PARTY Trial Update

The PARTY Project is in full swing. Practices in the 3rd cycle of the randomised controlled trial have completed the baseline snapshots of their patients, practice and staff. The practices have been randomised to intervention or control arms and have commenced the training component of their PARTY involvement. Feedback from the sessions has been consistently positive with participants engaging in lively discussion around the issues of youth health access and outcomes.

The 3 month follow-up interviews of the young people who were recruited in the first two cycles of the RCT are in progress. We are delighted that so many of them are willing to do the follow-up interview. The young people who complete our Exit Surveys (very shortly after their GP consultation), and the 3 month and 12 month follow-ups are eligible to go in a draw, to win an iPod, for each interview they complete. However, feedback from the telephone interviewers suggests that many young people are happy to do the survey for its interest and the contribution they can make to research. Parents (who attended the consultation with their 14-17 year olds) have the opportunity to take part in a written survey about their views on health care for their son/daughter and young people in general. Whilst most of the survey involves check-box responses, many of the parent respondents thus far have demonstrated their interest in young people’s health by taking the time and effort to give quite detailed replies to the open-ended questions.

With the 3rd cycle underway we are now thinking ahead to the next cycle which will commence late April/early May this year (see advertisement below). We already have a couple of practices committed to taking part but welcome inquiries from GPs, practice nurses or practice managers who would like to discuss potential participation. From past experience we have found that, after the initial telephone contact, it can be really useful for some PARTY Project team members to visit a practice for a brief meeting where we tell the interested practice staff and clinicians what PARTY involves. So, if you and others at your practice are interested in young people’s health, give us call and get the ball rolling.

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

Expressions of Interest NOW Invited from Melbourne practices for 4th round of PARTY trial

Would your metropolitan Melbourne general practice be interested in:

- Enhancing health care access & outcomes for young people (14-24 yrs)
- Earning 40 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.
The PARTY team would like to congratulate Verity Newnham and Janelle Seymour on becoming proud mothers of beautiful baby girls!

Janelle’s daughter, Ruby May Scott, was born on 23/11/07 and weighed 3.6kgs.

Verity’s daughter, Indigo Rose Newnham Janssen, was born on 24/12/07 and weighed 3.45kgs.

The Practice Nurse Adolescent Clinic for Health Evaluation (PANACHE) project explored the impact of running adolescent nurse-led clinics in general practice with the aim of examining the acceptability of practice nurse led clinics to general practitioners, practice staff, young people and their parents.

Five practice nurses from three Victorian rural practices participated in the project with the support of their general practice workplaces. All of the practice nurses were extremely enthusiastic about extending their roles and were provided with training in youth health issues and communication skills as part of their participation in the project. The adolescent health clinics ran weekly over a period of four months, after which, the process was evaluated and wrapped up in November.

Despite multiple strategies (advertising, visiting schools, liaising with local services, seeking referrals from GPs) young people were not attracted to attend the clinics and many of the practice nurses felt that the short time frame was insufficient to allow ‘word of mouth’ referrals.

However, the practice nurses felt that participating in PANACHE had given them the opportunity to expand their roles and extend their knowledge base. As one practice nurse stated, “I think I definitely have an increased awareness. I definitely learnt new skills. There are things I wouldn’t have thought to do previously that now I think to do”.

Practice staff also felt that the clinics had a positive impact on their practices, with one practice staff member stating, “I think it gives a message that this practice actually has a place for young people...it also gives a message in here to start putting youth issues on the agenda and to think more about it”.

Overall, while the clinics were not accessed by many young people, they were seen to have greatly enhanced the knowledge, attitudes, communication and support of all practice staff at each of the participating general practices.

The newest addition to the PARTY team, Gemma Carey, has a background in anthropology, ethnography and public health. She recently moved from the University of Adelaide to take up a research fellow position in Political Science at Melbourne University. Gemma has joined the PARTY team on a part-time basis as a field researcher, and will be conducting audits in participating practices.

"As the health issues of young people can often be difficult for them to deal with alone, I feel that a raised awareness and special training in general practices in regards to these issues will improve the service we can offer young people. I’m excited to be involved in the PARTY project, and am looking forward to contributing.”

CONTACT PARTY
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