

Australasian Society for Psychiatric Research

8 September 2010

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Message from the President

Dear members,

A few important points:

ASPR Scientific Meeting. Registration for the ASPR Scientific meeting is now open. We look forward to seeing all members at the meeting in Sydney in December.

Membership fees. An email will be sent in the next week or so to individuals whose membership renewal is due. Thank you to all who have already renewed membership.

Sponsorship for ASPR prizes. This year we aimed to establish longer term relationships with our industry sponsors. I am delighted to report that Lilly has undertaken to support the Oration for three years 2010-2012 inclusive, that AFFIRM (the Australian Foundation for Mental Health Research) have undertaken to support the prize for the early career research for three years 2010 to 2012, and that the Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW Inc has voted to continue support of ASPR prizes for a further five years till 2015. ASPR is grateful for the continued and generous support of our sponsors for these important prizes and awards. Please look at the Awards on the ASPR website and in this bulletin and begin to consider who you might nominate in the various categories. We will open nominations for these awards very soon. Please take a few minutes to consider those individuals who are contributing to research excellence in Australia. The more nominations the better!

NHMRC Project Grants _Feedback to the NHMRC. Many senior researchers within our society have voiced their concerns about the processes and reviews associated with both CRE and NHMRC Project Grants this round. ASPR would very much like to know if you have had concerns about the processes associated with the grants this year. We would like to keep a record of any difficulties you may have experienced as a applicant (rejoinders and reviews), as a reviewer (excessive number of reviews to be completed quickly) or with any other aspect of the process. This information will be collated and presented to the NHMRC. Please email Kanupriya.Kalia@anu.edu.au. We need to provide feedback to the NHMRC to improve this process.

With best wishes,
Helen



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ASPR Committee Contacts

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ASPR Matters

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

If you have not already done so, please remember to renew your membership in order to receive this email bulletin and save \$\$\$ on registration fees at the upcoming conference! To renew please complete this [form](#) and return to Mick Gould at convention@optusnet.com.au

AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHIATRIC RESEARCH 2010 CONFERENCE

Dates: Sun 5 - Wed 8 December 2010

Venue: Swiss Grand Bondi, Sydney, Australia

Website: www.iceaustralia.com/aspr2010

Full Program Now Available!

We are pleased to announce the program for the ASPR 2010 Conference is now available on the conference website. This is a premier industry event for members of the Society, trainees, mental health practitioners and researchers will attract both national and international audiences and is set to be the most innovative ASPR Conference yet.

Major conference highlights include:

- International keynote speakers Professor John O'Brien, Professor of Old Age Psychiatry, Newcastle University, United Kingdom and Professor Ranga Krishnan, Duke University School of Medicine, Singapore and USA
- Australian of the Year Professor Patrick McGorry, Chair of Youth Mental Health, University of Melbourne and Executive Director of ORYGEN Research Centre
- Plenary speakers Professor Bernard Balleine, Brain & Mind Research Institute, Professor Richard Banati, Ramaciotti Centre for Brain Imaging, Professor Max Bennett, Brain & Mind Research Institute, Professor Ian Overall, University of Melbourne, Professor Rhoshel Lenroot, University of New South Wales and Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute, Professor John Mendoza, ConNetica Consulting, Professor Chris Pantelis, University of Melbourne and Dr Margie Wright, Queensland Institute of Medical Research
- Our range of practical, expert-led pre-conference workshops and seminars (refer to the conference website for a comprehensive breakdown of these sessions)
- The Gala Dinner, the highlight event of the social program

To view the full program please visit the conference website <http://www.iceaustralia.com/aspr2010/program.html>

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ASPR Matters

ASPR 2010 EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION

Early Bird Registration for conference is also available. Register now to secure your discounted Early Bird rate and save \$\$\$\$. Registrations for Early Bird close 6th October 2010. Prices start from just \$695 for ASPR members. Please visit the conference website www.iceaustralia.com/aspr2010 to register online **Need further information?** Visit the conference website, or contact the Conference Organisers: International Conferences & Events Ph: 03 9681 6288 E: aspr2010@iceaustralia.com W: www.iceaustralia.com/aspr2010

ASPR 2010 AWARDS

2010 Nominations closing date: 30 October, 2010. See [here](#) for full details.

Founders Medal

This award was named in honour of the four founders of ASPR: Professors Scott Henderson, Issy Pilowsky, Graham Burrows and Peter Beaumont. The medal is awarded to persons who, over their entire careers, have made a contribution of significance to psychiatric research.

Selection Criteria: Criteria for assessing a nominee's track record are rated in NHMRC categories: publications, grants, and impact. Ties will be decided by contribution to ASPR.

ASPR Eli Lilly Oration Award

This Oration is given at each conference by a member of ASPR who is prominent or rising to prominence in the Australian and New Zealand psychiatric research community. Eli Lilly company pays the expenses of the Orator to attend and present an Oration at the annual meeting and gives a prize of \$8000 towards this person's research.

