

CLINICAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

CAPABILITIES STATEMENT

The Clinical and Community Health Research Unit (CCHRU) is committed to conducting leading edge collaborative research specialising in the areas of mental health, pregnancy and acute and chronic illness, with the aim of addressing important healthcare challenges, promoting health and wellbeing, improving the quality of care, and providing culturally sensitive care.



OUR VISION

The primary goal of the CCHRU membership is to continue to develop their reputation as leading specialist researchers dedicated to tackling some of Australia's key health issues in mental health, pregnancy-related health, and acute and chronic (medical) illness.

STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES

Two of CCHRU's greatest achievements are its collaboration with the Western Centre for Health Research and Education (WCHRE) and Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre (TPADC). WCHRE, at Sunshine Hospital, provides our researchers with access to excellent research facilities and services. TPADC, in Melbourne, gives our researchers excellent access to people with alcohol and drug misuse and gambling problems, and their families.

EXPERTISE AND INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION

Our highly qualified research teams have a strong reputation for conducting world standard quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research; publishing in international peer reviewed professional journals; and presenting at local, national and international conferences.

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Our collaborative research partners include, for example:

Western Health; BeyondBlue — the National Depression Initiative; Orygen Youth Health; Headspace; Mercy Health; Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre; NorthWestern Mental Health; NorthWestern Mental Health Aged Persons' Mental Health Program; Consultative Council on Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity, Department of Health Victoria; Mother and Child Research, LaTrobe University; Monash University, School of Nursing and Midwifery; Australian Community Centre for Diabetes (ACCD); and Sydney Medically Supervised Injecting Clinic.

RESEARCH FOCUS

Our research teams engage in interdisciplinary research. Their research is underpinned by three research foci: promotion of health and wellbeing, improvement in the quality of care, and provision of culturally sensitive care.

The research teams focus primarily on three research programs: mental health, pregnancy-related health, and acute and chronic (medical) illness.

1. MENTAL HEALTH

Promotion and maintenance of good mental health is a national health priority. This research team focuses on:

- prevention and early intervention in young people and adults with mental health, substance misuse and gambling problems;
- promotion of recovery in people with severe and enduring mental illness, substance misuse and gambling problems; and
- promoting primary caregiver/family coping and wellbeing.

Recent projects:

- Evaluating the use of restraint and seclusion in inpatient aged psychiatry units.
- Preventing mental health problems in young people through better mental health literacy.
- Exploring needs — examining barriers to service access: young people with depression and anxiety.
- A peer support program for enhancing medication adherence in mental health consumers with schizophrenia.

- Evaluation of problem-solving based self-help manual for caregivers of family members with first-episode psychosis.
- Evaluation of a cognitive behaviour therapy based self-help manual for people with depression.

2. PREGNANCY RELATED HEALTH

This research team aims to promote the health and wellbeing of child bearing women, their children and families, from socially and economically disadvantaged communities. In particular, the team explores women's pregnancy experiences, gestational diabetes, adverse pregnancy outcomes, risk in pregnancy, perinatal health and morbidity, older maternal age, and sexual health and social challenges that impact upon pregnant women.

Recent projects:

- Gestational diabetes among multiethnic groups in the Western Region of Melbourne.
- Having a baby in Australia: African women's experiences.
- Anxious waiting: soft markers and high risk pregnancy.
- Perinatal morbidity among Australian women aged 35 years and older.
- Limerick Lullaby Project: An intervention to relieve stress in pregnancy.
- Promoting normal birthing: Endeavouring to develop a midwifery focused scope of practice.

3. ACUTE AND CHRONIC (MEDICAL) ILLNESS

Research undertaken by this team explores interventions which enhance standards of community and hospital care with the goal of improving patient outcomes. In collaboration with health service providers, the team facilitates patient care by evaluating current practices, and examining the use of evidence based practice.

Recent projects:

- Intranasal fentanyl for women in childbirth.
- Effectiveness of bedside handover.
- Evaluation of medication endorsement for Enrolled Nurses.
- Intranasal naloxone for heroin overdose.
- Use of health data to improve nursing services and quality of nursing practice.

RESEARCH STUDENTS

CCHRU members are active in the supervision of higher degrees, such as PhD (by thesis or publication) and Masters by Research. The number of Australian and international students supervised is continually increasing and our graduates are highly regarded within the health sector.

CONTACT

Professor Terence McCann, Unit Leader
Phone +61 3 8395 8141
terence.mccann@vu.edu.au

Associate Professor Mary Carolan, Deputy Leader
Phone +61 3 9919 2585
mary.carolan@vu.edu.au
vu.edu.au/research/cch