How effective is microfinance in South Asia?

The Joanna Briggs Institute has secured a grant to undertake a systematic review on views and experiences of microfinance interventions in South Asia.
### Executive Director’s message

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Executive Director’s message

Welcome to the October issue of JBI Matters. It is now summer in the Southern Hemisphere, and we are blessed with hot, sunny days here in Adelaide. We have been working hard on strategic planning and on our IT projects involving the rewrite of SUMARI and COnNECT+. We are looking forward to our colloquium next month in Singapore, and to some enthusiastic discussion around many strategic issues and questions.

In the meantime, our program of work continues. We have recently secured a grant from the Department for International Development through the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Coordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre), United Kingdom, to undertake a systematic review on microfinance interventions in South Asia. This significant project not only puts us on the world map but also attests our position as a world-class research organisation. Also, the project focusses on an area beyond health care, affirming the breadth and scope of our research capabilities.

This month, our staff have again been at the forefront, sharing and disseminating our methodologies and resources at local, national and international conferences. It is refreshing to note that we are going viral as well – do check out the YouTube clip applauding our resources.

Our philanthropic work is gathering momentum – this month we hosted a major event for our sponsors and supporters that was very promising.

I hope that your travels to Singapore are safe, and I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Professor Lyle Palmer
Executive Director
How effective is microfinance in South Asia?

Microfinance, which is the delivery of financial services to self-employed, low-income very poor to poor people, is a key component of the financial landscape of South Asia. Primarily focused on poverty alleviation, microfinance can include the provision of savings, credit, insurance and payment services and affords people with limited or no access to the formal financial sector access to financial services.

The Joanna Briggs Institute has secured a grant to undertake a systematic review on peoples’ views and experiences of delivering and participating in microfinance interventions. To be conducted for the Department for International Development through the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre), United Kingdom, the systematic review will focus specifically on contextually relevant qualitative and mixed method studies to address the review question regarding participation in microfinance interventions in South Asia.

In South Asia, the modern microfinance movement was born in Bangladesh in the 1970s as a response to prevailing poverty among its vast rural population. But it was in the 1980s and 1990s that accelerated growth in the number of microfinance institutions and their reach occurred. As microfinance evolved, so too have its components and now some non-financial services such as training in financial literacy and skills development programs are included under the aegis of microfinance. Despite the growth and popularity of microfinance, there is mixed evidence regarding its impact.

A number of key reviews conducted have highlighted that apart from anecdotal evidence and inspiring stories, rigorous quantitative evidence demonstrating a strong, positive impact of microfinance is still absent. Indeed recent evidence seems to indicate that microfinance may in fact be doing harm in some contexts.

A recent systematic review has identified that impact evaluations of microfinance interventions
are often methodologically weak and inadequate for ascertaining the effects of microfinance. Differences in context and setting of differing microfinance interventions have been cited as a possible reason behind the mixed conclusions by research regarding their effectiveness. Focus on a particular regional context such as South Asia is therefore necessary to both examine the impact and effectiveness of microfinance interventions and to investigate peoples’ and communities’ views and experiences of delivering and participating in microfinance interventions.

The chief investigator of the project is Assoc Prof Craig Lockwood, Director Implementation Science, who has experience using EPPI-Centre methods through his involvement in a past systematic review project, ‘The impact of national and international assessment programs on education policy, resource allocation and teaching and learning practices in developing countries’, for the Australian Council of Educational Research. The project team includes Dr Zachary Munn, Acting Director Synthesis Science; and Research Fellows Dr Judith Gomersall, Dr Micah Peters, Sandeep Moola and Dr Kyawt Kyawt Swe. The project has already commenced and will be conducted over the next year.

Presentation at Cochrane Colloquium in Hyderabad

In September 2014 Associate Professor Lockwood travelled to Hyderabad, India, to present at the 22nd Cochrane Colloquium: ‘Evidence-informed public health: opportunities and challenges’, on behalf of the Cochrane Nursing Care Field.

Assoc Prof Lockwood delivered a well-received presentation on how the Nursing Care Field ‘measures success’, and workshop on ‘Starting and sustaining a field’, jointly held with the Emergency Care Field based in Paris that showcased the Nursing contribution to Cochrane. The Colloquium was a good opportunity for the Nursing Care Field to network and raise its profile.

Hyderabad, known as the City of Pearls, was described by Assoc Prof Lockwood as a city of diverse colours, sights and sounds (as seen in the photo on the right). Assoc Prof Lockwood was treated to a tour and dinner with Mr Deepak Moola as the ‘icing on the cake’ for his first visit to India.
JBI expertise at burns conference

Burns care literature suffers from a relative shortage of high-quality evidence.

