

SHARP Newsletter 2010



2010 COMMITTEE'S REPORT

SHARP has once again had a bumper year with our ~600 members participating in over 30 events. These events have ranged from events on campus, to rural trips, to community events, to national conferences. These events have raised awareness and understanding of rural, remote and Indigenous health issues and inspired us all to consider rural practice.

As well as all the events we get involved in, SHARP promotes a range of other rural health-related opportunities to members. Via our website and regular emails SHARP has encouraged SHARPIes to apply for rural scholarship and placement programs. In 2010, several SHARPIes were successful in their applications for these programs and have had fantastic experiences while on placement. We are hoping to hold a rural scholarships information night in 2011 where members can find out more about all the different programs, hear about some rural adventures, and get tips on how to apply. Keep your eyes open for this event and please get in touch if you have some pointers and exciting stories to share.

Other Highlights of 2010 include:



- SHARP being named Club of the Year for 2010 by UniCentre Clubs and Societies – the 2nd year in a row that we have won this award.
- Teena being a co-Senior Liaison Officers of the National Rural Health Students' Network (NRHSN)'s Medical Portfolio.
- Kay being recognised for 'Outstanding Service for General Staff' at the Vice-Chancellor's annual awards night.
- Teagan being selected to participate in the General Practice Network NT's Rural High School Visit Program in the Northern Territory, and was also the recipient of the Rural Health Workforce Australia sponsored award for Outstanding Contribution to a Rural or Remote community.
- SHARPIes being interviewed and their photos featured in an Australian Government (Department of Health and Ageing) booklet and banner about rural health.

It has been a great privilege to lead the club over the last 12 months and we couldn't have done it without the enthusiasm and hard work of you, our members. Your support and willingness to help out is much appreciated and is the reason why we continue to be one of the biggest clubs in the NRHSN and at the University of Wollongong (UOW). We look forward to seeing you getting involved in the club again next year. Also a huge thank you to the NRHSN and UniCentre Clubs and Societies, with both of whom we are proudly affiliated.

Enjoy reading this newsletter which summarises what SHARP got up to in 2010. What a busy yet fun year it has been!

Yours in rural health,

Aarielle, Abby, Catherine, David, Ellie, Emma, Ivonne, Jeremy, Justin, Kay, Kim, Naomi P., Naomi Y., Nikki, Sorrell, Teena, Teesha

EVENTS HELD:

Welcome BBQ for the new medical students (February 1)

SHARPIes Simon and Teena gave a powerpoint presentation about SHARP and the NRHSN to the 2010 cohort of medical students. This was followed by a yummy BBQ on the lawn outside the GSM and a free SHARP showbag for all the students.



SHARP 'MedCamp' Workshop (February 6)

Justin, Jeremy, Teena, and Kay headed to Fitzroy Falls to run a workshop at the annual MedCamp. The workshop included a range of rural-themed activities such as putting a tent up blind-folded, piñata, and thong-throwing.



Health and Behavioural Sciences Orientation (February 24)

SHARP went troppo and used inflatable palm trees to decorate the O-week information and membership stand. SHARP also ran a free BBQ, and handed out showbags to welcome all the new health students. 116 new SHARP members signed up on the day.



SHARP Bush Dance (March 12)

The 4th annual SHARP bushdance was held at the UniBar and included everyone's favourite Aussie BBQ. ~100 SHARPIes dusted off their country gear and boot-scooted to the tunes of the Wongawilli Bush Band.

SHARP AGM (March 18)

45 SHARPIes attended this event which was video-linked between the Wollongong and Shoalhaven campuses. At the AGM SHARPIes were updated about all the exciting SHARP events planned for the year, and elections were held for the SHARP Committee for 2010. 5 other SHARP meetings were held during 2010 – 4 committee meetings and 1 general meeting.

Hills Hoist Seminar Series

SHARP teamed up with WUHOW (Wollongong University Health Over Wealth) to present the Hills Hoist Seminar Series again this year. This seminar series is about encouraging medical, nursing, and allied health students to work in rural communities here and overseas when they graduate. 4 seminars were held in 2010 and each was video-linked to the Shoalhaven Campus. Students attending the seminars have found them inspiring.



On March 22, Jenny Lane discussed the challenges and rewards of working in refugee health. On May 3, Dr. Philippa Binns talked about exciting times working with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and in Tanzania. On August 10, a bunch of medical students who recently participated in an aid trip to Vanuatu shared their experiences. On September 7, Prof. Noel Tait spoke about his involvement in the humanitarian response to the 2009 Sumatran earthquake.



Close the Gap Day (March 25)

This annual event was bigger than ever and featured an inspiring presentation by traditional artist and healer Gary Simon 'Jagamarra'. The event also included a screening of Oxfam's 'Close the Gap – Let's Get It Right' DVD, a Welcome to Country, a BBQ, and cake! At both the Shoalhaven and Wollongong campuses there was also a stand where attendees could pick up Close the Gap merchandise and Indigenous Health resources, and add their name to the Close the Gap pledge that calls on Australian

governments to take action and remain committed to closing the 17-year gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. 350 UOW staff and students attended this event which received media coverage by WIN NEWS, the South Coast Register, UOWTV, and the UOW News and Media Unit. Check out the UOW News article at <http://media.uow.edu.au/news/UOW076023.html>.

