In this report we provide:
- summaries of selected CHASE research projects and partnerships;
- an overview of our forward directions;
- a report on research outputs for 2010.

The CHASE vision is working collaboratively with communities, organisations and governments to promote social inclusion and to enhance the health and wellbeing of all, particularly those populations, communities and individuals who experience social exclusion.

The CHASE philosophy is that individuals, communities and populations should be assisted to find their own ways to promote social inclusion and to find their own solutions to exclusion issues. We appreciate that not everyone can or wishes to be included in the “mainstream”. Nevertheless, the health of the so-called “included” and “excluded” can be promoted regardless of their social positioning.

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Introduction

In this report we provide a brief summary of some of CHASE’s current research activity and our forward directions, as well as report on research outputs for 2010 in terms of publications and higher degree by research (HDR) completions.

Key statistics – research outputs 2010
1 PhD completion
6 Research based books
7 Research monographs
19 Book chapters
35 Refereed journal articles

For details see pages 11-16

CHASE brings together a group of 25 Deakin staff (see page 9), located mainly in the School of Health and Social Development, across both Burwood and Waterfront campuses. The group is multidisciplinary, including: public health; health promotion; health sciences; social work; occupational science and therapy; sociology; anthropology; and disability studies. The group includes established researchers, mid career researchers, early career researchers, and staff undertaking their own higher degree by research studies. As of 1 March 2011 there were 43 higher degree by research students (pages 10-11) whose lead supervisor is on the CHASE staff; the vast majority of these students are part time.

Current CHASE research is funded by ARC, NHMRC, government departments, VicHealth and other external agencies. Selected research studies are described on pages 3 to 7.

One of the major features of the way CHASE works is through the development of partnerships. This report features two of the newer partnerships we are developing (pages 8 to 9), describing some of the agendas that these partnerships work around. We look forward to developing further partnerships that can support broad programmes of work in the future.

CHASE research

Overview

Our current research is carried out in five different areas:
- Social diversity and improving the health and wellbeing of marginalised/ disadvantaged/ excluded groups
- Gender, stigma, discrimination and sexuality
- Disability
- Gender, families and reproductive health, including gendered violence and abuse
- Aboriginal health

Work in these areas is necessarily interconnected. Underlying the group’s work in all these areas is an active concern with: the development of mixed methodologies; the application of systems thinking; multidisciplinary approaches; systematic approaches to reviewing and synthesising the research literature; and with issues of knowledge transfer and practice development.

Looking across the range of CHASE research studies, we find:
- a concern with exploring effective policy and practice responses to the diversity of Australian and Victorian populations;
- a concern with undoing discrimination, responding equitably to diversity and promoting and protecting social justice and human rights;
- a particular focus in many studies on key life transitions; and,
- work across all the various stages in the life-course.
Into the future, we will be seeking to develop further work that addresses the above concerns as well as questions of working effectively with social diversity across the life-course.

In this issue of our regular report, we focus on just some of the projects underway, talking particularly about projects that our PhD, masters and honours students are involved in.

The Equipping Inclusion Studies: Assistive Technology Use and Outcomes in Victoria


CHASE researchers Natasha Layton (PhD candidate) and Dr Erin Wilson were part of a team of Deakin University researchers receiving funding from the Aids and Equipment Action Alliance and the William Buckland Foundation to undertake research into assistive technology provision for people with disabilities in Victoria. The research was conducted between 2008 and 2010, and produced a suite of reports. Together these comprise The Equipping Inclusion Studies.

Overall the reports show that people with disabilities lack vital equipment (assistive technology - AT) to assist them to participate in life. Deakin University’s Associate Researcher, Natasha Layton said the study investigated factors that affect the capacity of Victorians with a disability to be mobile and active in their daily lives and to participate.

“The Equipping Inclusion Studies show that assistive technology is critical for people with a disability to enable them to reach their potential.

There is an unmet need for people with a disability, and a strong social justice argument for more assistive technology,” she said.

