PARTY Trial Update

2008 has been a very industrious year for the PARTY Team. We have worked with a diverse range of practices across Melbourne including some based in community health centres and tertiary education settings. The commitment of the GPs, practice nurses and practice support staff has been most gratifying especially at a time when general practices are working under great pressure. We look forward, in 2009, to welcoming new practices on board including some from regional Victoria. If your practice would like the opportunity to contribute to improved health care access and outcomes for young people get in touch with us. (see calls for Expressions of Interest at the bottom of this page).

As of December 2008, 620 young people have completed PARTY’s telephone Exit Survey after visiting their GP or practice nurse. 3 month follow-up surveys have been conducted with 262 young people and 12 month follow-up surveys with 98 young people have now been concluded. We have been pleased with the retention rate at the follow-up stages with a high proportion of young people agreeing to be interviewed again.

The training component of the PARTY Project has been well-received, both in control and intervention practices. In 2008 we have been able to enhance the training experience with more flexible approaches to time, place and mode of delivery in recognition of the varied structure and location of the practices. This versatility is a reflection of our aim to make participation in the project as straightforward and rewarding as possible for all participants.

Once again, the PARTY Team expresses their thanks to all the practice staff, young people and parents who have participated in the project. We are also most appreciative of the efforts of Helen Cahill, Trish Carroll and the students & young actors who have contributed to our training sessions.

For further information about the PARTY trial, please contact Brenda Grabsch. PARTY Project Coordinator, on 03 8344 7196.

Further Expressions of Interest Invited - Call Now

Would your general practice be interested in:

- Enhancing health care access & outcomes for young people (14 - 24 yrs)
- Earning at least 40 (but up to 120) Category 1 RACGP QA &CPD points for GPs
- Free evidence-based training in health care for young people

If "YES", for more information please phone Kitty at the Department of General Practice on 8344 4538.
In the December 10th issue of ‘Australian Doctor’, PARTY Chief Investigator, Dr. Lena Sanci, wrote a guest editorial on Medicare cards for the young.

Lena stated that the idea of Medicare cards for youth was first reported in the Australian medical literature about 10 years ago. More recently this concept has gained momentum, with youth representatives propelling the need for action at a workshop for health professionals interested in improvements in health care access for young people.

These young participants in the workshop - many of whom were representatives at the Prime Minister’s 2020 Youth Summit - supported the idea of automatic Medicare card distribution to young Australians upon turning 13 years of age. They stated that “many young people seeking health professionals do not feel comfortable discussing issues with their parents and guardians. They therefore go un-addressed.” Young people feel that having their own Medicare card would increase their access to healthcare services, and promote a confidential and comfortable environment for them to discuss their issues.

Lena also noted that it has been over a decade since the barriers GPs perceived in delivering quality health care have been researched - GPS considered that automatic issue of a Medicare card would improve young people’s access to confidential health care consultations as they would not need to obtain their parents’ card.

The issues concerning Medicare cards for the young are on the agenda for discussion with stakeholders, including young people, parents, policy makers and the medical colleges. Dr. Amanda Fraser, from the Department of General Practice at the University of Melbourne (see Profile below), will begin this process with the Centre for Adolescent Health.

PARTY Profiles...

Dr Amanda Fraser—General Practice Registrar

Amanda is a General Practice Registrar and recently joined the Department of General Practice at the University of Melbourne. As a new mother, Amanda is undertaking part-time roles in clinical work, teaching and research. Amanda’s current interest is in youth health and she is undertaking a project with Dr Lena Sanci evaluating the utility of providing 15 year olds with an individual Medicare card.

Thank you for your involvement and interest in the PARTY project in 2008. Best wishes for a happy and safe festive season! Until next year....

CONTACT PARTY
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Best wishes for a happy and safe festive season! Until next year....