

Health Research Opportunities

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**Government
of South Australia**

SA Health



Overview of National and State Research Policy and Health Policy Agendas

Where to monitor for future
research opportunities

South Australia recognises:

The need for new investments in research with a focus on *exploring complexity* using new tools, and translating research into health and wellbeing improvement.

This has been explicitly stated (and now funded) by NHMRC, NHF, MRC (UK), HRC (NZ), NIH (USA) and Canada.

Cont:

- > Much of what we do within health and also what impacts on health involves complexity.
- > The future of research will involve the interplay between biological, social and environmental determinants of health and wellness through the life-course and generations (CIH).
- > The response to this will require large multidisciplinary teams of researchers who can work on complex topics.

Cont:

- > Thus portfolios of research effort with significant flexibility to work between portfolios may be required.
- > Need to include evaluations on the collective impact of policies, programs and interventions on health and wellbeing (evaluation of complexity not just evaluation against objectives within a program).

We need to know:

- > Whether policies and interventions within and external to the health system are improving population health.
- > The cost effectiveness, cost utility and cost benefit of what we do (Health Economics Collaborative)
- > If we are impacting on equity and reducing inequality.

A possible future (the influence of Ilona Kickbusch)

- > The future of health research not only lies within the health system but involves other areas of government, non government and local government, primary health care systems, where our shared goals of economic, environmental, social and health and wellbeing outcomes can be achieved.

Getting the Data Right!

- > We need the right type of data collections in place for monitoring, research and evaluation purposes.
- > The data linkage unit (*SANT DataLink*) will be a significant enabler in research and evaluation effort in SA.
- > SA's administrative data sets included in the data linkage consortium are unique in Australia and will eventually provide the capacity to understand the interplay between health and its determinants.

Contact: Tony Woollacott

Current Policy Drivers

- > Towards a National Primary Health Care Strategy (2008 Discussion Paper)
- > Australia: The Healthiest Country by 2020 (National Preventative Health Taskforce)

Critical issue will be how a primary health strategy involving GP's and the prevention strategy are resourced and articulate with each other on prevention, early detection and early intervention.

COAG NP Preventive Health

Over the next six years the following outcomes are expected:

- > Increase proportion of healthy weight
- > Increase proportion of people meeting national guidelines on healthy weight and physical activity
- > Reduce smoking
- > Reduce hazardous consumption of alcohol
- > Healthy start to life

COAG NP Indigenous Health

- > Focus is on alcohol and smoking
- > Comprehensive primary health care
- > Improving clinical outcomes
- > Building a sustainable workforce

COAG NP Early Childhood Development

South Australia's Strategic Plan

- > Many synergies between national COAG agendas and SASP Targets.
- > However it is less evident how social determinants and equity are considered in the COAG agendas.
- > Social determinants and equity are important in policy and research effort in SA

SASP Targets

- > Remain a key driver of SA policy and strategy and therefore are fertile areas for multidisciplinary research and evaluation.
- > The Ilona Kickbush residency has given the SASP targets and cross government work to achieve shared goals significant impetus.

Ilona Kickbusch Residency

- > Many of the recommendations within the Kickbusch report require research and evaluation integrated with the activity occurring against the health targets.

Key Research Areas

Generation H!SA – Early Childhood

- > Involves the development of a cross government early childhood strategy/framework linked to research and evaluation – build system wide coherence. Research and evaluation effort occurring in this area include:
 - Family Home visiting evaluation
 - Establishment of an early childhood data linkage demonstration project
 - Centre for Intergenerational Health research activity (psychological health and wellbeing and healthy weight, early childhood).

Contact: Heather Petty

Health Literacy

- > Critical to the success of this area will be policy implementation which ensure health system and practitioner responsibility for health literacy aligned with the Kickbusch definition.
- > “More than providing clients with information” Is about empowerment.
- > Research and evaluation will need to involve all dimensions of health literacy.

Contact: Helen van Eyk

Centre for Intergenerational Health

- > <http://centre-for-intergenerational-health.com/home>
- > Intergenerational research is about the health of individuals and populations, between and across generations, and recognises a range of factors that influence health from genetic, physical, lifestyle to the broad social, and other determinants of health.

Centre for Intergenerational Health

- > Themes for research are:
 - Healthy reproduction
 - Early childhood
 - Healthy weight
 - Healthy ageing
 - Psychological health and wellbeing

Contact: Heather Petty

Prevention in SA

- > Significant focus on implementation of EPODE (OPAL) and evaluation
- > ABHI Evaluation (chronic disease prevention, management, early risk factor identification, service integration, schools and community programs and social marketing – MeasureUP)

- > Chronic Disease Action Plan

Contact: Bruce Whitby

- > Primary Prevention Plan – out for consultation

Contact: Michele Herriott

Primary Health Care in SA

- > GP Plus Strategy
- > Development of the GP Plus Health
- > Network Model and Regional Health Improvement Plans
- > These areas provide significant opportunity for evaluation.

Contact: Ian Hender

Health economic evaluation in primary care – CNAHS & Adelaide Division of General Practice.

Objective:

To identify the characteristics of primary care-based initiatives that have the greatest impact on the health of the population. The improved understanding of the impact of these initiatives can improve the quality of decision making around scarce resources and help avoid the implementation of comparatively inefficient interventions.

Contact: Assoc Professor Jon Karnon University of Adelaide

Policy relevant questions for General Practice

- > What is the uptake of the four year old check?
How will these checks inform trends regarding development, weight etc.
- > What is the uptake of the 45 year plus health check
 - How many of these are men?
 - What is required within General Practice to enable men to access GP services
 - Can we monitor the change of men's help seeking behaviour through the health checks
 - What proportion of men are returning for follow up
 - Is there evidence of improved health status?

Future of Research in SA

SA Health and Medical Research Institute

- > support new and leading areas of research in human medicine and health
- > attract national and international leading researchers
- > build partnerships between researchers and research bodies to promote research excellence
- > foster the application of research knowledge to benefit health and well being of people within and outside of South Australia

Future research in SA cont

- > offer significant economic advantages to the State, by attracting significant funding from national and international sources
- > support South Australian and Australian Government research objectives
- > create synergies between researchers and care providers, through the co-location with the new Royal Adelaide Hospital, and collaboration with other State hospitals

Future Research in SA

- > CIH will fit under SAHMRI

Contact: Marianne Hellers

Within the health system

- > must have more focus on good quality, mixed method research and evaluation integrated with current policy and operational agendas.
- > Building platforms for research – better quality data making it possible to get research and evaluation findings sooner.

Summary

Many research opportunities however:

- > How do researchers engage with the health system to provide research results that provide immediate information needs?
- > How do researchers (cross institutional) engage with health and others systems whom impact on health and wellbeing to build a body of knowledge in key areas?

Summary

- > How do policy makers and practitioners engage with the evidence (where it exists) and implement it.
- > The reality is: there is a lot of evidence but not necessarily used.



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