The National Centre in HIV Social Research (NCHSR) is in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales. NCHSR research projects are partly or fully 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 (STIs) and hepatitis C (HCV).
Research priorities

Through its excellent and engaged research NCHSR aims to contribute to effective responses to HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases in most affected communities.

NCHSR’s major priorities are to conduct research:

- into the shared and emerging understandings of sexuality, sexual practice and illicit drug use, with particular reference to the social and cultural understandings, dynamics and structures that inform those practices
- to inform the strategies and health care models most appropriate to deal with the impact of HIV, hepatitis C and sexually transmissible infections
- to inform effective prevention strategies and identify facilitators and barriers to their adoption by those at risk of HIV, hepatitis C and sexually transmissible infections
- into the personal, social, economic and cultural impact of HIV, hepatitis C and sexually transmissible infections, and
- into the social and personal aspects of the conduct of clinical trials, including vaccine.
Director's report

Professor John de Wit was appointed Director of NCHSR as of 1 July 2008. He is also Professor at Utrecht University where he holds a chair endowed by the National Organisation for Health Research and Development.

John has a longstanding involvement in research in the field of HIV, STI, viral hepatitis and sexual health that spans two decades, and most of this work is concerned with understanding behaviours and developing and testing interventions to promote prevention and behaviour change in various communities, including men who have sex with men, young people and minority communities. His work in HIV, STI, viral hepatitis and sexual health is firmly grounded in social science theories of evaluation, decision-making and social behaviour and contributes to evidence-based practice in persuasive communication, behaviour change and health promotion.

The past year, 2008, was an eventful year for the National Centre in HIV Social Research. One change is immediately obvious from these pages. After almost two decades of excellent leadership by Professor Susan Kippax, as of 1 July the Centre has a new Director. Allow me to briefly introduce myself.

I come to NCHSR from Utrecht University in The Netherlands, where I started my work in HIV behavioural and social research in 1989, in the former Interdisciplinary Department of Gay and Lesbian Studies. After transferring to the Department of Social and Organisational Psychology in 1993, my theory-driven research into the factors that shape the sexual and risk practices of gay and other men who have sex with men has expanded to include basic and applied research of mostly behavioural interventions to promote safer practices and support prevention in other health domains. Over the years I have also become immersed in behavioural and prevention research in viral hepatitis, sexually transmissible infections and sexual health more broadly, in a range of communities including gay men, people who inject drugs, heterosexual young people, and culturally diverse young people and adults.

Perhaps less a coincidence than it may seem at first, NCHSR came into existence around the same time that I started working in the sector. In the late eighties the importance of behavioural and social research became unmistakably clear. It provided a better understanding of the factors that shape sexual practices, drug use and risk and this helped to strengthen prevention responses that originated in the communities. HIV and viral hepatitis were not going to go away and strong social research was required to ensure effective responses. Nowhere else in the world has this lesson been implemented so adequately, and the support for social research maintained so consistently, as in Australia. Effective partnerships between community, policy makers, (public) health professionals and researchers also developed in some Western European countries. However, in many of these countries prevention and social research have fallen off the political and policy radars with the advent of effective medical treatment of HIV, resulting in substantial de-funding. A long time ago Ron Stall, a leading HIV researcher, noted that the major mistake that could be made was to ‘declare victory and leave the field’. This was not the case in some Australian jurisdictions, in particular not in New South Wales, which puts the state in a unique position globally. Australia and NSW’s leadership is also evident in their responses to hepatitis C in people who inject drugs, which
is rooted in a strong tradition of harm reduction and increasing advocacy for a human rights approach.

As a social scientist intensely committed to research in HIV and related diseases it was a fantastic and timely opportunity to accept the leadership of NCHSR, and I am thankful to those close to my heart for their support in moving across the globe. Since its inception the Centre has produced leading social research and the Centre has significantly influenced the discourses of researchers, practitioners and policy makers. Moving beyond its well-known focus on the social, cultural and political dynamics that shape risk and prevention, the work of the Centre also includes a strong program of research into diagnosis, treatment and care, and increasingly work is being done overseas. Several factors contribute to success of the Centre: a strong commitment to partnership with communities, recognition of the importance of multi-disciplinarity and reflexive theorizing, and the use of research methods that highlight the lived experiences of individuals and communities. Most important, however, are the people who are the Centre. It is the expertise and commitment of staff, both past and present, that enabled the Centre to become world leading and I feel privileged to be part of that. It is difficult to imagine that the Centre would be where it is now without the unique leadership of Sue Kippax. It is a challenge to step into her role that can best be met by drawing on what I see as my complementary expertise and skills. What I bring with me to the Centre is extensive experience and a strong international reputation in behavioural and social research that bridges the gap between theory and practice and between distinct conceptual approaches. Building on the established strengths of the Centre I hope to contribute to the vision of exploring emerging issues and new directions including, what can be called, comprehensive intervention science. This type of research links the mapping of risk and practices to comprehensive conceptual understandings which are then used for the development and evaluation of policies and programs in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care.

Turning to the business of the Centre, much has been achieved in 2008, as illustrated in the remainder of this annual report. Importantly, the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing renewed its funding agreements with NCHSR, the other national centres and peak bodies. This funding for a further period of three years supports the backbone of the Centre’s strategic research in relation to the national strategies in HIV, viral hepatitis, STIs and indigenous sexual health and reflects the continued commitment of the Commonwealth to effectively respond to these important health issues. Technical innovations in the way NCHSR conducts its research were supported by a Major Research Equipment and Infrastructure Initiative grant awarded by the University of New South Wales. This funding will be used in 2009 to put in place a platform for online research and to support on-site data collection using hand-held devices and kiosk-type computers.

Researchers at NCHSR were also successful in obtaining other competitive grants and new research funding from other sources. A group of investigators brought together by Dr Christy Newman successful applied for a competitive grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council. Starting in 2009, Christy will work on this three-year project to investigate the capacity of the general practitioner workforce to meet ongoing HIV primary care needs in Australia. A/Prof Carla Treloar and colleagues at the Centre received funding for two new projects in hepatitis C. Carla received funding from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to conduct a pilot study that uses a life history approach to understand the factors which differentiate those long-term injectors who have not acquired with those who have acquired hepatitis C to inform prevention strategies. A team of researchers consisting of Carla Treloar, Loren Brener and Joanne Bryant received funding from the South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service to conduct a
An important event in the HIV sector
board memberships, reviewing, and
included editorships, editorial
Service to the scientific community
reflected in committee memberships
with community organisations, as
C. Staff also collaborated closely
NSW Ministerial Advisory Committees
advisory committees, including the
international, national and state-level
to serve in a range of high-level
excellent national and international
Centre's work and reflects its sustained
illustrates part of the success of the
papers was published, mostly in highly
productive in other respects. In 2008
an increased number of peer-reviewed
pilots study of injecting practices in
heterosexual hepatitis C serodiscordant
couples. Proposals for full-scale studies
for both of these projects have been
submitted to the NHMRC.
NCHSR was also successful in
obtaining funding for its program of
international capacity building in the
Asia Pacific region. NCHSR joined
the HIV Consortium for Partnerships
in Asia and the Pacific. Funded by
AusAID, the Australian Government's
overseas aid program, this collaboration
of nine Australian HIV organisations
formed to support regional partnerships
and strengthen the capacity of
partner organisations. The Centre,
represented by A/Prof Heather Worth
and Dr Catherine Spooner, specifically
partnered to build the capacity of social
research in the region. In conjunction
with the work in the Consortium,
A/Prof Heather Worth received funding
to conduct targeted social research in
marginalised and hard-to-reach groups
and communities in Indonesia, Papua
New Guinea and the Pacific Region. As
part of its international capacity building
work, Rachael Hamed worked on an
Australian Leadership Awards (ALA)
Fellowships grant and developed a
training program to build the capacity of
Chinese Fellows in leadership positions
in HIV social research in their country.
NCHSR staff were also highly
productive in other respects. In 2008
an increased number of peer-reviewed
papers was published, mostly in highly
ranked journals. This important index
illustrates part of the success of the
Centre's work and reflects its sustained
excellent national and international
standing. Many staff also continued
to serve in a range of high-level
international, national and state-level
advisory committees, including the
NSW Ministerial Advisory Committees
on HIV/AIDS as well as Hepatitis
C. Staff also collaborated closely
with community organisations, as
reflected in committee memberships
and contributions to meetings.
Service to the scientific community
included editorships, editorial
board memberships, reviewing, and
membership of steering committees.
An important event in the HIV sector
in 2008 was the amfAR Global
Consultation on MSM and HIV/
AIDS Research, for which I served on
the Planning Committee. Sue Kippax
presented at this international meeting
that took place late September in
Washington, DC. This invited meeting
brought together some 40 researchers
and other stakeholders to prioritise and
further the agenda for HIV research in
MSM, in particular in low and middle
income countries.
In 2008 we welcomed several new
staff members to NCHSR. Dr Philippe
Adam joined us as a Senior Research
Fellow to contribute to the development
of our online and prevention research
in HIV. Dean Murphy was appointed
as Research Associate to work on the
feasibility study into the development
of an online research platform and
cohort study in MSM. Karen McMillan
was appointed as a Research Associate
to contribute to the Centre's program
of international capacity building, as was
Rachael Hamed, in the role of Project
Coordinator. Catherine Spooner was
appointed as Senior Research Fellow
to work in international capacity building
as well. Ilyse Resnick was appointed
as Research Officer in the hepatitis C
program. Michelle Bal was appointed
Research Assistant on the HIV TALK
Survey, a study of the experiences
and practices of highly treatment-
experienced people in Europe. Paul
Byron worked as Research Assistant on
a project conducted within the UNSW
Hepatitis C Vaccine Initiative.
Other changes in staffing include the
promotion of Dr Loren Brener and Dr
Max Hopwood to Research Fellow.
Their work contributes greatly to the
hepatitis C research program of the
Centre and I congratulate them on
this well-deserved recognition and
achievement. In 2008 A/Prof John
Imrie was seconded on a part time-
role to the Africa Centre for Health
and Population Studies, in Mubatua,
KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. John
has a passion for Africa and his
secondment reflects the strength of his
work and collaborations in the region.
John's secondment also contributes
importantly to the international HIV
social research program of the Centre
and extends this into the world's most
affected region.
We also said goodbye to some staff. June Crawford retired after having worked at the Centre from its early days. Her contributions to the Centre and its work were invaluable and she will be missed. Limin Mao joined the UNSW Cancer Research Centre and Augustine Asante took up a position at the UNSW School of Public Health and Community Medicine. Fortunately both continue to collaborate with the Centre and their former colleagues. We also saw Diana Bernard leave; she was appointed Project Coordinator of the HPV School Vaccination Project at Sydney University. A/Prof Heather Worth continues her work in international capacity building at the School of Public Health and Community Medicine together with Jason Lee, Karen McMillan, Louisa Minney and Catherine Spooner. Lastly, we said goodbye to several professional, technical and casual support staff: Rachel Hamed, Baden Chalmers, Carolyn Eccles, Claire Fielding, Sarah Fitzherbert, Maude Frances, Michael Keogh, Sophie McDonald, Nirvan Morrison, Ilyse Resnick and Camellia Webb.

