

BRIDGING THE GAP

PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHANGE IN REFUGEE CHILD & FAMILY HEALTH

NEWSLETTER #13 FEBRUARY 2017

Happy new year! As we move into 2017 we celebrate the contributions of all who have participated in the Bridging the Gap partnership over the past 12 months. 2016 was an amazing year of learnings and achievements. In this edition we share some details of publicity, presentations and publications and congratulate colleagues.

Group pregnancy care for refugee background women

State government support

The Murdoch Childrens Research Institute and partner agencies have been awarded 4 years of funding to expand group pregnancy care (Healthy Happy Beginnings).

The project is part of the Strategic Partnerships: Capacity Building and Participation Program with the Multicultural and Social Cohesion Division of the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The funding will support the implementation of group pregnancy care at each site using the Plan Do Study Act framework.

A rigorous evaluation has been designed which will include the employment of bicultural research staff to conduct interviews with women throughout their participation in the program.

Community Advisory Groups will be established to support and provide advice for the implementation and evaluation of each new program.

Finalist: 2016 VicHealth Awards

Healthy Happy Beginnings: innovation to promote refugee child and family health was a finalist in the 2016 VicHealth awards. This is testament to the dedication and persistence of the staff and partners contributing to this program.



Jo

Szwarc, Elisha Riggs, Waan Tardiff, Jane Yelland at the VicHealth awards ceremony

Media coverage!

SBS World News recently visited the Healthy Happy Beginnings program in Werribee to film and interview women and staff about the program. Please click on the link to watch the 2 minute feature:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2016/12/18/karen-community-mothers-club-making-life-easier-refugee-mums-be>

NHMRC Partnership application

In December 2016, MCRI and partners submitted an NHMRC application to support the expansion of group pregnancy care to include a total of 8 groups over 5 years. The outcome is expected to be announced June/July 2017.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

MURDOCH CHILDRENS RESEARCH INSTITUTE

VICTORIAN FOUNDATION FOR SURVIVORS OF TORTURE

MONASH HEALTH

WESTERN HEALTH

CITY OF GREATER DANDENONG

CITY OF WYNDHAM

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

MERCY HOSPITALS VICTORIA

VICSEG NEW FUTURES

With thanks to:

Mary Anne Biro



Mary Anne Biro is now on leave leading up to her retirement in mid-2017.

Mary Anne has made a wonderful contribution as midwife, manager, lecturer and researcher to improving the way maternity care is provided to Australian families and to outcomes for women and their babies. Mary Anne has had significant responsibilities and leadership of midwifery education at both Victoria and Monash University.

Mary Anne was the first manager of the Birth Centre at Queen Victoria Hospital for Women, which later moved to Monash Health; and conducted the first randomised-controlled trial of team midwifery care.

Many thanks to Mary Anne for her participation in Bridging the Gap as an investigator and the steering group, and to contributing to the success of the Language in Labour initiative. We have benefited greatly from her wisdom and insights.

Rhonda Small

Rhonda is a much respected long-term colleague and an investigator on Bridging the Gap. She is retiring from the Judith Lumley Centre to concentrate on continuing with work at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, based there for 8 weeks each year.

Rhonda has worked at the Judith Lumley Centre (formerly Mother and Child Health Research) since the Centre was established in 1991 and was its Director from 2009 to 2013.

Rhonda's expansive research program has been inspirational and many of us have learnt from the care and rigour in which she has conducted epidemiological and intervention studies to improve the lives of women having a baby. Her cross-cultural research has informed many other research projects including Bridging the Gap.

We look forward to continuing our collaboration with Rhonda in her role at the Karolinska Institute where she is involved in a trial of group pregnancy care for refugee women, and thank her for many contributions to Bridging the Gap. We will always remember her analogy - and the drawing - of the 'too hard basket' :



“

Working with refugees and asylum seekers has often been put in the too hard basket. Bridging the Gap has provided the sparks for maternity and MCH staff to work in this space. Through taking small steps and breaking things down into bite size pieces, change and new ways of looking at working together have become possible.” (Partnership Forum, 2015)

Congratulations to:

Euan Wallace



Euan Wallace is a chief investigator on Bridging the Gap, has been instrumental to the design of the partnership with the maternity sector, and his wise counsel has been valuable to processes enabling quality improvement.