Co-researcher Professor Rob Carter said this is the first time a comprehensive economic evaluation of the total packages of care for persons with a disability has been compared with the benefits across all life areas.

The publication of findings was launched by Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner Dr Helen Szoke who stressed that people with a disability have every right to be given every opportunity to participate fully in their communities. “The report clearly shows that there is more work to be done in terms of equipping people with a disability with the tools to achieve their best,” Dr Szoke said. “The Commission is keen to see agencies work together to address the unmet needs for people with a disability living in Victoria”, she said.

Significant findings include:

• 75% of people surveyed had unmet need for assistive technology solutions (devices, personal care and/or environmental modification);
• People living with disabilities require an average of eight assistive technology devices to participate in life;
• Best outcomes occur when people are supported to construct their own individual solution which for most people includes devices, personal care, and environmental modifications;
• As the elements of enabling solutions are funded separately, Victorians struggle to navigate through a complex current service system;
• Substantial elements of AT cost are carried by funders other than the Victorian Aids and Equipment Program (VAEP);
• For many Victorians, key elements of AT are not provided at all through any funder;
From a government affordability perspective, important improvements can be achieved at modest cost for many AT clients; the lack of a safety net provision in the VAEP subsidy program means, for many Victorians, cumulative co-payment costs are unreachable; and, lack of assistive technology is a major barrier to the achievement of participation as detailed in international, national and state disability policies.

The Equipping Inclusion Studies comprise three elements, Key Findings and Policy Implications, an Equipment Study and an Economic Study. Copies of the report including key findings and policy implications are available at www.aeea.org.au

Women connecting: exploring women's friendship in a multicultural setting

Master of Public Health major project, carried out by Teresia Mutisya, supervised by Dr Jan Moore and Dr Lisa Hanna

This exploratory study aimed to gain an understanding of the role and purpose of a multicultural Women’s Friendship Group (WFG) in enhancing the individual social health and wellbeing of its members. While previous research has investigated the value of friendships to older women’s health and wellbeing, little has been carried out in Australia and especially in a cross-cultural setting. Research in this area is necessary considering the contemporary Australian population where a significant proportion of the population is aging: currently at 13% and projected to rise to 25% by the year 2056 (ABS 2008). Women as compared to men make up a higher proportion of the population with a ratio of 100 to 98.1 in Victoria in 2008 (ABS 2008) and 22% of the entire Australian population was born overseas.

This qualitative research was conducted within a descriptive qualitative framework and gathered rich descriptive data through four focus groups of eight participants each, drawn from members of a WFG in Melbourne, Australia and aged 55-87 years. A thematic analysis of the data found women perceived their membership of the WFG to enhance their individual health and wellbeing. Findings revealed how the role played by WFG membership in improving their social connectedness and boosting self esteem enhanced their health and wellbeing. The WFG activities which members engaged in were perceived to benefit their health and wellbeing. Importantly, the women perceived the WFG to be special compared to other groups they had been involved with given the friendship bond they experienced and this bond kept the number of members rising. As a group they had challenges of ethnic languages and leadership succession but they were hopeful they could work together through the challenges.

Membership of a WFG is perceived to enhance the social health and wellbeing of its members and it is, therefore, recommended that the model be replicated elsewhere. However, further exploration of the key aspects of the group may be necessary to better understand the group’s success. These include exploring the leadership of the WFG through the leader, researching the process of setting up the WFG and exploring ethnicity and multiculturalism more specifically.

‘Dabble n Dance’

‘Dabble n Dance’ is a group program designed for young parents who have returned to secondary education and their children which commenced in late 2010. It aims to use the Arts in order to strengthen the relationship between parents and
their children, support positive parenting behaviours and parental self-confidence. A Multi Family Group program in Canada which uses music activities amongst others in work with young parents, their families and children suggests that the stigma attached to young parenthood along with the practical dilemmas associated with being a young parent, can lead to social exclusion and isolation which can negatively impact upon parent/child relationships. Group sessions encompassing music activities aim to increase social inclusion and social connectedness and reduce the social isolation faced by young parents.

