This capacity building will be carried out in conjunction with the project Aboriginal Patterns of Cancer Care (see page 23), which is run by The Cancer Council New South Wales in conjunction with NCHSR and researchers from the University of Sydney.

Responding to the needs and quality-of-life experiences of advanced non-small-cell lung cancer patients
Treloar

A number of instruments exist to measure the quality of life of cancer patients. However, direct reporting of the experiences of patients with advanced lung cancer and their carers, with regard to their quality of life and unmet needs for care and support, is extremely limited. This project aims to enhance understanding of the needs and quality-of-life issues of people living with advanced non-small-cell lung cancer and to contribute to resources and strategies to improve the experience for both patients and their carers. People with advanced non-small-cell lung cancer, and their carers, will be invited to participate in focus group discussions. Participants will be recruited from a range of hospitals in a range of health care settings.

International studies

These studies are undertaken in regions of the world significantly affected by HIV/AIDS. The emphasis is on countries in the Asia–Pacific region and on working collaboratively with local health policy and education sectors to build sustainable research and response capacity.

Strengthening HIV-related social research capacity in Papua New Guinea
Worth and Kelly

In 2007 the 10 research cadets in the Strengthening HIV Social Research project based at the Papua New Guinea Institute of Medical Research in Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province, achieved an enormous amount. While becoming learned in both qualitative and quantitative research, the cadets engaged in a qualitative research project on young people’s attitudes towards sex and HIV and were all awarded scholarships to attend the 8th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP), where three presented oral papers. All of the cadets underwent training in HIV monitoring and evaluation and together the team were successful in their application for a grant to study the social impacts of antiretroviral therapy for people living with HIV/AIDS in Papua New Guinea. This project will begin in 2008.

The cadets have been invited to high-profile meetings such as those to develop PNG-specific HIV indicators for the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS), national sexual health meetings and the Papua/PNG meeting held in conjunction with the International AIDS Society Conference in Sydney. They have also been involved in the evaluations of programs such as Tokaut AIDS and in identifying best practices in addressing violence against women and girls in Melanesia and East Timor. Within PNG, the research cadets and the program as a whole are being viewed as an important achievement in the national response to HIV and were profiled as such in the PNG UNGASS report.
Global science/Women's health [book]
Worth

This project seeks to characterise and model knowledge translation in cases in which knowledge generated in global partnerships is applied in national and local contexts. In 2007 a publisher (University of Illinois Press) was found for the book from the project which addresses the ways in which globalisation of scientific information affects women's health. The book will be published in mid-2008.

5-Centre HIV and AIDS research initiative (5-CHARI)
Kippax and Worth

A memorandum of understanding between social researchers from five universities in Sydney (UNSW), South Africa (University of Pretoria), England (University of London), Canada (University of Toronto) and Brazil (University of São Paulo) has been reached to facilitate the sharing of research ideas and the writing of policy papers in the following areas: masculinity in the context of HIV prevention; the impact of treatments and vaccines on behavioural prevention; stigma and disease; and varying responses to education and health promotion. In 2007 a study began at the University of Pretoria in South Africa (Kippax, UNSW, and Brouard, University of Pretoria) to examine the impact of voluntary counselling and testing on stigma and discrimination. Also in 2007 a paper written in collaboration with members of 5-CHARI is in press in Global Health (Kippax and Worth, UNSW, and Aggleton, University of London) and an issue of the journal AIDS that focused on living with HIV and AIDS was edited by Susan Kippax, UNSW, and Peter Aggleton, University of London.

National HIV/AIDS prevention project, Sri Lanka: behavioural surveillance system
Kippax, Worth and Rawstorne

While the current prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Sri Lanka is low, the Government of Sri Lanka has committed to a program to prevent the spread of the epidemic, including establishing and implementing a behavioural surveillance system in Sri Lanka and providing geographical and other relevant information regarding at-risk and vulnerable populations. This is to give logistical support to the National STD AIDS Control Program for the on-going HIV serosurveillance work.

This project is funded by the World Bank to the Ministry of Health in Sri Lanka and carried out by NCHSR in collaboration with NewSouth Global at the University of New South Wales, together with sociologists from the University of Sri Jayawardenepura in Colombo.

By March 2007 the first round of Sri Lanka's behavioural surveillance survey was successfully completed. In all, over 7000 interviews were conducted among six groups: factory workers (both men and women), three-wheel drivers, female sex workers, men who have sex with men, beach boys and drug users. The overall response rate of 92.1% was very pleasing. Feedback to the National STD AIDS Control Program (NSACP), Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka, and discussion of the main results occurred in Colombo in May 2007. Further dissemination took place at a specially designated satellite session at the 8th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP) in Colombo in August 2007. A report of the first-round methodology and results was written and will be officially launched in Colombo in 2008. Capacity-building workshops on sampling and SPSS data analysis for behavioural surveillance were delivered to the NSACP in May 2007. The following capacity-building workshops are scheduled for 2008: 'Multivariate analysis of behavioural surveillance data' and 'Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS): methodology and analysis'.

Due to the richness of the data from Round 1 and the unlikelihood that changes in behaviour and attitudes would occur in the absence of health promotion campaigns, it has been decided not to pursue a second round of the survey at this stage. The project is scheduled to conclude in 2008.
The sexual attitudes and lifestyles of London’s Eastern Europeans (SALLEE)
Imrie

Since 1 May 2004, 10 new countries in central and eastern Europe have become full members of the European Union. Contrary to UK government projections, accession of these countries has resulted in a massive influx of predominantly young, sexually active, economic migrants from the new member states to the UK. This constitutes the largest and most concentrated migration to the UK since the Second World War. The aim of this study is to survey and interview migrants from central and eastern Europe, to measure their sexual behaviours, attitudes and lifestyles, to describe the extent of their specific sexual and reproductive health risks and to advise on appropriate health service responses. This project is funded by the UK Medical Research Council and involves a collaboration that includes the Centre for Sexual Health and HIV Research and the School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies, University College London; the UK Health Protection Agency, London; and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Rapid assessment of the HIV epidemic among men who have sex with men (MSM) in South Africa
Imrie

South Africa is currently experiencing a severe, maturing, generalised HIV epidemic with approximately 5.5 million people infected with HIV, the largest number of HIV infections of any country in the world. In the 1980s the very much smaller HIV epidemic was concentrated in men who have sex with men (MSM). However, emergence of a generalised epidemic in South Africa eclipsed the HIV epidemic among MSM. Current information on the incidence and prevalence of HIV among MSM in South Africa, as well as on risk practices and prevention strategies to minimise risk, is extremely limited. MSM are still categorised as a ‘high-risk group’ for HIV and other sexually transmissible infections, but on the basis of a lack of evidence, prevention messages explicitly directed at MSM are conspicuously absent from national education campaign programs. The aims of this study are to establish the prevalence of HIV among MSM attending community events in Johannesburg and Durban; to describe sexual and other risk behaviours for HIV infection among MSM in these cities and to estimate their usage of HIV testing and counselling services. This study is funded by the UK Department for International Development and involves a collaboration that includes the South African Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria; School of Community Medicine, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg; the Centre for Sexual Health and HIV Research, University College London, UK; and the HIV Centre for Clinical and Behavioural Studies, Columbia University, New York, City, US.