Euan has been appointed the inaugural Chief Executive Officer of *Safer Care Victoria*. Safer Care Victoria, is a government initiative in response to the Review of Hospital Safety and Quality Assurance, and will be leading quality and safety improvement in Victorian public and private health services.

Congratulations Euan!

Dannielle Vanpraag

We were thrilled to hear of the birth of baby Esther in December. All family members are doing well. Dannielle is currently on maternity leave from her role with Bridging the Gap.



Publications

Cultural safety and belonging for refugee background women attending group pregnancy care: an Australian qualitative study

Karen women's experiences of a new model of group pregnancy care were recently reported in the online journal 'Birth'. Nineteen women who participated in the first year of *Healthy Happy Beginnings* reported feeling empowered and confident through learning about pregnancy and childbirth in a facilitated group setting. They felt prepared, confident and reassured from their participation in the program. The women identified that the greatest benefits came from storytelling with peers, and developing trusting relationships with a team of professionals, with whom women were able to communicate in their own language. Women also discussed the pivotal role of the bicultural worker in the multidisciplinary care team and transition to maternal and child health care.

You may be able to access the paper here: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/birt.12272/full>

Or request: bridgingthegap@mcri.edu.au

Improving the ascertainment of refugee-background people in health datasets and health services

Ascertainment of vulnerable populations in health datasets is critical to monitoring disparities in health outcomes, enables service planning and guides the delivery of health care. There are challenges to improving the accuracy of ascertainment of refugee background, with sensitivities for both consumers and providers about the way identifying questions are asked. Initial testing of four data items in maternity and early childhood health services (maternal country of birth, year of arrival in Australia, requirement for an interpreter and women's preferred language) suggests that these are straightforward items to collect and acceptable to service administrators, care providers and to women.

You may be able to access the paper here:

<http://www.publish.csiro.au/ah/AH16164>

Or request: bridgingthegap@mcri.edu.au

Presentations

It is great to see collaborators in Bridging the Gap presenting at conferences. We welcome our collaborators to present Bridging the Gap projects at conferences. Please contact the MCRI team to discuss presentations you would like to give.

NHMRC Symposium on Research Translation, Melbourne, November 2016

Jane Yelland, Elisha Riggs and Bridging the Gap partners

Evidence informed healthcare quality initiatives to improve refugee families' outcomes

Australian College Neonatal Nurses Conference, Melbourne, September 2016

Chris East and the Bridging the Gap partnership

Plan, Do, Study, Act: partnering for quality improvement to address refugee perinatal health and health care inequalities

Victorian Maternal and Child Health Nurses Conference, Melbourne, October 2016

Waan Tardiff, Pauline Petschel, Elisha Riggs

Healthy Happy Beginnings

Teaching and Learning about Health Literacy Symposium, Melbourne, September 2016

Elisha Riggs, Jane Yelland, Philippa Duell-Piening, Stephanie Brown

Health literacy interventions to improve refugee maternal and child health

Monash Health Translation Precinct: Research Week, Melbourne, November, 2016

Chris East, Mary Anne Biro, Karen Wigg, John A, Jenny Morgans, Wendy Dawson, Jane Yelland et al.

Communication in care: quality improvement initiative to engage professional interpreters in labour

Foundation House professional development opportunities 2017

As reported in the last newsletter over 70 people were involved in Bridging the Gap professional development in the last quarter of 2016. Participant evaluations have been overwhelmingly positive.

Please click on the link to the Foundation House 2017 training calendar.

http://learn.foundationhouse.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/2017-Calendar_FINAL.pdf

About Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap is a partnership between Healthy Mothers Healthy Families research group at Murdoch Childrens Research Institute and the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (Foundation House), maternity and maternal & child health services in Melbourne's south east and west, primary health care networks, local and state government.

Bridging the Gap is supported by contributions from the partner organisations and a partnership grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council (2013-2017).

This newsletter has been put together by the Healthy Mothers Healthy Families research group at MCRI. For more information please contact:

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