



## Highly prestigious award for Dr Tania de Koning-Ward

Dr Tania de Koning-Ward of the School of Medicine has received a prestigious award from the Commonwealth Health Minister.

The Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, presented Dr de Koning-Ward with the Commonwealth Minister's Medal for Excellence in Health and Medical Research at a dinner held by the Australian Society for Medical Research in Melbourne in June.

Dr de Koning-Ward is surprised to have received this prestigious honour, which is in recognition of her research dating back 12 years and her supporting role of graduate and postgraduate students.

'I guess my initial thought was how good this was for Deakin University', she said. 'It is also recognition for the team of researchers we have built up and the amazing work they are doing.'

Professor Brendan Crotty, Head of the School of Medicine, is delighted with Dr de Koning-Ward's achievements. 'This is a very significant achievement and the School of Medicine is delighted with her success', he said.

In 2009, Dr de Koning-Ward and research colleagues made a world-renowned breakthrough by discovering the way in which malaria makes red blood cells 'sticky'. The work, published



in *Nature*, offers new hope for the development of treatment options for malaria, which kills more than 800 000 people each year.

Dr de Koning-Ward will receive \$50 000 as part of her prize and will put the money towards helping the research team find out more about the process of malaria infection, in the hope of creating a vaccine or drug to fight the disease.

### For more information

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## 2011 ISBNPA Conference

The 2011 Annual Conference of the International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity (ISBNPA) was recently held in Melbourne. The conference attracted just over 700 attendees from academia, research institutes, non-government organisations, community organisations and all levels of government from Australia and across the world. Deakin's Centre for Physical Activity and Nutrition Research (C-PAN) played a major role in the organisation of

the conference with C-PAN Director, Alfred Deakin Professor David Crawford, chairing the local organising committee, and other C-PAN staff making up the local organising committee. C-PAN staff were well represented throughout the conference with more than 20 oral presentations, a number of poster presentations, and were involved in chairing of sessions. In addition, Dr Karen Campbell and Professor Tony Worsley were two of the debaters in the very lively keynote debate titled

*We should invest our nutrition and physical activity promotion efforts on youth rather than the ageing population.*

The conference was a great opportunity for Australian and international representatives to network and share the latest cutting-edge research in the fields of behavioural nutrition and physical activity.

## Local government and obesity prevention: an evidence summary

The Collaboration of Community-based Obesity Prevention Sites (CO-OPS Collaboration, [www.co-ops.net.au](http://www.co-ops.net.au)) has released a series of evidence summaries to assist with policy and practice-level decisions around obesity prevention, as well as practical tools to help apply this evidence.

The latest report in the series is titled 'Local government and obesity prevention: an evidence resource' ([www.co-ops.net.au/File.axd?id=5284d5c4-669d-406b-8419-2df0128064c2](http://www.co-ops.net.au/File.axd?id=5284d5c4-669d-406b-8419-2df0128064c2)) and recognises local government's long history and influential role in public health outcomes, including the prevention of

lifestyle-related diseases such as obesity and diabetes. This report has been downloaded a staggering 750 times in one month, which equates to more than once for every local government in Australia.

Earlier reports in the series include:

- Remote and rural issues in the prevention of obesity for pre-adolescents and adolescents.
- Achieving equity in community-based obesity prevention interventions for children and adolescents.
- Considerations regarding harm

minimisation for obesity prevention policies and programs for pre-adolescents and adolescents.

To access these reports you need to register (for free) with CO-OPS ([www.co-ops.net.au/Login.aspx](http://www.co-ops.net.au/Login.aspx)). Registration entitles you to access the evidence summaries, as well as 'Best Practice Principles for Community-based Obesity Prevention'. In addition to these resources you can access almost 100 resources from the searchable resource library and you can choose to receive a bi-monthly CO-OPS newsletter.

## Mitchell Community Health Service – solid partnership in a community setting

Mitchell Community Health Service in Broadford was recently successful in a funding bid through the Health and Hospital Fund.

The infrastructure funding will assist the organisation to expand its clinical training capacity. The site regularly hosts community nutrition placements for dietetics students.

The Faculty's Dietetics team, led by Dr Sharleen O'Reilly, assisted with the bid through a letter of support, acknowledging Mitchell Community Health Service as an exemplar of a regional health agency providing key opportunities for students undertaking community nutrition placements.