Randomised controlled trial of three different approaches to the taking of sexual histories in sexual health services
Imrie

Computers play an increasingly important part in clinical consultations. The purpose of this study was to determine whether it is possible to improve patient health outcomes in sexual health services by using computer-assisted interviews to collect information about patients’ sexual history and use the information provided to determine the most appropriate diagnostic screening for the individual. The project involves a collaboration between the Centre for Sexual Health and HIV Research, University College London; Camden Primary Care NHS (National Health Service) Trust; St George’s Hospital NHS Trust, Tooting, London; the Medical Research Council Clinical Trials Unit, London; and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. It is funded by the UK Medical Research Council. Data analysis is ongoing and preliminary results will be presented at two major international conferences in 2008 and submitted for publication.
Addressing the need for innovative HIV testing strategies among UK African communities

Imrie

This study involves translating a model of community-based voluntary counselling and HIV testing (VCT) that has been running successfully in Kenya in East Africa into a format that would be acceptable and feasible to deliver to different African and other vulnerable communities resident in east London, UK. The research showed that a translated intervention needed to meet key requirements—employ health professionals and ensure strictest confidentiality—in order to be acceptable to the community. The results of the study were promoted to different clinical units in the UK and several are now seeking funding for implementation and a full-scale evaluation. The main results of the study were published in late 2007. This project was a collaboration between the Centre for Sexual Health and HIV Research at University College London; the UK African HIV Policy Network, London; Newham Primary Care NHS Trust, East London; Liverpool VCT and Care, Nairobi, Kenya; and the Medical Research Council Social and Public Health Sciences Unit, Glasgow, Scotland. It is funded by the Clinical Research and Development Committee, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, London.

Replicating a proven intervention to meet the sexual and reproductive health needs of young, black Caribbean women

Imrie

This project addressed the question of whether and how we should go about translating culturally specific interventions, already shown to be effective in one setting, into another setting and into another population group. An intervention originally developed for African–American and Mexican–American women, which had been shown to be effective in multiple experimental evaluations, was translated into a format appropriate for young, black Caribbean women living in north-west London. The study results showed that culture, and not ethnicity, was the main hurdle to effective translation. Understanding that a common youth culture dominated the way young people thought about and engaged with health and social services has allowed successful translation of the intervention content such that it appropriately reflects young people’s engagement and is, as a result, much stronger. We hope the translated intervention will be implemented in the community by a number of different agencies. Final results of the research will be submitted for publication in 2008. The study was funded by the UK Medical Research Council and involved a collaboration with the Centre for Sexual Health and HIV Research at University College London; the Health Sciences Centre at the University of Texas, San Antonio, Texas, US; the Northwest London Hospitals NHS Trust; The African Child, Brent, London; and the Health Protection Agency.
Collaboration and dissemination

NCHSR’s contribution to social research goes beyond the implementation and reporting of our own research projects. Staff members act as co-investigators in research studies based in other institutions, liaise with communities, disseminate information and run conferences. They also sit on committees locally, nationally and internationally, and act as peer reviewers, journal board members and informal advisors.
Collaboration and dissemination

Consortium for social and policy research on HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases

The Consortium for Social and Policy Research on HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases was formed in 2003 to:

- increase the skills of the research workforce in the area of HIV, hepatitis C and illicit drug use
- ensure that area health services and non-government organisations have the skills to assist in the formulation of good research questions and to contribute fully to research in the field
- assist in the implementation of the policy and practice outcomes of research.

Members of the Consortium are NCHSR and the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC), both at UNSW, ACON (the AIDS Council of NSW), Positive Life NSW (formerly People Living with HIV/AIDS NSW), the Hepatitis C Council of NSW, the NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA), the NSW Health Workforce Development Program (WDP) and the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC). The Consortium Board also includes representatives of the AIDS and Infectious Diseases Branch of NSW Health.

Workshops

The Consortium runs workshops the aims of which are to assess the research needs of the HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases sector, investigate new and innovative research methods and provide non-researchers with the opportunity to learn about basic research methods. In 2007 six workshops were conducted, as follows:

**HIV and disability: looking across the great divide**

Guest speakers were David Abello, SPRC; Colin Griffiths, active member of the positive community in Newcastle; Saul Isbister, Touching Base Inc; Nadine Krejci, NCHSR; and Rob Lake, former President of PLWHA. The workshop facilitator was Norman Booker from WDP.

**Youth transitions and risk behaviours: what do we need to do?**

Guest speakers were Elizabeth Callister, Department of Education and Training; Vanessa D'Souza, NSW Association for Adolescent Health; John Harvey, Ilbijerri Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Theatre Co-operative; Dr John Howard, Ted Noffs Foundation; Jen Johnson, Hepatitis C Council of Victoria; Catherine Spooner, SPRC; Kim Stewart, AIDS/ Infectious Diseases Branch, NSW Health; Sam Stott, Youthblock Health and Resource Centre; Dr Julia Tresidder, Youth Substance Abuse Service and Communities that Care Ltd; and Dr Don Weatherburn, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. The workshop facilitator was Dr Rob Wilkins from WDP.

**Equitable access? Acting on structural and organisational discrimination faced by people affected by hepatitis C and HIV**

Guest speakers were Stevie Clayton, ACON; Glenn Flanagan, PLWHA; Dr Max Hopwood, NCHSR; Stuart Loveday, Hepatitis C Council of NSW; Sue Mason, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital; Paul Newman, Aboriginal Support and Planning Unit, NSW Department of Corrective Services; Julie Page, Sydney West Area Health Service; Professor Barbara Paterson, University of New Brunswick, Canada; Felicity Sheaves, Sydney West Area Health Service; Sinead Sheils, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital; Dr Ingrid van Beek, Kirketon Road Centre; and Michael
West, Northern Sydney Central Coast Health. The workshop facilitator was Norman Booker from WDP.

**Responsibility, blame and cultures of care**

Guest speakers were Don Baxter, Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations; Associate Professor Leong K. Chan, College of Fine Arts, UNSW; Nick Corrigan, ACON; Dr Raymond Donovan, Dr Jeanne Ellard and Dr Max Hopwood, NCHSR; Dr Michael Hurley, Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society, La Trobe University; Dean Murphy, Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations; and Dr Kane Race, Department of Gender and Cultural Studies, the University of Sydney. The workshop facilitator was Norman Booker from WDP.

**Beyond the facts: interrogating hepatitis C treatment**

Guest speakers were Heidi Coupland, National Centre in Epidemiology and Clinical Research, UNSW; Rita Farrugia, St George Hospital; Magdalena Harris, NCHSR; Jenny Kelsall, VIV AIDS, the Victorian state drug user organisation; Robyn Latham, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University; Stuart Loveday, Hepatitis C Council; Susan McGuickin, NUAA; Marlize Mouton, NCHSR; Sally Spruce, Coffs Harbour Health Campus in HIV/AIDS, HCV and Sexual Health, North Coast Area Health Service; and Associate Professor Carla Treloar, NCHSR. The workshop facilitator was Dr Rob Wilkins from WDP.

**Measuring success: return on investment in HIV and other possibilities**

Guest speakers were Don Baxter, Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations; Jim Hales, Health Outcomes International; Klara Henderson, The George Institute for International Health; Associate Professor Matthew Law, National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, UNSW; Darryl O’Donnell, AIDS/Infectious Diseases Branch, NSW Health; and Associate Professor Heather Worth, NCHSR. The workshop facilitator was Norman Booker from WDP.

