

IsACnews

NEWSLETTER FOR
NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence
Improving health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Evidence synthesis at ISAC...

Part of ISAC's overall research aim is to improve the evidence base that underpins child health preventative and curative care programs, guidelines and KPIs. We are using mixed method approaches to synthesise the available evidence about access and quality of health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and are improving programs and guidelines in collaboration with primary, secondary and tertiary health services across Australia. We also plan to form an "ISAC evidence group" in early 2015.

The proposed objectives of the group are to:

- Improve the evidence base for Aboriginal child health acute or preventive guidelines or indicators
- Improve the indicators (KPIs) that measure the effectiveness of Aboriginal child health programs
- Improve the methodology used in assessing evidence of primary, secondary, tertiary program effectiveness (i.e. methodology for systematic reviews but also including evidence mapping, scoping reviews and implementation science)
- Reduce duplication in primary reviews / reviews of the evidence for Aboriginal child health guidelines and programs

We would like to encourage researchers, policy makers, program managers and clinicians around Australia to join. If you are interested please contact Karen or Natalie. Let us know your perspectives on the most important questions to answer and the most important areas in need of improvement.

For those of us who are unsure what this means, evidence synthesis involves systematically combining quantitative and qualitative evidence from multiple studies and reviews to obtain the most robust estimates of effectiveness and the barriers and facilitators to implementation. Models of care and programs should be tested and assessed in different settings. Thus we need to assess evidence from multiple sources. Qualitative evidence is used to help explain, interpret and apply the results of the evidence synthesis.

Overall aim of ISAC

To improve health and developmental outcomes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Australia through improvements in health services

ISAC objectives

- Generate new knowledge that leads to improved health and developmental outcomes in Aboriginal children
- Ensure effective transfer of research outcomes into health policy and practice
- Develop the health and medical research workforce by providing opportunities to advance the training of new researchers
- Facilitate collaboration across ISAC and national and international networks
- Work across primary, secondary and tertiary level health services but have a specific focus on improving pathways within primary community care

Also in this edition...

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- Welcome Natalie Strobel and Rachael Ham
- ISAC website
- Recruiting: Poche Fellow
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Evidence synthesis at ISAC (continued)...

In evidence-based healthcare, techniques such as systematic reviews (that answer a defined research question by collecting and summarising all empirical evidence that fits pre-specified eligibility criteria) and meta-analysis (statistical approach to combine the data derived from a systematic review) are used for combining evidence from high-quality trials.

One approach is to:

1. Form an 'expert group' including key stakeholders, end users, consumers and experts to assist with all stages of the process
2. Decide on the key questions to be answered
3. Map and scope programs, guidelines and evidence gaps
4. Conduct additional systematic reviews, meta analyses and qualitative reviews where needed
5. Assess the quality of the information collected
6. Formulate recommendations
7. Obtain additional perspectives as widely as possible
8. Disseminate findings
9. Decide on a timeline for updating.

So what does this mean at ISAC?

ISAC promotes evidence-based healthcare, and the identification, appraisal and synthesis of high quality evidence in the form of qualitative systematic reviews and meta-analyses of health services research.

Cochrane Review



[The Cochrane Collaboration](http://www.cochrane.org/)

ISAC is planning to work with the Cochrane Collaboration, an international organisation whose primary aim is to help people make well-informed decisions about healthcare and health policy by preparing and maintaining high quality systematic reviews. Visit [their homepage](http://www.cochrane.org/) at <http://www.cochrane.org/> The Cochrane Library is published on behalf of The Cochrane Collaboration - <http://www.thecochranelibrary.com/view/0/index.html>

Research titles for a Cochrane Review

We are just beginning! Our first titles are:

- "Effectiveness of screening tools to improve social and emotional wellbeing in mothers of infants under 12 months of age".
- "Effectiveness of interventions to improve social and emotional wellbeing in mothers of infants under 12 months of age".

Cochrane Workshops

Two ISAC researchers (Dr Dan McAullay and Dr Natalie Strobel) will be attending the Cochrane course from 10-12 December 2014 in Sydney: Introduction to writing a Cochrane Review.

ISAC has also offered to co-host a Cochrane review workshop in Perth in 2015 so watch this space for more details.

Evidence synthesis in Aboriginal child ear health in WA

In addition ISAC has been assisting the Telethon Kids Institute in WA to understand the evidence base behind the implementation of ear health programs in WA. A research assistant Victoria Stroud has been employed by Telethon Kids to search out all the guidelines used in WA and also the evidence reviews underpinning these.

Recruiting a Research Fellow for the UWA Poche Centre for Indigenous Health

Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives

Recruitment has commenced for a new Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander qualitative/formative researcher to be based with ISAC and the new UWA Poche Centre for Indigenous Health.

The Poche Centre for Indigenous Health at UWA has just been established, made possible by a generous gift by leading Australian health philanthropist Greg Poche AO. UWA's Poche Centre (<http://www.poche.uwa.edu.au/>) joins a family of Poche Centres at the University of Sydney, Flinders University (Adelaide and Alice Springs) and the University of Melbourne.