A change in leadership, such as NCHSR witnessed in 2008, is a major event for an organisation and its stakeholders, and I am very grateful for the confidence placed in me and the warm welcome I have received from the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the former Director of the Centre, the Centre’s staff and our collaborators in the wider sectors. I am very grateful to A/Prof John Imrie for accepting to stay in the role of Acting Director over a prolonged transition period. I especially want to thank my dear colleague A/Prof Carla Treloar who has joined me in the leadership of the Centre in the newly appointed role of Deputy Director.
NCHSR Management Board

The role of the management board is to oversee the performance of NCHSR, ensure that the Centre effectively and efficiently pursues its objectives, and assists with the development of strategy. It also has a part to play in monitoring operations and finances and ensuring compliance with UNSW requirements.

Chair
Associate Professor George Kouvaros, Acting Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, The University of New South Wales (throughout 2008)

Members
Professor Ilan Katz, Director, Social Policy Research Centre, The University of New South Wales
Professor Daniel Tarantola, Chair Initiative for Health and Human Rights, The University of New South Wales
Professor Anthony Zwi, School of Public Health and Community Medicine, The University of New South Wales

Attendees
Professor John de Wit, Director, NCHSR *
Associate Professor John Imrie, Acting Director, NCHSR *
Associate Professor Carla Treloar, Deputy Director, NCHSR *
Ms Imogen da Silva, Business Manager, NCHSR *
Ms Janice Knapman, Executive Assistant, NCHSR (Secretariat)

*Part-year
Scientific Advisory Committee

The work of NCHSR is supported by a group of experts from social science, public health and non-government organisations. The major role of the Scientific Advisory Committee is to provide guidance to NCHSR on matters of strategy and policy, including the strategic and work plans.

Chair

Emeritus Professor Sheila Shaver, former Director of 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 Development Unit; Research Director Cooperative Research Centre Aboriginal Health, School of Population Health, The University of Melbourne *

Professor Janet Chan, Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Social Sciences & International Studies, The University of New South Wales *

Ms Chamandeep Chehl, Director, Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections Policy Section, Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing *

Professor John de Wit, Director, National Centre in HIV Social Research, The University of New South Wales *

Ms Imogen da Silva (Observer), Business Manager, National Centre in HIV Social Research, The University of New South Wales *

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

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

Ms Catherine Farrell, Director, Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections Policy Section, Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing *

Mr Daniel Geus, Assistant Director, Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections Policy Section, Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing *

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

George Kouvaros, Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Professor, School of English, Media and Performing Arts, The University of New South Wales *

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

Ms Annie Madden, Executive Officer, Australian Injecting & 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, 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

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

Dr Carla Treloar (Observer), Deputy Director, National Centre in HIV Social Research, The University of New South Wales

Ms Helen Tyrrell, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Hepatitis Council

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

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

Dr Heather Worth (Observer), Deputy Director, National Centre in HIV Social Research, The University of New South Wales

* part-year
Staff

Director (from July 2008) and Professor *
John de Wit, MSc, PhD

Acting Director (until June 2008), Head HIV program, and Associate Professor
John Imrie, BA(Hons), MA, MSc, DipLSHTM, PhD

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

Deputy Director (until September 2008), Head International program, and Associate Professor
Heather Worth, BA, MA(Hons), PhD

Professorial Research Fellow
Susan Kippax, BA(Hons), PhD, FASSA

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

Senior Research Fellow
Philippe Adam, MA, PhD *
Henrike Korner, BA(Hons), DipEd, MA, PhD
Catherine Spooner, BA(Hons), MPH, PhD *

Research Fellows
Augustine Asante, BA(Hons), MSocSci, PhD
Joanne Bryant, BSc, MSc, PhD
Martin Holt, BSc(Hons), MSc, PhD
Limin Mao, BMed, MEdAdmin, PhD *
Christy Newman, BA(Hons), PhD
Asha Persson, BA(Hons), PhD
Patrick Rawstorne, BA(Hons), MA, PhD
Iryna Zablotska, MD(Hons), MPH, MDvSt, PhD

Research Associates
Diana Bernard, BSoCStud, GradDip *
Loren Brener, BSoCSci, MA, PhD

Research Officers
Andrew Frankland, BA, MCrin
Peter Hull, BPsych(Hons)
Ilyse Resnick, BSc *

Research Assistants
Michelle Bal, BSc, MSc *
Paul Byron, BA(Hons) *
Magdalena Harris, BA(Hons), MA
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
Ian Lubek, BA(Hons), PhD
New staff

Philippe Adam, Senior Research Fellow

Philippe was appointed in July 2008 to support the development of online HIV research and interventions in Australia. Philippe has been involved in HIV social research for almost 20 years. During this time he has conducted numerous large-scale studies and has contributed to evidence-based understandings of the HIV prevention needs and responses in MSM in more than 60 countries. Philippe is an advisor to NGOs, government agencies and international organisations such as UNAIDS. Previously Philippe was in charge of behavioural surveillance in MSM in France and was among the first researchers to initiate large-scale online (cohort) studies as well as theory-driven interventions using new media and technologies.

Paul Byron, Research Assistant

Paul is a PhD student at NCHSR. He was appointed by NCHSR to work on a project conducted within the UNSW Hepatitis C Vaccine Initiative. For this project he is involved with analysing data collected in focus groups and interviews with people who inject drugs, health service staff and clinicians.

John de Wit, Professor and Centre Director

John joined NCHSR in July 2008 from Utrecht University in the Netherlands where he has worked in HIV social research since 1989. John’s research is primarily concerned with contributing to a theory-based understanding of sexual and risk practices and effective prevention interventions. His work encompasses both applied and basic social science research, and continues to emphasise HIV and gay men, although it has broadened to include hepatitis B, STIs, teen-pregnancy and unwanted sex. A central theme in John’s work is the understanding of how individuals self-regulate their practices in social and physical contexts that are not always supportive and may even promote risk. This research emphasises the importance of feelings, personal and social motives and implicit rather than reasoned processes.

Dean Murphy, Research Associate

Dean, who was previously NCHSR’s Community Liaison Officer, has rejoined the Centre after having worked at the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations in the AFAO/NAPWA Education Team. In his current role as a Research Associate, Dean is involved in assessing the feasibility of a repeat cross-sectional and cohort study of MSM using an e-platform. He is also a PhD student at NCHSR.

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

Manager, International Programs and Policy
Louisa Minney, BA

Community Liaison Officer
Baden Chalmers, BA, DipEd

Research Resource Manager
Maude Frances, BA(Hons), GradDip *

Research Information Officer
Carolyn Eccles, BA *

Librarian
Sophie McDonald, BVA, MA

Library Assistants
Claire Fielding, BA(Hons) *
Michael Keogh, BIndDes *

Editor and Publishing Manager
Sarah Fitzherbert, BA(Hons)

Publications Officer
Judi Rainbow

Consortium Events Coordinator
Annie Whitelaw

Project Coordinator
Rachael Hamed, BA, MA *

Finance Officer
Nalini Krishnan, BSc, DipEd

Executive Assistant
Janice Knapman, AssocDipSocSci

Administrative Officer and Receptionist
Nirvan Morrison, AdvDipGrDes

* part-year
About NCHSR

Catherine Spooner, Senior Research Fellow

Catherine has a background in psychology and public health and has worked in government, not-for-profit, private and academic settings. Her main area of expertise relates to alcohol and other drug problems, particularly among youth. She has investigated the aetiology of drug problems, trialled innovative research methods with drug users, and conducted intervention research with the health, community, criminal justice, education and law enforcement sectors. Dr Spooner joined NCHSR in July 2008 to work in the International program.

Michelle Bal, Research Assistant

Michelle joined NCHSR from Utrecht University where she received her Masters in Social Psychology. At NCHSR Michelle was involved in the data analyses and reporting of the HIV TALK Survey; this studied the experiences and practices of treatment experienced by women and men, both gay and straight, living with HIV in five European Countries. The focus of her work is on the ways in which patient-provider interactions shape treatment experiences and outcomes.

Rachael Hamed, Project Coordinator

Rachael has a first class Masters degree in sociology and is a trained teacher of English as a Second Language. Rachel joined NCHSR to work on the Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) Fellowships project and assist with the training of leaders of HIV social research in China.

Karen McMillan, Research Associate

Karen has a first class Masters degree in sociology and joined NCHSR to contribute to the International program. Karen supervised the PNG research cadets conducting the interviews for the Tonga and Vanuatu condom study.

Ilyse Resnick, Research Assistant

Ilyse received a Bachelor of Science (Psychology) from Lebanon Valley College in the United States. She immigrated to Australia in 2006 and joined the Centre to work on the hepatitis C program. Ilyse was appointed to facilitate such things as ethics approval, participant recruitment, data collection and analysis, and reporting of studies in working papers, conference abstracts and journal articles.
Research at the National Centre in HIV Social Research falls into three conceptual areas, with cross-cutting international work:

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

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

All NCHSR research projects are partly or fully funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. Additional funding sources are indicated in the project descriptions.
Our research

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 being studied. They explore the meanings of practice and the determinants of risk, as well as monitor changes in risk over time.

Gay Community Periodic Surveys
Zablotska and Frankland

The Gay Community Periodic Surveys (GCPS) 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 GCPS of gay men’s sexual practice was conducted in Sydney in 1996 and the survey has been repeated every six months since then. GCPS 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 2008, these surveys took place in Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide and twice in Sydney (in February and August). GCPS data provide useful monitoring of self-reported HIV status, and changes in sexual practices and drug use by gay men. The results of each survey are presented in individual reports. An agreement has been reached by all states to trial a new reporting system. According to this agreement, each individual state report will present a brief summary of findings in table format and a combined expanded report will be produced annually, which will compare trends over time and across Australia.