**Internships**

The Consortium internships aim to allow employees working within the HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases sector, in either non-government organisations or area health services, to learn something about how research is conducted and how they can be involved in research in the future. The academics involved, on the other hand, benefit from an insight into the front line of HIV and hepatitis C prevention and treatment programs. The internship program allows an intern to work for up to six weeks within either NCHSR or SPRC and is a vital component of the Consortium’s attempt to build research capacity within the sector.

In 2007 Peter Canavan from the National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS completed an internship at NCHSR. Researcher Limin Mao worked with Peter on the Primary Health Care Project on HIV and Depression funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

**Practicums**

Consortium practicums are provided to community and health services staff as opportunities for knowledge and skill development in the areas of social and policy research on HIV, hepatitis C and illicit drugs. Practicums can be taken up at either the SPRC or NCHSR, both located at UNSW, Sydney.

A practicum runs for a limited period (up to six weeks part-time). The Consortium sets practical, useful and realistic goals for practicum attendees,
Collaboration and dissemination

such as developing introductory-level research skills and being exposed to a number of research processes. We do not expect practicum attendees to develop skills sufficient for them to be independent researchers but, rather, skills that will enhance their ability to be consumers of, and contributors to, research.

Attending a practicum program may lead someone to decide to take up more formal, tertiary-level studies in research (such as through the Master of Arts by Research program).

In 2007 the practicum ‘Writing for publication’ ran at NCHSR from 16 July to 1 September. Ben Bavinton from ACON completed the practicum. His tutor/supervisor was Magdalena Harris and his mentor was Dr Robert Reynolds. Dr Limin Mao was available to offer quantitative assistance. Ben spent two days per week over six weeks writing up a report on the Fun and Esteem project he runs.

Scholarships

Consortium scholarships were available for students of the Graduate Diploma, Masters by Research and PhD courses offered in Health, Sexuality and Culture by NCHSR. As a condition of funding, the projects supported by these scholarships had to be based in New South Wales or be of benefit to the population of New South Wales.

In 2007 three Consortium scholarships were awarded. PhD scholarships were awarded to Ather Pervaiz and Dean Murphy. A scholarship to take part in NCHSR’s new Graduate Diploma program was awarded to Patrick McGrath.

Community liaison

The Research Link project has been funded since 1999 by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing to strengthen the links between social researchers and community-based health promoters and educators in the HIV, sexual health and hepatitis C sectors.

The ongoing aims of the Research Link Project are to:

- assist and support evidence-based practice in health promotion interventions
- encourage dialogue between researchers and educators to identify areas needing investigation
- facilitate productive links between researchers and educators.

The project is normally run by a full-time community liaison officer, whose primary tasks are research dissemination, capacity building and the development of strategic relationships. In 2007 the position remained vacant for most of the year, but in November Baden Chalmers was appointed. Baden will liaise between NCHSR researchers and community educators in both the HIV and hepatitis C sectors.

Social research briefs

A responsibility of the Community Liaison Officer is to arrange for the writing and publication of a series of social research briefs, four-page documents that provide regular and timely dissemination of social and public health research into HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases that is of current concern to decision makers, service providers and educators in the field. The briefs also disseminate findings from evaluations of innovative programs and models of best practice. The briefs provide readers with links to new reports, fact sheets and journal articles as well as to relevant websites and internet databases. In 2007 there were two social research briefs in preparation.
NCHSR Clearinghouse

The NCHSR Clearinghouse, a searchable web-based database initially funded by the Consortium, was launched in February 2005. It provides links and access to Australian resources and documents that support research, policy and practice relating to HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and illicit drug use. Clearinghouse records include research articles and reports, conference presentations, policy documents, theses, media releases and community media articles. As a central point of access to material housed in university, government, community and other locations, the Clearinghouse is intended to facilitate resource sharing across the sector, along with understandings of the necessary links between research, policy and practice.

HIV/AIDS Library Network

All new items received in the NCHSR library catalogue during 2007 were added to the HIV/AIDS Library Network database, available online through RMIT University.

The HIV/AIDS Database (HIV A) covers 1980 to the present time and includes journal articles, books, reports and audiovisual titles from the catalogues of the NSW HIV/AIDS Library Network. It deals extensively with clinical, medical, social and psychological aspects of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C and is designed to provide information support for doctors, health care workers and allied professionals, students, researchers, and people with HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C.

The HIV/AIDS Database includes selected holdings from the following library catalogues:

- ACON (AIDS Council of NSW)
- Albion Street Centre, Sydney
- Drug and Alcohol Services Library
- Family Planning NSW
- NCHSR.

Collaborations

Internationally, NCHSR continues to work with researchers in a number of countries including Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, France, Portugal and South Africa, and with a group of eminent international researchers who are members of the Global HIV Prevention Working Group. In Australia, NCHSR continues to work collaboratively on several projects with the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, and with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research and the Social Policy Research Centre, both at UNSW. It also works closely with organisations that support those affected by HIV and hepatitis C.

In 2007 NCHSR also collaborated with:

