



Research and Evidence Based Practice Advisory Group Meeting

Deakin + DHS Partnership

Monday 14th September 2009
Conference Room 3
DHS State Government Offices
Geelong

Minutes

Chairperson

Ms Christine Ferguson, Manager Housing and Neighbourhood Renewal, Department of Human Services, Barwon South West Region

Present

Ms Christine Ferguson, Ms Susan Brumby, Mr John Hedditch, Ms Kay Mills, Dr Cathryn Carpenter, Dr Wanda Korndorffer, Professor Trisha Dunning, Associate Professor Mardie Townsend, Professor Sue Kilpatrick, Mr Matthew Ebdon, Ms Anne Somerville, Ms Anne O'Callaghan, Mr Chris Loughnan

Apologies

Professor David Lowe, Associate Professor Louise Johnson, Ms Libby Mears, Ms Irene McGinnigle, Professor Evelyne De Leeuw, Ms Carole Micallef, Prof Joseph Graffam, Mr Tim Moore, Mr Steven Sawyer, Mr Mark Brennan, Prof Rob Carter, Ms Michelle Courtney, Mr Peter Day, Mr Chad Foulkes, Mr Ron Frew, Ms Sharlene Gillick, Mr Kim McGough, Dr Darren Palmer, Mr Terence Reed, Dr Sally Savage, Mr Andrew Scott, Dr Paul Talman, Ms Virginia Todd, Mr Tom Van Etten, Dr Kathryn Von Treuer, Ms Juliet Williams, Ms Karen Pritchard, Ms Sue Morgan, Dr Anita Peerson, Ms Jasmine Van Den Hurk, Ms Andrea Sanigorski,

Welcome and Introduction

Christine Ferguson welcomed members to the meeting with a particular welcome to new members Susan Brumby and Wanda Korndorffer. Chris also welcomed Sue Kilpatrick via video conference link from Warrnambool.

New members background briefing

1. **Associate Professor Sue Brumby** (Centre Director, National Centre for Farmer Health, Hamilton, Victoria).

Sue provided a background briefing regarding the successful launch of the National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) on Friday 10th July by the Victorian Premier. Based on a partnership between the Western District Health Service and Deakin University the NCFH aims to provide national leadership to improve the health and wellbeing of farm men and women, farm workers and their families across Australia.

Sue's presentation (see attached) outlined the key service elements for the National Centre for Farmer Health covering professional training and education, applied research, an IT information hub, as well as Agrisafe and Sustainable Farm Families programs.

There was further discussion of associated issues including: different climate change effects on rural communities; myths regarding farmer lifestyles; and barriers farm families experience in accessing health services.



Mardie offered Sue support to link into relevant Deakin Schools in relation to farmer health research. This may also result in increasing dissemination of farmer health issues to the media and a wider urban audience. Sue Kilpatrick also suggested making contact with Professor David Lowe (Director, Alfred Deakin Institute) to discuss incorporating Farmer Health data into the proposed Regional Research Centre. Kay noted that Farmer Health is a Beacon Deakin + DHS Partnership priority with the focus on helping the NCFH facilitate a Farmer Health Conference in 2010.

2. **Dr Wanda Korndorffer** (Director Innovation, Gordon Institute of TAFE, Geelong)

Dr Korndorffer has extensive experience working in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector including academic research and most recently Director of the TAFE Development Centre in Melbourne. Dr Korndorffer is responsible for six major program areas including: Business Development, Education Development, International Education, Knowledge Management, Information Systems and Marketing.

The Gordon Institute continues its long history of offering a wide range of apprenticeship, certificate and associate diploma courses in the region. Wanda also emphasized that the Gordon Institute also offers a wide range of fee for service training across the state as well as internationally. The Institute is currently moving through a change management process to implement its five year Business Plan which includes a strong emphasis on developing partnership collaborations. The Gordon Institute has recently appointed a range of Directors across the Institute whose roles will include making new partnership connections.

Their vision for the future also includes a focus on:

- ICT flexible delivery of training incorporating new ways of learning;
- developing higher level vocational training eg a vocational degree;
- health training in partnership with Geelong and regional health Services; and
- further development of partnership connections eg Corio Norlane training.