Respondent-driven survey of sexual behaviours among gay men in Sydney
Zablotska

Recent reviews of the HIV epidemic in NSW exposed the information gaps about the risky sexual practices of men not identifying as gay, who are not attached to gay communities, rarely participate in gay community life and are almost never reached through gay community research. The GCPS samples have increasingly become older and less representative of the diverse gay community beyond its core. The ‘hidden’ population groups of men on the periphery of the gay community become less and less visible. They also have less access to information, testing and prevention compared to the men in the heart of the gay community. A new sampling methodology - Respondent-driven sampling (RDS) - offers an innovative approach to target this less studied group of men. Dr. Iryna Zablotska received an Early Career Research grant from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at UNSW to conduct a pilot RDS study among MSM in Sydney. In 2008, the study began enrolment of participants with the goal of recruiting up to 100 men. The results from this study and lessons learned will be presented in a report that will be produced in 2009.

Further analysis of behavioural data from the Health In Men Cohort
Imrie, Crawford and Zablotska

The Health in Men (HIM) cohort was an open cohort of HIV-seronegative homosexually-active men in Sydney. The HIM cohort started in 2007 and active data collection concluded in 2007. The purpose of the study was to monitor safer sex practice in the context of HIV-vaccine initiatives. The study also examined sexual and drug risk as well as detailed data on sexual relationships, HIV status of
Our research

self and partners, use of the internet, sexually transmissible infections and HIV treatment optimism-scepticism. The cohort consists of 1427 participants, the majority of whom have participated on more than one occasion. Through semi-annual interviews a wealth of data has been collected regarding diverse aspects of the practices and experiences of HIV-negative men. Further analyses of HIM cohort data were conducted in 2008 and resulting papers were published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. A specific focus in current and future (longitudinal) analysis is on the adoption of sexual and risk reduction practices, the evolution of sexual behaviour over the life of the individual, and changing perceptions of risk and how these might inform health promotion.

Understandings of risk and HIV among men who have sex with men (MSM) in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales

Imrie

This is a coordinated study of risk and HIV among MSM in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales, conducted in collaboration with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research. The study will examine risk factors for HIV seroconversion in different contexts using data from men who recently tested positive for HIV and believed to be recent seroconverters. The study will also look at risk motivations among MSM deemed to be at high risk for HIV and will focus on attitudes and understandings. The past few years have seen some significant variations in numbers of new HIV diagnoses and different HIV risk practices in different jurisdictional contexts. The aim of this study is to examine these different risk contexts across different jurisdictions to better understand the mechanisms of risk as well as the attitudes and understandings of risk in MSM who would appear to be at elevated risk of HIV seroconversion.

Developing MYRIAD: An internet based MSM cohort study and research platform

Imrie, Adam and Murphy

In Australia most research on sexuality and health among men who have sex with men (MSM) has been conducted offline. Because online research remains an exception it is still associated with various preconceptions. For example, online research may not sufficiently protect participants’ privacy, online samples may be more biased, and responses may be less valid than in offline studies. In July 2008, work started on exploring the feasibility of an online cohort study. Specifically the feasibility project is examining: validity of an online sample recruitment and retention, using the internet for mass follow-up, developing an integrative online survey system, and the feasibility of linkage to existing databases. The assessment also covers the acceptability of the project among participants, ethics and consent, community involvement, governance, and ownership and intellectual property. The possibilities of online research have been under-utilised in Australia in comparison with other industrialised countries. Using the technique of online research would be beneficial for research on sexuality and health especially among MSM who have demonstrated a high uptake of the internet for social and sexual purposes. The proposed MYRIAD: The 10,000 men project intends to fully explore the possibilities of an internet-based research platform for a prospective cohort study among MSM.

Periodic surveys of drug use among young people

Lavis, 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 under-represent people who live in unstable situations, such as young people. This project complements those surveys by collecting data on the drug use of young people who attend music festivals, young people who are beyond school age and at a changeable time of life. Annual surveys of young people recruited from the Big Day Out music festival provide data on their recent licit and illicit
use of drugs, their attitudes to drug use, their knowledge of how hepatitis C is transmitted, and their experience of and exposure to injecting drug use. The first round of data collection was carried out in January 2004 in Sydney; the most recent, in January 2009 in Sydney and the Gold Coast. Planning is underway to extend the data collection to Perth in 2010.

**Survey of knowledge, risk practice and access to services among Aboriginal people in New South Wales**

Worth, Bryant and Hull

NSW has the highest proportion of Aboriginal people in Australia, yet there is little or no information about levels of sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and blood borne viruses (BBVs) in the NSW Aboriginal population. Evidence from other Australian states indicates the prevalence of STIs amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people to be up to eight times higher than for the non-indigenous population. Despite this, very little culturally appropriate research has been conducted with ATSI communities about sexual health and BBVs, especially compared with other priority population groups such as gay men and injecting drug users. This project was conducted through a unique partnership between NCHSR and the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW. It aimed to describe levels of knowledge, risk practice and access to health services in relation to STIs and BBVs for Aboriginal people aged 16 to 30 years in New South Wales. Convenience samples were collected at the Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout Carnival in Lismore in October 2007 and the Yabun Festival in Sydney in January 2008. Data were collected using handheld computers with questions read to the participant via headphones and answers recorded on a handset.

**Pharmacy needle and syringe survey 2008: hepatitis C risk and access to sterile injecting equipment in pharmacies in New South Wales**

Bryant, Hull and Treloar

A substantial proportion of sterile needles and syringes distributed in New South Wales are dispensed through pharmacies. However, there is very little information about people who obtain needles and syringes from pharmacies, including whether they are a different group from those who obtain needles and syringes from needle and syringe programs. In 2006 a pilot study was conducted using eight pharmacies in south-east Sydney. It showed that a considerable proportion of people attending pharmacies engage in injecting practices that put them at risk for acquiring or transmitting hepatitis C and HIV. In 2007 the project was expanded to include most of metropolitan Sydney and the Newcastle and Hunter Valley regions. Thirty-six pharmacies were recruited to the project and 671 participants completed surveys. In 2008, 35 pharmacies from the same regions facilitated the collection of 761 surveys. A report of the NSW survey will be published in 2009. The Pharmacy needle and syringe survey will be expanded to Western Australia in 2009.

**Injecting practice among heterosexual hepatitis C serodiscordant couples**

Treloar, Brener, Bryant and Gray

Although surveillance data shows that rates of drug injecting equipment sharing are high among sexual partners, there is very little research in Australia or internationally which addresses the sexual relationship as a site of hepatitis C transmission (or prevention) – emphasising the underutilisation of the social relationship as a unit of analysis of risk behaviour. This study will interview NSP clients with experience of heterosexual serodiscordant (for hepatitis C) relationships. This project, funded by South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service, is a pilot study with a full proposal under review with the NHMRC.
Negotiating the medical field

The studies listed here are concerned with the relationship 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 and Kippax

The Positive Health cohort was an open cohort study of HIV-positive gay and other homosexually active men living in New South Wales. The study focused on HIV and sexual health testing, markers of health, treatment and care, sexual practices and attitudes, drug use and other issues. The main goal of the study was to assess the lived experiences of HIV-positive people over the time of their HIV infection. The recruitment and interviewing of participants was completed in June 2007. In 2008, the research team worked on additional analyses and the preparation of publications in peer-reviewed journals. This study has been conducted jointly 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.

Comparative analysis of self-reported data from the Health in Men (HIM) and Positive Health (PH) cohort studies—aspects of general health, sexual health and sexually transmissible infections (STIs)
Imrie, Zablotska and Adam

The Health In Men (HIM) and Positive Health (PH) cohorts have provided key information on questions relating to HIV incidence, HIV risk, sexual practice and partnerships and recreational drug use, all of which have been well documented by our teams in international scientific literature. Both studies collected significant self-reported data pertaining to participants’ experiences of general health and well-being, sexual health and experiences of accessing sexual health services. The proposed comparative analysis involves comparing the self-reported lived experiences of HIV-negative and HIV-positive gay men in the HIM and PH cohort studies in relation to general health and well-being, sexual health symptoms and accessing sexual health services.

Prevalence, nature and recommendations for clinical management and self-management of depression in people with HIV
Kippax, Kidd, Saltman, Newman and Mao

This study aimed to describe, measure and compare depression among HIV-positive and HIV-negative gay men; describe the ways in which depression is managed by general practitioners (GPs) and gay men themselves, as well as to develop the research capacity and skills of GPs to assess and manage depression among gay men. Extensive data were collected through interviews and surveys of patients and GPs conducted through seven high HIV-caseload general practices in Sydney, Adelaide and a rural-coastal town in New South Wales. The patient survey included a short self-screening tool for depression, the PHQ-9, as well as items for measuring social and behavioural factors associated with depression. Patients were invited to self-report symptoms of depression, and their treating GP provided a clinical assessment and treatment history of depression. Data on management
Our research

of depression and HIV were extracted from clinical notes. The findings highlight the important link between socioeconomic hardship, interpersonal isolation, and personal withdrawal with major depression for gay men, regardless of HIV status. The study also provides further evidence of health inequity affecting gay men in Australia. The high rates of depression among both HIV-positive and HIV-negative gay men are likely to be related to the marginalisation and discrimination experienced by gay men. This study is the first of its kind in Australia to include a qualitative component, and this has made it possible to explore in-depth the complex issues related to the marginalisation and discrimination of gay men, and how this relates to the experience and management of depression.

The Straightpoz study: heterosexual men and women living with HIV

Persson

The Straightpoz study is a qualitative longitudinal cohort study that explores the experiences of heterosexual men and women living with HIV and their seronegative 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. The first round of interviews was completed in 2005 and focused 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 and focused 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 being conducted in 2009. 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 research monograph based on this study was launched in late 2006. The second research monograph was released in early 2009. More publications from this study are available on the NCHSR website and other dissemination of findings is ongoing.

Who is 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 the information phone line. Since the establishment of the info-line, there has been an average of about 400 callers each year. In 2008 the quantitative data from call records systematically collected during 2003–2007 were analysed to investigate the needs of HIV-positive heterosexual men and women, their partners, friends and families. The findings were summarised in a report for the Pozhet service providers, which has been used to better plan and target health services and social support for heterosexual people affected by HIV.