- 407 Doctors, Sydney
- Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW, Sydney
- Action for AIDS, Singapore
- ACON (formerly AIDS Council of NSW), Sydney
- AIDS Action Council of ACT, Canberra
- AIDS Council of South Australia, Adelaide
- AIDS/Infectious Diseases Branch, NSW Health
- AIDS Policy Research Centre, Tsinghua University, China
African Centre for Health and Population Studies, Mtubatuba, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Albion St Clinic, Sydney
Auburn Migrant Resource Centre, Sydney
AusAID, Canberra
AusAID, PNG
Australasian Hepatology Association
Australasian Society for HIV Medicine
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and its member organisations
Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League and its member organisations
Barts and The London, Queen Mary, University of London, UK
BBV/STI Program, Department of Human Services, Victoria
Bigge Park Centre (Liverpool Hospital Sexual Health), Sydney
Burnet Institute, Melbourne, Victoria
Cambodian–Australian Welfare Council of NSW Inc.
Cancer Council New South Wales
Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Burnet Institute, Melbourne
Centre for Health Record Linkage, Sydney
Centre for Health Research in Criminal Justice, Justice Health, Sydney
Centre for International Health, Curtin University of Technology, Perth
Centre for Sexual Health and HIV Research, University College London, UK
Centre for the Study of AIDS, University of Pretoria, South Africa
Church of Christ Sudanese Christian Services, Anglicare Migrant Services
City University, London, UK
Clinical Research Unit for Anxiety and Depression, St Vincent’s Hospital, Sydney
Communicable Diseases Unit, Queensland Health
Department for International Development, UK
Department of Health, Western Australia
Department of Human Services, Victoria
Discipline of General Practice, University of Sydney
Faculty of Psychology, Maastricht University, The Netherlands
Family Planning, Timor Leste
Fiji School of Medicine, Department of Public Health
Fundacion Timor Hari
Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Geneva, Switzerland
Haemophilia Foundation Australia, Melbourne
Health Economics Unit, Deakin University, Melbourne
Health and Human Rights Initiative, The University of New South Wales
Health Protection Agency, London, UK
Hepatitis Australia and its state bodies
Hepatitis C Council of NSW
HepLink
Heterosexual HIV/AIDS Service (Pozhet), Sydney
HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies, Columbia University, New York City, US
HIV Social, Behavioural and Epidemiological Studies Unit, University of Toronto, Canada
Holdsworth House Medical Practice, Sydney
Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa
Institute for Health Services, Timor Leste
Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Bern, Switzerland
James Cook University, Queensland
Key Centre for Women’s Health and Society, Melbourne University
Kirketon Road Centre, Sydney
Liverpool VCT and Care, Nairobi, Kenya
Livingstone Road Sexual Health Centre, Sydney
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, UK
Medical Psychology Research Unit, School of Psychology, University of Sydney
Medical Research Council Clinical Trials Unit, London
Medical Research Council Social and Public Health Sciences Unit, Glasgow, Scotland
Melbourne Sexual Health Clinic
Melbourne University
Mid North Coast Division of General Practice, Coffs Harbour
Mildura Street Surgery, Coffs Harbour
Ministerio du Saude, Timor Leste
Multicultural HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C Service, Sydney
National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS and its member organisations
National Catholic AIDS Office, National Catholic Health Service, PNG
National Department of Health, PNG
National Development and Research Institutes, Inc., US
National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University of Technology, Perth
Newham Primary Care NHS Trust, East London, UK
NewSouth Global, The University of New South Wales
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust, London, UK
NSW Department of Corrective Services
NSW Health and area health services
NSW Primary Health Care Research Capacity Building Program, The University of New South Wales
NSW Users and AIDS Association
O’Brien Street Practice and the Care and Prevention Program, Adelaide
Parramatta Sexual Health Clinic, Sydney
PATH (Program for Appropriate Technology in Health), Seattle, US
People Living with HIV/AIDS (Victoria)
Pharmacy Guild of Australia, New South Wales Branch
PNG Institute for Medical Research, Goroka, PNG
Positive Life NSW
Price Waterhouse, Indonesia
Public Health Association of Australia, Canberra
Queensland Association for Healthy Communities
Queensland Health
Queensland Positive People (QPP) Inc.
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Melbourne
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Immunology, Sydney
Royal Women’s Hospital, Melbourne
St George’s Hospital NHS Trust, Tooting, London, UK
St George’s Hospital School of Medicine, London, UK
Sax Institute, NSW
Scarlet Alliance and its member organisations
School of Community Medicine, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa
School of Population Health, Melbourne University
School of Public Health, Fudan University, Shanghai, China
School of Public Health and Community Medicine, UNSW
Sigma Research, University of Portsmouth, London, UK
South African Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria, South Africa
South Australian Department of Health
South Pacific Commission, Noumea
School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies, University College London, UK
Sydney Hospital
Sydney Medically Supervised Injecting Centre
Sydney Sexual Health Centre
Taylor Square Private Clinic, Sydney
Technical Support Facility Asia–Pacific Region, Malaysia
Thai Welfare Association, Sydney
Thai–Australian Association, Eden: Education & Migration Office
The African Child, Brent, London
Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, UK
UK Health Protection Agency, London
UNAIDS, PNG
UNAIDS Technical Support Facility, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
UNDP, Asia and the Pacific, New York, US
University of Bath, UK
University of New Brunswick, Canada
University of New England, Armidale
University of Sydney
University of Texas Health Sciences Center, San Antonio, Texas, US
University of Timor Leste
University of Western Sydney
Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men’s Health Centre
Victorian Cytology Service, Melbourne
Victorian Drug Users Group (VIVAIDS)
Volunteer Service Overseas, Tokaut AIDS, PNG
Western Australian AIDS Council
Western Australian Centre for Health Promotion Research
Workforce Development Project, NSW Health
World Vision Australia
World Vision International.

Committees

NCHSR has established relationships with other research institutions, universities, government bodies, non-government organisations and the community. In 2007, members of NCHSR served on committees of the following:

National and international

5-Centre HIV and AIDS Research Initiative (5-CHARI):
- Project Planning Committee, Sri Lanka Behavioural Surveillance System (Heather Worth)

AusAID Consortium for Workforce Development 2007 (Heather Worth)

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing:
- Advisory committee for evaluation of four national strategies (HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, STIs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sexual Health) (Carla Treloar)
- Enablers and Barriers of Indigenous Injecting Drug Users Accessing Needle and Syringe Programs Project (Carla Treloar)
- Expert Working Group of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS, Sexual Health and Hepatitis (MACASHH) (Carla Treloar)
Hepatitis C Subcommittee of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS, Sexual Health and Hepatitis (Susan Kippax, Carla Treloar)
HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmissible Infections (HASTI) Subcommittee of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS, Sexual Health and Hepatitis (John Imrie)
National steering group for a hepatitis C intervention project titled ‘Hepatitis C – Building the Evidence’ under the auspices of the Blood Borne Virus and Sexually Transmissible Infections Subcommittee (BBVSS) of the Australian Population Health Development Principal Committee (Carla Treloar)

Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society:
Scientific Advisory Committee (Susan Kippax)

Bill & Melinda Gates and Kaiser Foundations:
Global HIV Prevention Working Group (Susan Kippax)

South African Human Sciences Research Council Working Group on HIV Risk in Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM), Pretoria, South Africa (John Imrie)

Sri Lanka Behavioural Surveillance Project Planning Committee (Chair) and Project Review Committee (Patrick Rawstorne)

Tristate STI/HIV Committee (John Imrie, Susan Kippax)


State and community

ACON:
Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Committee (Max Hopwood)
Alcohol and Other Drugs Working Group (Kane Race)
Mental Health Promotion Strategy Reference Group (Martin Holt)

Australian Hepatitis Council:
Health Reference Group (Carla Treloar)

Community Restorative Centre NSW:
Jailbreak Health Project Consultative Group (Carla Treloar)

Hepatitis C Council of NSW:
Medical and Research Advisory Panel (Susan Kippax, Carla Treloar)

Heterosexual HIV/AIDS Service:
Advisory Group (Asha Persson)

HIV/AIDS Library Network (Maude Frances for first half of year, Sophie McDonald for second half of year)

Kirketon Road Centre:
Member, Advisory Group for Prevention of Initiation to Transition Project (Carla Treloar)

Metropolitan Gay Men’s HIV Interagency (Baden Chalmers, John Imrie)

NSW CALD HIV/AIDS Interagency (Henrike Körner)

NSW Health:
New South Wales Ministerial Advisory Committee on Hepatitis (Carla Treloar)
New South Wales Ministerial Advisory Committee on HIV/AIDS and STI (Susan Kippax, John Imrie)
New South Wales Ministerial Advisory Committee on HIV/AIDS and STI, Health Promotion Subcommittee (John Imrie, Juliet Richters)
NSW Health Think Tank on HIV Notifications, Steering Committee (John Imrie, Iryna Zablotska)

NSW Sexually Transmissible Infections Program Unit Advisory Group (Juliet Richters)

Sexually Transmissible Infections in Gay Men Action Group:
Alcohol and Other Drugs and Sexual Risk Working Group (John Imrie)
Collaboration and dissemination

The University of New South Wales

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences:
- Postgraduate Affairs Committee (Henrike Körner, Kane Race)
- Research Committee (Heather Worth, Iryna Zablotska)
- Standing Committee (Susan Kippax)

Human Research Ethics Panel, Health and Social Research (Henrike Körner)

