



**Deakin University and the Department of Human Services
(Barwon - South Western Region) Partnership
Executive Meeting**

Thursday 12th March, 2009
Department of Human Services
Level 3, Regional Directors Office

Minutes

Chair: Mr Jim Higgins

Present

Mr Jim Higgins, Professor John Catford, Associate Professor Mardie Townsend, Dr Michael Ackland, Mr John Hedditch, Ms Robyn Everist, Ms Kay Mills, Mr Chris Loughnan

Apologies

Professor Evelyne De Leeuw, Dr Iain Butterworth, Professor Boyd Swinburn, Professor David Lowe, Ms Christine Ferguson, Mr John Devereaux

Welcome

Jim Higgins welcomed executive members and advisory group co chairs to the meeting with a particular greeting to Associate Professor Mardie Townsend as the new Executive representative to replace Evelyne De Leeuw. Jim acknowledged and thanked Evelyne for excellent contribution to the partnership and looked forward to the Partnership benefiting from Mardie's wide experience and expertise.

Confirmation of Executive Minutes from last meeting

Executive Minutes from Wednesday 26th November confirmed and accepted. No business arising.



Key Partnership Staffing Issues

Iain Butterworth has given notice of his resignation from his Partnership position. John Catford and Jim Higgins and Executive members all acknowledged Iain's crucial role in developing the Partnership Business Plan and driving partnership activity to its current level of prominence. John Catford noted that the process for recruitment of a new Deakin staff member to Iain's position will follow standard Deakin recruitment process and will be open to all Deakin staff. John emphasized that the successful applicant should be strongly networked and able to unlock resources across faculties. The vacancy should be filled over the next few months. Mardie Townsend indicated her willingness to help fill any temporary void of partnership activity while Iain's replacement is confirmed. Iain is scheduled to meet with Mardie for a full briefing on his role when he returns from leave. The Executive is keen to acknowledge Iain's contribution to the Partnership and his enthusiasm and expertise in performing the Deakin Coordinator role. A farewell gathering has been earmarked for 20th April with venue and time to be confirmed.

Deakin+ DHS Partnership Progress Report

Kay Mills tabled the **Partnership Executive Report** for the last quarter and summarized major points in particular the **Three Beacon Projects** nominated for partnership attention. ([see attached](#))

Engaging in activity to promote Farmers and Rural Health issues:

The partnership team has been consulting and developing links with key players in the field such as Ms Susan Brumby, Director of the National Centre for Farmers Health in Hamilton. John Catford reported membership on the steering group foci of the National Centre for Farmers Health (NCFH). Three advisory groups have been set up covering research, teaching and clinical service delivery. Jim Higgins enquired as to the governance structures for the NCFH and DHS representation on working groups. John Catford indicated that a Business Plan and accountability structures were being developed and that Janet Laverick (Director Primary Health Branch) was involved as a DHS representative. Kay also noted partnership engagement with Professor Sue Kilpatrick who has recently been appointed as Pro Vice Chancellor (Rural and Regional) Office, Deakin Warrnambool.



The partnership proposes to develop the concept of a **Farmers Health Conference** in collaboration with the National Centre for Farmers Health. This would involve setting up a reference group including co chairs to consider conference parameters including

- Aims and scope of conference
- Frameworks to underpin conference
- Desired outcomes
- Key partners
- Audience and location
- Event management
- Fees and budget

Associate Professor Mardie Townsend noted research on rural farm injury as a potential topic for consideration. Mike Ackland suggested topics to include consideration of the recent world economic downturn and its impact on local rural communities. He recommended a focus for ongoing actions to be developed to address issues that arise from conference engagement. Suggested timelines for a Farmers Health Conference aimed for October/November this year depending on findings of reference group.

Corio Norlane Projects:

There is a continued focus on promoting Deakin and DHS ongoing engagement with the Corio Norlane Development Advisory Board. The major emphasis of the Partnership over the past three months has been in securing Deakin academics to participate in the inaugural meeting of the Deakin Research team with the Corio Norlane Development Advisory Board (CNDAB) scheduled for 15th February 2009. Professor Sue Kilpatrick has agreed to lead this team. Unfortunately because of the bushfires this meeting had to be postponed. Iain Butterworth has recommended to Christine Ferguson(CNDAB) that her team liaise with Sue Kilpatrick to identify an alternative date when the "Deakin Research Team" can be formally established with the CNDAB. Kay Mills to follow up whilst Iain is on leave.

