



## 2007 GP & PHC Research Conference Evaluation

### Alive but unhurried!

Combining knowledge acquisition and exposure to current themes in Australian primary care with a good time!

#### Summary

Delegates came from around Australia and overseas to participate in the 2007 GP & PHC Research Conference *Working together*. With over 140 speakers and more than 60 posters, there was much to be presented and discussed.

Online evaluations were submitted by 195 of the 381 delegates, giving a response rate of 51%. Delegates who submitted an evaluation were primarily academics and researchers and most worked at universities.

#### Key points:

Pre-conference workshops

- ⇒ 6 pre-conference workshops were held
- ⇒ 46% attended a pre-conference workshop
- ⇒ 92% rated that their expectations of the workshop as fully or partly met.
- ⇒ 93% rated the workshop with providing them a considerable or moderate understanding of the topic
- ⇒ 92% rated the workshop as being considerably or moderately relevant to their working needs
- ⇒ 81% rated the workshop content as excellent or good quality
- ⇒ 83% rated the quality of workshop presentations as excellent or good
- ⇒ 66% rated the value of handouts as excellent or good.

Conference

- ⇒ 79% rated plenary speakers as excellent or good
- ⇒ 71% rated plenary sessions as excellent or good forums for knowledge exchange
- ⇒ 86% rated concurrent paper sessions as excellent or good forums for knowledge exchange
- ⇒ 77% rated research poster sessions as excellent or good forums for knowledge exchange
- ⇒ 91% rated the conference as an excellent or good forum for networking
- ⇒ 82% rated networking as important to a great or moderate extent

Respondents indicated that there were many presentations to choose from. They were pleased to note that presentations were available on the PHC RIS website soon after the conference.

Networking was a key feature of the conference for many respondents. They appreciated the many opportunities the conference provided to enable networking to meet new people, catch up with those you know, discuss potential future projects and obtain feedback from peers.

Encouragement, support and opportunities were terms often used to describe what was good about the conference. "I was revitalised".

## Introduction

Through this conference PHC RIS and its partners the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute (APHCRI), the Australian Association for Academic General Practice (AAAGP) and the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, continue to build a community with a common purpose to achieve better primary health care through rigorous research that is relevant to policy and practice.

Delegates came from around Australia and overseas to participate in the 2007 GP & PHC Research Conference **Working together**. With over 140 speakers and more than 60 posters, there was much to be presented and discussed. All abstracts and presentations (where permission has been given) can be viewed at <http://www.phcris.org.au/conference/2007/index.php>

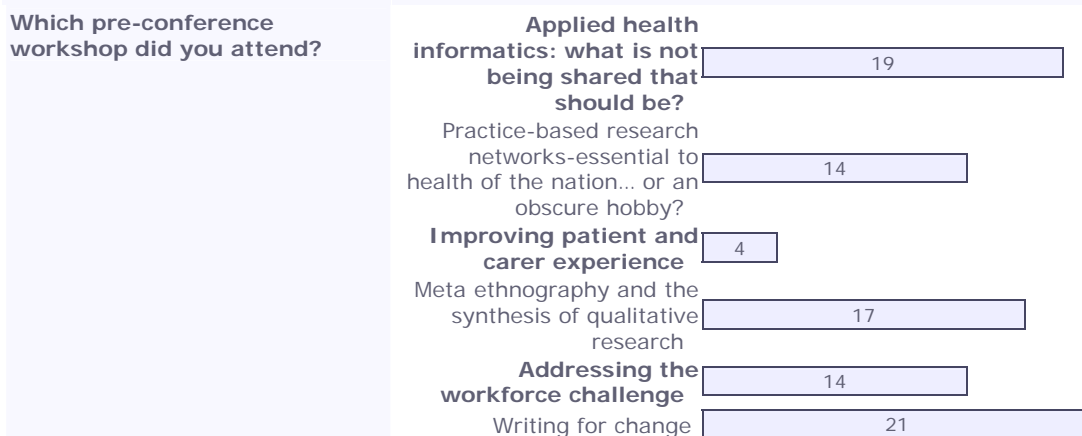
Online evaluations were submitted by 195 of the 381 delegates, giving a response rate of 51%. Delegates who submitted an evaluation were primarily academics and researchers and most worked at universities.