National Rural Leadership Development Seminar (NRLDS) (April 8-10)

This landmark event was held at the University of Wollongong and attended by over 100 enthusiastic allied health, nursing and medical students. At least 2 students from every medical society and 2 students from every rural health club came to Wollongong where they developed skills that will help them on their way to becoming leaders in rural and remote practice.

NRLDS is a joint initiative of the NRHSN and the Australian Medical Students' Association (AMSA) and UOW's Graduate School of Medicine was proudly the gold sponsor of the inaugural event. The speakers at NRLDS were amazing and included Prof. Don Iverson, Faye McMillan, Tim Williams, Sam Bailey and Nina Funnell. Check out 2 UOW News articles about NRLDS at <http://media.uow.edu.au/news/UOW074174.html> AND <http://media.uow.edu.au/news/UOW076487.html>.

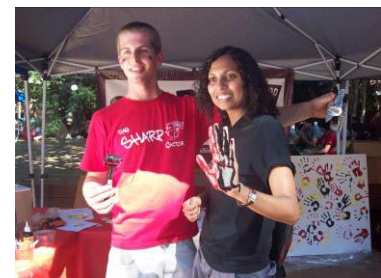


UniCentre Cup (April 16)

SHARP entered a team in this "All Club Event" organised by the Centre for Student Engagement. The team, lead by David, participated in Dodgeball, Soccer, Bocce, Oztag, and Volleyball.

Diversity Week Celebrations (April 21)

SHARP teamed up with the Woolyungah Indigenous Centre to hold an 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' stall on the Duckpond Lawn. Students and staff could try marinated BBQ kangaroo, make some bush jewellery, be entertained by didgeridoos, and learn more about rural and Indigenous health. There was also a BBQ lunch at the stall that raised money to send UOW students to the 2010 National Indigenous Student Tertiary Education Games.



UOW Student Experience Projects Showcase (April 28)

SHARP was invited to give a 3-minute presentation about our activities, and contribution to the UOW student experience. It was a great opportunity for SHARP to spread the word of rural health and increase awareness on campus of our events and activities. Check out a UOW News article about the showcase at <http://media.uow.edu.au/news/UOW077461.html>.

Vibe Alive Indigenous Festival, Moree, NSW (May 18-20)

Sorrell, Simon and Nadia attended this festival and promoted health to indigenous and non-indigenous kids from rural and regional NSW. They shared their enthusiasm for health with the students and encouraged healthy eating and lifestyle choices through hands-on sessions.

2 Deadly (June 23)

Indigenous school students visited the campus. SHARPIes helped out on the day as well as beforehand with bag-packing.



12th National University Rural Health Conference (July 15-17)

15 SHARPIes (Amit, Chris, Justin, Teena, Teesha, Abby, Jeremy, Emma, Ifrah, Hayley, Ivonne, Tyson, Naomi, David, Matthew) travelled to Alice Springs to attend this prominent event on the NRHSN calendar. Chris presented an abstract in the student presentations session of the conference. After meeting MC Ernie Dingo, hearing from several leaders in rural health, participating in skills workshops, and networking with over 400 students from rural health clubs around Australia, all have returned with much

enthusiasm for rural and remote practice. SHARP would like to thank the Graduate School of Medicine, UniCentre Clubs and Societies, and the Department of Health and Ageing for financial support in sending out SHARPIes to the conference. Also thank you to everyone who supported the Krispy Kreme Fundraiser and Cadbury Chocolate Fundraiser we held.

25th Illawarra Police Charity Ball (July 30)

About a dozen SHARPIes attended this annual event of the NSW Police Force and helped to welcome guests and sell fundraising balloons. The event raised \$15000 for Autism Spectrum and the Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW) Illawarra Centre.



Health Careers Expo at Wollongong Hospital (August 6)

Raj, Teesha, Chris, Rhys, Jacki, & Kay shared their university experiences with local high school students. The SHARP members also facilitated a role-play scenario that increased awareness of the range of professions that exist in health and discussed health career options.

Wakakirri Indigenous Festival, Barunga, NT (August 13)

SHARPIes Catherine, Bianca, and Kim teamed up with members of KRASH and StARRH to run interactive health-themed sessions with rural and remote school students.

AHM Check It (August 20)

This men's health event was held at the WIN Entertainment Centre and organised by the Healthier Illawarra Men committee. SHARP was heavily involved in promoting the event and recruiting student volunteers. The 100+ student volunteers were from a range of health disciplines and helped to conduct free health checks 983 men. Check out the UOW News articles about the event at <http://media.uow.edu.au/news/UOW084244.html> AND <http://media.uow.edu.au/news/UOW085834>.





Rural High School Visit to Walgett Shire (September 20-24)

Teesha joined 6 medical students from RHUWS (the University of Western Sydney's rural health club) on this road trip which was called 'Engage and Encourage'. They visited the central schools in Walgett, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge and spoke to the students there about health careers and the opportunities, pathways and support available. They also toured the Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service, Lightning Ridge Hospital and Collarenebri Medical Centre, visited the local tourist attractions, and learnt about Indigenous culture.