Dr Zachary Munn, JBI Acting Director Synthesis Science, highlighted this as a precursor to his introduction of the idea of journal clubs as an effective way to promote evidence-based health care, specifically in burns.

His presentation, ‘Journal clubs in burns: how they can contribute to evidence-based practice’, was one of the two he delivered at the 17th Congress of the International Society for Burns Injuries, held on 12–16 October at the Hilton Hotel, Sydney.

‘The major thrust of a journal club is to introduce concepts of critical thinking and analysis by critical reading,’ Dr Munn said.

In his second presentation, ‘The evolution of an evidence based resource for burns care,’ Dr Munn covered in detail evidence-based health care in burns and the wealth of resources available from the JBI Burns node.

He also shared outcomes of a ‘Burns nutritional support’ quality improvement project conducted via JBI’s clinical fellowship program using the JBI Practical Application of Clinical Evidence System (PACES) tool.

Both presentations, as well as Dr Munn’s poster, were excellently received. The conference provided an opportunity for medical specialists in all aspects of burn care around the world to come together to explore the theme ‘Improving the quality of burn care outcomes: managing the wound and its consequences’.

At the conference, JBI together with the Australia and New Zealand Burn Association JBI Journal Club (ANZBA) launched a collaboratively produced book, Allied health practice guidelines – burns trauma rehabilitation (pictured).

New Evidence Synthesis Group

The JBC welcomes a new Evidence Synthesis Group, the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Center for Evidence-Based Practice and Outcomes Research Evidence Synthesis Group, to the Collaboration.

The MUSC Center is housed jointly in the Library and the Quality Management Department of the MUSC Hospital and aims to promote scientific inquiry, evidence-based practice, and quality outcomes at MUSC. These goals are accomplished through the development of evidence-based practice clinical decision support tools, evidence-based practice education for MUSC clinicians, and outcomes research.

The MUSC Center will be undertaking systematic reviews on paediatric surgery, asthma, sickle cell disease and infectious disease, as well as surgical site infections and pre-operative bathing practices. The MUSC Center is affiliated with the Texas Christian University Center for Evidence Based Practice and Research and will be convened by Emily Brennan.
Taking in panoramic views and the JBI story

Amidst spectacular views of Adelaide from the sea to the hills, over 70 personally invited guests from the corporate sector of Adelaide were given insights into JBI’s work that is changing lives in the world.

Held on 16 October in the Banquet Room of the stunning new state-of-the art Bendigo Building, which afforded panoramic vistas from its floor-to-ceiling windows, the corporate cocktail function was organised by the Joanna Briggs Foundation for supporters and sponsors.

Prof Lyle Palmer, JBI Executive Director; Philip Pledge, Chairman of the Advisory Committee, Alexa McArthur, JBI Research Fellow; and Sandy Davis, JBF Fundraising Manager; spoke to an enthusiastic audience. Alexa highlighted the impact of JBI’s evidence-based clinical fellowship programs in disadvantaged communities, whether in Africa or locally, where implementation of best practice clinical changes have brought about real, and in some cases, life-saving, outcomes for patients. Several company directors expressed a desire to financially assist the Foundation and be more involved.

A cello and violin duo from the University of Adelaide Medical Orchestra, added a classy touch to the evening’s proceedings. Guests enjoyed fine wine donated by Andrew Kay, Chief Executive Officer of Wirra Wirra and member the JBF Advisory Committee.

From left: Matthew Rowe, Senator David Fawcett, Sandy Davis and Philip Pledge
ConQual article published

A JBI article has been published in the BMC Medical Research Methodology open access journal. Titled ‘Establishing confidence in the output of qualitative research synthesis: the ConQual approach’, (ConQual is short for confidence and qualitative), it outlines a new method developed by JBI that rates the confidence of synthesised qualitative findings.

The method, says authors Dr Zachary Munn, Dr Kylie Porritt, Assoc Prof Craig Lockwood, Assoc Prof Edoardo Aromataris and Emeritus Prof Alan Pearson, aims to ‘develop a process to assess the confidence in synthesised qualitative research findings and develop a Summary of Findings tables for meta-aggregative qualitative systematic reviews’.

The article details the ConQual processes to establish dependability and credibility so that an overall ranking can be assigned to rate the confidence of synthesised qualitative findings, serving as a practical tool to assist in decision-making.

BMC Medical Research Methodology is an open access, peer-reviewed journal that publishes articles on methodological approaches to healthcare research.