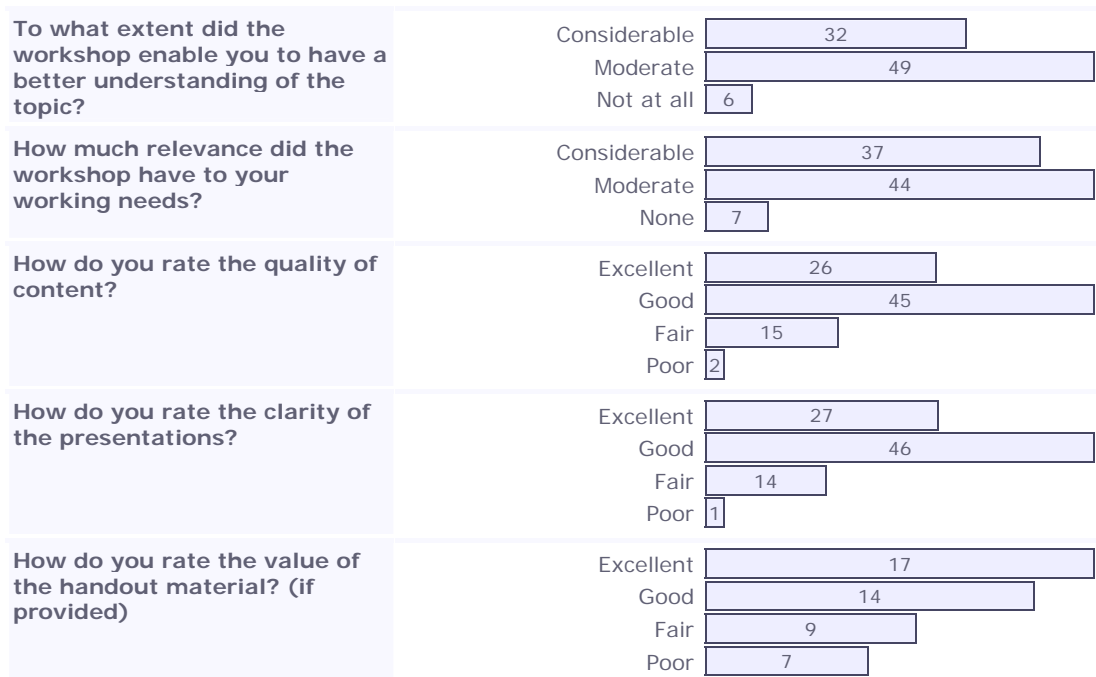
## Who responded?



## Pre-conference workshops

Pre-conference workshops were attended by 46% (86/186) respondents.

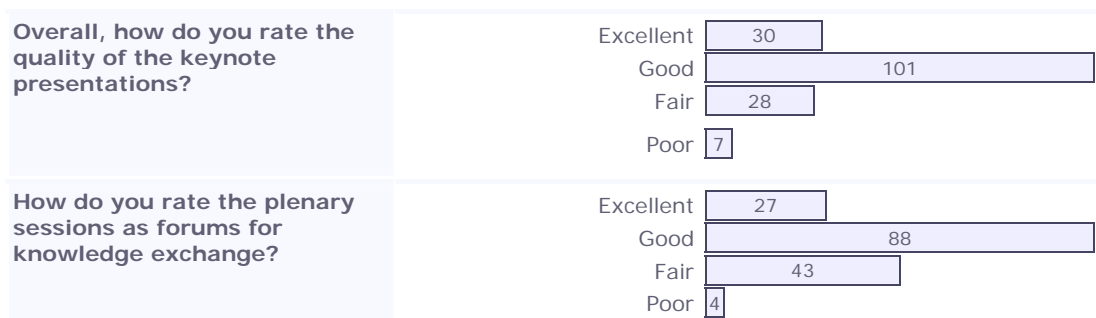




#### **Comments about the workshops:**

- ⇒ There are examples that I may be able to apply in my new work
- ⇒ Will contact the presenter to engage them further in current proposed projects.
- ⇒ Well set out - but not enough time. Needed to control the questions better, or as it was a small group, could have done the exercise all together.
- ⇒ The format was very involving and allowed us all to have input, so it was useful.
- ⇒ Good- created quite a lot of discussion and working in groups from the same area was useful.