Barriers to HIV testing among people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Körner, Asante and Kippax

This project investigated the reasons for delayed HIV testing among people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The project had two components: one quantitative, the other qualitative. The quantitative component collected
demographic and socioeconomic data, along with data about people’s use of health services, attitudes towards HIV and perceptions of stigma. These were 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 followed the survey and approximately 20 HIV patients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds were interviewed. These interviews explore in-depth some of the issues covered in the survey, in particular issues relating to patients’ use of health services. The project was 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 their 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. The project was completed in 2008.

**National treatment service users project, Phase 2**

Bryant, Ellard and Treloar

This study is a partnership between NCHSR and the Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL). The project aims to evaluate the suitability and impact of consumer participation at the organisational level within various drug treatment settings including pharmacotherapy, detoxification and rehabilitation programs. Five treatment services in three Australian states were selected through an expression-of-interest process to develop and implement demonstration consumer-participation projects aimed at increasing levels of consumer participation at the organisational level. These demonstration projects were evaluated using qualitative methods and draw on a realist evaluation framework. In 2008 baseline data was collected from three sites. In 2009 the baseline-data collection will be completed and evaluation data will be collected from all sites. The evaluation is intended to be explorative and focus primarily on processes rather than outcomes. The relatively short time-frame of the project makes it difficult to explore medium- and long-term impacts and therefore the evaluation will focus primarily on readiness, implementation and short-term changes. The findings will be used to develop a model of consumer participation that is suitable for use in a diverse range of drug-treatment settings. Furthermore, the findings from this research will contribute to the development of consumer-participation policies that can enhance service delivery and improve health outcomes in the drug treatment field.

**UNSW Hepatitis C Vaccine Initiative: knowledge of and willingness to participate in vaccine trials**

Treloar, Byron and McCann

The UNSW Hepatitis C Vaccine Initiative 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, staff of services tailored to people who inject drugs, and medical staff involved in their health care. In 2008 data collection was completed and a presentation given to a workshop held by the UNSW Hepatitis C Vaccine Initiative. Findings from the study will be reported in 2009.

An investigation into the factors influencing the decision about whether or not to take up treatment for hepatitis C

Lavis, Bryant, Hull, Hopwood and Treloar

This project used quantitative and qualitative methods to determine the factors that influence people’s decisions to undertake treatment for hepatitis C. In 2008, quantitative data were collected from 713 people with hepatitis C. Respondents were recruited from various avenues including pharmacotherapy clinics, pharmacies, needle and syringe programs, and the mailing lists of the Hepatitis C Council of NSW and Haemophilia Australia. Self-complete surveys collected data about knowledge and perceptions of treatment, social support, symptom severity, and experiences of discrimination, among others. The qualitative component of the project included interviews with people living with hepatitis C and focus groups and interviews with clinicians in drug treatment services. NCHSR researchers are now working in collaboration with the ETHOS project (Enhancing Treatment for Hepatitis C in Opiate Substitution) conducted by NCHECR. A study report about the quantitative and qualitative data will be published in 2010.

Post-treatment outcomes study: psychosocial impacts following completion of hepatitis C treatment

Hopwood

Little is known about the outcomes of viral clearance and non-response to treatment for hepatitis C infection. One aim of this study was to explore post-treatment related psychosocial issues among people who have cleared hepatitis C infection and those who have not. The focus was on individuals’ hepatitis C-related risk practices and health and quality of life following completion of treatment. In all, 27 participants were recruited for in-depth semi-structured interviews via the Hepatitis C Council of New South Wales and Hepatitis C Victoria. The sample comprised 13 men and 14 women aged from 26 to 57 years. Eligible participants completed hepatitis C treatment at least six months prior to interview. A thematic analysis of the data was undertaken and several key themes identified included (i) the impact of viral clearance and non-response on health and quality of life, (ii) sustained treatment after-effects and problems of attribution, and (iii) end of treatment protocols and the demand for post-treatment information, support and referral. One recommendation that arose from this study was to develop and adapt post-treatment programmes modelled on those for survivors of cancer. Post-hepatitis C treatment programmes could be widely implemented throughout Australian liver clinics and could assist people to address issues of persistent after-effects, risk practice, and changes in health and quality of life following completion of treatment.
Exploring cultural, social and political dynamics

These studies focus on the cultural, social and political contexts in which health and risk are practised. Projects listed under this theme cover diverse topics 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.

The role of the internet in building social capital among homosexually active men: virtual communities in HIV prevention

Kippax, Worth, Rawstone 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. 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. The study also assessed 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. Between February and April 2008, the main project survey was conducted online at the project website, www.e-male.com.au. Over 4,000 men were attracted to and completed the online survey. The survey attracted a diverse range of MSM, including notably high proportions of young and bisexual men, men from regional areas and those who had never been tested for HIV. A project report has been published and the project team is now focusing on peer reviewed publications.

The QUICKIE study

Holt, Race and Bernard

The Qualitative Interviews Concerning Key Issues and Experiences (QUICKIE) project was a two-year study (from 2006 to 2008) funded by NSW Health. In 2007 and 2008 around thirty sexually active, community-attached gay men were 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 complemented data from NCHSR’s behavioural surveys. Each year QUICKIE interviews had a special focus. In 2006/07 men’s perceptions of HIV were explored, including the changing significance of HIV from the perspectives of both HIV-negative and HIV-positive men. In 2008 the special focus was sexually transmissible infections and the perception of health risks. A report of the 2006/07 survey findings was published in 2008.

Living with uncertainty: creating the postmodern self in contemporary Australia

Reynolds

The aim of this study was 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 2008 the data and analysis was written up as a series of articles which concluded the project, following the publication of a monograph in late 2007.

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. Data collection was completed in 2008 with a series of focus groups held in three sites involving clients of the New South Wales Users and AIDS Association (NUAA). 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.

Under construction: the social and cultural politics of hepatitis C in Australia
Treloar

This project aims to investigate the ways in which hepatitis C is being constituted as a disease medically, socially and culturally in Australia in order to develop insights into how it might be confronted both medically and socially without further stigmatising those affected by it. To this end, the aims of the project include addressing the following questions: What disease concepts are being mobilised to make sense of and act on hepatitis C? What metaphors are circulating in relation to the disease? How does hepatitis C’s symbolic and practical associations with injecting drug use and HIV act to construct the disease both conceptually and materially? How do the wide diversity of symptoms and prognoses related to hepatitis C impact on the way the disease is understood both at a cultural level and among affected individuals?

Hepatitis C seroconversion: using qualitative research to enhance surveillance
Treloar and Ellard

Little is known about events surrounding hepatitis C seroconversion. In-depth qualitative exploration of these events and circumstances will assist with interpretation of surveillance data and the development of hepatitis C prevention programs. This qualitative project will consist of two phases: (i) a mapping exercise will be carried out to identify and assess potential recruitment sites and a pilot study of selected cases (2007–2008); (ii) a targeted study designed to inform the development of an HCV seroconversion surveillance mechanism (2008–2009).
Staying safe: How do long-term injecting drug users avoid hepatitis C infection?
Treloar and Harris

This project aims to use a life history approach to understand the factors which differentiate those long-term injectors who have not acquired with those who have acquired hepatitis C to inform prevention strategies. Although the prevalence of hepatitis C among those who have injected for 8–15 years is high (about two-thirds of people will have acquired hepatitis C), there are people who remain hepatitis C negative. This qualitative, life-history project will recruit participants in Sydney and interview them a number of times to cover a wide range of issues in their lives. This project is part of an international collaboration with similar projects being undertaken in New York and London.

Aboriginal patterns of cancer care (APOCC)
Treloar, Newman, Brener

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 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. Thus far data collection has begun and eight in-depth interviews have been conducted, transcribed and cleaned. 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.

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

This program will build skills in the development and evaluation of intervention programs to improve Aboriginal health outcomes. The program is led by two indigenous researchers and will build capacity in six indigenous early career researchers and a further three from non-indigenous backgrounds. The Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW and 11 Aboriginal health services are partners through existing research programs. The program draws on extensive skills in intervention research and will provide opportunities to work on major funded research programs in Aboriginal health. The program will develop skills in intervention research capable of providing an evidence base to inform Aboriginal health policy. It will build capacity in (i) the development of research partnerships with Aboriginal communities; (ii) the identification of potentially effective interventions (iii) the investigation of the impact of health interventions and (iv) the integration of research with policy. At NCHSR, this capacity building will be carried out in conjunction with the Aboriginal Patterns of Cancer Care project, which is run by The Cancer Council New South Wales, NCHSR and researchers from the University of Sydney.
International studies

These studies are in part undertaken in regions of the world significantly affected by HIV/AIDS, with an emphasis on countries in the Asia Pacific region and in Sub-Saharan Africa. Working collaboratively with local health policy and education sectors to build sustainable research and response capacity is an important feature of these projects. Several other studies are collaborations with researchers and agencies in developed countries and have a more conceptual focus.

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

The project concluded in July 2008 after having successfully established a behavioural surveillance system (BSS) in which over 7000 interviews were conducted amongst six groups in round one. These groups included factory workers (both men and women), drivers of three-wheel taxis, female sex workers, men who have sex with men, beach boys and drug users. Key findings have been disseminated to stakeholders, delivered through oral presentations at conferences, distributed in a report, and are now being written up for journal publications. Other achievements in the project include the delivery of capacity-building workshops on: conducting BSS; analysing BSS data; implementing respondent driven sampling (RDS); and writing results for journal publication. Although HIV prevalence in Sri Lanka is currently low, the Ministry of Health acknowledges the need to attract further funding to conduct subsequent rounds of data collection and to establish an ongoing BSS.

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

Since 2007, 10 research cadets have been part of the Strengthening HIV Social Research project based at the Papua New Guinea Institute of Medical Research in Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province. As well as becoming proficient 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. The cadets were invited to high-profile meetings, such as those to develop PNG-specific UNGASS (UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV) indicators, 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 evaluation of programs, such as Tokaut AIDS, and best practice in addressing violence against women and girls in Melanesia and East Timor. Within PNG, the research cadets and the program as a whole are viewed as an important achievement in the national response to HIV and were profiled in the PNG UNGASS report. This project was completed in 2008.
The ART of Living: Rolling out antiretroviral therapy in Papua New Guinea

Kelly

This project was carried out in Papua New Guinea by the PNG research cadets based at the PNG Institute for Medical Research. The research used both qualitative and quantitative research methods to examine the lived experiences, including impacts, of the roll-out of antiretroviral therapies (ART) on people with HIV who are receiving treatment in PNG. The objectives of the project were to understand the lived experiences of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) on ART.