For more information on the ConQual approach, read ‘Confidence in the “poor cousin”’ in the July 2014 issue of JBI Matters.

Presentation at craniofacial conference

Assoc Prof Craig Lockwood, JBI Director of Implementation Science, delivered a presentation at the 10th Asia Pacific Craniofacial Conference/ACLAPA (Australasian Cleft Lip and Palate Association) Meeting, by invitation of Prof Peter Anderson, President of the Asia Pacific Craniofacial Association.

His presentation, titled ‘Systematic reviews in evidence-based surgical intervention evaluation’, touched on the methodology for conducting systematic reviews with a focus on evaluating the effectiveness of surgical interventions. He gave a run-down of the A to Z of conducting systematic reviews, including question development, inclusion criteria, search strategy and interpreting effect sizes. He also took the audience through related JBI tools such as the Comprehensive Review Management System (CREHMS) and Meta-Analysis of Statistics Assessment and Review Instrument (MAStARI).

The conference was held on 4 October in Adelaide.

JBI featured in YouTube clip

Two Clinical Informationists and a Communications Specialist from the Welch Medical Library, Baltimore, USA, discuss the benefits of a few online medical resources as well as the usefulness of JBI COnNECT+ and JBI tools in a short YouTube clip. Click on the screen below to view the clip.

Latest JBISRIR issue out now

The latest issue of the JBI Database of Systematic Reviews and Implementation Reports is now online. The editorial is open access. Happy reading!
‘On the Couch’ with burns panel

Dr Zachary Munn, JBI Acting Director of Synthesis Science, was part of an impressive line-up of speakers at ‘On the Couch with our Burns Panel’ at the 2014 Florey International Postgraduate Research Conference held on 25 September at the National Wine Centre, Adelaide.

The panel, hosted by Channel 9 presenter Brenton Ragless, included burns heavyweights such as Winthrop Prof Fiona Wood, Director of the WA Burns Service; and Assoc Prof Bill Griggs, Director, Trauma Services, Royal Adelaide Hospital; among others.

Dr Munn contributed to a fascinating discussion on various perspectives relevant to burns – from firefighting, first aid, treatment and rehabilitation to research, prevention, psychology and victim support.

The Postgraduate Research Conference is a highlight in the Faculty of Health Sciences calendar. In its eighth year, the conference attracted a record number of 110 Higher Degree by Research students who presented their research posters and discussed their research with fellow students and academics from the faculty. Two of the 3 Minute Thesis finalists also presented. Erica Tilley (Feb 2014 Intake), from the School of Translational Health Science, was awarded a prize at the event for the high standard of her poster presentation (see story on page 18).

This year, ten visiting PhD and Master candidates from the University of Freiburg, Germany and Nagoya University, Japan, participated in the conference and presented their research alongside the Adelaide students.
Clinical Fellowship program

Two clinical fellows who completed their Week 2 Intensive of the Evidence-based Clinical Fellowship program presented their projects at the JBI Headquarters in Adelaide on 17 October.

- Anne Baynes (pictured), from the Canberra Sexual Health Centre: ‘Adherence to recommended Australian STI screening guidelines among men who have sex with men and disclose at risk behaviour at an Australian Capital Territory sexual health centre: a best practice implementation project’.

- Tasha Lutz, from Clinical Forensic Medical Services: ‘Prevention of DNA contamination during forensic examinations in a clinical forensic medical service: a best practice implementation project’.

LinkedIn group

Have you joined the LinkedIn Joanna Briggs Institute Stakeholders group yet?

Launched recently, the new Joanna Briggs Institute LinkedIn group is an easy, convenient online platform to share ideas, discuss or deliberate on anything related to the translation of the best available research evidence to inform decision making at the point-of-care, or simply to stay in touch.

Within this group, there are also two ‘subgroups’, JBI Students and JBI Alumni and we invite you to join any that applies to you. However, if you are not a member of a subgroup you will still be able to link with us via the main JBI Stakeholders group and receive regular communications from us.

Simply join LinkedIn and create your profile if you do not have one already and search for ‘Joanna Briggs Institute Stakeholders’. You will find the two subgroups to the right of the screen.

Join today and post any topic you wish in the discussions section. We look forward to linking with you for better evidence and better outcomes.