National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research:
- Australian HIV Observational Database Steering Committee (Iryna Zablotska)
- Pharmacology/Toxicology Working Group (Iryna Zablotska)
- Primary HIV Infection Working Group (Henrike Körner)

National Centre in HIV Social Research:
- Centre Management Committee (Imogen da Silva, Jeanne Ellard, Sarah Fitzherbert, Maude Frances, Suzanne Fraser, John Imrie, Suzanne Fraser, Martin Holt, John Imrie, Sophie McDonald, Christy Newman, Juliet Richters)
- Dissemination Policy Committee (Joanne Bryant, Baden Chalmers, Imogen da Silva, Sarah Fitzherbert, Maude Frances, Suzanne Fraser, Martin Holt, John Imrie, Sophie McDonald, Christy Newman, Juliet Richters)
- Organising Committee of the 10th Social Research Conference on HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases, March 2008 (Joanne Bryant, Suzanne Fraser, Max Hopwood, Henrike Körner, Linmin Mao, Asha Persson, Carla Treloar, Annie Whitelaw)
- Postgraduate review panel (Augustine Asante, Joanne Bryant, John Imrie, Henrike Körner, Robert Reynolds)

School of Public Health and Community Medicine:
- PhD review panel (Augustine Asante, Carla Treloar)

Scholarly journals

NCHSR staff contributed to scholarly journals as members of editorial boards and as peer reviewers.

Editorial board members

AIDS (Susan Kippax)
AIDS and Behavior (Limin Mao)
AIDS Care (Susan Kippax)
AIDS Education and Prevention: An Interdisciplinary Journal (Susan Kippax)
Culture, Health and Sexuality (Susan Kippax, Editor; Heather Worth)
International Journal of Drug Policy special issue, Pleasure and Drugs (Carla Treloar, Guest Editor)
Reproductive Health Matters (Juliet Richters)
Sexual Health (John Imrie, Guest Editor; Juliet Richters)
Sexualities: Studies in Culture and Society (Susan Kippax)
Sexually Transmitted Infections (John Imrie, Associate Editor)
Subjectivity (Susan Kippax)

Peer reviewing for journals

In 2007 NCHSR staff reviewed papers submitted to the following national and international scholarly journals:
African Journal of AIDS Research
AIDS
AIDS and Behavior
AIDS Care
American Ethnologist
Staff at NCHSR have also reviewed grant applications, conference abstracts, strategy documents and other materials for:

4th International AIDS Society (IAS) Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment & Prevention, July, Sydney
8th International AIDS Impact Conference, Biopsychosocial Aspects of HIV Infection, July, Marseilles, France
8th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP), August, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Collaboration and dissemination

AIDS Fonds, The Netherlands
Australian Development Research Awards (AusAID)
Blackwell Scientific Press
Canada Research Chairs Program, Government of Canada
Harm Reduction 2008: IHRA's 19th International Conference, May 2008, Barcelona, Spain
Medical Research Council, UK
National Institutes of Mental Health, US
Oxford University Press
The Hep C Review of the Hepatitis C Council of NSW.

Conferences attended

NCHSR staff members attended the following conferences in 2007:
1st Hepatitis Australia Health Promotion Conference, Health Promotion and Hepatitis C, June, Melbourne
1st World Congress for Sexual Health (18th World Congress of World Association of Sexual Health), Achieving Health, Pleasure and Respect, April, Sydney
3rd South African AIDS Conference, June, Durban, South Africa
4th Biennial NSW Primary Health Care Research and Evaluation Conference, November, Sydney
4th International AIDS Society (IAS) Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment & Prevention, July, Sydney
5-Centre HIV/AIDS Research Initiative (5-CHARI), July, Aix-en-Provence, France
6th Conference of the International Association for the Study of Sexuality and Culture in Society, Dis/Organised Pleasures, June, Lima, Peru
8th International AIDS Impact Conference, Biopsychosocial Aspects of HIV Infection, July, Marseilles, France
8th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP), August, Colombo, Sri Lanka
18th International Conference on the Reduction of Drug Related Harm, May, Warsaw, Poland
43rd Medical Symposium Specialist Meeting for STIs, HIV and AIDS: HIV Medicine and Social Research, Port Moresby, PNG
Anex Illegal Drugs and Mental Health Conference, September, Melbourne
Australasian Sexual Health Conference 2007, October, Gold Coast, Queensland
Combined Australasian Professional Society for Alcohol and Drugs (APSAD) and Cutting Edge Addiction Conference, November, Auckland, NZ
Institute for Research on Women and Gender Conference, Against Health: Resisting the Invisible Morality, October, University of Michigan, US
Psychosocial Aspects of HIV/AIDS Conference, Emerging Themes, May, Melbourne
The Australian Sociological Association (TASA) and the Sociological Association of Aotearoa New Zealand (SAANZ) Joint Conference 2007, Public Sociologies: Lessons and Trans-Tasman Comparisons, December, Auckland, NZ
NCHSR hosts regular colloquia for local and international academics to present their research. In 2007 they were:

25 January  
*Results of the first Dutch online periodic survey among MSM*  
Professor Harm Hospers  
Center for Research on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Education, Faculty of Psychology, Maastricht University, The Netherlands

27 February  
*What do gay men want? Sex, risk, and the inner life of male homosexuality*  
Professor David M. Halperin  
Department of English, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, US

*Doing research with the community: reflections from a study of male-to-male sex in three Indonesian sites*  
Dédé Oetomo  
GAYa NUSANTARA Foundation, Surabaya, Indonesia

22 March  
*Risky people/risky places: a decade of research with injecting drug users in south-western Sydney*  
Associate Professor Lisa Maher  
National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research and School of Public Health and Community Medicine, The University of New South Wales

12 April  
*AIDS & Viagra: the two faces of medicalisation of sexuality in the late 20th century*  
Dr Alain Giami  
French National Institute of Health & Medical Research, Paris, France

10 May  
*Evaluation of a hospital-initiated home-based care programme for PLWHA in Mumbai, India*  
Margaret Karr  
Centre for International Health, Curtin University of Technology, Perth

29 May  
*Through the looking glass: adventures as a scholar in the world of hepatitis C*  
Dr Barbara Paterson  
Canada Research Chair, Faculty of Nursing, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, Canada

19 July  
*The epidemiology and drivers of the HIV epidemics in the United Kingdom and Europe. Are we seeing a true rise in HIV incidence?*  
Dr Valerie Delpech  
Health Protection Agency, UK

23 August  
*Why does the burden of depression persist?*  
Gavin Andrews  
Scientia Professor, School of Psychiatry, and Director, Clinical Research Unit for Anxiety and Depression, St Vincent’s Hospital, Sydney
20 September  ‘Every time I do it I absolutely annihilate myself’: loss of (self)-consciousness and loss of memory in young people’s drinking narratives

Professor Christine Griffin
Head, Department of Psychology, University of Bath, UK

18 October Setting standards of care and prevention for HIV intervention trials in resource-constrained settings

Professor Daniel Tarantola
School of Public Health and Community Medicine, The University of New South Wales

Visitors

NCHSR welcomed the following visitors in 2007:

Dr Philippe Adam
Institute for Prevention and Social Research, Utrecht, The Netherlands

Professor Peter Aggleton
Director, Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, UK

Professor John de Wit
Faculty of Psychology, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