Selection Criteria: Criteria for assessing a nominee's track record are rated in NHMRC categories: publications, grants, and impact. Ties will be decided by contribution to ASPR.

ASPR Schering-Plough Award

The ASPR Schering-Plough Award is intended for ASPR researchers whose work is beginning to make a significant impact on the national and international scene, reflecting either scientific excellence or public impact (or both) - the "rising stars" in mental health research. The successful applicant will receive a plaque, a certificate and \$1000. In general, the award is made to researchers up to and including 35 years of age. However, researchers over the age of 35 may make an application on the basis of early career status.

Selection Criteria: (a) the scientific quality and/or impact of the submissions; and (b) the applicant's track record (relative to opportunity

Australian Rotary Health (ARH) Knowledge Dissemination Award

ARH has established an annual award to recognise excellence in knowledge dissemination and research translation. The award consists of a framed certificate and the expenses of attending the ASPR conference.

Selection Criteria: The entry should describe the activity, the target audience, and the evidence base for the research/knowledge which is being promoted. It should also describe the impact that their activity has had and how this was measured.

AFFIRM Early Career Scholar Award

This award is for a researcher early in their career to enable attendance at an overseas conference at which they will be presenting research or to facilitate an overseas study opportunity. The winner will receive up to \$4000 to facilitate the above.

ASPR Consumer-Researcher Award

In 2010, ASPR will award the Consumer-Researcher Award on the basis of research posters submitted to the 2010 ASPR Annual Conference. ASPR will invite representatives from a consumer organisation to take a prominent role in judging the posters. The winner will receive a certificate and award of \$1000 will be presented at the Annual Conference.

Process: All posters submitted to the ASPR 2010 Annual Conference will be considered for the award.

Selection Criteria: a) The relevance of the research presented for mental health consumers, and b) The clarity of presentation. All posters will be considered.

Depression & Anxiety Consumer Research Unit (CRU) Medal

This award will be presented to the consumer-researcher who is judged to best meet the selection criteria based on a short written submission to the judging panel. The panel will be comprised of consumers with lived experience of a depression or anxiety disorder and will be Chaired by the Director of the Depression and Anxiety Consumer Research Unit at CMHR, ANU. A certificate and medal will be presented at the Annual ASPR Conference.

ASPR-Schizophrenia Fellowship Consumer-Researcher Award

A certificate and award of \$350 will be presented at the Annual Conference. The conditions of this award are the same as the conditions of the ASPR Consumer-Researcher Award. This award is offered to the second place getter. Do not submit nominations for this award. All posters will be considered.

Click [here](#) to view full descriptions of all awards.

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Conferences and Related

AUSTRALASIAN CONFERENCE ON CENTENARIANS

The Brain and Ageing Research Program (chair: Prof Perminder Sachdev) of the University of New South Wales (UNSW) invites you to the inaugural Australasian Conference on Centenarians, “**Living to 100: The Science and the Art**”, to be held on the 11th-12th November, 2010 at the UNSW campus in Kensington, Sydney. Leading national researchers on various aspects of exceptional longevity will present. The Keynote speaker will be **Prof Leonard Poon**, leader of the Georgia Centenarian Study and internationally renowned for his work in this field. Symposia topics include genetics, nutrition, risk factors, cognition and the brains of the very old, and community impact of extreme longevity. The conference will offer an excellent opportunity to establish collaborative research in this field to further advance the Australian Studies of Centenarians. Please hurry as registration numbers are capped. See www.med.unsw.edu.au/livingto100 or email Dr Melissa Slavin m.slavin@unsw.edu.au for further information.

THE 14TH PACIFIC RIM COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS SCIENTIFIC MEETING

Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre from the 28th - 30th October 2010.

The conference program will feature over **140 presenters**. The full list of Keynote, Workshop and Symposium speakers and topics can be viewed [here](#). Conference registration is now open online. You can view full details [here](#).

Conferences Continued

SURVEY OF HIGH IMPACT PSYCHOSIS (SHIP): SEPTEMBER UPDATE

SHIP is the second national survey of psychosis, funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. We are now halfway through enumeration. By end of July, 764 of the pool of people screen-positive for psychosis and randomised for interview had been assessed.