Presentation at the Australian Research Centre for Population Oral Health

Sandeep Moola, JBI Research Fellow Implementation Science, presented a seminar at the Australian Research Centre for Population Oral Health (ARCPOH) in Adelaide, as a part of their monthly seminar sessions on 24 October. By invitation of ARCPOH Director Prof Marco Peres, Sandeep presented on ‘Evidence-based research collaboration: JBI and ARCPOH’, providing an overview of JBI and JBI COnNECT+, and proposing ideas for a potential evidence-based research collaboration between JBI and ARCPOH.

A potential to start a new Oral Health node is currently being explored.
Tackling chronic disease in rural Victoria

In the five years since its establishment, the Centre for Chronic Disease Management (CCDM) has already received the Joanna Briggs Collaboration (JBC) Evidence Transfer Award twice – in 2012 and 2013. The award, given to JBC centres for significant development and maintenance of nodes, speaks volumes about the work of the centre.

In 2012 alone, CCDM, which is one of the few JBC centres undertaking evidence transfer, produced 39 evidence summaries. Initially operating as the JBI Chronic Disease node, CCDM progressed through to becoming a fully-fledged Collaborating Centre in 2014 under the guidance and direction of its director, Dr Hanan Khalil. Since its inception, the centre has developed the taxonomy for the node, and established the Expert Reference Group and the Corresponding Reference Group. To date, it has 110 evidence summaries and 31 recommended practices to its name, and continues to be prolific.

Prof Hanan Khalil attributes this to ‘the large gap between evidence and practice within healthcare, particularly in the field of chronic disease’, a reality that prompted the initial idea of a collaborative partnership for the centre.

‘There was a great need to reduce this gap, and improve the management of chronic disease,’ Dr Khalil said.

The pulling together of diverse but related capabilities, apart from being a logical move, has lent a rich texture to the collaborative partnership that is the CCDM. In 2009, Monash University’s School of Nursing and Midwifery, the School of Rural Health’s Department of Indigenous and Rural Health, and the Gippsland Medical School, with partner organisations of Latrobe Regional Hospital and Latrobe Community Health Services Inc., came together to form the Centre for Chronic Disease Management.

Dr Hanan Khalil, as Chair of the Centre, and Helen Chambers, as project officer, are both from the School of Rural Health at Monash University. The aim of the collaboration is to...
promote the development of translation science and the implementation of evidence-based health care in chronic disease with a specific focus on developing evidence-based resources that are easily accessed by clinicians.

Dr Khalil joined the Centre in mid-2010 as an executive member representing the Department of Indigenous and Rural Health. When Prof Karen Francis, the original founder of the Centre, resigned in late 2010, Dr Khalil took over the management of the Centre.

‘We have a special interest in the impact of chronic disease in regional and rural communities and health services in Victoria,’ Dr Khalil said. ‘When we create our resources, we engage with clinicians, researchers and students within the collaborating organisations so that health professionals can make use of them knowing they are based on the best available evidence for the care of patients in various health settings.’

A pharmacist academic at the School of Rural Health at Monash University, Dr Khalil also leads a rural pharmacy program supporting students and pharmacists in rural areas and undertakes research in evidence based health care and chronic diseases management. Her research has caught media attention and won national awards. She is also the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Evidence Based Healthcare.

Currently CCDM comprises an executive committee, with 10 members from Monash University’s School of Rural Health, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Latrobe Regional Hospital and Latrobe Community Health Services Inc. The committee is chaired by Dr Khalil and is guided by expert opinion from an international expert reference group.

Not one to rest on her laurels, Dr Khalil continues to press on in her quest to increase the access to evidence-based material for practitioners. The evidence summaries and recommended practices, and recently, systematic reviews, will continue to roll out, but Dr Khalil has her sights on another frontier. Since the centre began conducting training in systematic reviews, she hopes it can achieve Collaborating Centre status in evidence synthesis in the near future.
Closure at last

The sense of awe in seeing a starry sky may not match the joy of receiving a Dean’s Commendation for doctoral thesis excellence but Deborah (Zhili) Chen senses a connection between the two.

Astronomy was once her passion and Deborah remembers the magical feeling and wonder at the beauty of the universe she used to experience when she was stargazing. The culmination of her postgraduate journey in the receipt of the prestigious award is more than magical – the choice of her research topic was in fact fuelled by her love for her twin sister, Zhihui.

In 2006, a strange illness gripped her twin sister. Over five years, Deborah was by Zhihui’s side as she watched the disease gradually rob her sister of her life – inspite of the best care from first-rate doctors and the healthcare system in Singapore, where they both lived. After her sister passed away, Deborah struggled to come to terms with the actual cause of the death and the apparent gaps in healthcare.

‘I had many questions I could not answer,’ Deborah says.