Associate Professor Jacqueline Gahagan
School of Health and Human Performance, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Professor Harm Hospers
Faculty of Psychology, Maastricht University, The Netherlands

Professor Ian Lubek
Department of Psychology, College of Social and Applied Human Sciences, University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada

Professor Barbara Paterson
Canada Research Chair, Faculty of Nursing, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, Canada
Education and research training

The interdisciplinary program in Health, Sexuality and Culture at NCHSR offers students the opportunity to undertake postgraduate research in any area of sex, culture, health and/or the politics of medicine. Our MA by Research equips students with the conceptual, practical and critical skills necessary for advanced work in the fields of sex, drugs, body politics and health. NCHSR staff also contribute their expertise across a variety of disciplines by giving lectures and running workshops in both the academic and community sectors.
Health, sexuality and culture program

In 2007 there were 26 students enrolled in the Health, Sexuality and Culture program; 11 were PhD candidates, 13 were undertaking the Masters by Research and two were undertaking the Graduate Diploma. Our program has links with other programs in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, as well as in the School of Public Health and Community Medicine and the College of Fine Arts, also at the University of New South Wales.

Dr Henrike Körner took on the role of Postgraduate Research Coordinator in July 2007. The student representative is Magdalena Harris.

Lectures and workshops

**Dr Augustine Asante** gave two lectures at the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, UNSW, as part of its Master’s program in International Health and Development. His lectures were entitled ‘Health system reform and equity: how far have we come?’ and ‘Global health funding and health care in developing countries: implications for equity’.

**Dr Loren Brener** spoke on mixed methodology for Jeanne Ellard’s course ‘How to combine qualitative and quantitative research’.

**Associate Professor John Imrie** spoke on ‘The state of social and behavioural research: successes and limitations’ to the Joint South African Human Sciences Research Council/US National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Symposium on Reinvigorating Behavioural HIV Prevention Research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa, in June. He also spoke to the Faculty of Community Medicine and Public Health at the University of Sydney in August on the importance of understanding homosexual behaviour when devising control programs to combat sexually transmissible infections in resource-limited countries.

**Associate Professor John Imrie** and **Dr Iryna Zablotska** participated in ‘Taking a closer look: an international symposium on evolving HIV and STI risk reduction in gay men’, organised by the Robert Koch Institute, Berlin, Germany, on behalf of the European Centres for Disease Control (Stockholm). They discussed the state of behavioural surveillance research among men who have sex with men. In August, John and Iryna also spoke to a summit organised by the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations on trends in HIV notifications and the contribution of behavioural surveillance to understanding the drivers of infection.

**Dr Limin Mao** spoke to second-year undergraduate students of the School of Social Work, UNSW, about HIV social research.

**Dr Pol McCann** was an invited lecturer at the Charité Medical School, Humboldt University, Berlin. He delivered a lecture entitled ‘The role of sport in teaching Australian boys about desired forms of masculinity’.

**Dr Kane Race** spoke at the Consortium for Social Policy Research on HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases workshop ‘Responsibility, blame and cultures of care’.

**Dr Patrick Rawstorne** and **Associate Professor Heather Worth** gave two workshops to the National STD and AIDS Control Program, Colombo, Sri Lanka, as part of the Sri Lanka Behavioural Surveillance Survey. The workshops were entitled ‘Sampling for a behavioural surveillance survey’ and ‘SPSS analysis of behavioural surveillance survey data’.

**Dr Juliet Richters** gave a lecture and a seminar on ‘Researching sexual behaviour: survey methods and other approaches’ to Master of Arts students in Couple and Family Therapy at the School of Social Work, UNSW.
Dr Iryna Zablotska lectured on the sexual transmission of HIV in August and international family planning in September, both at the University of Sydney. She also gave five tutorials at the University of Sydney, entitled ‘Foundations of international health’, ‘Disease priorities and social methods’, ‘Disease control’, ‘Women’s and children’s health’ and ‘Global perspectives of HIV/AIDS’. Dr Zablotska spoke at the Australian Legal Assistance Forum workshop, at NCHSR, on ‘Understanding the importance of HIV social research in providing evidence for an effective response to HIV’ and ‘The role of partnerships in building HIV response’. She also facilitated the session ‘Understanding of local contexts and specificities’.

Postgraduate students

Sexual attitudes and behaviour of international backpackers visiting Australia

Cari Egan

Using theories derived from anthropology, sociology and psychology, this project examines the sexual attitudes and behaviour of young international travellers to Australia, specifically comparing their casual sexual behaviour and use of condoms prior to and during travel. In addition to exploring travellers’ sexual behaviour both quantitatively and qualitatively, this study will also explore the perceptions held by hostel and sexual health/travel clinic employees of travellers’ sexual safety while abroad. The importance of self, adventure, liminoid space and place for the traveller will also be explored.

Supervisors: Dr Juliet Richters and Professor Susan Kippax (NCHSR)

An investigation of information needs and information-seeking practices of people with hepatitis C

Maude Frances

This study aims to understand how people with hepatitis C use the internet, in conjunction with other media, to access information. By situating internet use within people’s everyday realities, the research will provide insights into the sociocultural conditions that facilitate or impede its use. Particular attention will be paid to the impact on information practices of discrimination and stigma experienced as a result of having hepatitis C. Drawing on theories from sociology and information studies, as well as on findings from public health research, the study will enable an integrated approach to providing appropriate information for this group. Qualitative and quantitative data collection were completed during 2005, and data analysis commenced in 2006 and continued throughout 2007.

Time frame: 2003–2009
Supervisors: Associate Professor Carla Treloar and Dr Joanne Bryant (NCHSR)

The dynamics of shame: implications for the drug and alcohol counsellor when working in residential rehab

Rebecca Gray

Using ‘shame’ as an axis, this research aims to explore the relationship between counsellor and client in residential rehab and then how this therapeutic dynamic is affected by the institution. The research will include an analysis of the language used in the promotional material of these services, as well as qualitative data drawn from interviews with counsellors who work in this clinical space.

Time frame: 2006–2010
Supervisors: Dr Robert Reynolds and Dr Kylie Valentine (NCHSR)
Press ‘enter’: information technologies and the textual construction of sex

**Abigail Groves**

Generated by new information technologies, ‘cybersex’ has emerged as a new site of sexuality within popular culture. This project examines the cybersex text and its implications for discourses of technology, subjectivity and the body. Utilising qualitative data drawn from interviews with authors of these texts, the project also examines users’ experiences of internet sexuality, as well as their ethical practices in generating the collaborative text of cybersex.

Supervisors: Associate Professor Heather Worth and Dr Kane Race (NCHSR)

Living with hepatitis C in Auckland and Sydney

**Magdalena Harris**

This qualitative research project compares the lived experiences of people with hepatitis C in Auckland and Sydney, focusing on issues of social support, stigma, disclosure and treatment options. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 people living with hepatitis C in Auckland in 2004, and with a further 20 living in Sydney in 2006. The project draws upon phenomenological and governmentality approaches to incorporate the lived corporeal experiences of participants with a political analysis of the social structures that inform and mediate these experiences.