Advisory group members suggested the following collaborations:

- Mardie Townsend to meet with Wanda to discuss integrated approaches to Education service delivery and course pathways between Deakin and Gordon TAFE;
- Invitation to Wanda to attend the Corio Norlane Development Advisory Board Research Planning Forum on the 29th October;
- Mardie to discuss the "Deakin at your Doorstep" program with Wanda. Deakin is keen to work with the Gordon in partnership not duplicate education service delivery. This program would help address access to training in rural (eg Colac) and coastal areas (eg Lorne , Anglesea); and
- Wanda also highlighted the modern and world class facilities offered at the Gordon's Boundary Rd Campus (East Geelong) and extended an invitation to tour this facility.

3. **Ms Andrea Sanigorski** (Senior Research Fellow, Obesity Prevention, Public Health Research Cluster, Faculty of HMN&BS, Deakin University)

Andrea was an apology for the meeting and will be invited to present a background briefing at the next meeting.



Research Working Parties

Project teams have been convened in three research priority areas identified for concentrated work identified by the advisory group. Kay reported on the activity of the project teams to date.

1. Regional Research Centre Project Team

This project team, chaired by David Lowe, has now met to progress planning to develop a governance and Business model to support the development of a Regional Research Centre (RRC). The aim is to develop a Regional Research Centre with a sustainable structure providing key economic and social data to support evidence based planning in the region. The need to manage and interpret data sets relating to population changes in Geelong and the South-West Region is well supported by government and non-government bodies. G21 has committed funds to developing a RRC as a priority project under G21 Health and Wellbeing Pillar objectives. The RRC is a partnership project with key leadership and support from Deakin in applied research and the offer to the house RRC data in the Alfred Deakin Institute. Issues in developing the model include determining access and the cost of data to the broader community and commercial organizations. David Lowe is developing details for further lobbying of the model to Canberra.

2. Thinker in Residence Project Team

Louise Johnson (Assoc Head of School, School of Heritage, History and Society, Faculty of Arts and Education, Deakin University) chairs this group. Membership includes participants from G21, Deakin, Department of Human Services (DHS), the City of Greater Geelong (COGG), Regional Development Victoria (RDV) and Committee for Geelong. The project team is giving consideration to a range of models to determine themes, topics, costs and available candidate/s. Under the Adelaide model a selected thinker comes to the region for a block of time, then has a reflection period and comes back for follow up work. The work program includes developing a range of seminars and visioning workshops. The thinker concepts are also linked to Adelaide's Festival of Ideas.

Professor Louise Johnson (Deakin) has met with G21 CEO Andrew Scott to engage their Environment Pillar and then present a proposal to the G21 Board. Anne Somerville estimates that the Program may commence in 2011, due to the time required to scope out the program requirements and the bid for funding.

3. Evaluation Support Project Team

The Evaluation Support Project Team has held its first meeting with Christine Ferguson as Chairperson. The project team is currently in the process of developing terms of reference and a project plan aimed at increasing the capacity of Human Service agencies in research and evaluation.

One of the initial strategies will involve engaging with each of the PCPs to identify members evaluation needs and research interests with the view to targeting capacity and relationship building approaches as required. Dr Cathryn Carpenter will facilitate a workshop for those PCPs who express an interest.

Research Evaluation of Deakin + DHS Partnership

Dr Kathryn Von Treuer and team from the School of Psychology Deakin have been engaged to undertake a evaluation of the Deakin + DHS Partnership. They have commenced a stage one evaluation mid way through the three year Business Plan. The team has met with the co-chairs of the four advisory groups and has mapped out key advisory group contacts. They have developed an online survey that was sent to all advisory group members with a two week



completion timeline. The survey findings will provide important feedback on the partnership performance and help inform development of the Partnership Business Plan for 2010 onwards and future key activity and engagement.

Research Matter arising

Joint Deakin- DHS Research Ethics Committee

Sue Kilpatrick suggested developing a joint ethics committee for research projects between DHS and Deakin to avoid duplication and two ethic committee applications. It is timely with the recent division of DHS and DOH to consider a process to streamline ethic committee approvals. Sue noted the Tasmanian joint ethic committee example between the Department of Health and Human Services and University of Hobart as a reference model. This item will be added to the agenda for consideration at the partnership next Executive meeting in December.