As ‘Dabble n Dance’ is an innovative and newly implemented program it is important to establish an understanding of how sessions are experienced by participants in order to develop, improve or change current processes. In order to provide in-depth and descriptive feedback to program facilitators a formative evaluation will be undertaken. Sarah Baudinette, a social work honours student, based at Waterfront, will be working on the evaluation; she will be supervised by Dr Sophie Goldingay.

This evaluation will consider how program participants experience certain aspects of the program from within their individual contexts and from their own unique perspectives. Amongst other things, the research will consider the scope of the ‘Dabble n Dance’ program and its accessibility for parents who are studying and have young children, parents who are often considered to be faced with disadvantage. The extent to which ‘Dabble n Dance’ reduces young parents’ social exclusion and isolation will be a key concern of the research.

### The 1 in 4 poll

The 1-in-4 poll is a national survey of people with a disability in Australia and commenced in 2010. The poll is funded through the Australian Research Council Linkage program and is a partnership between Deakin University researchers (Dr Erin Wilson in CHASE and others in the School of Psychology) and Scope, a major Victorian disability organisation. A major aim of the poll has been to enable the self report of people with disabilities about issues that affect them.

The first poll focuses on social inclusion, a major element of human rights for people with a disability. The launch of the first poll at the end of 2010 followed substantial work to develop an accessible online survey method suitable for use by adults with a range of disabilities as well as those who may be using assistive technology.


Further findings are forthcoming and a second poll will be launched toward the end of 2011. The 1-in-4 poll represents a major tool in advancing the human rights of people with disabilities by providing a way for this population to have their voice heard regarding current social issues. The results will also be used to inform necessary policy change.
A good place to raise a family

This project is led by CHASE members Dr Fiona Andrews and Associate Professor Julia Shelley, with contributions from Associate Professor Mardie Townsend, Associate Professor Louise Johnson (Faculty of Arts), Ms Sarah Barter-Godfrey and Ms Ruth Klein on various aspects of the project.

There is a growing body of evidence suggesting that where we live can have a significant and long term impact on our health and wellbeing. Children are particularly vulnerable to these neighbourhood affects, especially in the early years when brain development is still underway.

The suburbs have historically been the preferred place to raise a family however, new approaches to housing families are urgently required, particularly in Melbourne which has Australia’s fastest growing population and a limited land supply. This project aims to identify factors that affect residential location choices, and the quality of experiences of parents raising children in inner versus outer suburbs of Melbourne. Findings from this study will help inform development of communities that satisfy families’ residential location aspirations, as well as assisting them to raise healthy children.

This project is located in two Melbourne municipalities; the inner local government area of the City of Maribyrnong, and the outer local government area of the City of Wyndham. These municipalities were chosen as both are proposed locations to accommodate Melbourne’s expanding population. In addition, both contain higher than Victorian average numbers of families with young children aged 0-4 years (Wyndham 8.2%, Maribyrnong 6.6%, Victoria 6.2% using figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

The pilot phase of this project was successfully completed during 2010. The aim of the pilot phase was twofold. Firstly, to establish partnerships with the City of Maribyrnong, and the City of Wyndham and secondly, to collect background information on perceptions of these two local government areas as a good place to raise a family from published and unpublished data, from service providers, and from an analysis of print media in the two municipalities.

Findings are currently being analysed and will in the first instance be presented to the two local governments at the end of March 2011. From there it is anticipated that we will move into the second phase of the project; namely to recruit and interview parents from the two municipalities to obtain parents’ perspectives of the factors that affect residential location choices, and experiences, of raising children in inner versus outer suburbs of Melbourne.

Supporting resilience in early childhood

“Supporting Resilience” is a research project that is taking place at Deakin University. The research project is in collaboration with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, VicHealth and Community Connection and has been funded by the Australian Research Council under its linkage programme.