Condom access and usage amongst young people in Vanuatu and Tonga

McMillan

NCHSR managed this project for which research was undertaken by the PNG research cadets. Through qualitative case studies, the project aimed to increase the understanding of why young people in Vanuatu and Tonga are not using condoms for sex. Thirty in-depth interviews were undertaken in each country. This project was completed in 2008 and the findings have been published in a report.


Rawstorne, Worth and Lee

This project is funded by the Global Fund through the Ministry of Health in Timor-Leste. The project has two major objectives: While the prevalence of HIV in Timor-Leste is currently in the low-level range, the Ministry of Health as well as donors such as the Global Fund see the importance of establishing surveillance systems, including second generation behavioural surveillance in Timor-Leste. HIV is concentrated in sub-populations, particularly female sex workers (FSW) and men who have sex with men (MSM). These two sub-populations, as well as uniformed personnel who are one of the major clients of FSW, are the groups targeted in the first round of the BSS. In subsequent rounds, other groups such as youth may also be included. By July 2008, the project had successfully completed a mapping exercise to ascertain the size, whereabouts and feasibility of sampling FSW, MSM, and uniformed personnel. Mapping activities were focussed in seven districts: Dili, Baucau, Lautem, Viqueque, Ermera, Suai and Maliana. The mapping activities informed sampling for the main study that was carried out late May 2008.

Strengthening HIV-related social research capacity in Timor-Leste

Worth

The overall objective of this project is to develop the capacity of researchers and research institutions in Timor-Leste to develop and maintain a local evidence base on HIV and effective responses, including thorough social, behavioural, economic, epidemiological and clinical research. The aims of the project are to train two graduates in HIV social research methods over a one year period and successfully apply for funding for an HIV social research project in Timor-Leste that will employ the trained social researchers on a full-time basis for a further year. Furthermore, the project aims to obtain long-term institutional support for researchers from the Institute for Health Services. In particular, the project aims to increase the amount and use of HIV social research in Timor-Leste through workshops with stakeholders and partnering with universities.
Our research

HIV Consortium—Supporting HIV social research in the Asia Pacific region
Worth, Spooner and McMillan

Nine Australian organisations have formed the HIV Consortium that has been set up to strengthen the capacity of organisations and individuals in the Asia Pacific region to respond effectively to HIV and AIDS. Funded by AusAID, this consortium will foster strategic partnerships and linkages between Australia and organisations in the region to enable sustained performance improvement for those working in the HIV/AIDS health care, research and community responses. The consortium also aims to support engagement in national and regional policy development and policy processes to facilitate in-country cross-sectoral collaboration and productive partnerships with government. The program also includes assisting regional networks to form within and across sectors to support the HIV response. Within the broader consortium NCHSR collaborates closely with the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society on a number of projects that specifically aim to strengthen HIV social research. The other organisations involved are:

- Albion Street Centre (ASC)
- Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM)
- Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS)
- Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO)
- Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL)
- National Serology Reference Laboratory (NRL)
- National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR)
- Scarlet Alliance (Australian Sex Workers Association)

Targeted HIV social research in Indonesia, PNG and the Pacific region
Worth

This project aims to build on the HIV social research component of the HIV Consortium through a program of research in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Pacific region. The program of research will be undertaken specifically in marginalised and hard-to-reach groups and communities in those countries. It will partner in-country researchers in concrete projects in order to provide hands-on training. The projects will also involve vulnerable communities in all aspects of the research.

Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) Fellowships for “Strengthening HIV social research capacity amongst Chinese HIV social research leaders”
Worth

The goal of the ALA Fellowships program is to foster and strengthen links between a wide range of Australian organisations and their counterparts within the Asia Pacific region and to develop appropriately trained current and aspiring leaders in the Asia Pacific region who, in the short-to-medium term, will be in a position to advance key regional policy priorities. The aim of this one-month training program was to specifically build the capacity of Fellows in leadership positions in HIV social research to better develop policy and programs in China. The project also sought to promote a collaborative research partnership between NCHSR and the AIDS Policy Research Centre at Tsinghua University in China.
Surveying 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. 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.

Innovative community and general practice-based approaches to HIV testing in migrant African and asylum-seeking communities (East London VCT Study)

Imrie

There is an urgent need to increase the uptake of HIV testing among UK black-African communities by improving delivery options and standards. Black Africans make up less that 1% of the UK population, but constitute the majority of heterosexual people living with diagnosed HIV. However, HIV testing is not routine and a high proportion (greater than 33%) do not know their HIV status. Fear, stigma, and inaccurate perceptions of personal HIV risk prevent many UK Africans from accessing free confidential HIV testing services that are mainly located in sexual health services. Many only present to health services at the onset of AIDS-related illness and therefore suffer poorer prognosis. The aim of this study is to develop and undertake preliminary evaluation of two models of community-based and GP-based HIV testing services targeting UK black Africans. This study follows on from formative work completed in 2007 that designed the necessary service delivery protocols and brings together a multi-disciplinary group of researchers, healthcare professionals and community stakeholders to assess the acceptability and feasibility of the two models. The study is funded by the UK Medical Research Council and collaborators include University College London, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, UK African HIV Policy Network, Liverpool VCT Kenya, and International AIDS Alliance.

Randomised controlled trial of three approaches to sexual history taking in UK sexual health services (The CASHI Trial)

Imrie

This study tests the acceptability of different approaches to sexual history taking in UK sexual health services. The UK government is committed to introducing individual electronic patient records by 2010 and this study will determine the relative merits of three different sexual history taking methods against specified clinical and sensitive information disclosure outcomes. Funding has been provided by the UK Medical Research Council; on this project NCHSR collaborates with University College London and St George’s Medical School, London. Previous research has demonstrated improved reporting of certain sensitive behaviours when computer-based survey instruments are used. If the same holds true when used in clinical settings, there may be considerable gain and reduced morbidity as a result
of improved testing and treatment. This trial will provide a definitive answer to this question in the context of UK sexual health services. Participants in this multi-site, individually randomised controlled trial were assigned to one of three conditions that determined the method of sexual history taking employed during their clinical consultation. Data collection is now complete and the analyses are ongoing.

‘Speak up, now’: A participatory study of unwanted sexual experiences and behaviours of young people in The Netherlands
De Wit and Adam

Large numbers of young people report unwanted sexual experiences, including in The Netherlands, a country generally acclaimed for its sophisticated sexuality education. Despite the substantial literature addressing unwanted sexual experiences, surprisingly little systematic and comprehensive understanding has been accumulated regarding the range of sexual experiences of young people that may be considered unwanted, what constituted these experiences in terms of players, sexual acts and context, and what makes these experiences more or less unwanted, unpleasant or problematic. The aim of this study is to contribute to a holistic understanding of the unwanted sexual experiences and sexual acts of young people, using a multi-method approach that emphasises the importance of understanding acts in context that provide meaning. Qualitative and quantitative data for this study are collected online from a panel of young people to obtain typical scenarios of the range of unwanted sexual experiences and acts, assess evaluations of these different scenarios and determine the personal and social factors that shape vulnerability for unwanted sexual experiences and perpetrating unwanted sexual acts. Data collection started in November 2008 and over 3000 young Dutch women and men from different backgrounds have been recruited.

Is automaticity indeed everywhere? A second-generation study of the moderation of impulsive influences on evaluation and behaviour
De Wit

The previous decade saw a proliferation of theory and research in psychology, in particular social psychology, that underlines the importance of automatic (i.e., unaware, efficient, unintentional and uncontrollable) influences on behaviour. In fact, this recent theory and research suggests that the major factors that shape behaviour may be automatic rather than controlled. The present research questions this strong assumption and addresses what has been termed a ‘second-generation’ question concerning non-conscious influences on social behaviour. A set of studies will be conducted that challenge the widely shared but largely unsubstantiated theoretical notion that most human experience and behaviour reflects automatic processes (cf. Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). The project’s main hypothesis holds that, rather than being ubiquitous and pervasive, automatic influences on evaluation and behaviour occur in the absence of strong competing, deliberative goals. Sexual behaviour is presented as a unique exemplar of social behaviour to study the multiple, complex ways in which impulsive and reflective behavioural systems interact.
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.
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 which aim to assess the research needs of the HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases sectors; investigate new and innovative research methods; and provide non-researchers with the opportunity to learn about basic research methods. In 2008, six workshops were conducted, as follows:

**Hepatitis C prevention: what more can we do tomorrow?**

The keynote speaker was Professor Tim Rhodes, Professor in Public Health Sociology and Director of the Centre for Research on Drugs and Health Behaviour at London School of Hygene and Tropical Medicine, University of London. The facilitator was Norman Booker from WDP.

**From theory to flexible practice: BBV health promotion in action**

Guest speakers were Ben Bavinton, ACON; Dr Graham Brown, Western Australian Centre for Health Promotion Research; Dr Kym Collins, Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health Service; Barry Edwards, South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service; Shaun Edwards, ACON; Niki Parry, Hepatitis C Council of NSW; Associate Professor Carla Treloar, NCHSR; Kathy Triffitt, Positive Life NSW; Associate Professor Marilyn Wise, UNSW Research Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity. The facilitator was Dr Rob Wilkins from WDP.

**Treatment options for amphetamine-type substance use: it’s not crystal clear**

Guest speakers were Steve Brooker, St Vincent’s Hospital; Suzie Hudson, St Vincent’s Hospital; Jo Khoo, Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies (NADA); Rebecca McKetin, National Drug and Alcohol and Research Centre, UNSW; James Shearer, South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service; Kerri Shying, NUAA; Andrew Trist, NUAA; Craig Williams, ACON Volunteer Educator, NUAA. The facilitator was Norman Booker from WDP.

