Welcome

From the Director, Professor Julie Byles

Welcome to our first newsletter. We are pleased to share some of our events and achievements over the year so far. We have been busy resurveying the women in ALSWH New Young Cohort, with over 10,000 having responded so far. Our PhD students have also been very active with three having either submitted their theses or ready to submit, and others busy writing up. Our monthly writing workshops help us support each other to keep momentum on publications, and our grant workshops help us stay ahead of the grant deadlines. There will be plenty more stories for our next newsletter as well, so stay tuned for next quarter’s issue.

Event

The “booze booth” at the HMRI Open Day

The “booze” booth, which was part of the 2014 HMRI Open Day on the 4th of July, was used to communicate safe drinking habits to the public. Visitors could pour a standard drink using coloured water, and compare this to an actual standard drink. The hit of the booth was the beer goggles, used to simulate the vision of an intoxicated person. People were asked to walk on a straight line without the beer goggles, and then were asked to do it again with the beer goggles. The public were generally quite shocked by how badly their vision was impaired. A number of information pamphlets were handed out to inform the public about what constitutes low-risk drinking and to highlight the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol.

-Amy Anderson
Dietary intervention reduces maternal blood pressure and the incidence of preterm delivery


Summary: This systematic review and meta-analysis aimed to determine the effect of dietary intervention before or during pregnancy on pregnancy outcomes. Results indicate that dietary interventions during pregnancy, particularly dietary counselling, slightly reduce blood pressure (BP) (0.66 mmHg systolic and 2.76 mmHg diastolic) but not hypertensive disorders. Dietary interventions focusing on macronutrient intake reduce the incidence of preterm delivery (21% decrease in the odds). No other significant effects were observed for the other pregnancy outcomes. This review advances our understanding of the role of nutrition for a healthy pregnancy by observing small reductions in BP and slight increases in the length of gestation.

- Ellie Gresham

10 MOST RECENT PUBLICATIONS


Duffy L, Loxton D, Adams J, Sibbritt D. Complementary and alternative medicine for victims of intimate partner abuse: A systematic review of use and efficacy. Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine, 2014;963967.


ALSWH UPDATE

Recruiting in the 21st Century

In 2012-13, a new cohort of 18-23 year old Australian women joined ALSWH. Recruiting was an eye-opening experience for all involved. Despite the challenges, the dedication of the recruitment team paid off, with over 17,000 women joining the cohort – a fantastic result! We learned a few important lessons along the way too…

1. Flexibility is essential to any recruitment strategy.

2. Thinking outside the box may involve running an inflatable snow globe at music festivals.

3. You are never too old to enjoy dress ups.

4. Social media presence is very important.

5. The seemingly impossible can be achieved when you are doing something you are passionate about surrounded by an incredibly creative, enthusiastic and devoted team.

- Natalie Townsend

CONFERENCE/SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

Yodi Christiani- International Conference on Urban Health, 4-7 March 2014, Manchester, UK. Low health insurance coverage among women residing in Indonesian cities and its inequity: A challenge for achieving universal health coverage

Parivash Eftekhari- American Thoracic Society conference, 16-21 May 2014, San Diego, USA: Impact of asthma on mortality in older women: an Australian cohort study of 10413 women

Anna Graves- International Health Data Linkage Conference, 28-30 April 2014, Vancouver, Canada: Consenters and refusers in the New Young Cohort of the ALSWH.

Xiaoyue Xu- International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity conference, 21-24 May 2014, San Diego, USA: Evaluation of older Chinese people’s health beyond macronutrient intake across four regions in China