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ADVISORY SERVICE OPERATION IN 2003
Kia ora tatou

This is second first newsletter for 2003. We are aware that our first newsletter for this year (No 69 12 Feb 2003) did not get through to some subscribers. No 69 is available from our website (URL at end). The conference details from that newsletter are included in this issue as well.

This year we plan to highlight examples of recent publications and resources relevant to social health research methods. The second set in our series is included with this newsletter.

Regards,
David Thomas, Director.

RFP - COMMUNITY BASED DIABETES PROJECT
Closing date 21 March 2003

The Ministry of Health and the Health Research Council (HRC) have developed a National Diabetes Research Strategy to fund research into the primary prevention of diabetes.

This Request for Proposals seeks research providers interested in developing an intervention that will be effective in reducing the incidence of diabetes in the community. This initiative also includes a focus on forming strategic partnerships with District Health Boards (DHBs) as part of the research process. A funding pool of approximately $1.35 million is currently available for this research project.


Please note a one-stage application procedure will apply. Individuals and organisations interested in undertaking research within the identified research theme are invited to register their interest with the Council Secretariat by 5 pm, 21 March 2003 and submit a full application to the Council Secretariat by 5pm, 16 May 2003.
The application form (JV203-NDRS) is available on the application forms page http://www.hrc.govt.nz/appformsb.htm of the HRC website.

Contact Sharon McCook (smccook@hrc.govt.nz), HRC Project Administrator (Partnership Programme, phone (09) 303 5224 with any queries about this Request for Proposals or the application process.

**CALL FOR TENDER: REVIEW OF PRACTICE 'MODELS' used by Maori Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment**

Practitioners in New Zealand
Closing date 29 April 2003

The above research project is part of the New Zealand Mental Health Research and Development Strategy. The Strategy aims to use research and development to identify ways that will improve the planning and delivery of mental health services in New Zealand, consistent with the Treaty of Waitangi and with the needs of consumers and other stakeholders. It is funded by the Ministry of Health, supported by the Mental Health Commission, and administered by the Health Research Council of New Zealand.

The project 'Review of Practice 'Models' used by Maori Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Practitioners in New Zealand', aims to:

1. Provide detailed descriptive baseline information on the practice models and frameworks currently being utilised by a sample of Maori alcohol and drug practitioners in a range of services, with a particular focus on the range of models being used; how these models are operationalised in practice; the methods by which practitioners operationalise the models; and links between practice models and outcomes for clients.
2. Investigate the extent to which existing Maori alcohol and other drug treatment practitioners currently work with problem gamblers, and are able or willing to incorporate problem gambling their current practice.

The application form (MHRDS RT Form.doc) and Notes (MHRDS Maori Models RT.doc) are available from the HRC web page. http://www.hrc.govt.nz. The closing date for this application is 5.00pm, Tuesday 29 April 2003.

**CONFERENCES 2003**

Workshops and four conferences of interest to health researchers are noted below. Send notices of other conferences to the Newsletter editor.

**CRITICAL HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY**

10-12 April, 2003, Takapuna, Auckland, NZ.
Third Conference of the International Society for Critical Health Psychology Key topics for the conference are medicalisation, gender and sexuality, images of health,
and issues in public health. The keynote speakers are Michele Crossley, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, and Isaac Prilleltensky.

Conference details available at: http://ischp.massey.ac.nz/
Enquiries to: k.chamberlain@massey.ac.nz

SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION CONFERENCE
29 & 30 April 2003, Wellington Convention Centre, Wellington

Titled 'Connecting Policy, Research And Practice', the conference is the first in a series of biennial conferences aimed at improving the linkages Between government advisors, social service providers and social policy researchers and evaluators.

Registration and further details from:

HERMENEUTICS CONVERSATIONS
AUT 1 May and 2 May, Cost $125 per session
THURSDAY 1ST MAY: SHARING TEACHING EXPERTISE
Organiser: Carrie Sanders: carrie.sanders@aut.ac.nz
Melinda and Sharon have both been formally acknowledged as ‘expert teachers’. They have developed a style of narrative based pedagogy. While this workshop will include discussion from the experience of preparing nurse practitioners, it is aimed at a cross-disciplinary audience. Topics will include: Listening to learn Promoting the scholarship of teaching and learning The curriculum issues of keeping up with the knowledge explosion

The session begins mid afternoon to enable educators to attend. A light dinner will be served.
Venue: AA236, Akoranga Campus, AUT, North Shore, Auckland
Time: 3pm –9pm
Contact organiser for registration information
FRIDAY 2ND MAY, HERMENEUTIC CONVERSATIONS
Organiser: Liz Smythe: Liz.Smythe@aut.ac.nz

Join us for a day of hermeneutic conversation. Our connection with Melinda and Sharon is through meeting them at Prof Nancy Diekelmann’s Advanced Heideggerian hermeneutic workshops. I am always inspired by the conversations of Melinda and Sharon. They have a significant depth of understanding of Heidegger’s writings. They ask the questions that breathe life into the words and make meaningful links with practice. They have strong research backgrounds. Bring your questions.
Venue: AG Block Conference room
AUT, Akoranga Drive, North Shore, Auckland.
Time: 9am-4pm
Contact organiser for registration information.
PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE
2-4 July 2003, Turangawaewae Marae, Ngaruawahia Tinorangatirotanga In Public Health - Working With Maori And Indigenous Values And Principles Call for papers: due 20th March 2003 Details on website http://www.pha.org.nz Or contact pha@actrix.co.nz for emailed or hard copy version.