**Access, respect and partnership: how can mainstream services work better with Aboriginal people?**

The Keynote speaker was James Ward, Program Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health at the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical
Research (NCHECR). The facilitators were Dr Rob Wilkins, WDP and Troy Combo, NCHECR. Group facilitators and panel members were Natalie Beckett, South Coast Aboriginal Medical Service; Norman Booker, WDP; Sallie Cairnduff, AH&MRC; Sheryl Cimera, Sydney South West Area Health Service; Millie Ingram, Wyangga Aboriginal Elders Group Redfern; Kyra Kumsing, Redfern Aboriginal Medical Service; Trish Levet, Sydney South West Area Health Service; Anna McGowan, Sydney South West Area Health Service; Robert Monaghan, North Coast Area Health Service; Catherine O’Connor, Sydney South West Area Health Service; Peter Patterson, Hunter New England Health; Fiona Poeder, Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL); Ronald Prince, South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service; Scott Rutter, Sydney South West Area Health Service. The facilitators were Dr Rob Wilkins from WDP and Troy Combo from NCHECR.

**Sex @ work: the ordinary extraordinary lives of sex workers**

Guest speakers were Ally Daniel, Macquarie University; Basil Donovan, NCHECR; Joanne Holden, Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP); Maria McMahon, SWOP; Dr Jason Prior, University of Technology; Rachel Sandford, SWOP. The facilitator was Dr Rob Wilkins from WDP.

**Home and away: working in HIV in the Pacific and Asia**

Guest speakers were Mark Bebbington, HIV Consortium for Partnerships in Asia and the Pacific; Dave Burrows, AIDS Project Management Group; Stevie Clayton, ACON; Jason Lee, NCHSR; Kirsty Morgan, Western Region Health Centre; Neil Poetschka, South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service; Dr Patrick Rawstorne, NCHSR; Edward Reis, Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM); Dr John Rule, National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA); Paul van Reyk, HIV/AIDS activist; David Wilson, Global HIV/AIDS Program of the World Bank. The facilitator was Norman Booker from WDP.

**Internships**

The Consortium internships aim to provide employees working within the HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases sector, in either non-government organisations or area health services, the opportunity to learn how research is conducted and how they can be involved in research in the future. On the other hand, the academics involved 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 aim to build research capacity within the sector.

**Nick Corrigan** from ACON completed an internship at NCHSR in 2008. His mentors were Associate Professors John Imrie and Carla Treloar from NCHSR. His area of interest was the partnership approach to HIV/AIDS in NSW. He proposed a case study approach, by which he hoped to examine the partnerships in the Hepatitis C and the HIV/AIDS responses as points of comparison. The outcome of Nick's internship was a 20,000 word dissertation for submission to London South Bank University in order to complete a Masters program.

**Tadgh McMahon**, Manager of the Multicultural HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C Service, completed two weeks of a four week part time internship at NCHSR to further the completion of his dissertation towards a Doctorate of Public Health at Flinders University. Associate Professor John Imrie from NCHSR was Tadgh's mentor.

**Gabrielle Murphy**, a hepatitis C social worker at John Hunter Hospital, was awarded a Consortium internship at NCHSR. Her area of interest was Hepatitis C treatment issues. Dr Max Hopwood from NCHSR was one of her mentors.
Collaboration and dissemination

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, 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).

The “NUAA Journal Club” is a Consortium initiative which ran monthly in 2008. This capacity-building enterprise involved two researchers from NCHSR visiting NUAA to facilitate a workshop with NUAA staff. Each workshop was based around a selected journal article. The aim of the workshops was to encourage NUAA staff to engage with social research literature, to facilitate their understanding of the methods and terminology used within social research and to explore how NUAA may benefit from and use social research in their own work.

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 2008 the Consortium has continued to support students who were awarded scholarships in 2007. In 2008 the Consortium supported five additional students who were awarded Consortium scholarships. PhD scholarships were awarded to Rebecca Gray and Toby Lea, a part-time Masters to Edward Reis, a full-time Masters to Paul Byron and a Graduate Diploma to Maureen Steele.

Aboriginal workforce development

Another aim of the Consortium in this round of funding is to contribute to the development of the Aboriginal workforce in New South Wales.

Through consultation with James Ward, Program Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health at NCHECR, and Sallie Cairnduff from the AH&MRC on how to best contribute to this development, it was suggested the Consortium redirect funds for a proposed Aboriginal scholarship into running internships. These would be open to Aboriginal Sexual Health Workers, Aboriginal Drug & Alcohol workers and other Aboriginal workers who work in the BBV/sexual health/drug use sector (e.g. Aboriginal NSP workers, Aboriginal nurses). Support is available for workers across New South Wales.

The internships can be one day workshops or run over a period of weeks depending on requirements. Interns work alongside NCHSR research staff to upgrade skills in a number of chosen topics.

Through consultation with Nick Thompson from the AH&MRC it was proposed the Consortium fund a series of ‘Skills in Survey Research’ workshops to assist workforce development of the Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Network (ADAN). The first workshop was held at Brewarrina in November 2008. The aim of the workshop was to develop participant’s skills in writing survey questions, administering a survey, designing databases and in reading and understanding tables and graphs. Peter Hull from NCHSR conducted this workshop in conjunction with Nick Thompson.
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.

The Australian Database on HIV and hepatitis C was created in 2008, with the aim of linking policy, cultural material and social research. The purpose of the Database is to collect, store and preserve research data and materials, policy documents, and cultural materials derived from research findings and policy implementation in areas of HIV and hepatitis C. In addition it is intended this project will construct a relational database allowing the alignment of material from particular research projects (datasets, surveys and questionnaires) with related research outputs (publications and conference papers) and policy, media and health promotion materials. The Database will include research materials from the four national centres in HIV and viral hepatitis research, policy documents from government and non-government bodies, and will make these materials accessible to researchers and research students in Australia and the region.

The Research Link project was funded from 1999 until 2007 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 aims of the Research Link project were 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.

In 2008 NCHSR continued the community liaison officer role, whose primary tasks are research dissemination, capacity building and the development of strategic relationships. Baden Chalmers held the position in 2008 and facilitated liaison between NCHSR researchers and community educators in both the HIV and hepatitis C sectors through representation on a number of committees, participation in conferences and organisation of research feedback events.

Social research briefs

These are a series of four-page news briefs providing regular and timely dissemination of social and public health research into HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases 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. One social research brief was produced in 2008 entitled “Oral sex and young people”. A further six briefs were commissioned in 2008 and will be published in 2009.
HIV/AIDS Library Network

All new items received in the NCHSR library catalogue during 2008 were added to the HIV/AIDS Library Network database, available online through RMIT University. The HIV/AIDS Database (HIVA) 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.

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

In the early 2000s, five leading international universities joined forces to create 5-CHARI, the five-centre HIV/AIDS research initiative. This major international collaboration brought together the combined resources of the National Centre in HIV Social Research, University of New South Wales, Australia; the HIV Social, Behavioural and Epidemiological Studies Unit, University of Toronto, Canada; the Centre for the Study of AIDS, University of Pretoria, South Africa; the Thomas Coram Research Unit at the Institute of Education, University of London, United Kingdom; and NEPAIDS (the HIV Prevention Studies Unit) of the University of São Paulo, Brazil. Drawing upon a common set of understandings, work within the five centres is generating a better understanding of the HIV epidemic, and contributing to improvements in HIV prevention, impact mitigation and care. Through its work, consultatively and collaboratively, 5-CHARI has sought to promote innovative thinking about the epidemic, its course and development; the development of new research paradigms and perspectives; greater recognition of the role of socio-cultural structures and human relationships as the drivers of the epidemic; new thinking about gender and sexuality as they relate to HIV/AIDS; the development of new explanations of relevance to HIV/AIDS prevention and care; and innovation and integration within the fields of sexual and reproductive health. The 5-CHARI initiative has created a strong platform for exchange, discussion and collaboration that is supported by an annual meeting of members. Currently 5-CHARI are seeking to establish a Social Sciences Resource Network that can provide expert advice to researchers and policy makers in resource limited countries with major HIV epidemics, as well as to international agencies supporting the response to HIV in these countries.

Collaborations

Internationally, NCHSR in 2008 continued to work with researchers in a number of countries including Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, 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.

The National Centre in HIV Social Research 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
Africa 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.
Camden Primary Care NHS (National Health Service) Trust, UK
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 Clinical Immunology, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney
Department of Health, Western Australia
Department of Human Services, Victoria
Department of Infectious Diseases, Amsterdam Health Service, The Netherlands
Department of Infectious Diseases, Rotterdam Health Service, The Netherlands
Department of Psychology, Utrecht University, The Netherlands
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
Collaboration and dissemination

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
New South 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 Women's Hospital, Melbourne
Rutgers Nisso Group, Dutch Expert Centre on Sexuality, Utrecht, The Netherlands
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
Trimbos Institute, Netherlands Institute for Mental Health and Addiction, Utrecht, The Netherlands
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, Avon, 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
Collaboration and dissemination

Committees

NCHSR has established relationships with other research institutions, universities, government bodies, non-government organisations and the community. In 2008, members of NCHSR served on the following committees:

National and international
AIDS Impact Conferences
Scientific Board (John De Wit)
amfAR Global Consultation on MSM and HIV/AIDS Research Planning Committee (John De Wit)
AusAID HIV Capacity Building Consortium (Heather Worth)
Australian Government Department of Health and Aging
Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS, Sexual Health and Hepatitis, Hepatitis C Subcommittee (Carla Treloar)
Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS, Sexual Health and Hepatitis C, HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmissible Infections Subcommittee (John Imrie)
Australian Population Health Development Committee, Blood Borne Virus and Sexually Transmissible Infections Subcommittee (BBVSS)
National Steering Group for a hepatitis C intervention project ‘Hepatitis C – Building the evidence’ (Carla Treloar)
Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society
Scientific Advisory Committee (John Imrie, John de Wit)
Bill & Melinda Gates and Kaiser Foundations
Global HIV Prevention Working Group (Susan Kippax)
Education summit for GPs and sexual health physicians
Steering Committee for HIV Matters: Mental health, adherence and treatment resistance (Christy Newman)
Harm Reduction 2009: IHRA’s 20th International Conference
International Programme Advisory Group (Carla Treloar)
Hepatitis Australia
National Hepatitis C Needs Assessment 2008 (Max Hopwood)
HIV in Europe Initiative
Steering Committee (John De Wit)
Ministerial Advisory Committee for HIV/AIDS, Sexual Health and Hepatitis Hepatitis C Subcommittee (Carla Treloar)
HIV/AIDS and STIs Subcommittee (John Imrie)
National HIV/AIDS prevention project, Sri Lanka: behavioural surveillance system
Project Planning Committee (Patrick Rawstorne, Chair)