The research will identify students, families, schools, and communities displaying resilience, it will explore the conditions and characteristics of that resilience; and look at the educational, health, work-related, or leisure interventions that support and foster resilience and positive outcomes for children and young people.

The project is studying three different cohorts of children passing through 3 different transitions: from kinder to primary school; from primary to secondary school; and the transition to post-compulsory schooling.
The early childhood team within the study has three chief investigators: Professor Ann Taket, Associate Professor Karen Stagnitti (both of who are based within CHASE), and Associate Professor Andrea Nolan, who is in the School of Education at Victoria University, Siobhan Casey is an ARC-supported PhD student working on the study.

The Early childhood team has now completed recruitment to the study with 26 families in Colac, Corio/Norlane and Dandenong joining the study. The first set of data collection has also been completed, with play assessments for all the children, interviews with kinder staff and mothers and observations of the children at kinder. The play assessment being used is the CHIPPA, developed by Associate Professor Karen Stagnitti.

Now that all the children are settling into their new primary schools, it will soon be time for the team to go in and meet their prep class teachers and see the children in their new environment. The study includes visits to each of the schools once a term, in the middle of each term so everyone has had a chance to settle in.

In the middle of term 3, the team will be talking to the prep year teachers about the children’s progress and the children will also repeat their play assessment with our two special sets of toys.

This year we have another member joining our team to help out with some of the data collection in Dandenong, and to carry out a sub-analysis within the main study. Emma McDermott, who is an honours student at the Burwood campus, supervised by Ann, is looking forward to joining the team.

Later this year the team will be reporting on their initial analysis of the variety of strategies used by mothers and kinder teachers to support children’s resilience.

CHASE Partnerships

Collaborating in research and development in a University-based centre offers mutual advantage. The collaboration itself is important - it breaks down barriers between theory and practice, and encourages positive relationships between health professionals, health consumers, carers,
researchers and communities. Specifically, participation in CHASE will provide partners with increased capacity to drive positive social change, through policy development, workforce development and research.

As partners in CHASE, participants are able to contribute to:

- independent commentary and public leadership on key issues, including evidence-based policy advice;
- increasing the skills of the current workforce and supporting recruitment and retention of staff who work within the broad areas relevant to health and social exclusion;
- collaborative research projects utilising a team approach, with the potential for practical and theoretically relevant outcomes useful to all parties;
- publishing and dissemination of research findings in a range of contexts, including conferences, seminars, public forums, reports and journals;
- new research opportunities, priorities and initiatives that are consistent with the needs of the partner organisations and people at risk of social exclusion;
- the development of skills and career opportunities for themselves and others contributing to the work of CHASE; and
- the enhancement of health and social outcomes of people who experience any of the multiple problems associated with social exclusion or who are at risk of doing so.

CHASE members are working with the following organisations:

- ACE National Network
- Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council Inc (AGMC)
- Coles Myer
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Justice
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Helen McPherson Smith Trust
- Mental Health Council of Australia
- Mental Illness Fellowship
- MS Society
- Parks Victoria
- Perth Home Care Services
- Scope Victoria
- Telstra Foundation
- Victorian Centre for Excellence on Depression and Related Disorders (beyondblue)
- Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)
- Wesley Mission Victoria
- WISE Employment
- Worawa Aboriginal College

This report features two of our newer partnerships, with the Mental Health Council of Australia and Worawa Aboriginal College.

CHASE – Partnership with Mental Health Council of Australia

The Mental Health Council of Australia, MHCA, (the peak, national non-government organisation representing and promoting the interests of the Australian mental health sector, committed to achieving better mental health for all Australians) has funding from DOHA to carry out a study of the stigma experienced by mental health consumers from health professionals. Three web-based surveys, one of consumers, one of carers and one of professionals have been carried out, and the initial analysis of the results will be written up by Rachelle Irving (the Director of Projects and Research at MCHA) for her major project thesis on the Master of Health Promotion at Deakin University. Professor Taket is supervising her.
The survey of consumers has included the collection of qualitative data on the experiences, good and bad, of care that mental health consumers have received. This part of the data set will be analysed by honours student Stephanie Jefferies, supervised by Professor Ann Taket and Dr Melissa Graham. Stephanie’s analysis will focus on the differences, if any, that consumers report in care received from specialist mental health staff versus that received from generalist health care staff.