#### **Conference**

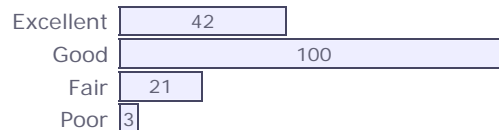


#### **Comments about plenary sessions:**

- ⇒ Nicky Britten was thought provoking and ...gave some new ideas
- ⇒ David Currow is a "wunderkind" very polished and consummate with a patient focus...he identified the big gaps in research...it made practical sense
- ⇒ Chris Van Weel tended to throw language out there about the GP researcher which was engaging
- ⇒ Rachel Humeniuk was passionate and thorough on an important issue
- ⇒ Claire Jackson and Jenny Doust provided good information about the systematic review process and their methodology - demystifying the research process which I appreciated
- ⇒ Libby Kalucy's talk - I think she is amazing

- ⇒ Norman Swan was fantastic - his knowledge and/or research made for a very well informed discussion with just the right level of challenging questions. He asks questions that are very pertinent and that we would not ask of each other as "insiders" of the GP&PHC research community. Great to have time for questions from the floor.

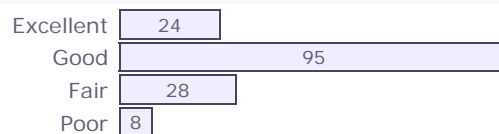
**How do you rate the concurrent paper sessions as forums for knowledge exchange?**



**Comment on concurrent paper sessions:**

- ⇒ So many to choose from, not enough time so fantastic that the power points will be on the web so that we can access these and follow up with speakers.
- ⇒ Keeping to time is marvellous! The presenters in general did a good job, but tended to spend too much time on the background and methods, and consequently not enough on the findings and implications.
- ⇒ It's great that there has been time for longer papers this year, which was a really good development on last year's conference.
- ⇒ I thought the environment was warm, it was positive to see research presentations from students and seasoned researchers. I also thought the comments and questions asked were positive and helpful in extending my thinking regarding each topic.
- ⇒ Smaller, more intimate than plenaries, so more exchange. Also more opportunity to speak with presenters afterwards
- ⇒ Hearing from people actually engaged in projects is valuable; being able to choose from such a wide range is great, frustrating having to miss when relevant sessions clash but unavoidable!

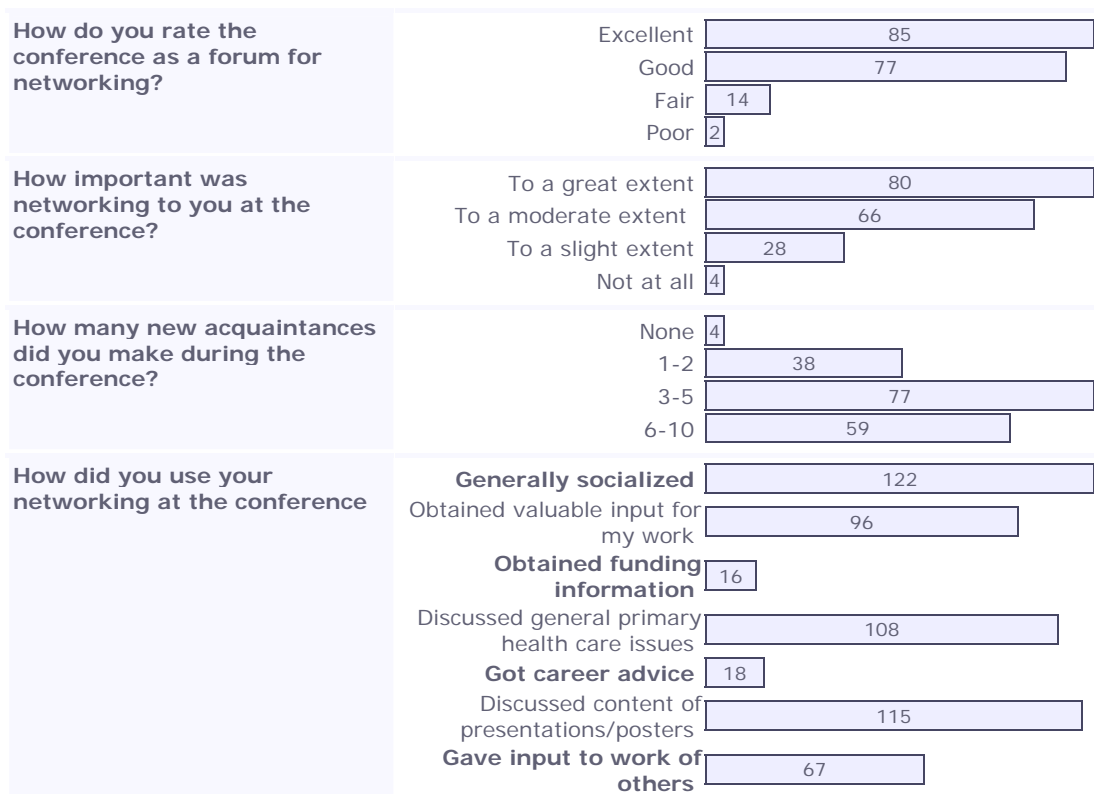
**How do you rate the research poster session as a forum for knowledge exchange?**



