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THE PARTY AND PANACHE TEAMS AT THE NOVEMBER LAUNCH OF THE PRIMARY CARE RESEARCH UNIT (PCRU)

On Wednesday 29th November, 2006, Professor James Agnes, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine Dentistry and Health Sciences launched the Primary Care Research Unit within the Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne.

The PCRU consists of three main streams of research: Mental Health; Chronic Disease; and Young People’s Health.

PARTY and PANACHE are the two main areas of focus within the PCRU Young People’s Health Research Team.

Would your Victorian practice be interested in participating in the PARTY Project Randomised Control Trial in 2007?

- enhancing health care access & outcomes for young people (14-24yo)
- earning 30 category 1 RACGP QA &CPD points for the GPs
- free evidence-based training, for all practice staff, in health care for young people

If "YES", please phone Kitty for more information at the Department of General Practice: 8344 4538.

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The PARTY Pilot Study is in full swing within our three recruited practices; a rural, an outer metropolitan and a community health centre. PARTY staff are currently conducting baseline practice pilot audits and surveys of participating GPs, nurses, receptionists and practice managers.

The training sessions in young people’s health attended by pilot practice staff, in particular the role-plays with drama students, have been well received.

Each of the practices represent a very different face of general practice, making this pilot phase of PARTY an invaluable preparation for the randomised controlled trial which will commence around March, 2007.

THE PARTY Project Pilot: In full swing...

PARTY’s Chief Investigator Dr Lena Sanci with staff from PARTY’s rural pilot practice, Brooke Street Medical Centre

Dr Sanci in a ‘mock’ consultation with youth actor Martin Janssen

PARTY and PANACHE Research Teams within the Primary Care Research Unit (PCRU)
PARTYing with PANACHE

Danielle Newton joined the Practice Nurse Adolescent Clinics for Health Evaluation (PANACHE) team as a Research Assistant in December 2006. Danielle’s background is in health psychology. She has worked on a number of projects in the sexual health, mental health, body image, disability, and health promotion areas.

Danielle is pleased to report that the PANACHE project is now well and truly up and running. “We have now recruited three pilot practices for participation in PANACHE. The practice staff are enthusiastic and excited about being part of such an important project”, said Danielle. “The practice nurses will commence their training in February and we anticipate that they will begin running the clinics in March, so things are very much on track”, she explained.

PANACHE will examine the barriers and facilitators of practice nurses providing clinics for young people, the impact of nurse-led clinics on nurses and GPs, and will also examine the views of young people and their parents about the practice nurse led clinics.

“This project represents a fantastic opportunity for us to explore innovative approaches to young people’s access to healthcare. An evaluation of practice nurse-led adolescent health clinics has never before been conducted in Australia so this research is both novel and relevant to an Australian context”, said Danielle.

Danielle can be contacted at the Department on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Phone: 8344 4547 or Email: dnewton@unimelb.edu.au

The PARTY and the Practice Nurse Adolescent Clinics for Health Evaluation (PANACHE) projects have been working collaboratively over the last few months and have recruited Dr Danielle Newton as the new PANACHE Research Assistant.

Call for Raised Road Safety Awareness Among Young Drivers

One of the PARTY project objectives is to promote road safety awareness among young drivers.

Each year in Victoria approximately 120 road users, aged between 18 and 25, are killed and a further 2300 are seriously injured. TAC road statistics for 2006 indicate that drivers in the 18-25 age bracket (which comprise 14% of all licenced drivers) accounted for 21% of all fatal road accidents. The statistic shows a significant decrease from 30% in 2005, but is still a disconcertingly high figure.

“There was an encouraging drop, but there’s no doubt about it: young drivers remain over-represented in the toll,” commented David Healy, TAC senior manager for road safety.

Research done by the RACV has found that in the first 12 months of obtaining their licence, the risk of probationary drivers being involved in a crash is 3 times higher than that of an experienced driver. Common factors increasing the risk of an accident involving young drivers include: inexperience, poor decision making, willingness to take risks while driving, influence of peer passengers, alcohol, and mobile phones.

Concerns about the over-representation of young drivers in the 2006 road toll figures have raised calls from road safety advocates, challenging State governments to revamp the current probationary licence program to force young drivers to gain more experience by restricting their initial liberties behind the wheel.

Calls for more restrictions have prompted the NSW government to impose a ban on P-plate drivers carrying more than one under-21 passenger late at night in the first 12-months of their licence period, these new restrictions (effective July 2007) are an attempt to curb the rate of injuries and death. The RACV is currently pushing for the Victorian government to follow suit.

Do you know anyone who would be interested in subscribing to the PARTY Newsletter? Please feel free to forward this newsletter onto others. We are also interested in your feedback and/or suggestions. Please e-mail any comments or requests to Verity at vnewnham@unimelb.edu.au.