In February 2013, Deborah relocated from Singapore to Adelaide to commence her Masters in Clinical Science, the unanswered questions burning in the back of her mind. Her first systematic review, titled, ‘The effectiveness of disease management interventions on health-related quality of life of patients with arthritogenic alphavirus infections’, led to ideas of conducting the second and third systematic reviews on the effectiveness of public health surveillance systems and mosquito control on the chikungunya disease.

Mosquito-transmitted arthritogenic alphaviruses are viruses that cause febrile arthralgia and include the chikungunya virus (CHIKV), Ross River virus, Barmah Forest virus, Sindbis virus, o’nyong-nyong virus and Mayaro virus.

The chikungunya virus causes debilitating arthralgia in humans. Since 2004, CHIKV has caused millions of infections in the Indian Ocean region and has emerged in new areas, including Italy, France, the Middle East and the Pacific region. Chikungunya, which translates as ‘that which bends up the joints’, is characterised by an abrupt onset of fever and severe joint pain that may persist for weeks to years.
Deborah’s progress through her masters was so remarkable that her principal supervisor, Assoc Prof Craig Lockwood, recommended that she rolled over into a PhD program.

It was at this point that Deborah got a handle of evidence-based practice and methodology. ‘I realised I had the passion, strengths and personality to be good at evidence-based practice, so a PhD seemed like a natural move,’ she says.

Deborah completed her PhD in June 2014 with her thesis titled, ‘Chikungunya virus: evidence for global policy, practice and research in disease management, surveillance and mosquito control’. The completion – and a timely closure for Deborah as she was finally able to isolate the cause of her sister’s death – was made all the sweeter with the award of the Dean’s Commendation.

‘I saw the news on Facebook when I was about to leave my office for the day. I froze in my seat as I couldn’t believe it was real. Joy and thankfulness to God overwhelmed me,’ Deborah says.

Her PhD also opened doors for her. The fact that her PhD research honed in on systematic reviews of clinical effectiveness based on international guidelines and standards, and formulation of new/updated clinical guidelines and recommendations based on JBI’s Grades of Recommendations impressed her employer, Monash Health in Melbourne. She secured her position as systematic reviewer for clinical effectiveness even before she technically completed her PhD.

Deborah now lives and breathes evidence-based health care.

‘There’s tons of health care information out there, but often there’s a lack of appraisal and synthesis of the information, knowledge translation and usage of that information to guide clinical decision-making.

‘Where I work, I can witness how evidence reviews play a crucial role in influencing top management’s decision-making at the point-of-care,’ Deborah says.

In both study and work, Deborah has realised that evidence-based health care research is not for everyone. ‘It requires particular traits, such as being organised and systematic, being able to capture and put into perspective ultra-fine detail, accountability, analytical skills, and a love for language and writing.’

They say good things happen in threes. For this diminutive 26-year old, the School of Translational Health Science’s youngest student to complete a PhD, the third blessing happened at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens on 4 September this year – her engagement to nuclear medicine technologist Stirling Ha.
Evidence-Based Clinical Fellowship Program

Learn about clinical leadership and how to implement evidence in practice to improve patient outcomes.

The Evidence-Based Clinical Fellowship Program is a six-month workplace, evidence-based, implementation program involving two five-day intensive training workshops in the Joanna Briggs Institute, and a workplace evidence implementation project in the intervening months. Dates for 2015 are now available:

**March intake**
Week 1: 16–20 March
Week 2: 17–21 August
Enrol by 30 January

**May intake**
Week 1: 11–15 May
Week 2: 12–16 October
Enrol by 27 March

**June intake**
Week 1: 15–19 June
Week 2: 16–20 November
Enrol by 1 May

For information on these two programs and to enrol contact jbieducation@adelaide.edu.au.

Clinical Leadership Program

The Clinical Leadership Program is open to all clinical leaders and leaders-to-be in all health care disciplines. Dates for 2015 are now available for this one-day program delivered by Proteus Leadership:

**March intake**
Tuesday 17 March
Enrol by 30 January

**May intake**
Tuesday 12 May
Enrol by 27 March

**June intake**
Tuesday 16 June
Enrol by 1 May

**July intake**
Tuesday 7 July
Enrol by 22 May
Comprehensive Systematic Review Full Training Program (Modules 1, 2 and 3)

Five days
Learn how to conduct reviews using qualitative and quantitative data.
Program dates for 2015:
2–6 March
4–8 May
20–24 July
7–11 September

