

International Research Collaborative – Oral Health and Equity
Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Human Biology
The University of Western Australia



Spring Edition

Welcome to the first issue of the IRCOHE Bulletin. The IRCOHE has some 150 collaborators across the globe and is one of the leading dental public health research teams in Australasia.

Graduate Dr Jenny Willie-Stephens maps 7million Australians access to dental care

As part of a successfully completed recent Master's Degree in Dental Public Health, Dr Jenny Willie-Stephens mapped every dental clinic, public and private, in NSW, with an accuracy of less than 10meters each. Her work found that marginalised people on the whole lived further away from dental services, although they suffered greater disease burdens.

Her studies saw her win the **Prime Minister's Pacific-Australia Award**, a prestigious award offered to recipients of long-term development awards (AusAid Scholarships). They are for postgraduate students from the Pacific, Papua New Guinea or East Timor who are leaders or potential leaders in their countries. Jenny has now returned to Vanuatu, to be a leading force in the development of their dental services.

Willie-Stephens J, Kruger E, Tennant M. Public and private dental services in NSW: a geographic information system analysis of access to care for 7 million Australians. NSW Public Health Bull. Jun 2014

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Dr Abed A Anjrini leads the way in changing views on wisdom tooth extraction

Dr Anjrini is a doctorate studies looking at the international comparisons of the rates of wisdom teeth extraction have been in the news again.

Abed's first paper was published in the prestigious British Dental Journal (BDJ) and reported that the rates of wisdom teeth extraction in WA were over 7 times higher than in the UK and 50% higher than in France. Abed's work was a splash in the Western Australian newspaper earlier in the year and was on radio and TV news. More recently the **editor of the BDJ wrote an editorial in support of the research and its conclusions.** Abed's Doctorate studies continues and he is now looking at the costs of this gap to the Australian community (that runs into the billions of dollars), and whether the health policy positions based on the strong evidence base of the UK and other countries have any transferability to Australia.

Anjrini AA, Kruger E, Tennant M. International benchmarking of hospitalisations for impacted teeth: a 10-year retrospective study from the United Kingdom, France and Australia. Br Dent J. April 2014

Get to Know Our Fellows: Yev Dudko and Praj Desai

Graduate students and research associates of the team are Fellows of the IRCOHE. The list of Fellows is growing; we now have over 100 fellows across the world. Each newsletter we focus the spotlight on our fellows' research. This month two of our recent new members describe their work.

Dr Yev Dudko

Yev has been an honorary research fellow of the IRCOHE since summer'12. He is a dental clinician with a history as a commercial airline pilot. Yev has an interest in Public Dental Health and is conducting research into the types of dental services most commonly delivered in the various clinical pathways in Australia, based on the hypothesis that disease-driven care should lead to similar mixes of dental treatment provided. The study found that there is substantial difference between various dental care pathways in

Australia in terms of mix of care provided, indicating that the original hypothesis is not supported. Yev, is now doing his Research Masters in dental public health with the IRCOHE.

Dr Praj Desai

Praj has been associated with IRCOHE as a Research associate since summer'13 and she began her Doctorate journey in June'14. Her primary focus has been on studying the extent of water fluoridation across Australia, using geographic information systems and big data. Through her research, Praj hopes to develop new primary population level dental services frameworks for targeting high-risk individuals. Praj graduated with a Bachelor in Dental Surgery in 2008. In 2012, she received her Master of Clinical Dentistry in Restorative Dentistry from Newcastle University in the UK.

What is the IRCOHE?

The International Research Collaborative - Oral Health and Equity (IRCOHE) is a multinational collaborative focused on developing innovative solutions in oral health education, research and service to address the global challenges associated with social inequities. The primary focus of the IRCOHE is to undertake cutting-edge research and develop strategies to address the significant unmet needs of marginalised communities.

Research programs are targeted at facilitating improved oral health in societies across the globe. Key issues

include: oral health policy and strategy; accessibility; workforce: skills mix, education and distribution; and research oriented to health care needs and prevention.



“...global emphasis on addressing communities in need”

Contacts

Please contact Marc or Estie contacts at ircohe.net

National prize for Fellow

Dr Alla Talal Alsharif, who joined the IRCOHE a couple of years ago, has kicked the winter cold away with a wonderful acknowledgement of her skills and talent.

Alla has published half a dozen papers in the peer review literature over the last couple of years. Her work is focused on reforming dental health systems to be more effective in targeting of those in need and in particular children in need. Alla's formal Doctorate studies is focused on analysing the trend of hospitalization of children over the last decade, with the aim of remodelling School Dental Service programs to match need. Last month, at a meeting of all Saudi students (undergraduate and graduate) held in Brisbane, Alla was the surprise winner of the Doctorate Excellence Award from the Saudi Cultural Mission in Australia for her achievements in Dental Public Health research. **Alla was the only student in Australia to win the award**; a real feather in her cap. The annual awards are part of the King Abdullah Foreign Scholarship Program which includes all Saudi students studying at all universities in any discipline across Australia. The award most importantly is an acknowledgement of her sustained excellence in her Doctorate studies, a monetary prize of \$2500 comes with it which Alla plans to use to attend an International Conference for dental research, to be held in March in the United States. The IRCOHE congratulates Alla on her success and her contribution to the community.

IRCOHE invited to WHO body

In winter'14 the IRCOHE were invited to join the WHO Global Health Workforce Alliance. The IRCOHE is a collaborative partner focused on innovation in dental workforce development and is only the second Australian group to join.



Publications 2014

The IRCOHE team has published a peer review publication every 2 weeks for the last few years now. This year has been the same. To-date the Fellows have 23 publications accepted in 2014 with Dr Ray Lam's (Doctorate student) 7th paper being the most recent in *Australian Health Review*. Congratulations to Ray.