Supervisors: Associate Professor Carla Treloar and Dr Asha Persson (NCHSR)

Safe-sex campaigns in Australia and New Zealand

**Justin McNab**

In New South Wales and New Zealand in the mid-1990s, AIDS councils launched two very different safe-sex campaigns aimed at increasing safer sexual practices in gay communities, particularly within gay men’s primary relationships. This qualitative study will research and compare these campaigns by reviewing literature and other materials from or about the campaigns themselves, interviewing key HIV/AIDS prevention workers in New South Wales and New Zealand, and analysing qualitative interview data collected by NCHSR in which gay men were asked about issues that the New South Wales campaign hoped to address. This comparison will be situated in the wider context of social and public health policy and will also attempt to tease out some of the assumptions underlying public health and policy messages and campaigns.

Time frame: 2004–2007
Supervisors: Associate Professor Heather Worth and Dr Robert Reynolds (NCHSR)

HIV, sex work and China’s human rights

**Alice Jinmei Meng**

This study aims to explore the decriminalisation of sex work in China in the context of human rights protection and HIV prevention. Using a combination of legal research methodologies and social science methodologies, this study will assess the impact of China’s anti-prostitution law on human rights and HIV prevention. The hypothesis of this study is that the decriminalisation of sex work in China is an appropriate approach to the protection of human rights and the prevention of HIV.

Time frame: 2007–2011
Supervisors: Associate Professor Heather Worth (NCHSR) and Professor Daniel Tarantola (The UNSW Initiative for Health and Human Rights)
Kinship practices among gay men who have become parents through commercial surrogacy

Dean Murphy

This project explores how the use of commercial surrogacy by gay men is changing understandings of parenting and family, as well as providing insights into the legal, biomedical and social aspects of assisted reproductive technologies. Of particular interest are: desire and decision-making about parenthood; understandings of family and kinship; the importance of biogenetic connectedness; and relationships between parents, children, surrogates and egg donors. Data has been collected through interviews in Australia and the United States as well as from advertisements on gay and lesbian parenting websites in both countries. Data collection will be completed in early 2008.

Time frame: 2004–2009
Supervisors: Dr Suzanne Fraser and Dr Robert Reynolds (NCHSR)

HIV and labour migration in Pakistan

Ather Pervaiz

The aim of this research is to explore the underpinning social, economic and cultural factors considered to increase the risk of HIV transmission among overseas Pakistani migrant workers.

Time frame: 2007–2010
Supervisors: Associate Professor Heather Worth and Dr Patrick Rawstorne (NCHSR)

Exploring identity formation in a hepatitis C membership association

Paul Simpson

Coming to terms with living with an illness like hepatitis C is mediated through one’s identity, which for the purposes of this study comprises ways of self-understanding related to social subjectivity and feelings of belonging. Concerns have been expressed about the ways biomedical discourse and neo-liberalism can mediate identity surrounding living with an illness, as a person’s wider social concerns and reality are often disregarded within these discourse types. Member-based associations like the Hepatitis C Council of NSW may be well positioned to help people negotiate or consider these concerns as they relate to formation of identity surrounding living with hepatitis C.

Using interview research methods and critical discourse analysis, the formation of identity among members of the Hepatitis C Council of NSW will be examined. Whether and to what extent membership of the council represents engagement in diverse and alternative discourse types, and how this relates to identity formation surrounding living with hepatitis C, will be explored.

Supervisors: Dr Kylie Valentine and Associate Professor Carla Treloar (NCHSR)

Sexual meanings and subcultures among homosexually active Sri Lankan men

Matthew Tyne

Using ethnographic research methods, this project explores sexual practices and subcultures among homosexually active men in Colombo, Sri Lanka. It will document how these men socialise, organise and create sexual meanings in the context of local attitudes to homosexuality, criminalisation and internationalist queer influences. In addition the study will gauge opinion from health and community activists, as well as from the men themselves, on the vulnerability of homosexually active men to HIV and to what extent interventions have addressed these vulnerabilities.

Time frame: 2004–2007
Supervisors: Associate Professor Heather Worth and Dr Asha Persson (NCHSR)
Implicit and explicit attitudes of health care workers and their hepatitis-C-positive clients: is this related to quality of care?

**Loren Brener**

This research examined the health care experiences of people who have hepatitis C and assessed how the attitudes and behaviours of both clients and their health care workers affected health care experience, quality of care and treatment outcomes. It addressed some limitations of previous research by using various instruments, not only self-report measures, to assess both the implicit and explicit attitudes of the target groups. This research is now complete and has been written up as a PhD dissertation.

Time frame: Completed in 2007
Supervisors: Professor Susan Kippax (NCHSR) and Associate Professor William von Hippel (School of Psychology)

Factors influencing men’s participation in programs for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV in Tanzania

**Michael Burke**

This research project explores how differences in modernity and masculinity position and prepare rural Tanzanian men to engage with the technology of prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV. The chosen methodology uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches. In the qualitative section, key informants and male community members are interviewed. A theoretical framework of grounded theory guides this analysis of discourses of disease and masculinity in relation to HIV and PMTCT. In the quantitative section, utilising both bivariate and regression analyses, predictors of HIV knowledge, knowledge of PMTCT and HIV stigma are explored. These results will be synthesised to increase understanding of the response of rural men in Tanzania to PMTCT.

Supervisors: Professor John Kaldor (National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research) and Professor Susan Kippax (NCHSR)

Adult accounts of organised child sexual abuse

**Michael Salter**

This project is an exploratory qualitative inquiry into the life histories of adults who were sexually abused by multiple adults alongside multiple children. The project will analyse the social, familial and subcultural structures and processes of organised abuse as they emerge in the recounted biographies of participants. The analysis will consider the social and sexual practices that constitute organised abuse and explore the contexts in which children may be at risk of organised abuse.

Time frame: 2007–2010
Supervisors: Dr Juliet Richters (NCHSR) and Dr Anne Cossins (School of Law)

In 2007 there were 10 Master of Arts students enrolled with NCHSR

How to (re-)create a sex pig: an authored text

**Baden Chalmers**

This qualitative research project will investigate the development of a sexual subculture of gay men and the recent focused interest of the health promotion sector upon this group of men known as 'sex pigs’. Using a fractured identity discourse, the project will discuss the implications of these health promotion interventions for this group of men and the impact of such interventions on their behaviour.

Time frame: 2007–2010
Supervisors: Dr Robert Reynolds and Dr Martin Holt (NCHSR)
The relevance of gender and sexuality to self-identity among homosexually active men in Thailand and Australia

**David Fowler**

This project will examine the relative importance of gender and sexuality in self-identity among homosexually active men in Australia and Thailand. Relevant research from both countries will be reviewed and additional research undertaken to identify similarities and differences in the relative importance of, and the relationship between, gender and sexuality in constructions of identity.

Supervisors: Dr Kane Race and Associate Professor Heather Worth (NCHSR)

Barriers to hepatitis C treatment among Vietnamese people in south-western Sydney

**Melissa Fraser**

Using semi-structured, in-depth interviews, this project aims to better understand the views of the Vietnamese community in south-western Sydney on hepatitis C treatments. Interviews have been conducted and data analysis has commenced; the thesis is due to be submitted in August 2008.