The Survey includes some 1500 base variables. Instruments/questions have been selected on the basis of their reliability; availability; cost/time effectiveness; and comparability with (a) the Low Prevalence (Psychotic) Disorders Study 1997-1998 to provide some measure of change and (b) the 2nd National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing 2007 and other ABS and population surveys for benchmarking against population norms. The main domains covered are:

- Clinical and cognitive profile
- Physical well-being
- Measures of impairments and disabilities
- Social participation and functioning
- Socio-economic/demographic profile incl. education, finances, employment, living circumstances
- Service utilisation and perceived need for services incl. evidence-based service provision and intervention
- Measures of quality of life

Novel components include:

1. Brief assessment of cognitive function
2. Clinical assessment of physical morbidity and blood testing for metabolic measures
3. Use of the Multidimensional Scale of Independent Functioning to get a detailed assessment of role function, including level of role support
4. Investigation of the role of the general practitioner in the management of the patient with psychosis in a primary care setting
5. Estimation of prevalence of psychosis among people solely in contact with non-government organisations (in addition to prevalence within in- and outpatient services)

Members of the SHIP Technical Advisory Group and Project Implementation Steering Group: V Morgan, A Jablensky, A Waterreus, R Bush, V Carr, D Castle, M Cohen, C Galletly, C Harvey, P McGorry, J McGrath, H Stain, B Hocking, A Mackinnon, A Neil, S Saw.

For further information, contact Vera Morgan (National Project Director/Convenor) Vera.Morgan@uwa.edu.au

Conferences Continued

4TH ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION: A DIALOGUE ACROSS DISCIPLINES AND CULTURES

Suicide Prevention Australia is co-hosting the upcoming 4th Asia Pacific Conference of the International Association for Suicide Prevention.

Special Guest Speaker:

Patrick McGorry, Australian of the Year 2010, Professor of Youth Mental Health, University of Melbourne, Executive Director, Orygen Youth Health, Victoria, Australia

Key Speakers:

Alan (Lanny) Berman, BA, Ph.D
President, International Association of Suicide Prevention
Executive Director, American Association of Suicidology

Jane Burns, PhD
Executive Director, The Inspire International Research Institute

Andrew Tai Ann Cheng, Distinguished Research Fellow and Professor Institute of Biomedical Sciences, Academia Sinica Taipei, Taiwan

Diego de Leo, Conference Co-chair
Director, Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Prevention (AISRAP), Griffith University

Michael Dudley
Conference Co-Chair
Chairperson, Suicide Prevention Australia (SPA)

Jill Fisher

Brian Mishara, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Centre for Research and Intervention on Suicide and Euthanasia

Natasha Mitchell

Sandra Palmer

Lakshmi Ratnayeke
Director Rural Programme, Sri Lanka Sumithrayo, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Click here to [register](#)

Information

EVALUATION OF REACHOUT.COM FINDS THE SERVICE FACILITATES HELP-SEEKING AMONGST HIGHLY DISTRESSED YOUNG PEOPLE

Evaluation of ReachOut.com, a web based mental health service for young people aged 14-25, has found that the majority of young people who access the service are experiencing very high levels of psychological distress, and encouragingly, that the service facilitates help-seeking, with 37% of respondents who had ever visited ReachOut.com during a tough time reporting that the service helped them quite a bit or a lot to ask a professional for help.

The findings were drawn from the 2010 User Profiling Survey, a cross-sectional, self-selected questionnaire of over 1,500 new and repeat users of the website. This year's survey included measures relating to service integrity, attitudes and awareness of mental health difficulties, service utilisation and help seeking. It also introduced, for the first time, the Kessler-10 (K10), a standardised psychometric scale that measures psychological distress in participants – and found the majority of respondents scored in the high (19.4%) or very high (51.8%) range of psychological distress. Interestingly, only 40% of users reported visiting the site because they were going through a tough time and looking for help, suggesting that ReachOut.com is reaching a subsection of young people who do not yet recognise their need for support or intervention.

ReachOut.com is also having a positive impact on mental health literacy, an important precursor to help seeking and supporting peers to seek help. For those seeking information on a mental health issue, 70% reported learning where to get help from and 68% reported a better understanding of the mental health experiences of others after using ReachOut.com. Furthermore, nearly half of all respondents indicated that ReachOut.com has helped to “see things in a more balanced way (43.5%)” and “understand how the way you think about things can affect how you feel and behave (46.3%)” suggesting that young people who use ReachOut.com are building effective problem solving skills and healthy thinking patterns. Over half (61.5%) of respondents also acknowledged that ReachOut.com made them feel like they were not alone.

A summary report of the evaluation findings will be available from www.inspire.org.au later this year.

Submitted by Cheryl Mangan

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Advertising in the ASPR Bulletin

The ASPR Email Bulletin is sent out once every two months, on the first Wednesday of that month. We are happy to include relevant news items and information about positions, conferences and courses. However, the Bulletin does not include attachments that are not core ASPR business. Therefore, please email a very brief statement (2-3 lines) on the news item or about the position, conference or course, with website and contact details for those who may want more information, to **Kanupriya Kalia: Kanupriya.Kalia@anu.edu.au**

Your email should arrive at least one week before the end of the month to ensure inclusion in the next Bulletin. In order to avoid email overload, advertising material is not emailed to ASPR members in between Bulletins.

Privacy Information

If you would like to update your email details or to remove yourself from the ASPR electronic mailing list, please contact **Kanupriya Kalia: Kanupriya.Kalia@anu.edu.au**