Rural Appreciation Weekend (RAW), Dunedoo (October 1-4)

This event was an opportunity to experience rural life and network with over 100 students from other rural health clubs. A busload of SHARPIes attended and participated in activities that included a Dunedoo street parade, camping under the stars, dinner at Dunedoo Golf Club, sheep-shearing and venomous snakes and Indigenous culture workshops, bonfire and marshmallow toasting, team-building activities. ABC TV's Landline also attended the event and ran a story about RAW. Many SHARPIes and other NRHSN students made cameos in the report which can be seen on the Landline website <http://www.abc.net.au/landline/content/2010/s3065825.htm>.



Illawarra Mental Health Awareness Expo (October 12)

A dozen SHARPIes helped out at this community event which was organised by IHMRI. The event was a huge success with hundreds of community members coming along to learn more about mental health services and hear first-hand about mental illness from 'Topo' Rodriguez, John Strang, and Summah McKinnon. SHARPIes welcomed and guided visitors, kept count of visitors, assisted with questionnaires on exit, and 'manned' a SHARP stall. At the stall, members of the public could find out more about SHARP, and pick

up copies of "When the cowpat hits the windmill – A guide for staying mentally fit written by students for students", a resource developed by the NRHSN in collaboration with Beyondblue.

Talk to a Rural Health Champion (October 14)

Dr. Kilfoyle, a Rural Health Champion who currently works in Alice Springs, came to share her passion for rural health with SHARPIes. She inspired us with her stories of living and working in the bush and the fantastic work-life balance she has achieved. This event was sponsored by Rural Health Workforce Australia. 2 lucky SHARPIes who attended the event also received \$50 iTunes vouchers – they were Aaron and Nicola.



Pit Stop – a preventative health program for men (October 15-17)

Benny, Rebecca, Nicholas, and Kay attended this exciting event held at Phillip Island, VIC. They assisted the Victorian Section of the Royal Flying Doctor Service to carry out quick health check ups on men attending the Australian MotoGP. Everyone who attended had a fantastic time and SHARP is hoping to send a bigger group of SHARPIes to Pit Stop next year.

A Rural Rubix Rumble Harbour Cruise (October 16)

This inter-club social event was a huge success with 60 SHARPIes attending. The SHARPIes were joined by 140 students from other rural health clubs across NSW.

Red Week and Red Party (October 18-22)

SHARP teamed up with Wollongong University Health Over Wealth (WUHOW) to hold a week-long series of events aimed at raising awareness of HIV/AIDS in developing countries. Proceeds from the events which included a BBQ and Red Party At The Brewery went to the Oaktree Foundation.

Centre for Student Engagement Awards Night (October 22)

SHARP scooped up a couple of awards at this annual night that celebrates the efforts and achievements of all the Clubs and Societies on campus. SHARP was awarded Club of the Year for the 2nd year in a row and SHARP was also named runner-up for the Service Club of the Year Award. Emma and Kay represented SHARP at this event.



Rural Medicine Australia Conference (October 22-24)

SHARPIes Sara, Rebecca, and Teena were selected to receive funding through the NRHSN's Conferences of National Significance (CoNS) program. They have each received funding to attend the Rural Medicine Australia Conference in Hobart this October. Visit the "Conferences" page of the SHARP website for more information about the CoNS program.



Stumping Serious Diseases Gala Dinner (October 23)

36 SHARPIes helped to sell raffle tickets at this annual event which is attended by many local and national celebrities and sports stars. The event is about raising awareness and funds for research into cancer and other serious diseases.

Pink and Blue Breakfast (October 27)

SHARPIes helped out at 8th annual Pink Breakfast that was at the same time a Blue Breakfast to raise awareness and funds for the National Breast Cancer Foundation and Movember Foundation. Around \$15,000 was raised at the event. Check out the UOW News article at <http://media.uow.edu.au/news/UOW090342.html>.



Annual Ceremony of Appreciation for the Body Donation Program (November 1)

4 SHARPIe nursing students assisted guests at this ceremony which is held to commemorate and honour the unique gift that donors make to the education and training of medical and health students, researchers, and staff.



Rise Above 4 Local Cancer Kids (November 5)

16 SHARPIes participated in this 24 Hour Charity Walk which raised funds to improve the care available locally for kids with cancer and their families. The event was held at the Illawarra Fly.

SHARP 2010 Christmas Party (December 8)

It was great to see so many SHARP members, their friends and family attend this end of year social event. The extravaganza included fine food and drinks. SHARPIes could also pick up their certificates from 'Check It' and 'Stumping Serious Diseases' and 'Pink and Blue Breakfast'. All the kids were delighted by a visit from Santa. Gifts were collected for a local charity.



UOW Graduation Ceremonies (December 14)

SHARPIes helped to usher at a number of graduation ceremonies, including the graduation of the first cohort of GSM students. A huge congratulations to all the SHARPIes who have graduated. We are proud of you!