For information and to enrol contact jbieducation@adelaide.edu.au

CSR Module 1: Introduction to Evidence-Based Healthcare and the Systematic Review of Evidence
One day (Mandatory pre-requisite for Modules 2 and 3)
Program dates for 2015:
2 March
4 May
20 July
7 September

CSR Module 2: The Systematic Review of Quantitative Data from Experimental and Non-experimental Studies
Two days
Program dates for 2015:
3–4 March
5–6 May
21–22 July
8–9 September

CSR Module 3: The Systematic Review of Evidence Generated by Qualitative Research, Narrative and Text
Two days
Program dates for 2015:
5–6 March
7–8 May
23–24 July
10–11 September
Welcome to the Wolters Kluwer update, a monthly column from our business partners at Wolters Kluwer (WK) which focuses on their activities on behalf of JBI worldwide.

A hive of activity

Fall (in the Northern Hemisphere) is almost halfway over, and it has been a very busy time for key evidence and nursing meetings globally.

The Joanna Briggs Institute was represented at the Wolters Kluwer stand at the annual Cochrane Colloquium meeting in Hyderabad, India (21–25 September) focused on ‘Evidence-informed public health: Opportunities and challenges’.

Wolters Kluwer attended the annual ANCC Magnet® meeting in Dallas, Texas, on 8–10 October. This was the largest Magnet meeting ever, with over 8500 nurses from around the world in attendance. Every attendee received collateral featuring JBI in their attendee bag. Our ‘Passport to Prizes’ promotion ensured that everyone visiting the Wolters Kluwer booth received a demo of JBI.

Immediately following was Nursing Management Congress, a LWW-managed nursing event attracting 1000 nurse managers to Las Vegas, Nevada, on 13–15 Oct.

MR hosted a breakfast for 200 of the most senior nurse attendees who earned CE for attending. The presentation, called ‘Minimizing costs and improving outcomes with evidence-based practice’, was presented by Dr Daphne Stannard, Director of the JBI Collaborating Center at the University of San Francisco Medical Center.

The early morning session went a full hour, with all attendees focused and interested the entire time. Dr Stannard and Dr Anne Dabrow Woods met with attendees immediately following the presentation in the booth area, allowing us to demo JBI and set up some new trials.

Our thanks to Dr Stannard for another outstanding presentation on behalf of evidence-based practice and JBI. We look forward to seeing you all at the Biennial Colloquium in Singapore.
Collaboration Matters

Singapore Colloquium
The 9th Biennial JBI Colloquium, ‘Scaling New Heights and Challenging the Status Quo’, in Singapore on 10–12 November is just a few short weeks away!

Travel reimbursement
For Centre Directors who still need to claim reimbursement for their travel, please note that the cut-off date for travel invoices to be sent to JBI for reimbursement is 30 November 2014. As the JBI office breaks for Christmas on 19 December 2014 we must allow at least two weeks for reimbursements to be processed before the end of our financial year.

For eligibility to receive reimbursement please ensure invoices are sent no later than 30 November to jbc@adelaide.edu.au.

Social media
For live Colloquium updates don’t forget to follow us on Facebook and Twitter. To post and track news relevant to the JBI Colloquium you can use the hashtag #JBISing2014.

JBC centre changes
We would like to farewell Dr Peter Roupas from the JBC Affiliate Center CSIRO Food and Nutritional Sciences who is retiring from his position as Deputy Director. Dr Roupas will be returning however as an Honorary Fellow. We look forward to welcoming the new Deputy Director in due course.

We would also like to farewell Matt Kowald from the JBI Aged Care Unit who is stepping down from his position as Deputy Director. Mr Kowald will continue to be involved in the JBC through involvement in relevant working parties.

In his place we would like to welcome the newly appointed Deputy Director, Ms Gail Harding. Ms Harding is the Director of Nursing at Wheatfields Inc., a specialised aged care service provider delivering ongoing and respite support and individual care to the elderly.

51st meeting of the Committee of Directors
The agenda and meeting papers for our forthcoming Committee of Directors meeting in Singapore on 13–14 Nov are now available on the JBC intranet. The two-day face-to-face meeting is set to be an invigorating and interesting discussion of potential changes to the JBI/JBC structure and processes.
Erica wins conference prize

The School of Translational Health Science is proud to announce one of our HDR students, Erica Tilley (Feb 2014 Intake), was awarded a prize at the recent 2014 Florey Postgraduate Research Conference for the high standard of her poster presentation.

The conference was a huge success with well over 100 PhD and Research Masters students presenting posters of their research, including 10 students from Nagoya University in Japan and the University of Freiburg, Germany. We congratulate Erica for her outstanding presentation.