**Comments about the research poster sessions**

- ⇒ Liked the layout of the posters, easy to wander through, not isolated from the rest of the sessions
- ⇒ There were a lot of posters to look at and it was a little overwhelming. From a passing view, the posters were an excellent quality.
- ⇒ Posters provide an opportunity to quickly scan for relevant information from a broad range of research and project posters. Provide good cost: benefit ratio time wise.
- ⇒ Making the posters available on line is an excellent idea. It's much easier to follow up on areas of interest.
- ⇒ The chance to talk one on one to the researcher is the biggest benefit.

## Networking at the conference



### Comments about networking:

- ⇒ Networking is very important to me as a novice researcher in need of mentors and specialist input into my project
- ⇒ This is the main reason I attend this conference. It's great to catch up with familiar faces and new people and to be reinvigorated to get into your research.
- ⇒ ...what did occur naturally, when the paper sessions ended, was that people milled around and talked/networked. This was where my best networking occurred, since people were there because they had a genuine shared interest.
- ⇒ Have built international networks which will be invaluable for my future research
- ⇒ Found that joining in conversations of people I knew who were talking to people I didn't know was a good way to meet new people.
- ⇒ It was really my own presentation that provided an opportunity to raise my profile with others somewhat, and attending others whose research is relevant to mine.
- ⇒ Discussed potential future research projects; got feedback on others' use of my work

### General comments – what worked, what can be improved, what next

- ⇒ Participants were kept well informed during the lead up to conference.
- ⇒ Putting the abstracts online in advance was very helpful for me to plan which presentations I wanted to catch
- ⇒ I really liked the pocket conference time table which made life much easier ... having notes space next to the abstracts in the book.
- ⇒ One of the few conferences I have ever attended where a genuinely healthy option was provided at all meals and teas. Well done.



- ⇒ I would promote it to research groups/organizations outside Australia. Lots can be learned from other countries and other countries could learn a great deal from what is being done in Australia.
- ⇒ It gave me an opportunity to see the bigger picture and consider my own future career direction. I was (partly because of this) revitalised.
- ⇒ The mixture of professions attending; the encouragement and support given to those new to research and to presenting their work; the opportunities for many people to present their work.
- ⇒ I find the range and variety of subjects gives an enormous amount of knowledge about what is happening in primary health care research.
- ⇒ Liked the APHCRI presence throughout- the streams of substantial work about primary care service delivery and the attention to translation to policy/practice. Felt like primary care research has substantially matured from little clinical projects to a variety of different types of research better linked to policy and practice issues.
- ⇒ Assistance (many thanks) and being able to meet likeminded people who are passionate about research and healthcare in all its guises. Again brilliant!
- ⇒ It all worked well. It was good to meet the bureaucrats...it is important that they talk to us and get a feel for the environment in which we work.
- ⇒ Rural and remote venue - make the academics go bush
- ⇒ Keep those little ice creams coming throughout the day!
- ⇒ More sessions focused on debating current issues of relevance to the field
- ⇒ More from allied health, Indigenous primary health care, youth health, mental health, health economics. Health informatics, pharmacy, health networks
- ⇒ Make it carbon neutral!
- ⇒ Suggested speakers: Prof Carl May from the UK, Prof Tony Kendrick from the UK, Kurt Stange from USA, Nick Mays, Ray Pawson
- ⇒ Promote the conference to community health and health promotion services in area health services and also to a wider array of disciplines eg naturopaths.
- ⇒ It would be good to have something groundbreaking to kick off the conference in the future.
- ⇒ Illustrated benefits of the primary health care research sector working together over many years.