The Faculty recognised not only the current achievements but also the

potential to expand it into clinical dietetics training with the multidisciplinary primary health care Wallan GP Super Clinic.

Associate Professor Tim Crowe, Course Director of the Master of Dietetics, said 'We are thrilled that Mitchell Community Health Service was successful with the funding bid'.

## Student placements case study – Development Assessment Centres

In the new climate of Clinical Placement Networks introduced across Victoria, it is increasingly important to share resources and examples of best practice in preparing students for placements.

Deakin's School of Psychology staff have developed an innovative approach to assist the Master of Psychology (Industrial and Organisational) students before they attend placements.

Work placements are widely recognised for their positive impact on graduate employability. Placements offer students an opportunity to maximise strengths, improve areas of weakness, and develop an understanding of the requirements of their chosen field.

The course leaders of industrial and organisational psychology have created a Development and Assessment Centre (DAC) based on a model of DACs used in corporate settings to provide development feedback to potential employees.

The DAC was originally conducted as a pilot project with assistance from People Measures. A review of progress was undertaken at the conclusion of each placement through self assessments and evaluations provided by on-site supervisors.

Student and supervisor perceptions of the project were very positive and the DAC is now conducted every year for industrial

and organisational psychology students prior to undertaking placements.

The DAC methodology offers a much needed strategy for not only assessing professional competencies, but also by providing a standardised process for placement preparation, planning and ongoing student development. The process facilitates insight into one's strengths and development needs prior to professional employment. Importantly, there is an opportunity to address development needs within the context of a placement.

## Research snapshots

### Good company important for a healthy lifestyle

The latest research findings of Deakin University Australian Research Council Future Fellow Dr Sarah McNaughton, from the Centre for Physical Activity and Nutrition Research (C-PAN), have shown that good company may be as important as good nutrition for a healthy lifestyle.

‘Food is not just about the nutrients, it is also about the social interactions that go with it’, Dr McNaughton said. ‘Having someone to sit and have a meal with is very important because we find that people eating alone may not cook a nutritious meal. It’s an issue facing older adults in particular.’

Dr McNaughton is leading a Diabetes Australia Research Trust and Australian Research Council funded research project that involves 4000 Victorians aged between 55 and 65 years.

Her overall research interest is in dietary patterns across the life-course. With colleagues at C-PAN, Dr McNaughton is

collaborating on research projects that work with young children right through to older adults. She is beginning to shed some light on how dietary patterns vary across life and the impact of life-stage transitions on diet and health, subjects about which very little is currently understood.

‘A major focus of my work is dietary patterns, so rather than focusing on individual nutrients or foods, we are looking at the patterns of eating and the interactions between what people are eating and the impact on their health. In the older age groups, the factors that influence what people eat may be quite different to someone who has just left home.’

The research aims to find out what social and environment influences there might be on people’s diet and to develop interventions that can help people maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle. The development of intervention programs to



improve nutrition and help reduce chronic disease will obviously greatly benefit the community and will help to ease the ever increasing costs associated with public health.

‘I guess you’d say I am very passionate about nutrition and I am particularly interested in how we can prevent ill-health and improve quality of life through good nutrition’, Dr McNaughton said.

#### For more information

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### School of Medicine Research Day

The Deakin Medical School is holding a Research Day to showcase its research on Friday 8 July at the Peter Thwaites Lecture Theatre at Deakin’s Geelong Waurin Ponds Campus.

Research Day will feature the School’s research in the following areas:

- cancer
- infectious diseases

- rural and regional health
- metabolic disease
- psychiatry and neuroscience
- bone disease.

Speakers will include researchers working at Deakin’s Geelong Waurin Ponds Campus, as well as clinical researchers from key partners, including Barwon Health, CSIRO (AAHL), Kardinia Health

GP Super Clinic, the National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH), and the Centre for Rural Emergency Medicine (CREM).

RSVPs are essential. Please register online at [www.deakin.edu.au/hmnbs/medicine/researchday/index.php](http://www.deakin.edu.au/hmnbs/medicine/researchday/index.php)



## Upcoming events

### School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences Research Degree Symposium

Deakin's School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences invites you to attend its 8th Annual Research Degree Symposium, 'Promoting Health: Innovation in Food, Nutrition, Exercise and Sport Research', to be held on Wednesday 26 October.