Time frame: 2004–2008
Supervisors: Associate Professor Carla Treloar and Dr Henrike Körner (NCHSR)

‘Who says I’m a junkie?’ Construction of a drug-user identity and influences on health-seeking behaviour

**Gary Gahan**

This study aims to gain insights into factors that influence the construction of a drug-user identity and the role this identity plays in influencing decisions relating to accessing health and other supportive services. The study is particularly focused on the experiences of people who fall within the broad categorisation of controlled occasional users, those who are unlikely to adopt to any great extent an identity as a ‘problematic’ drug user or a ‘junkie’. The study aims to explore the hypothesis that these people are less likely to access specialised ‘explicit’ drug-use services such as staffed needle and syringe programs and that they may have less access to appropriate blood-borne virus prevention, and educational and peer resources, thereby increasing their risk of exposure to blood-borne virus transmission and other harms, such as overdose.

Time frame: 2007–2011
Supervisors: Associate Professor Carla Treloar, Dr Joanne Bryant and Dr Kylie Valentine (NCHSR)

‘Getting on with it?’ Understanding the employment experiences of people living with hepatitis C

**Nadine Krejci**

This study explores the employment experiences of people living with chronic hepatitis C. The primary focus of the research is the impact of hepatitis C on people’s work life and the ways in which potential or real disruptions (both physical and social) are managed. A better understanding should also be gained of the ways in which labour market participation enables or constrains the medical or self-management of this chronic viral infection. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with people living with hepatitis C in the Hunter region of New South Wales, a large geographic area covering urban, regional and rural settings. A sophisticated understanding of participants’ experiences as employees living and working with hepatitis C must recognise the contextual basis of these experiences, taking into account the apparent and not-so-apparent influences of personal illness experience (for example, symptoms and side effects), labour market and workplace
structures, and health and social service systems. To this end, a policy analysis will be undertaken of relevant upcoming or proposed policy and system changes, with a view to identifying whether such changes can be expected to make it easier or harder for people living with hepatitis C to ‘get on with it’.

Supervisors: Associate Professor Carla Treloar (NCHSR) and Dr Tony Eardley (SPRC)

Selling safe smut: exploring the effectiveness of sexually explicit HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns in engaging Sydney gay men

Brent Mackie

Government and non-government health organisations target the gay community with sexually explicit prevention campaigns that aim to educate about preventing the transmission of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmissible infections. By investigating the impact of sexually explicit campaigns on the Sydney gay community, this project critically examines the question, ‘Are HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns more effective at engaging gay men if they use colloquial language and sexually explicit imagery?’

Time frame: 2004–2007
Supervisors: Dr Robert Reynolds (NCHSR) and Dr Leong Chan (College of Fine Arts)

‘Talk about sex?’ How HIV-positive gay men communicate about sexual health with their health professionals

Jan Mietinen

This study aims to understand the needs, expectations and experiences of HIV-positive gay men in communicating about sexual health issues with the doctors, nurses and other health professionals they see on a regular basis. Findings of the study may help in understanding the lived experiences of HIV-positive gay men and may also assist in the development of clinical guidelines to manage sexual health among HIV-positive people.

Supervisors: Dr Henrike Körner and Dr Martin Holt (NCHSR)

‘More than a liver’: the role of the social work practitioner in hepatitis C treatment centres

Marlize Mouton

In this study the roles and actions of social workers in hepatitis C treatment centres are explored through interviews with social workers in the field, in order to identify what approaches, strategies and actions are beneficial to the treatment process and treatment outcome.

Time frame: 2004–2007
Supervisors: Associate Professor Carla Treloar (NCHSR) and Dr Elizabeth Fernandez (School of Social Work)

Cultural understandings of health and human rights, and their implications for global HIV policy development and implementation

Edward Reis

This project seeks to assess the adequacy of concepts of human rights in relation to cultural understandings of health. It will examine the implications of human rights concepts for the development and implementation of global HIV policy.

Supervisors: Dr Kane Race and Associate Professor Heather Worth (NCHSR)
Queer girls’ comic pornography
Jackie Ruddock

This study is an analysis of the fields and logics of the comic pornography field, focusing on the genre of queer girls’ comic pornography. This work in a new field provides possible readings of female bodies, social marketing of sexual pleasure, fan commodities and communities, pleasure theory and academic work theorising pornography.

Supervisors: Dr Kane Race (NCHSR) and Dr Gay Hawkins (School of English, Media and Performing Arts)

Visual constructions of an epidemic: cultural taboos and their influence on the design of HIV/AIDS graphics
Louise Kolff

This study focuses on taboos as defining factors in the design of graphic responses to HIV/AIDS and a key influence in the visual cultural construction of the epidemic. Drawing upon theories from visual and cultural studies and sociology, the research investigates the changing trends in Australian and American campaigns, and their sociocultural and political implications. The methods used will be a mixture of qualitative research using interviews with designers of prevention campaigns and governmental and non-governmental organisations involved with HIV/AIDS prevention, image analysis focusing on specific case studies, and archival research for the triangulation of information. Through examining the design process and various censorial and decision-making mechanisms influencing the final campaign material, the study aims to create a critical analysis of the often hidden factors that shape current visual prevention messages.

Time frame: 2007–2010
Supervisors: Dr Raymond Donovan (NCHSR) and Associate Professor Leong Chan (School of Design Studies, College of Fine Arts)

Theses examined

NCHSR staff are often called upon to examine honours, masters and doctoral theses at both the University of New South Wales and other universities. Because of confidentiality agreements, full details cannot be given here. Theses marked in 2007 included:

PhD, Centre for Public Health Research, University of Queensland
PhD, Faculty of Medicine, Queen Mary University of London
PhD, School of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University, Melbourne
PhD, University of New South Wales
PhD, University of Southern Queensland
PhD, University of Toronto, Canada
Master of Public Health, School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales.
Publications
Monographs


Gay community periodic survey reports


Book chapters


Articles in refereed journals


Prost, A., Chopin, M., McOwan, A., Elam, G., Dodds, J., Macdonald, N., & Imrie, J. (2007). 'There is such a thing as asking for trouble': Taking rapid HIV testing to gay venues is fraught with challenges. *Sexually Transmitted Infections*, 83, 185–188.


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**Refereed conference proceedings**


Chan, L. K., & Donovan, R. (2007, December). The ‘social’ and ‘cultural’ in graphic design: Case studies from design postgraduate research. In *Sustaining Culture Through Design Education* [CD-ROM], proceedings of DesignEd Asia 07, Hong Kong.

Other publications


**Conference presentations**


Chan, L. K., & Donovan, R. (2007, December). *The ‘social’ and ‘cultural’ in graphic design: Case studies from design postgraduate research* [CD-ROM]. Presented at DesignEd Asia 07, Sustaining Culture through Design Education, Hong Kong.


Imrie, J., Prestage, G., Zablotska, I., Clayton, S., & Grulich, A. (2007, August). What can we learn from the New South Wales experience of sustained declines in new HIV diagnoses among men who have sex with men (MSM)? Poster presented at the 17th Meeting of the International Society for Sexually Transmitted Diseases Research (ISSTDR), Seattle, WA, US.


Rawstorne, P. (2007, June). *What is behavioural surveillance and how can we use findings from behavioural surveillance in addressing areas of need for HIV prevention, support, treatment and care, and policy-making and for assessing the impact and effectiveness of HIV-related programs?* Presented at a capacity-building workshop sponsored by the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine, Sydney.


Funding
NCHSR funding (excluding GST) received in 2007

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Statement of financial performance for the year ended 31 December 2007

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