

Our New Head of School

They say that first impressions count and I would have to say that my first impressions of the School of Physiotherapy, Curtin University, the physiotherapy profession in Western Australia and Perth as a place to live have all been very positive. I am looking forward to my time as Head of School. I hope that it will mark a new stage in the development and advancement of the School of Physiotherapy.



The School has a very good international reputation that is built on the quality of the staff and the very high quality students that we attract. I have had the opportunity to meet with all of the staff in the School on a one-to-one basis and I have been impressed by the dedication that everyone shows. Many people in other Schools in Curtin University have also told me that they are envious of the very high calibre students that we attract to the undergraduate program in physiotherapy. Equally, I have been very impressed by the diversity of our postgraduate students and the range of countries that they come from. Each of these people brings a richness to the School based on their diverse cultures and their different experiences of 'being a physiotherapist'.

In this edition of 'Hands On' we highlight some of our postgraduate courses. The School of Physiotherapy offers a wide range of options including continuing education courses, Graduate Certificates and Professional Masters programs. It is increasingly the case that completing an

entry-level degree in physiotherapy is simply the end of the beginning. We all require further education and development to maximise our potential. I encourage you to consider the range of programs that the School of Physiotherapy offers as an opportunity for you to pursue your own professional development.

This year, the School has also launched a new initiative with the start of our Graduate Entry Masters (GEM) program. We are one of the first physiotherapy schools in Australia to offer this type of program. The GEM program provides a tremendous opportunity for those people who have already completed another degree to become physiotherapists. It will add to the diversity of backgrounds that we have in the profession and it provides an excellent way for Curtin to address the current shortage of physiotherapists in WA. The Allied Health Professionals Employers' Group's position paper has highlighted shortages of physiotherapists in the disability sector and in rural areas. In my meetings with Directors of Physiotherapy in the major metropolitan hospitals, the tight labour market was also raised as an important issue. The addition of graduates from the GEM program and the fact that they graduate in April rather than the traditional November graduations will help to increase the number of physiotherapists in the workforce and to spread the availability of new graduates. If you have any friends or relatives with appropriate qualifications who would like to become physiotherapists ask them to consider becoming a GEM student.

My aim is to have the School develop a lifelong relationship with our students and graduates. To that end we are trying to build much stronger links with our alumni. We have added a new section to our webpage where alumni and other interested individuals can register to receive information about the School. By registering you can receive 'Hands On', get updates on the 50th Anniversary celebrations and find out about the move to our new building in 2002. As a School we are trying to make a better connection with

members of our extended family. I would encourage you to take a few minutes to register with us.

The School has many strengths but there is scope for a lot of improvement. It is my aim to rapidly progress the School through its next stage of development. Over the next few months we will be reviewing our Postgraduate Coursework Programs and developing a strategic plan. I intend to significantly improve postgraduate educational opportunities in the School and to make the School a world leader in Physiotherapy Research. We have a very exciting future ahead.

Tony Wright

Register with the School

We would like to be able to contact you to provide you with information about our courses, short news releases, electronic copies of 'Hands On' and other goodies. To register go to

<http://www.physiotherapy.curtin.edu.au/internet/contactsignup.shtml>

Short Course in Pulmonary Rehabilitation

This very successful course ran for the 3rd time from June 4th-8th of this year. The course has proved to be very attractive, in part due to the unique blend of theoretical and practical sessions. The participants have the opportunity to be involved in the outpatient pulmonary rehabilitation exercise program run by Dr Sue Jenkins and Nola Cecins at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

To date, 49 physiotherapists have completed the course with almost 90% of the participants coming from interstate or overseas (Japan, South Africa, Singapore and New Zealand).

It is planned to hold a course in cardiac rehabilitation in 2002. For information, contact Sue Jenkins via email at s.jenkins@curtin.edu.au



Evidence Based Practice 651 replaces Health Research Methods 651

For the past 20 years, the School of Public Health has been delivering Health Research Methods 651. During this time, students have complained about the format, delivery style and relevance of this unit. To respond to this feedback, the School of Physiotherapy has developed a unit titled Evidence Based Practice 651. This year, this new unit was introduced and has proved to be very successful. Dr Kathy Henderson is the unit coordinator and she has instructed the students in research design, evidenced based practice and has developed critical appraisal skills of the literature by introducing a Journal Club. Dr Marie Blackmore delivered the statistical and computing component of this course. Before first semester commenced, students were sent a manual on basic statistics. This manual was written by Dr Blackmore and also proved to be another successful new initiative.