The event provides research degree students with an opportunity to present their masters or PhD research that is related to the fields of physical activity and nutrition. It will be of interest to University staff, health professionals,

policy makers, potential research degree students, health researchers and others.

#### Details of the Symposium

Keynote Speaker: Professor Robin Daly  
Date: Wednesday 26 October 2011  
Venue: Amora Hotel, Richmond  
Closing date for abstract submission: 15 August 2011  
Registrations close: 12 October 2011

#### Online registration

To register for the symposium online, please visit [www.deakin.edu.au/hmnbs/ens/symposium/index](http://www.deakin.edu.au/hmnbs/ens/symposium/index)

#### For more information

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### Symposium for Behavioural Research in Diabetes

The Australian Centre for Behavioural Research in Diabetes (ACBRD) invites you to attend the 2011 Symposium for Behavioural Research in Diabetes.

This annual half-day event (in collaboration with The Australian Society for Psychological Research in Diabetes) will provide delegates with an opportunity to hear from local and international experts, including:

- Professor Barbara Anderson, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, USA
- Associate Professor Frans Pouwer, Tilburg University, Tilburg, Netherlands

- Associate Professor Alicia Jenkins, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

The event will foster professional exchange, provoke thought, create opportunity for meaningful discussion and give rise to new research questions about the behavioural and psychological aspects of diabetes prevention and management.

The symposium will be held at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre from 1.30–5.00 pm, Friday 2 September 2011, following the conclusion of the Australian

Diabetes Society - Australian Diabetes Educators Association (ADS-ADEA) Conference.

To register for the symposium, visit [www.acbrd.org.au](http://www.acbrd.org.au).

Registrations close on 11 August 2011.

#### About ACBRD

ACBRD is one of six research groups within Deakin's Population Health Strategic Research Centre. The Centre is the result of a partnership between Diabetes Australia – Victoria and Deakin University.

## Upcoming events continued...

### WHO Collaborating Centre Obesity Prevention Short Course

The World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention based at Deakin University is again holding its world renowned Obesity Prevention Short Course.

The course is a four-day intensive incorporating the latest research and evidence. This year's course will provide you with:

- frameworks to understand the determinants of obesity
- an enhanced understanding of the

obesity epidemic and associated burden of disease

- best practice principles for community-based obesity prevention
- tools for building obesity prevention initiatives
- skills to collect, synthesise and understand evidence
- examples of group work and learning techniques.

Registrations for the 2011 Obesity Prevention Short Course are now open,

places are limited and this course has booked out in previous years.

**More information** about the short course is available here: [www.deakin.edu.au/strategic-research/population-health/assets/resources/opsc-flyer.pdf](http://www.deakin.edu.au/strategic-research/population-health/assets/resources/opsc-flyer.pdf)

**Register** for the course here: [www.deakin.edu.au/services/online-payments/cfrstart.cgi?TRAN-NO=010&EVENT=obesity11](http://www.deakin.edu.au/services/online-payments/cfrstart.cgi?TRAN-NO=010&EVENT=obesity11)

### CO-OPS 2011 National Workshop

The 2011 CO-OPS National Workshop will be held on 13 and 14 October at the Mercure Hotel in Brisbane. This annual two-day event is now on the training calendar of many Health professionals around Australia. Over 250 expressions of interest have already been made for the event by people nationally and internationally, and after last year's Workshop in Sydney booked out over two months in advance, early booking is advised.

Excellent feedback was received after last year's event, with attendees reporting

they had learned a great deal and enjoyed the experience. A quote from one of last year's workshop evaluation forms attests to the quality of the CO-OPS Workshop:

*'The most relevant and helpful workshop I have ever attended. Every session was useful to my daily work.'*

Sessions at last year's CO-OPS National Workshop covered community-based obesity prevention and issues such as ethics, monitoring and evaluation, working with government, and working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

(CALD), low socio-economic status and indigenous communities.

Abstract submissions are now open for this year's event.

**For more information** about the event, including details of abstract submission and registration, please visit [www.co-ops.net.au/Pages/Public/2011\\_National\\_Workshop.aspx](http://www.co-ops.net.au/Pages/Public/2011_National_Workshop.aspx)