State and community
Burnet Institute, Victoria HIV Prevalence Study
Steering Committee (Iryna Zablotska)
Community Restorative Centre NSW
Jailbreak, Consultative Health Project (Carla Treloar)
Consortium for Social and Policy Research on HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases
Consortium Board (Martin Holt, Carla Treloar)
Hepatitis C Council of NSW
Medical and Research Advisory Panel (Carla Treloar)
Heterosexual HIV/AIDS Service:
  Advisory Group (Asha Persson)
HIV/AIDS Library Network (Sophie MacDonald)
Metropolitan Gay Men’s HIV Interagency (Baden Chalmers, John Imrie)
New South Wales Health:
  New South Wales Ministerial Advisory Committee on Hepatitis (Carla Treloar)
  New South Wales Ministerial Advisory committee on HIV and Sexually Transmissible Infections (John Imrie, John de Wit)
  New South Wales Ministerial Advisory committee on HIV and Sexually Transmissible Infections, Health Promotion sub-committee (John Imrie, Philippe Adam)
  New South Wales Ministerial Advisory committee on HIV and Sexually Transmissible Infections, Education Resources sub-committee (John De Wit)
  New South Wales STI/HIV Campaign Advisory Committee (John De Wit)
Steering Committee, Mid-term review of 2006-9 NSW hepatitis C, HIV/AIDS and STIs Strategies and Implementation plan for Aboriginal people (Carla Treloar)
New South Wales Users and AIDS Association (NUAA)
  Community Mobilisation Team (Loren Brener)
Sexually Transmissible Infections In Gay Men Action Group (STIGMA)
  Steering Group (John Imrie)

The University of New South Wales
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
  Dean’s Advisory Committee (John de Wit)
  Dean’s Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee (Christy Newman, Asha Persson)
  Higher Degree Committee (Henrike Körner)
  Research Committee (Carla Treloar)
  Standing Committee (John De Wit)
Human Research Ethics Panel, Health and Social research (Henrike Körner, Chair)
National Centre in HIV Epidemiological and Clinical Research
  STI Surveillance Report Steering Committee (Iryna Zablotska)
  Australian HIV Observational Database Steering Committee (Iryna Zablotska)
  Pharmacology/Toxicology Working Group (Iryna Zablotska)
National Centre in HIV Social Research:
  Centre Management Committee (Imogen da Silva, John de Wit, John Imrie, Pól McCann, Carla Treloar, Heather Worth, Iryna Zablotska)
  Dissemination Policy Committee (Joanne Bryant, Baden Chalmers, Imogen da Silva, John de Wit, Sarah Fitzherbert, Martin Holt, John Imrie, Sophie MacDonald, Christy Newman)
  Education Committee (Jeanne Ellard, John de Wit, Henrike Körner, Robert Reynolds)
Organising committee, 10th Social Research Conference on HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases (Joanne Bryant, Max Hopwood, Henrike Körner, Limin Mao, Asha Persson, Carla Treloar, Annie Whitelaw)
Organising committee, 11th Social Research Conference on HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases (Loren Brener, Imogen da Silva, John de Wit, Asha Persson, Carla Treloar, Ann Whitelaw, Iryna Zablotska)
Strategic Planning Committee (John de Wit, Imogen da Silva, Max Hopwood, Dean Murphy, Carla Treloar, Iryna Zablotska)
Schorlarly journals

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

Editorial board members
AIDS (Susan Kippax)
AIDS Care (John de Wit, Susan Kippax)
AIDS and Behavior (Limin Mao)
AIDS Education and Prevention (Susan Kippax)
Culture, Health and Sexuality (Susan Kippax, co-Editor; Heather Worth)
International Journal of Drug Policy (Carla Treloar)
International Journal of Drug Policy special issue, Drugs and Pleasure (Carla Treloar, Guest Editor)
Sexual Health (John Imrie, Joint Editor)
Sexualities: Studies in Culture and Society (Susan Kippax)
Sexually Transmitted Infections (John Imrie, Associate Editor)
Subjectivity (Susan Kippax)
The Open Ethics Journal (Henrike Körner)
The Open Health Services & Policy Journal (Henrike Körner)

Peer reviewing for journals
AIDS Care
AIDS and Behaviour
Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health
Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health
BMC Public Health
Culture Health and Sexuality
Culture, Health and Society
Drug and Alcohol Dependence
Drug and Alcohol Review
European Journal of Public Health
European Journal of Social Psychology
Ethnicity and Health
Feminist Media Studies
Health, Risk & Society
Health Sociology Review
Human Communication Research
International Journal of Drug Policy
International Journal of STD and AIDS
Journal of the History of Sexuality
Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment
Psychology and Health
Psychology, Health and Medicine
Science as Culture
Social Science & Medicine
Sexual Health
Sexually Transmitted Infections
Social Theory and Health
The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute
Women’s History Review
Collaboration and dissemination

Reviewing other than for journals

Staff at NCHSR have also reviewed grant applications, conference abstracts, strategy documents and other materials for:

- 6th Australasian Viral Hepatitis Conference
- XVIIth International AIDS Conference
- 19th International Harm Reduction Association Conference
- 20th Annual Australasian Society for HIV Medicine Conference
- AIDS Fonds, The Netherlands
- Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics Association Annual Conference
- Everyday Lives: The 10th Social Research Conference on HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases, National Centre in HIV Social Research
- National Health and Medical Research Council
- Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development
- UNSW Press

Conferences attended

- 2nd CRIAH Aboriginal Health Research Conference, April, Sydney
- 6th Australasian Viral Hepatitis Conference, October, Brisbane
- XVIIth International AIDS Conference, August, Mexico City, Mexico
- 20th Annual Australasian Society for HIV Medicine Conference, September, Perth
- Aboriginal Health Worker Forum on Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Health Promotion and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Health Promotion Workshop, March, Surfers Paradise
- Society for the Social Studies of Science and European Association for the Study of Science and Technology Joint Annual Meeting, March, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
- amfAR Global Consultation on MSM and HIV/AIDS Research, September, Washington, DC
- Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs Conference, November, Sydney
- Creating Futures: Research, Practice & Policy for Indigenous, Rural & Remote and Island Peoples, September, Cairns
- Everyday Lives: The 10th Social Research Conference on HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases, March, Sydney
- International Harm Reduction Conference, May, Barcelona, Spain
- Rural and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Chronic Disease Conference, May, Broken Hill

Conference hosted by NCHSR

Everyday Lives, the 10th Social Research Conference on HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases, 27–28 March 2008, University of New South Wales, Sydney

This was a special conference in several ways: It was the conference’s ten-year anniversary, looking back on 20 years of social research in HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases (HHARD); it was the first conference without Sue Kippax as NCHSR’s director after her retirement in 2007; and we welcomed our incoming director, Professor John de Wit from Utrecht University in the Netherlands, who opened the conference.
A record 230 delegates from Australia and overseas had registered, presenting 59 proffered papers, papers in 2 symposia, and three plenary sessions.

Plenary speakers included Raewyn Connell (The University of Sydney), Kate Holden (author of *In my skin*), Peter Waples-Crowe (Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation), John Rule (National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS), Niahm Stephenson (School of Public Health and Community Medicine, The University of New South Wales), and Tim Rhodes (Centre for Research on Drugs and Health Behaviour, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine). The eleventh HHARD conference will be hosted in 2010.

### Research discussions

In 2008 NCHSR hosted a series of meetings for staff to discuss their work with academics from within and outside of the Centre, as well as with other stakeholders in their work. These discussion meetings replaced the former Colloquium series that required substantial effort in organising.

- **29 April**  
  Search and website resources at NCHSR  
  Sophie McDonald

- **27 May**  
  "My hepatitis C is like chess, I will learn to play it one day": Biographical disruption and chronic illness  
  Magdalena Harris

- **24 June**  
  Work in South Africa  
  A/Prof John Imrie

- **29 July**  
  Preliminary findings from the e-male survey, a national online survey of men who have sex with men  
  Martin Holt and Patrick Rawstorne

- **26 August**  
  Preliminary findings from the ‘patient interviews’ in the Primary Health Care Project on HIV and Depression  
  Christy Newman

- **28 October**  
  Findings from the Straightpoz study  
  Asha Persson

- **25 November**  
  Respondent driven sampling pilot study  
  Iryna Zablotska

- **9 December**  
  Post-treatment outcomes study: Psychosocial impacts following completion of hepatitis C treatment  
  Max Hopwood

### Visitors

NCHSR welcomed the following visitors in 2008:

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

- **Professor John de Wit**  
  Department of Psychology, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

- **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

- **Dr Raymond Donovan**, Sydney
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 session one in 2008 there were 11 PhD students, seven Masters students and two students were undertaking the Graduate Diploma. In session two there were 13 PhD students, five Masters students and two students in the Graduate Diploma. Additionally, NCHSR staff supervised a PhD student enrolled at the National Centre for Epidemiology and Clinical Research.

In 2008 two students were awarded an MA:

Brent Mackie, Selling Safe Smut: A research project exploring the effectiveness of sexually explicit HIV/AIDS prevention education campaigns in engaging Sydney gay men. Supervisors: Robert Reynolds, NCHSR, and Leong Chan, COFA

Marlize Mouton, "More than a liver"—The role of the social work practitioner in hepatitis C treatment centres. Supervisors: Carla Treloar, NCHSR, and Elizabeth Fernandez, School of Social Sciences and International Studies

Lectures and workshops

Dr Martin Holt gave a lecture on 'Homosexuality' at the University of Sydney in the Social and Policy Aspects of Sexual Health course.

Dr Max Hopwood lectured on the politics and practice of harm reduction to NCHSR's Masters by Research students.

Dr Loren Brener and Dr Max Hopwood taught one module in the Social Science and Policy Project course in the School of Social Sciences and International Studies, The University of New South Wales.

Dr Loren Brener was invited to conduct training on theoretical aspects of conducting qualitative research at the Capacity Building Grant Workshops for the project Making a difference: building research capacity for health interventions to improve Aboriginal Health.

Dr Iryna Zablotska gave a lecture on Sexual Transmission of HIV in the Master of Public Health Program, School of Public Health, The University of Sydney. She also lectured on International Family Planning in the International MPH Program, School of Public Health, The University of Sydney.

Dr Asha Persson, Dr Martin Holt and Diana Bernard organised and spoke at a symposium to discuss findings from two of NCHSR's qualitative studies: the Straightpoz and QUICKIE projects. Other speakers included Kate Reakes (from Pozhet), Dr Kane Race (University of Sydney), Dr Chris Bourne (Sydney Sexual Health Centre) and Rob Lake (Positive Life NSW).