Professional Masters Programs

In January 2001, the Master of Applied Physiotherapy Sciences (MAPS) replaced the Master of Physiotherapy title which is now being used for the new Graduate Entry Master of Physiotherapy Program. Students who study the physiotherapy streams such as Gerontology, Neurosciences, Women's Health and Paediatrics will graduate with this new title. Our highly successful Masters of Manipulative Therapy and Masters of Sports Physiotherapy Programs continue under their existing titles.

The Graduate Certificate in Physiotherapy

This course has been redeveloped. Four generic units include 2 theoretical units and 2 clinical units. Paediatrics is being used as the prototype for the development of this Graduate Certificate. In first semester, the first unit was delivered as a Distance Education package. On line web site discussions were used. In second semester, the Clinical Management unit will be conducted by Paediatric Agencies who will organise Clinical Experience Opportunities (CEO's).

Graduate Certificate in Orthopaedic Manual Therapy

Manual Concepts (Kim Robinson and Toby Hall) held a four week intensive course at Curtin University in January and July 2001. Manual Concepts offers a scholarship to a country physiotherapist to the value of \$5,500. (See Rural

Scholarship Announcement). At the end of the four week intensive course, students may enrol into the 'Graduate Certificate in Orthopedic Manual Therapy' and undertake distance education units in Physiology of Pain 551, Pathology and Diagnosis 551 and Functional and Applied Anatomy 551.

Evaluation of Postgraduate courses

In second semester, all postgraduate courses will be evaluated by using CEW. This is a web based computer evaluation which has been well established in the undergraduate program. It is an objective method of evaluation of students' perceptions of the units, delivery of material and the strengths and weaknesses of each of the units.

Postgraduate Review

The School of Physiotherapy is currently conducting a review of its postgraduate courses. Part of this review process is to involve past students and clinicians who are interested in contributing to a series of feedback sessions. If you are available, please contact the Postgraduate Secretary, Taeyla Mayde. Phone: 08 9266 3647 Email: t.mayde@curtin.edu.au

Postgraduate Staff

We would like to express our appreciation to Joanne Cunningham for her dedication and dynamic energy in establishing new ideas and concepts in both Biomechanics and Sports Clinic 651/652. For the past 18 months, Joanne has been unrelenting in her commitment to share her theoretical and clinical knowledge with both postgraduate and undergraduate students. We wish Joanne success in her future ventures.

We welcome Helen Slater who is taking over Joanne's position. More about Helen in a future edition.

Graduate Entry Master of Physiotherapy

This course is one of only two graduate entry courses in physiotherapy in Australia. It provides a fast track learning experience for students who already hold a bachelors degree or equivalent and who have attained a better than average grade in essential prerequisites subjects. Thus this degree is open to students with a diverse background and makes our program unique in Australia.

This six semester program runs over two calendar years and includes the summer semester. Currently there are 15 students in the program. Some examples of the previous degrees held by these students include Human Movement and Exercise

Science, Biomedical Science and Exercise Physiology, Sports Science, Anatomy and Human Biology, Life Sciences, Kinesiology, Health and Physical Education. Many of the students have significant and diverse work experience which is relevant to physiotherapy. Students in the program have previously studied in local universities as well as interstate and internationally (Canada). With these additional qualities and life experiences, the students in this program will bring a greater diversity into the physiotherapy profession.

Feedback from students indicates that the early clinical exposure (in the form of supervised clinical visits) offered by this course is useful for the integration of knowledge and they find these visits exciting. They feel that this motivates their learning.

The Master of Physiotherapy represents another step in the evolution of the physiotherapy profession in Australia and provides an alternative avenue for admission into Physiotherapy. The School of Physiotherapy at Curtin is endeavouring to increase the number of graduates to meet the workforce shortage in this state. In addition, this program aims to meet the needs of global changes and will produce graduates who have qualifications which match the level of those countries such as USA which dominate international trade.

The structure of this program has been formulated with Members of the Advisory Committee and the Curtin Consultative Committee so that graduates are ready to enter the workforce in mid April of each year. This will be very advantageous to the Western Australian health service as there is usually a personnel shortage in key areas of practice during this time.

Enrol Now For 2002

Courses available.