A word from Erica

“I really enjoyed the Florey postgraduate research conference as an opportunity to raise the profile of my area of interest, a neurodegenerative condition known as progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP). PSP has a similar prevalence to motor neuron disease, and common symptoms include difficulty speaking and swallowing, and reduced mobility/falls.

It was a wonderful opportunity to learn about the diverse range of research in the Faculty of Health Sciences, and to consider how different findings, technologies or research methodologies may be applied to the area of PSP. I am grateful for the ongoing support and expertise of my JBI supervisors, Dr Sarahlouise White and Dr Micah Peters. With their guidance, my research poster was awarded the School of Translational Health Science award and the Bendigo Bank award.”

Workshops and value-added programs from RED

The following workshops, lectures and training sessions are available to all our HDR students. Some of the courses are run on demand, and others are routinely scheduled. The full program of courses can be accessed online from Researcher Education and Development (RED) and from the School of Translational Health Science website. There are no fees attached with most of the workshops available. The RED Centre is open to conducting these workshops on a needs basis and students can register a group interest with the School of Translational Health Science. Arrangements can be made to have staff from RED present in our school’s Boardroom or Conference Room.

Some of the courses listed are generic to HDR planning and preparation, and therefore would be suitable to our entire student group. Others are targeted toward students undertaking primary research and may be of interest to PhD students; however, all of the following courses are available to any of our students;

- On being supervised
- Reviewing literature
- Effective writing strategies
- Time management and procrastination
- Thesis writing groups
- Writing a paper for publication: papers that analyse primary data
- Managing an HDR thesis with Word 2007 – lecture
- Introduction to qualitative social research approaches
- Basic statistics and research methods
- Statistics for research students.
Writing a first class dissertation

The School of Translational Health Science is pleased to recognise the outstanding academic achievements of two of its HDR students: Edward Ko Ko Aung (Dean’s Commendation for excellence in his Master of Clinical Science thesis), and Deborah Chen (Dean’s Commendation for excellence in her PhD thesis).

One of the UK’s leading academic research companies, Ivory Research, recently published an article online, titled “How to write a first class dissertation”. The article refers to the two principal goals of dissertations: the first is to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the selected topics and the second is to reveal a solid grasp of the pertinent research methods. A well-written thesis will demonstrate high-level independent learning, written communication and information retrieval skills. A first class thesis must include a well-chosen, original topic and present both the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments. If a student wants to write a first class dissertation, it is imperative they understand exactly what the examiners are looking for. The student must convey a balance of creative and critical thinking, as well as the ability to reflect any of the theory’s limitations and research methodologies. A first class thesis will also include alternative options and recommendations.

The first section of a first-class thesis should include a comprehensive background of the particular study. The introduction prepares the reader for the content to follow and provides a proper context for the research. The introduction must also convey the research objectives and ultimate goals. A well-written introduction will stimulate and interest the reader, whilst a poorly worded introduction will have a contrary effect. A solid, well-written thesis will be clearly expressed, specific and arguable.

It’s important to note that the content of a thesis must be written with a critical eye. The student should adopt a questioning approach and attempt to explain the findings of the research. Students must clearly demonstrate the validity of their argument and interpret, demonstrate and explain it as thoroughly as possible. If a thesis includes elements such as additional statistics, tables, calculations or figures, the student should include a complete and critical explanation or comment for each.

The final chapter of a first class thesis should include recommendations and conclusions that motivate additional investigation or action. Any current issues relating to the research topic should be presented and arguments both for and against the topic should be included. The student must ensure all references are correctly cited and consistent. If a student wants to earn a high mark for their thesis, they must pay proper attention to writing style. The student must ensure their thesis includes all of the necessary elements, is written concisely, is free of grammatical or spelling errors and presents a valid argument with solid research to support it.

Student can access more comprehensive advice about thesis write up directly from the Adelaide Graduate Centre.
A rare disease and my first research journey

When my brother, Joby Joseph, lost his battle with osteosarcoma in early 2007, I started my journey to fight against this rare disease with the same hope and faith as he had until his last breath. He was a loving big brother, so generous with his time for others. I will miss him dearly.

After completion of my Master of Science in Microbiology in the 2006, the main focus was on how to broaden my knowledge of immunology for cancer treatment, research and education. Bettering patients’ health care and the health system became my life ambition.

