

PHC RED Programme: Activities at the Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health

We are currently pursuing five main objectives:

Firstly developing partnerships with key stakeholders

- With Divisions: Supervision of an innovative divisional population health registrar. In conjunction with JCU Townsville, running training for Divisions (SPSS, EBM, Evaluation)
- With GP's and PCP's: Established EBM interest group, Held discussions with Community Health and PCP's re training needs, Participating in a health promotion support group
- With Community Representatives: Developed a research project to coordinate community health initiatives
- Set up a PHC RED website and developed promotional material to help promote PHC RED in the region

Secondly providing advice and support to key stakeholders in the area of PHC research

- Supported an aged care assessment project in Julia Creek , and completed the evaluation for a family healing project

Thirdly developing and improving the research competency for key stakeholders

- Ran a four day health promotion and evaluation workshop which was attended by 25 participants
- Run a fortnightly research interest group which is to be video linked to NQRDGP

Fourthly building research capacity of MICRRH staff in order to provide better support to stakeholders

- Completed a staff research needs analysis
- Ran training on basic research skills (Doing Lit. Reviews, Using Endnote, Research Paradigms, SPSS etc.)
- Three staff members attended an EBM train the trainer workshop
- One staff member attended a project planning workshop: Managing Project Success by Design
- Site visit by JCU research department

Fifthly developing multidisciplinary research of strategic use to policy-makers, service planners, clinicians, consumers and, community

- Developing a research project to examine the incidence of postnatal and antenatal depression in women in Mt. Isa
- Developed a project to examine structural factors inhibiting the implementation of PHC at District level
- Developing a community focussed mental health programme

Highlights and opportunities

There has been a good response by PCP's, particularly in Community Health, Tropical Public Health and the Division of Allied Health to PHC RED activities. This has resulted in the formation of a PHC network which can be built on to promote PHC RED activities.

Issues and Problems

High staff turnover works against establishing research projects around individual practitioners/health workers. Additionally the issue of long term commitment and sustainability needs to be addressed. Many projects are funded for too short a time to have significant community impact. This leads to community disillusionment vis a vis research. UDRH's are in a good position to coordinate activity and ensure research continuity, which will have a significant effect on sustainability.

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