Master of Manipulative Therapy
(Full-time and part-time)

Master of Sports Physiotherapy
(Full-time and part-time)

Master of Applied Physiotherapy Sciences in the Neuroscience or Gerontology stream
(Full-time and part-time)

Graduate Certificate in Physiotherapy (Paediatrics) (Part-time)

For enrolment details contact
Anne Crouch, Student Liaison Officer.
Email: A.Crouch@curtin.edu.au
Tel: 08 9266 3609/4660

International Interests

The School continues to recruit students from all over the world. Currently we have 36 international, undergraduate students. These students come from all parts of the globe, including North America, Europe and South East Asia. Currently students from Norway comprise the largest cohort.

At the postgraduate level we have 18 international students in course work degree programs and 15 in research degrees. Again, Europe and North America are well represented among this group. There are also 4 students from Japan and one from Jordan.

Added to the on-shore international student numbers, we have a program running in Singapore and are working toward offering programs in Malaysia and Germany. The Japanese program is currently in suspension, however, the School, is now geared to respond rapidly to a request for degree conversion programs at off-shore locations.

Clinical placements for undergraduate students have been arranged in Northern Italy and we are negotiating placements in Norway and, possibly in Sarawak.

Our aim is to achieve a broad mix of international students at all course levels as this is a mutually enriching process.



Rural Scholarship Announcement

Certificate in Orthopaedic Manual Therapy January and June 2002

Manual Concepts and the School of Physiotherapy at Curtin University are pleased to again offer this valuable post-graduate scholarship in manual therapy. This scholarship will be awarded to a physiotherapist working in rural Western Australia who satisfies specific selection criteria. The applicant must be a member of the APA, have worked in rural Western Australia for at least 18 months, have the support of their region and be committed to work in the rural community. The scholarship forms part of a developing collaborative strategy between the School of Physiotherapy and Manual Concepts and formalises a relationship to provide postgraduate education in manual therapy. The successful applicant will be offered a free position (valued at \$5500) on this 4 week full time clinical program. Participants completing the above program can then apply to undertake three distance learning units offered by Curtin University's School of Physiotherapy, thereby achieving a Graduate Certificate in Orthopaedic Manual Therapy.



Interested physiotherapists should contact Anne Crouch, the student liaison officer, at A.Crouch@curtin.edu.au
Tel: 08 9266 3609/4660

Sports Physiotherapy Makes a Difference At Firefighters Championships

In 2000, the Curtin School of Physiotherapy was approached by the Fire and Emergency Authority (FESA) to provide a Sports Physiotherapy service for the Volunteer Firefighters State Easter Championships. Four postgraduate students were rostered on duty during Saturday and Monday. The aim of this service was to reduce the total impact of injuries through the early treatment of individuals injured during competition and to provide treatment for those volunteers with pre-existing injuries.

During the 2000 Easter State championships, 157 injuries were treated and only one Workers' Compensation Claim was submitted. Prior to these Easter championships, there were other competitions held throughout the State and 20 incidents relating to the Volunteer Firefighter events were recorded which resulted in 16 Workers' Compensation Claims. The actual cost of these claims to date is running at \$41,550 with a further provision of \$34,552.

Because of the marked reduction of Workers' Compensation Claims at the 2000 Easter Championships, FESA contacted the School to organise Sports Physiotherapy Coverage throughout the State for 2001. The scope of this service included the State Open Championships held in Geraldton in March, four of the five Zone Championships held between March and April (a service was not provided at the North West Zone



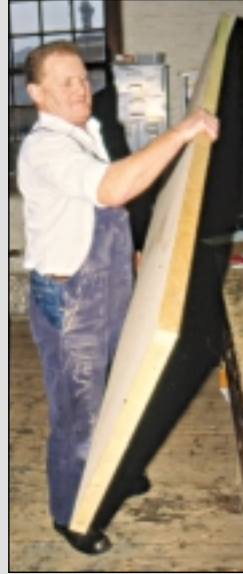
Championship in February) and the Easter Championships held in North Fremantle. FESA valued and budgeted for this Sports Physiotherapy Coverage and financially rewarded physiotherapists for their efforts.

During 2001 more than 350 competitors were treated by Physiotherapists. One of the major results of this Physiotherapist Sports Coverage service was a reduction of the number of reported incidents related to the Volunteer Firefighter events. Seven incidents were reported with 6 leading to a Workers' Compensation Claim and the actual cost paid to date has been \$1,870 with a provision for these claims of \$19,130. Compared with last year's Workers' Compensation Claims, these have been reduced significantly and have produced a positive savings for the government. FESA is delighted with these results and hopes to expand their involvement of Curtin and the physiotherapy profession.

Yes! Physios can make a difference!