In 2007, I cleared the entrance exam for the Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) at the Advanced Centre for Treatment, Research and Education in Cancer, Mumbai, India, while continuing my role as a pharmaceutical microbiologist in Gujarat. In September 2013, I had the great opportunity to meet Assoc Prof Craig Lockwood at JBI. I put forward my interest in cancer treatment, which spurred me to embark on the Master of Clinical Science in February this year. My research work is in loving memory of my late brother.

I am honoured to be part of a fantastic cohort of students from diverse disciplines. The program of intensive training in systematic review methodologies and software and the support from my supervisors have been life changing for me.

My main focus is to look for novel ways to treat osteosarcoma patients by identifying new therapeutic targets at the ‘innate immune response level’ and translating these ideas into clinical practice. My research topic, ‘Effectiveness of mifamurtide in addition to standard chemotherapy for high-grade osteosarcoma’ seeks to identify the best available evidence related to the treatment of osteosarcoma with mifamurtide in addition to standard chemotherapy.

The concept of using immunotherapy to treat chemotherapy resistant tumours has been around for several decades. The use of T-cells, NK-cells, and α-interferon has been widely reported but so far there has been no standard of care treatment that combines T-cells or NK-cells with chemotherapy for newly diagnosed patients. The other immune cells that have been largely ignored are macrophages and monocytes. Innovative therapeutic approaches, such as the use of immune activators (stimulants), more specifically macrophage and/or monocytes activating agent, e.g. mifamurtide used together with the existing multidrug chemotherapy, are needed to aid in preventing tumour recurrence and improve survival rates in patients with high-grade osteosarcoma. Hence targeting macrophages/monocytes and activating its tumoricidal function is therefore an approach to treat chemotherapy resistant osteosarcoma.

It was a great experience presenting my protocol at the Academic Panel recently. It was well received by both the external oncology experts. I was told by the acting postgraduate coordinator on the day that the feedback was remarkable, no further amendments were required, and it was immediately approved for submission to the Library.

Rincy Jimmy
Feb 2014 Cohort

HDR Annual Review of Progress

With the exception of students enrolled in 2014, or those who are submitting a thesis to the Adelaide Graduate Centre on or before 31 October, or whose candidature lapses on or before 31 October, or who withdraw from candidature on or before 31 October, all students, including those who are full-time, half-time, remote, or on leave of absence or study leave, must participate in the 2014 Annual Review of Progress.
‘What are you doing?’

The School of Translational Health Science is holding its seventh Graduate Research Seminar for 2014 on Friday, 31 October at the JBI Conference Room, Level 1, 115 Grenfell Street, Adelaide.

Peter Willis, Adjunct Senior Lecturer, Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences, University of South Australia, will be speaking on topic: ‘PhD students and supervisors beginning a qualitative research project’.

This will be a working seminar on early qualitative project appraisal for PhD students in conversation with their academic supervisors. The title question, ‘What are you doing?’ is a useful one for newcomers to research.

The question invites a distancing categorical appraisal in which the processes of reading, questioning and conversing with colleagues, and participating in and observing various research worthy social exchanges, are redefined through a formal process of classification. Peter will be discussing the 10 point appraisal process as part of his presentation.

‘In my supervision work of about 20 years, a ten point appraisal has emerged as a prompt for early conversations between beginning researchers and their supervisors about the project the student plans to tackle,’ Peter says.

The seminar will introduce the appraisal prompt and the ideas underpinning it.

QUOTE

‘Death is very likely the single best invention of life. It’s life’s change agent; it clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now, the new is you. But someday, not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it’s quite true. Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life.’

~ Steve Jobs

School blog

Don’t forget to visit the School of Translational Health Science blog to read the latest news, events and important information. Note that the blog does not replace the current HDR Facebook page, which is a ‘closed group’ to active students and supervisors.
An enjoyable evening

We are very pleased to have hosted our very first event, independent of our annual convention. On 15 October alumni members had the opportunity to network over a glass of wine at an Alumni Catch-up at our lovely office space in Grenfell Street.

A massive thank you to those who could make it – it was great to see you all! Alexa McArthur, Dr Micah Peters and Dr Matthew Stephenson gave updates on projects they were involved in and alumni members enjoyed the opportunity to discuss their current projects and share experiences.

A wonderful evening, and we look forward to the next one!

LinkedIn Alumni Subgroup

Our Alumni LinkedIn subgroup (a subgroup of the Joanna Briggs Institute Stakeholders LinkedIn page) now has 36 members! This has already far exceeded our Facebook group membership, which is exactly what we’d hoped.

If you haven’t already received an email inviting you to join our LinkedIn group, please check out the subgroup and join. It’s a great platform for discussion, sharing and support.