Jim Higgins highlighted the profile and scope of a range of projects being undertaken in Corio and Norlane. These include major changes around Education facilities, Norlane Regeneration project (a \$40 million DHS Housing budget) project and the Corio Norlane Redevelopment project. Jim emphasized the potential at this crucial development stage to collect base line data and set up longitudinal research projects to track progress and outcomes. Associate Professor Mardie Townsend has offered to help identify relevant Deakin research contacts for engagement with the CNDAB. Mardie brings extensive Deakin networks to the partnership and will be an invaluable resource to identify Deakin research strengths and facilitate research connections.



Workforce Development Research:

John Hedditch, Iain Butterwoth, Kay Mills and Chris Loughnan developed two proposals during the last period for submission for DHS Workforce Innovation Grants. Both submissions included funding provisions for a senior research fellow, to be housed within the School of Psychology's industrial and organizational program. The submissions topics were as follows:

- **A review and modernization of student placement systems and practises in Barwon South West Region's Human Services.** This proposal aims to develop an innovative, overarching rural strategic and operational framework for the coordination and planning of student placement opportunities across the region.
- **To develop a regional Human Services Workforce Planning and Development Framework.** This proposal aims to develop a comprehensive strategic and operational Workforce Strategy across Human Service providers.

It is proposed that a small Workforce group with Deakin and DHS representation convene to refine these proposals for resubmissions for funding. These remain a focus of activity to advance the Partnerships workforce objectives. The workforce group will review these submissions with particular reference to the Tasmanian workforce model presented by Stuart Auckland during last year's partnership symposium presentation.

John Catford noted another important point of reference is the work being undertaken by the COAG Workforce Agency. Jim Higgins believes a comprehensive Workforce strategy has excellent potential to be piloted in the Barwon South West Region for possible future adaptation across regions. Anne Somerville indicated that G21 has listed Healthy Workforce development in the region as a priority. G21 has a particular focus on a longer term workforce opportunities as well as a community perspective on workforce issues. Anne will be a valuable member of the working group.



Advisory Groups Report

Kay Mills noted that the Beacon projects activity cuts across all four advisory group activity. The tabled Executive report gives a full briefing of the current activity of each advisory group. The partnership team outlined the major points for each advisory group as follows:

Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group. John Hedditch summarized recent discussions reviewing the aims of the advisory group and outlined seven desired outcomes for 2009.

Research and Evidence based practice Advisory Group. Kay outlined the main focus here as Deakin research engagement with the Corio Norlane Development Advisory Group.

Teaching and Learning Advisory Group. The current emphasis is to progress the workforce issues outlined in the two DHS Workforce Innovation Grant submissions.

Public Health Forums. The Public Health Forum model has been revised moving away from a centralized Partnership delivery system. Under the new model the three Primary Care Partnerships (PCPs) in the region are funded by the Deakin + DHS Partnership to develop and deliver relevant Public Health Forums in their areas. This appears to be working very successfully with the program for 2009 outlined below

- **“Climate Change” Public Health Forum: South West PCP.** This forum was recently successfully presented to a broad audience in Warrnambool. The speakers provided an excellent and broad coverage of the topic from an international perspective to local area concerns. (see attached Climate Change flyer)
- **“Climate Change: an older persons Health perspective”:** Southern Grampians PCP. This forum is scheduled for 25th March for presentation in Portland. (see attached flyer)
- **Peter Quail Oration: “Addressing Racism”:** Deakin + DHS Partnership Team. This forum is scheduled for a 25th March presentation at the Deakin Waterfront Campus in Geelong. (see attached Peter Quail Oration flyer)
- **G21 Public Health Forums.** Scheduled for 10th September and 12th October at Kosta Hall, Deakin University Waterfront Campus Geelong. Proposed format Public lecture followed by a Master Class of business and health leaders. Topics to be confirmed.



Issues and Opportunities

John Catford outlined current issues and opportunities in the faculty of Health Medicine Nursing and Behavioural Sciences

- The implications to education of the Bradley review recommending changes to shift the market focus in education to a demand driven model. This model has wide implications for course development with funding following student demand.
- The faculty is looking at developing courses in pharmacy and optometry. John is undertaking a review of UK course delivery in these fields.

Jim Higgins outlined formal DHS changes in John Hedditch' role now titled Manager Regional Planning, Population and Wellbeing. The focus is not just on health but also an agenda of liveable and healthy community and engagement with a wide range of community and local government stakeholders. Mardie Townsend expressed interest in further engagement in developing these priorities in Healthy Living Communities

Deakin + DHS Partnership Budget

Chris Loughnan reported that the Deakin + DHS Budget was tracking as predicted in the 3 year Business Plan and was in a surplus condition. A Budget Statement will be tabled and reviewed at the next Executive meeting.

Other Business

No further business tabled.

Next Meeting

Scheduled for 1 to 3pm, Thursday June 11th at Deakin, Waterfront campus (room to be advised).