Preventing Injuries Associated with Manual Tasks using Participative Ergonomics

Associate Professor Leon Straker is collaborating with researchers from Curtin's School of Psychology and the University of Queensland's Department of Human Movement to evaluate the efficacy of participative ergonomics to reduce injuries associated with manual tasks. The project is being funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (\$106,000), WorkCover Queensland (\$89,000) and the Division of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (\$91,000).



140 workplaces employing 30-100 people were audited during late 2000. The workplaces were all from the food processing, health and construction related industries. The audit was conducted by specially trained inspectors using a measurement tool developed for the project. These inspectors have legal right of entry to workplaces enabling us to collect data from all selected workplaces.

50 of these workplaces volunteered to be part of the trial and we are currently delivering an intervention aimed at improving the management systems and

reducing physical risk estimates to a random sample of these volunteers. The intervention involves a number of visits by trained ergonomics consultants over a 3 month period. Work teams are trained in risk assessment and control techniques. Outcome measures include assessments of the management systems, physical risk estimates, productivity and workers compensation and lost time injury data.

This will be the first randomised and controlled trial ever conducted on the efficacy of participative ergonomics and its results are eagerly awaited by organisations within Australia and internationally.

LATE EFFECTS OF DISABILITY CLINIC

As part of her new role as a Research Professor in the Division of Health Sciences, Professor Joan Cole is working with Royal Perth Hospital to examine the needs of those people in the community who have a major physical disability and are now suffering the effects of aging. For some, the combination of the two factors reduces their ability to remain independent in the community.

The Late Effects of Disability (LED) Clinic is the brainchild of Royal Perth Hospital's Physiotherapy Staff, and is administered by Adjunct Associate Professor John Buchanan, Superintendent Physiotherapist, Ms Gnanaletchumy Jegasothy, and Ms Nicky Fortescue. The LED Clinic is being further strengthened by the services of a Medical Specialist in Rehabilitation Medicine who sees all patients following an extensive physiotherapy evaluation in the Out Patient Department at the Shenton Park Campus. The combination of administrative, neurological, orthopaedic and research expertise is proving to be a fruitful partnership.

The objective of the clinic is to provide a single point of reference for people with disabilities who identify a decline in their functional abilities. They are referred to RPH by their general practitioners.

The success of the LED Clinic is related to the ability to combine the knowledge of several very experienced physiotherapists with a wide range of skills who are also familiar with the disabilities which originally disrupted the lives of the clients.

Together with the clients, the functional problems can be teased out and strategies for addressing them devised. The goal is always to provide the client with solutions they can work through for themselves and to be an advisory resource to community practitioners.



The School of Physiotherapy is offering a professional 35mm slide making & 35mm slide scanning service for Professional Presentations.

- 35mm Slides \$7.15 each (inc GST) for ten slides or more
- 35mm Scanning \$2.75 each (Inc GST)
- Fast Turnaround for Urgent Work

Craig Cobb
Ph: (08) 9266 3657, Mobile: 0401 103 007, Email: icobbcc@info.curtin.edu.au

Student News

New Guild Representative

I have taken on the role of Shenton Park Satellite Campus Guild Representative for 2001. Put simply, my job is to liaise with both the School of Physiotherapy and Curtin Guild hierarchy and to facilitate an exchange of relevant information between them. I am also able to represent the views of students within the school to both the Guild and the University.

First semester 2001 has gone very smoothly with the majority of issues raised by physiotherapy students being dealt with by year and staff/student representatives. However, if you feel the Guild can assist in any way, don't hesitate to get in touch with me.



Best of luck with Semester 2,
Craig Wilson

APA Student Group

I would like to introduce the APA Student Group for 2001, third year students Damian Vance, Anna Mein, Fiona Eyres, Trish Butterly and myself. The committee is involved in providing further information on career paths and issues involving physiotherapy, opportunities to be involved with other professionals and promoting the physiotherapy profession in the community.

So far this year, we have been busy organising speakers to present to APA Student Group members on a variety of topics. Sports Physiotherapy, working overseas, working with indigenous people and Bowen Therapy were just a few! Next semester's topics should prove to be just as interesting.

A number of students from all years were involved with the APA stall at Garden Week in April, helping promote the APA and physiotherapy to the general public. Many special thanks, from the APA WA Branch and the Student Group, to those students who took up a great opportunity to be involved with other professional physiotherapists at the stall.

The rugby jumpers and t-shirts were very popular and we hope that those who ordered are happy with their purchases!



Kate Matthews