Environmental Volunteering Project

Matt Ebdon reported that the recent Deakin+ DHS Partnership funded Public Health Forum on climate change "Local challenges, local solutions" has been a catalyst for health-promoting, community-based projects in South West Victoria. As a result of the feedback from the event further monthly public forums coordinated and facilitated by Deakin University and the South West Sustainability Partnership brought together people from various community sectors to workshop ways Warrnambool may become more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

The monthly meetings have been well attended and very productive, resulting in the formation of **Smart Living Warrnambool**, a Transition Community that has commenced work actioning 4 key initiatives in the following areas:

- improving biodiversity and active transport infrastructure in local parks;
- developing permaculture, composting, grow and swap programs to secure and share healthy food;
- developing a public demonstration house that showcases sustainable design, products and features; and
- exploring local options for producing alternative energy to fossil fuels.

Deakin University has also developed inter-sectoral links with health and community services, environmental agencies, transport providers and service clubs to support people marginalised in south west Victorian communities to become volunteers in environmental management and revegetation activities. The three year program is due to be launched at the beginning of 2010 with funding for a volunteer coordinator being sought from Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD). Previous Deakin University research has demonstrated the environmental, community and individual benefits of environmental volunteering. Local communities are very keen to launch this **Environmental Volunteering** program to support people affected by mental illness, disability, long term unemployment and social isolation.

Chris Ferguson referred to Corio Norlane project funding options (eg Shell) and suggested investigating large corporate sponsorship partnerships in the South West Region. These partnerships can be mutually beneficially in fulfilling corporate environmental improvement responsibilities. Possible corporate sponsors could include Alcoa, Woodside and Santos

Other Items

Corio Norlane Development Advisory Board + Deakin Research Partnership

Christine Ferguson provided a briefing overview of the Corio Norlane Development Advisory Board's (CN DAB) current activity and its research engagement with Deakin. Corio Norlane has been a neighbourhood renewal site for the past 8 years with a focus on the multiple causes of economic and social disadvantage in the area. The CN DAB brings together both community



members and major stakeholders to coordinate and inform progress on major state, federal, community and corporate projects in the area.

The CN DAB and key Deakin University academics will convene a **Research Planning Forum** on 29th October to set out a strategic approach to research projects and funding in Corio and Norlane forward to 2015. Professor Sue Kilpatrick, Deakin's representative on the CN DAB, is leading this initiative with the support of Sandra McClelland. Mr John Eren, MP and Mr Jim Higgins (Regional Director DHS BSW) will be opening the forum.

On 31st August the CN DAB was accepted as a full member of the **World Health Organisation Alliance for Healthy Cities**. This is a significant achievement recognizing the collaborative efforts and outstanding work of the many people and groups which support the CN DAB. The accreditation is a credit to the Corio Norlane community and a strong validation of a Neighbourhood Renewal approach to planning and community governance. The CN DAB model will be presented to the Australian Health City Chapter Conference in Adelaide in October, 2009.

The **Corio Norlane Education Regeneration** project aims to coordinate and develop new education services in Corio and Norlane across nine government schools as well as develop partnership pathways with Gordon TAFE and Deakin University. **Northern Futures** has facilitated administration traineeships with the Transport Accident Commission as part of its strategic plan. These traineeships have provided a very successful model of raising the career aspirations of young people in the area. There has been a ripple on effect of interest in these traineeships from their peers.

Sue Kilpatrick noted that the work of the CN DAB and associated projects is of strong relevance to many other disadvantaged communities across the state. The state government is also particularly interested in programs that widen the aspirational goals in disadvantaged communities. The CN DAB has recently completed its third community survey regarding community aspirations, the renewal process, and what changes the community would like to see in the future.

G21 Public Health Forums

G21 has finalised plans for the final two Public Health forums to be held in October at the Deakin Waterfront Campus. G21 has used the Deakin +DHS Partnership funding as leverage to draw high-profile speakers and pay for large venues that can hold several hundred people. The additional master class component is a welcome feature of the G21 forums.

Public Health Forum Topic	Speakers / Partners	Date
"How does a healthy lifestyle build a wealthier community"? Keynote followed by a 'master class' with key business and community leaders.	Professor Rob Moodie	5 October
Child Health & Wellbeing: Are we really regenerating for our next generation? Panel discussion and 'master class'.	Bernie Geary and Mark Kennedy	12th October

Items for next meeting

- John Hedditch to provide an overview of key elements of National Reform Agenda
- Patricia Dunning to provide overview of diabetes research activity

Next meeting:

Thursday 18th February 2010, 10am to 12pm, Room Ad 1.122

Alfred Deakin Institute, Deakin Waterfront Campus, Geelong.