The UWA Poche Centre is focused on a central theme for Aboriginal people and communities - Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives and has three key focus areas:

- Culture, Wellbeing and Mental Health
- Aboriginal Children's Health, Disability and Developmental Outcomes
- Prevention and Management of Chronic Disease for Aboriginal people

The overall aim of the Aboriginal Children's Health, Disability and Developmental Outcomes focus area is to improve developmental and mental health outcomes in Aboriginal children in Australia through improvements in health services.

The objectives are:

- To improve understanding about family and service provider perspectives around child development, disability and mental health services for Aboriginal children
- To use new knowledge to improve existing programs across primary, secondary and tertiary Aboriginal child development, disability and mental health services for Aboriginal children
- To use new knowledge to improve and develop new models across primary, secondary and tertiary Aboriginal child development, disability and mental health services for Aboriginal children
- To improve health service provider training and capacity building in Aboriginal child development and mental health

The new position (Poche Fellow) is located under this focus area and will be accommodated with and supported by ISAC. The position will involve conducting interviews and focus groups with Aboriginal families and service providers about Aboriginal child development, disability, and social and emotional well-being; assisting with research methods, analysis and synthesis; and assisting with developing new models of service delivery. It will

Welcome to ISAC

Rachael Ham commenced August 2014

Rachael Ham is based at Apunipima Cape York Health Council. Rachael will coordinate Apunipima's research projects; assist in developing the Cape York ISAC research projects and provide support to ISAC Queensland based CIs and AIs.

Rachael was a Research Officer with the Cairns Institute at James Cook University and have 10 years work experience in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research. She is enrolled in post graduate studies in Primary Health Care Research and it's her goal to enrol in a Masters of Public Health in the future.

"I am passionate about Community Controlled Organisations and importantly advocate for community controlled services to lead the way for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities for health equities." Rachael stated. "My family background and indeed my own experience comes from the ground up as being agents of change through the establishment of Wuchopperen Health Service. My knowledge and experience from my time as Chairperson at Wuchopperen has provided me with strength and courage to ask hard questions and at the same time be practical and realistic. "

rachael.ham@apunipima.org.au

Natalie Strobel commenced October 2014

Natalie Strobel is based at UWA in Perth.

Natalie will cover Kimberley McAuley's work while she is on leave and coordinate and develop the ISAC evidence synthesis theme. Natalie will also provide research support and manage ISAC's training and capacity building programs.

Natalie has previously worked as a Research Fellow at Edith Cowan University in WA on a program of work to integrate health services and enhance community-based care. Prior to this she worked as a

also involve supporting the qualitative and formative research themes within ISAC.

The role will suit an individual with practical experience working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities who is looking to develop and build on their own skills in research, field work and communicating with families and service providers. We are looking for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who can: communicate with families and service providers about children's development and mental health; interview families and service providers about children's development and mental health; and who understands the importance of social and emotional well-being for Aboriginal families and communities. Specific skills and qualifications in qualitative or formative research such as conducting focus groups, participant observation, interviewing and analysis are desirable but not essential.

Please contact Karen or Estelle for further information.

Project Officer at the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare on several Closing the Gap projects including Remote Service Delivery, Healthy for Life, and the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse.

Natalie said "I am excited to join the team and utilise my skills (plus gaining some new ones) to contribute to the evidence synthesis, research and capacity building components of ISAC."

Natalie.strobel@uwa.edu.au

Congratulations...

Professor David Atkinson will take up the position of Head of the Rural Clinical School of WA in 2015. The RCSWA teaches students across 14 sites in rural WA and has an expanding research profile. David will remain based in Broome and will continue his research work in the Kimberley including with ISAC.

Professor Rhonda Marriott for being awarded the *CATSINaM Lifetime Achievement Award* at the CATSINaM conference in Perth last month.

ISAC Journal Club will commence in November. A new "article of the month" will be circulated and discussed by a new ISAC researcher every month.

The article will focus on a key area in improving service delivery for disadvantaged children. Everyone is invited to take part. We will email / post the article on our website every month together with useful guidelines for critical appraisal. Future plans are to use Twitter, Facebook, Yammer and other electronic media depending on the interests of the participants. As well as circulating the article we will hold an open discussion forum a specific time every month. We will circulate this date and time shortly. Any suggestions about how to improve this process would be very welcome.

Please email Natalie with any suggestions.

In the News...