First results from the survey analyses will be available in mid 2011, and will be reported on the MHCA website (www.mhca.org.au).

CHASE – Partnership with Worawa Aboriginal College

Worawa is a boarding school located just outside Healesville for Aboriginal girls in the middle years of schooling (years 7-10). Students come from suburban and regional Victoria as well as from interstate. Students learn to succeed through a holistic approach that encourages their intellectual development and physical ability, as well as moral, emotional, mental and spiritual capacity. As part of its standing as a Sports Academy, from the beginning of term 4 2010, Worawa Aboriginal College (WAC) has been implementing an extra-curricular personal physical fitness program for all pupils. The program, as part of a whole of school approach to working to address indigenous health issues such as diabetes, aims to ensure that pupils achieve at least three sessions of exercise per week. Initial funding is available to run this program for 3 terms, and the evaluation is required to explore its effects, and contribute to ensuring a sustainable and effective program. CHASE staff, led by Professor Ann Taket, are working with the staff at the college to help ensure the evaluation is carried out, and will be analysing the data that the school staff will collect. We are also exploring the possibilities of practicum students undertaking work-integrated learning placements at the college to help the school do work around nutrition and physical exercise. This may involve students from the School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences as well as the School of Health and Social Development.

CHASE Staff, 2011

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Professor Ann Taket

Deputy Director
Associate Professor Julia Shelley

Other staff
Dr Fiona Andrews
Dr Uschi Bay (on leave, 2011)
Sarah Barter-Godfrey
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Associate Professor Beth Crisp
Dr Claire Henderson-Wilson
Dr Sophie Goldingay
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Dr Lisa Hanna
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Norah Hosken
Dr Wendy Hunter (on leave, part of 2011)
Greer Lamaro
Dr Jane Maidment (on leave, 2011)
Dr Kevin Murfitt
Annemarie Nevill
Dr Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli
Professor Bob Pease
Dr Genevieve Pepin
Associate Professor Karen Stagnitti
Dr Janine Webb
Dr Erin Wilson
Dr Linda Wilson

Honorary Research Associate
Dr Robyn Ramsden
HDR Candidates (as at 1 March 2011)