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 2008 included:

- Doctor of Public Health, Flinders University
- PhD in History, The University of Melbourne
Postgraduate student projects

A summary of the projects of the PhD students that were supervised in 2008 is presented below. Supervisors and their affiliations are indicated as at 1 June 2009.

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 study uses both qualitative and quantitative methods. In the qualitative section, key informants and male community members are interviewed. A grounded theory approach 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: Prof John Kaldor (National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research) and Prof Susan Kippax (NCHSR)

Subjectivities, young people and sexual health

**Paul Byron**

A recent proliferation of social marketing campaigns, social health research, and public health interventions centre upon the (hetero)sex practices of young people. Much of this aims to reduce sexually transmissible infections amongst people under 25, who now constitute a ‘risk-group’ in Australian sexual health policy. This project will investigate the discourse of health materials and research, as well as young people’s self-narratives of sexual practices. Approaching ‘sexual health’ through discursive and material (bodily) practices, this project will investigate the relationships between subjectivity, sex practices, danger and pleasure. This focus will also challenge notions of agency, autonomy and responsibility found in contemporary sexual health promotion and research.

Supervisors: Dr Asha Persson (NCHSR) and A/Prof Vicki Kirby (School of Social Sciences and International Studies)

Sexual attitudes and behaviour of international backpackers visiting Australia

**Cari Egan**

Using theories from anthropology, sociology and psychology, this project examines the sexual attitudes and behaviours of young international travellers to Australia, specifically comparing their casual sexual behaviour and use of condoms prior to and during travel. In addition to quantitatively and qualitatively exploring travellers’ sexual behaviour, this study also explores 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: A/Prof Juliet Richters (School of Public Health and Community Medicine) and Prof Susan Kippax (NCHSR)
An investigation of information needs and information-seeking practices of people with hepatitis C

Maude Frances

The study aims to understand how people with hepatitis C use the internet, in conjunction with other media, to access and share information. By situating information use within people's everyday realities, the research will provide insights into the sociocultural conditions that facilitate or impede its use. Drawing on theories and methods from sociology and information studies, as well as findings from public health research, the study will enable an integrated approach to providing appropriate information for this group. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected during 2004–2005 and data analysis will be completed in early 2009.

Supervisors: A/Prof Carla Treloar and Dr Joanne Bryant (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.

Supervisors: A/Prof Carla Treloar and Dr Joanne Bryant (NCHSR) and Dr Kylie Valentine (SPRC)

The Dynamics of Shame: Implications for counsellors who work across alcohol and other drug settings

Rebecca Gray

Using shame as an axis, this project aims to explore the relationship between counsellor and client, and how this therapeutic dynamic is affected by the space in which treatment occurs. In part, this will observe the impact of shame and stigma, and how this relates to: problematic drug use; the identity of the "addict"; treatment models; and treatment setting. The research will draw from a textual analysis of promotional material found on service home-pages, and qualitative data, drawn from in-depth interviews with counsellors. Greater awareness of these dynamics will be used to describe alternative ways of working, to enhance the relationship between the client and counsellor, and ultimately to increase the opportunities for clients in their recovery, whichever form this takes.

Supervisors: Dr Kylie Valentine (SPRC) and Dr Christy Newman and Dr Robert Reynolds (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: A/Prof Heather Worth (School of Public Health and Community Medicine) and Dr Kane Race (The University of Sydney)

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 another 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 experiences.

Supervisors: A/Prof Carla Treloar and Dr Asha Persson (NCHSR)

Young GLBTQ: Sexual identity, alcohol and other drug use, and the commercial gay scene

**Toby Lea**

There have been considerable changes in recent years in the way that same-sex attracted people perceive, experience and define their sexual identity. Concealment of non-heterosexual identity and significant anguish about coming out are experienced among increasingly fewer people. It is possible, however, that this phenomenon is more pronounced among urban, white, middle-class people, and especially among young people. It has been argued that these changes, along with other social and structural factors, have influenced a decline in the significance of gay community and the bars, clubs and parties traditionally comprising the commercial gay/lesbian/queer ‘scene’. Despite this, the prevalence of alcohol and other drug (AOD) use remains high among GLBTQ and same-sex attracted people. This project will examine the changing meanings of sexual identity and the gay scene, and the effect that these changes have on the patterns, context, and meaning of AOD use, and blood-borne virus risk practices among a sample of young GLBTQ and same-sex attracted men and women aged 18 to 25, who are predominantly based in Sydney. This study will utilise an exploratory, mixed methods design. Phase One will comprise in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 20 participants and will capture a broad sample that varies by age, gender, patterns of AOD use, and level of social involvement in the commercial gay scene. The interview findings will inform the development of a survey instrument, which will be administered to more than 400 participants in Phase Two of the project.

Supervisors: Prof John de Wit and Dr Robert Reynolds (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.

Supervisors: A/Prof Heather Worth (School of Public Health and Community Medicine) 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 qualitative methodology, this study examines the impact of China’s anti-prostitution law on human rights and HIV prevention. This study argues that such law has not only encouraged human rights abuses against the participants of sex work but also impeded HIV prevention in sex work. In the context of international experiences and China’s particularities, this study recommends that for China decriminalisation of sex work is a potential national strategy for ensuring human rights and advancing HIV prevention.

Supervisors: Dr Henrike Körner (NCHSR) and Prof Daniel Tarantola (The UNSW Initiative for Health and Human Rights)

‘Talk about Sex?’ How HIV-positive gay men talk 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 talking about sexual health with their doctors/health care providers. 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 Korner and Dr Martin Holt (NCHSR)

Kinship practices among gay men who have become parents through commercial surrogacy
Dean Murphy

This project is exploring 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, print media, popular culture, and policy documents from both countries. Data collection was completed in 2008.

Supervisors: Dr Suzanne Fraser (Monash University) and Dr Asha Persson (NCHSR)

The role of social networks in hepatitis C harm reduction
Jamee Newland

This qualitative research project aims to contribute to understandings of practices within the education component of hepatitis C harm reduction. It will include investigation into one of the most commonly used, but rarely assessed, method of information exchange: informal peer exchange in social networks of people who inject drugs. Using a convergence of sociological theories, including Exchange Theory and Social Network Theory, the research will use a social-ecological approach to explore how informal information exchange occurs within social networks. The research will include an exploration into the role social relationships, cultural beliefs, environmental settings and structural factors have on informal information exchange and how these factors positively or negatively affect hepatitis C risk and transmission.

Supervisors: A/Prof Carla Treloar (NCHSR) and Prof Ralph Hall (School of Social Sciences and International Studies)
Suitability of respondent-driven sampling for use in behavioural surveillance among people who inject drugs

**Dana Paquette**

The focus of this research is on the suitability of respondent-driven sampling (RDS) for use in behavioural surveillance among people who inject drugs. This study will examine RDS' effectiveness in sampling PWID in south-east Sydney, examine its ability to reach more hidden segments of the population and will compare it to sampling methods currently used in behavioural surveillance.

Supervisors: Dr Joanne Bryant and Prof John de Wit (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 Pakistani men who have either worked or are about to work in the Middle East.

Supervisors: A/Prof Heather Worth (School of Public Health and Community Medicine) and Dr Patrick Rawstorne (NCHSR)

Hepatitis C and identity formations: How do third sector organisations help?

**Paul Simpson**

This study examines identity formations among people affected by HCV who engage with a hepatitis C Third Sector Organisation (TSO); the Hepatitis C Council of New South Wales (HCCNSW). A central concern is to look at how the HCCNSW as a TSO is unique in terms of the public narratives it provides on hepatitis C-related help and if and how these public narratives contribute to identity work of those who engage with it. Drawing from the literature on identity and language this research takes narrative as a central concept and method to explore identities premised on the assumption that narrative both help constitute and enact identities.

Supervisors: Dr Kylie Valentine and A/Prof Carla Treloar (NCHSR)

Exchange students

Since 2004 NCHSR has hosted placement students from Bath University in the third year of their undergraduate degree. The students have been engaged in NCHSR projects as well as developing work for their undergraduate degree which they complete upon their return to Bath. This is a highly productive program and we hope to continue this program with Bath and other international universities in the future. In 2008 NCHSR hosted postgraduate students from Utrecht University for the first time. As part of a new exchange program, each year a number of students from Utrecht will work with NCHSR staff to conduct research for the thesis they write as part of their MSc(Psych) program.

**Session 1**

Ben Bawtree-Jobson, University of Bath, BSc Psychology

**Session 2**

Laura Hardy, University of Bath, BSc Psychology
Marguerite de Keijzer, Utrecht University, MSc Psychology
Antonia Montanus, Utrecht University, MSc Psychology
Publications
Monographs


Gay community periodic survey reports


Book chapters

Chan, L. K., & Donovan, R. (2008). The 'social' and 'cultural' in graphic design: Case studies from design postgraduate research. In L. Justice and Y. Y. Lam (Eds.) Sustaining culture through design education. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Polytechnic University.


Articles in refereed journals


**Refereed conference proceedings**


Treloar C., & Fraser S. (2008, October). Hepatitis C treatment in pharmacotherapy services: increasing treatment uptake needs a critical view findings [abstract]. *Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, 23*(Suppl. 6), A338.

**Other publications**


Treloar, C., & Fraser S. (2008, November). *Hepatitis C treatment in pharmacotherapy services: increasing treatment uptake needs a critical view*. Paper
presented at the Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs Conference, Sydney.


**Presentations other than at a conference**


De Wit, J. (2008, December). *Behavioural surveillance and social research in injecting drug users and men who have sex with men*. Presentation to the Blood Borne Virus and Sexually Transmissible Infections Sub-committee (BBVSS) of the Australian Population Health Development Principal Committee, Melbourne.


Treloar, C. (2008, February). Barriers to accessing care in marginalised populations with hepatitis C. Presentation to the National Canadian Research Training Program in Hepatitis C, Montreal, Canada.


Zablotska, I. (2008, December). The safety of negotiated safety. Presentation at the CDC consultation meeting on serosorting, Atlanta, GA.
Submissions to inquiries


Funding
Funding

Statement of financial performance for the year ended 31 December 2008

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*Excludes debtors (unpaid invoices) 139 042 279 784 279 761 345 601