Fitzroy Crossing women tackle alcohol scourge

4 September 2014 – Article in Sydney Morning Herald - The story relates to the work of Fitzroy Valley communities and their collaborators in addressing FASD. <http://www.smh.com.au/national/fitzroy-crossing-women-tackle-alcohol-scurge-20140905-10c9rv.html>

Conferences 2014 and 2015:

OCTOBER 2014

18	South Australia 2014 State Population Health Conference Adelaide	http://sapophealth.yolasite.com/
22 to 25	Annual Child and Adolescent Health Research Symposium by WA Department of Clinical Research and Education at Princess Margaret Hospital and The Telethon Kids Institute <u>Abstracts close 22 August 2014</u>	http://pmh.health.wa.gov.au/research_symposium/
28 to 30	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association (NATSIHWA) AGM and conference Canberra	http://www.natsihwa.org.au/

NOVEMBER 2014

5 to 7	National Primary Health Care (NPHC) conference Canberra	http://amlalliance.com.au/events/national-primary-health-care-conference-2014
10 to 12	9th Biennial Joanna Briggs International Colloquium Singapore	http://joannabriggs.edu.au/jbi-events.html
25 to 28	International Indigenous Development Research Conference Auckland, NZ	http://www.indigenousdevelopment2014.ac.nz/

DECEMBER 2014

15 to 17	2014 World Indigenous Health Conference Cairns	http://www.indigenoushealth.net/worldindigenoushealth.htm
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JANUARY 2015

24 to 27	Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) Washington DC	http://www.amchp.org/Calendar/Conferences/amchp-conference/Pages/default.aspx
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FEBRUARY 2015

3 & 4	Nordic Conference on implementation of Evidence-Based Practice Implementation and shared decision making Welcome to the second Nordic Conference on Implementation of Evidence-Based Practice Bergen, Norway	http://www.hib.no/senter/kunnskapsbasert/foermidling/konferanse/implementation.asp
11 to 15	14th World Congress on Public Health Kolata India	http://www.14wcph.org/

MARCH 2015

20 to 22	6th International Meeting on Indigenous Child Health Ottawa, Ontario (<u>abstracts due 3 November 2014</u>)	http://www.cps.ca/en/imich
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APRIL 2015

9 to 11	Maternal, Child & Family Nurses Australia 6th conference Perth	http://www.mcafhna.org.au/
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MAY 2015

11 to 14	Creating Futures 2015 (CF 15) Cairns	http://CF15.conorg.com.au
25 to 27	The 13th National Rural Health Conference Darwin	http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/13nrhc/

SEPTEMBER 2015

15 to 17	SAAICC National Conference (Secretariat of National Aboriginal & Islander Child Care) Perth	http://www.snaicc.org.au/conference/
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OCTOBER 2015

3 to 10	Cochrane Colloquium 2015 Vienna, Austria	http://www.cochrane.org/events/colloquia
	International Indigenous Women's Convention Sydney	http://dreamtimepr.com/save-the-date-international-indigenous-womens-convention-sydney-october-2015/

DECEMBER 2015

7 to 9	9th Health Services and Policy Research Conference (Health Services Research Association) Melbourne	http://www.plevin.com.au/hsraanz2015/
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ISAC Face to Face meeting 15th May 2015 in Cairns – Save the date!

The next ISAC face to face is planned for 15th May 2015, the day after the Creating Futures 2015 conference in Cairns – details to follow.

Presentations by Prof Fiona Stanley:

- February** **KU Leuven Patron Saint's Day, Invited Speech**, Social inequalities in health and wellbeing: lessons from working with the Aboriginal population in Australia
- March** **Doctors for the Environment Australia iDEA 2014**, Climate Change and Children's Health
ARACY Annual Fiona Stanley Forum, Australian children's wellbeing in 2014: closing the gap between our aspirations and our effort
- April** **Doctors for the Environment Australia (WA Branch)**, Climate Change and Children's Health
International Health Data Linkage Conference, Science with a Soul: data to action for health child development
- May** **Meeting for Minds Forum**, Mental Health: an epidemiologist's perspective particularly as it relates to children and youth
- August** **Measuring Health Outcomes to Inform Policy Conference**, From data to wisdom: using data for health
HELP (Human and Early Learning Partnership), Population Monitoring as a strategy for improved early child development: progress and new challenges
Louisa Alessandri Memorial Fund Oration Evening, How population monitoring has improved child development outcomes
Aboriginal Health and Human Rights Seminar, Aboriginal Health and Human Rights
The Mental Health Services Conference of Australia and New Zealand, Brief Talk at Presentation of Mental Health Awards

ISAC Web site live at:

<http://www.paediatrics.uwa.edu.au/research/isac>

ISAC CIs

Prof Karen Edmond
Dr Daniel McAullay
Prof David Atkinson
Prof Rhonda Marriott
Prof Ross Bailie
A/Prof Alan Ruben
A/Prof Mark Wenitong
Prof Victor Nossar
Prof Betty Kirkwood
Prof Fiona Stanley

ISAC_{news} is intended to be a way to highlight some of the most noteworthy activities of ISAC and report back on progress and promote communication.

This way we will also promote the common purpose of ISAC, inform all involved of research and other opportunities.

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**Kimberley McAuley is on
maternity leave until March
2015 - please contact the other
ISAC team members with any
enquiries.**

*"We can't solve problems by
using the same kind of
thinking we used when we
created them."*

Albert Einstein