Sumaiya Abedin: Risk factors of maternal health, childbearing and pregnancy outcomes
Sarah Barter-Godfrey: The construction and subjugation of discourses of sexual consent
Kerry Benton: Emotionality in men’s sexual scripting
Georgia Birch: Somali women over 65, mothering and physical activity
Cameron Boyd: Practices of measurement and the problem of child sexual abuse
Sophie Bromfield: Women on organisational boards: status, power and social influence tactics
Lisa Broom: Exploring occupational roles and wellbeing following primary brain tumour diagnosis
Siobhan Casey: How interagency collaboration supports resilient students and families – early childhood
Eddie Clarke: System Justification: Psychological processes and relationship to social identity
Bernie Davern: How have gay school principals’ lived experiences informed their professional lives?
Alma Dender: Is the ChIPPA a culturally appropriate play assessment for rural and remote Aboriginal children in Western Australia
Sarah Epstein: Feminist mothers’ narratives about raising sons
Cherelle Evans: Spirituality, grief and loss – implications for social work practice
Stephen Fisher: Effectively communicating for gender equality
Pete French: Staking a claim: analysing interventionist discourses of men’s family violence
Enaksha Garde: Inclusion of people with disabilities in counselling and decision-making
Mark Griffiths: Digital Storytelling as Empowerment: An Existential Social Work Approach
Erin Hill: Social networks and changes in health for new mothers
Anne Hill: Starting points: the development, implementation and evaluation of an early childhood parenting intervention
Danielle Hitch: Current state of literature on occupational therapy in mental health
Norah Hosken: Intercultural exploration of educational aspirations through mutual ethnography.
Leanne Johnson: Enhancing rural and regional service delivery to human service clients
Krystyna Kostecki: Insights for older women - learning from stories of Elder Australian Women who have experienced sexual abuse
Lydia Lai Lam: Significance of resilience of social workers
Clare Land: Decolonising solidarity: relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous activists promoting self-determination
Natasha Layton: How the extent of assistive technology provision relates to outcomes
Jack Migdalek: Embodied choreography and performance of gender
Ndungi wa Mungai: The Health and Well-being of Sudanese Young Men in Melbourne
Berni Murphy: Promoting health through sport for women - a determinants approach
Lyn Nethercote: Counsellor – Action Researcher’s evaluation of role complexities in an agency setting
Annemarie Nevill: Impact of spirituality upon mental health of African migrants
Julie Peters: Cultural forces and the life stories of gender-nonconformists
Joy Philips: Implementation of aged care policies on residential services to lesbians
Louise Phillips: Best practice behaviour support plans: behavioural outcomes
Sarah Pollock: The emancipatory potential for outcomes measurement in the community services setting
Gregory Roberts: Into the mystic – emotion intuition and creativity after the death of a child/sibling
Beverly Scarvelis: From institutional care to living in South Australia – intercountry adoption
Rachael Schmidt: Perceived benefits of participating in a specialised seating service
Kate Seymour: (Re)Gendering Violence: Men, Masculinities and Violence
Petrina Smith: Mahal - love, lesbianism and people power in the Philippines
John Wallace: A critical exploration of the impact of neoliberalism in Australia
Elyse Warner: What does a young adult’s return home mean for families?
Joanne Watson: Supported decision-making – listening to those seldom heard

2010 Publications

Authored books

Edited books

Research monographs and reports


Layton, Natasha, Wilson, Erin, Colgan, Stephen, Moodie, Marj and Carter, Rob (2010) The equipping inclusion studies: assistive technology use and outcomes in Victoria; key findings and policy implications, study 1 - the equipment study, study 2 - the economic study, Deakin University, Burwood, Vic.

Layton, Natasha, Wilson, Erin, Moodie, Marj and Carter, Rob (2010) The equipping inclusion studies: assistive technology use and outcomes in Victoria; key findings and policy recommendations, Deakin University, Burwood, Vic.

Book chapters


Pallotta-Chiarolli, Maria (2010) To pass, border or pollute, in Barker, Meg and Langdridge, Darren (eds), Understanding non-monogamies, pp. 182-187, Routledge, New York, N.Y.


**Refereed journal articles**


Hunter, Wendy, McNaughton, Sarah, Crawford, David and Ball, Kylie (2010) Does food planning mediate the association between living arrangements and fruit and vegetable consumption among women aged 40 years and older?, Appetite, vol. 54, no. 3, pp. 533-537, Elsevier BV, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Kingsley, Jonathan, Phillips, Rebecca, Townsend, Mardie and Henderson-Wilson, Claire (2010) Using a qualitative approach to research to build trust between a non-Aboriginal researcher and Aboriginal participants (Australia), Qualitative Research Journal, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 2-12, Association for Qualitative Research, Melbourne, Vic.


2010 Higher Degree by Research Completion

Doctor of Philosophy

Elizabeth Beddoe

Supervisor: Professor Bob Pease

Thesis entitled: Building professional capital: New Zealand social workers and continuing education

Summary:

In a qualitative study of the engagement of New Zealand social workers in continuing professional education the construct “professional capital”, a form of symbolic capital, explains complex links between perceived status within institutional settings and the aspirations of practitioners. Strategies for developing greater engagement in scholarship and research are recommended.

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