AUSTRALASIAN EVALUATION SOCIETY
Annual Conference, Waipuna Lodge, Auckland.
Workshops 14-15 Sep 2003,
Conference 16-18 September 2003,

Organisers are looking for input on themes and topics for the conference. Please contact Maggie Jakob-Hoff on 09 360 0827 or maggiejh@evaluate.co.nz. Visit http://www.aes.asn.au/index.cfm

RECENT PUBLICATIONS: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Continuing our series of recent articles which contribute to methodological development, three are outlined below. The “Evaluating meta-ethnography” article will be of particular interest to qualitative researchers.

EVALUATING META-ETHNOGRAPHY
Campbell, R; Pound, P; Pope, C; Britten, N; Pill, R; Morgan, M; Donovan, J. 2003. A synthesis of qualitative research on lay experiences of diabetes and diabetes care. Social Science & Medicine, 56 (4): 671-684

ABSTRACT:
Interest in how qualitative health research might be used more widely to inform health policy and medical practice is growing. Synthesising findings from individual qualitative studies may be one method but application of conventional systematic review methodology to qualitative research presents significant philosophical and practical challenges. The aim here was to examine the feasibility of synthesising qualitative research using qualitative methodology including a formative evaluation of criteria for assessing the research to be synthesised.

Ten qualitative studies of adult patients' perspectives of diabetes were purposefully selected and questions proposed by the critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) adapted and used to assess papers prior to synthesis. Each study was reviewed independently by two experienced social scientists. The level of agreement between reviewers was determined. Three papers were excluded: one because it turned out not to be qualitative research, one because the quality of the empirical work was poor and one because the qualitative findings reported were also recorded in another paper already included.
The synthesis, which had two distinct elements, was conducted using the meta-ethnographic method. Firstly, four papers containing typologies of patient responses to diabetes were synthesised. Secondly, six key concepts were identified from all seven papers as being important in enabling a person with diabetes to achieve a balance in their lives and to attain a sense of well-being and control. These included: time and experience, trust in self, a less subservient approach to care providers, strategic non-compliance with medication, effective support from care providers and an acknowledgement that diabetes is serious. None of the studies included in the synthesis referenced any of the early papers nor did they appear to have taken account of or built upon previous findings. This evaluation confirmed that meta-ethnography can lead to a synthesis and extension of qualitative research in a defined field of study. In addition, from it a practical method of qualitative research assessment evolved. This process is promising but requires further testing and evaluation before it could be recommended for more widespread adoption.


Abstract
AIM: This paper contributes to an understanding of the political and ethical aspects of action research (AR).
BACKGROUND: Action research is growing in popularity in nursing and health care as a means of changing practice and generating new knowledge. As a methodology, AR relies on a close collaborative working relationship between researcher and participants, but this close relationship is also the source of political and ethical problems faced by researchers and participants.
CONTENT: We argue that action researchers and participants working in their own organizations should be clear about the extent to which they are engaged in a political activity, and that AR does not offer the same ethical guarantees concerning confidentiality and anonymity, informed consent, and protection from harm as other research methodologies (both quantitative and qualitative). This argument is illustrated by our experiences of participation in an AR study.
CONCLUSION: We outline three areas where AR is implicitly political, and three areas where it is ethically problematic. We recommend that researchers and participants recognize, discuss and negotiate these problematic areas before starting their work.


Abstract
OBJECTIVE: This study aims to develop a detailed analysis of the subjective experiences of people with schizophrenia living in highly staffed supported accommodation.
METHODS: Thirteen participants were audiotaped for one semistructured interview. The transcription and identified themes were discussed with the participants for feedback. Analysis of the interviews and feedback used grounded theory methodology.

RESULTS: A unifying social theory was developed called 'A Way to Survive'. Survival experiences for these participants ranged from the life threatening to the mundane. The major categories linked to survival were; psychosis, identity, alienation, God/religion, family, basic life stuff and health services.

CONCLUSIONS: A number of implications for service development and clinical practice were identified. Qualitative methodology for people with persistent psychotic symptoms allows for a depth and richness of information that may not be accessed using quantitative techniques. A number of difficulties in both collection and analysis arise from the presence of psychosis and further research in this area is required.

About the HRMAS ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER:
An occasional newsletter sent by the Health Research Methods Advisory Service (HRMAS) to a New Zealand-wide subscriber group (over 500 on the distribution list). The HRMAS is funded by the School of Population Health, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, University of Auckland

The purpose of the newsletter is to provide research information and resources for health and social science researchers.

The newsletter focuses mainly on the following areas:
- evaluation research
- survey research
- community consultation and collaboration (particularly with Maori and Pacific Island communities)
- policy research
- managing research
- writing proposals for health research funding
- qualitative research methods
- economic evaluation in health

Send comments and news to dr.thomas@auckland.ac.nz.

See our webpage (and previous HRMAS newsletters) at: http://www.health.auckland.ac.nz/hrmas

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