PROSpective
Population Research and Outcome Studies

Celebrating one year at our new home - The University of Adelaide

Population Research and Outcome Studies (PROS) now sits within the Discipline of Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, at The University of Adelaide.

Our core business is the monitoring and surveillance of population health and chronic disease epidemiology. We continue to undertake population health research that provides high quality population health information.

Information from population health surveys is used to inform policy, programs and health services that promote the health and well being of the South Australian population.

We continue to provide the same quality service that we always have to our customers who include Government, University departments, non government organisations, local councils and interstate and international agencies.

We strive to provide gold standard, methodologically robust data collection, analysis, reporting and consulting services.

Recent Publications

The following research papers have recently been published by PROS researchers:


The North West Adelaide Health Study (NWAHS) - 12 years

After 12 years, three major stages, and three telephone follow up surveys of NWAHS, results have been compared between three clinic visits to gain a clearer picture of the community’s health status, as well as potential needs for services in the north-west Adelaide area and the wider South Australian and international communities. The research team have determined the prevalence and incidence of chronic diseases which help inform the South Australian Strategic Plan that leads and delivers a comprehensive and strategic health system aiming to ensure healthier, longer and better lives for all South Australians.

ASTHMA - About one in eight adult South Australians have asthma; about 30,000 people develop asthma each year. People with asthma sometimes do not realise the seriousness of this condition and the need for co-ordinated management with a doctor who sees them on a regular basis.

CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD, Chronic bronchitis and/or emphysema) - About one in 26 adult South Australians have COPD; about 7,000 develop COPD each year. With regular lung testing by their doctors, people can get treatment at an early stage and stop or slow down the progression of lung disease. COPD is the fourth leading cause of death in Australia.

DIABETES - About one in 15 adult South Australians have diabetes; about 7,500 develop diabetes each year. For every five to six people who know they have diabetes, one person has diabetes but did not know it – about 11,600 people. These people are more likely to be aged 50 years and over. This means that older people should be checked for diabetes regularly as early detection is important in slowing the progression of the condition.

KIDNEY DISEASE - About one in nine participants have chronic kidney disease and one in eighteen have protein levels in their urine sample that indicated kidney damage. People aged 45 years and over are more likely to have kidney damage, diabetes, high blood pressure and/or an unhealthy weight.

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE - Over one in four adult South Australians has high blood pressure (HBP); about 29,200 develop HBP every year. People may not know that they have high blood pressure, or that it may not be well controlled.

OBESITY - Over one in four adult South Australians is obese (body mass index (BMI) - weight in kg divided by height in squared metres - 30+), and another one in three is overweight (BMI 25-29); about 16,100 become obese every year. About one in ten adult South Australians are severely obese (BMI 35+). Over one in two adult South Australians has a high waist circumference (100 cm or more for men and 90 cm or more for women).

For more information contact Janet Grant, the NWAHS Study Coordinator on 8313 1212.

"2nd most important Chinese CVD research paper of 2011"

A recent publication from PROS and the Jiangsu Provincial Disease Prevention and Control Center "Shi ZM, Yuan B, Taylor AW, Dai Y, Pan X, Gill TK and Wittert GA. Monosodium glutamate is related to a higher increase in blood pressure over 5 years: findings from the Jiangsu Nutrition Study of Chinese adults. Journal of Hypertension 2011, 29:846–853" was listed as the second of the most important studies in Chinese cardiovascular research in 2011, by the Chinese medical newspaper - Physician. The study found that the main component of MSG, glutamic acid monosodium salt was independently associated with elevated blood pressure, especially in women. A great example of Australian Chinese Collaboration.

NOBLE Baby Boomers

Obesity in Australia is greater among the Baby Boomer generation than other generation groups. If obesity is not reduced among this group, it will compromise their ability to remain in the workforce and increase per capita demand for health services in old age.

Participants of NWAHS, as well as the Florey Adelaide Men’s Ageing Study (FAMAS) who have been identified as being part of the Baby Boomer generation (those born between the years of 1945 to 1965) and where relevant, their employers, have been interviewed regarding related health and demographic issues. A control group of those born in Generation X (born 1966 - 1980) from NWAHS has also been interviewed. This study will identify key intervention points and provide policy makers with evidence and guidance for targeted interventions. The first survey has recently been in the field, so stay tuned for results.

PhD Projects

Currently we have two PhD Students aligned with this project. Professor Gazi Kourbelis is researching “Baby Boomers and Generation X: health status, health related behaviours and the influence of workplace” and her supervisors are A/Prof Anne Taylor, Prof Gary Wittert and Prof Graeme Hugo.

The topic of Excellence Professor Jan Grant PhD is “Epidemiological Perspectives of Baby Boomer Migrant Health” and she is being supervised by Prof Graeme Hugo, A/Prof Anne Taylor, and Prof Gary Wittert.

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Dr John Ware in Adelaide

Dr. John E. Ware, Jr., PhD, is Professor and Chief, Outcomes Measurement Science in the Department of Quantitative Health Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS). He is an internationally recognized leader of the field of healthcare outcomes assessment and a member of the Institute of Medicine (IOM), National Academy of Sciences. He has published more than 400 peer-reviewed articles. Dr. Ware was among the first to apply "modern" psychometric methods to cross-calibrate translations of the MOS SF-36 Health Survey pursuant to the International Quality of Life Assessment (IQOLA) Project.

John presented a seminar and a workshop in Adelaide, sponsored by PROS and PHCRIS, convened by the Australian Health Outcomes Collaboration. The seminar concerned "Advances in Health Outcomes Assessment: Implications for Current Practice", and the afternoon workshop "The Application and the Interpretation of Patient Reported Health Outcome Measures". Both the seminar and the workshop were well attended by people interested in Quality of Life and Health Outcomes research, and there was much lively debate from the floor.

For more information about PROS Quality of Life Research contact Jodie Avery on 8313 1217.

The South Australian Aboriginal Health Survey (SAAHS)

Aboriginal people in metropolitan Adelaide and rural and remote South Australia were interview by trained Aboriginal Interviewers.

An advisory committee was convened to make sure that all questions were culturally appropriate. Questions were drawn from other surveys undertaken with both Aboriginal and non aboriginal populations including questions about chronic conditions, risk factors, Aboriginal culture, health literacy, Aboriginal identification, health service use, quality of life, mental health, and other issues that the participants found important.

Around 20 Aboriginal interviewers travelled all over Adelaide and South Australia in order to provide representative, randomly selected population interviews for the survey. The tenacity of these interviewers enabled surveys to be conducted with a wide cross section of Aboriginal respondents. Analysis of the 399 interviews undertaken is underway and a report will be presented to key stakeholders in the very near future.

For more information contact Tania Marin, the SAAHS Coordinator on 8313 1218.

Anne Taylor in China

During August, Anne Taylor and Zumin Shi were invited to China to visit the Jiangsu Provincial Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. The trip was organised to improve business and academic standards, strengthen the academic atmosphere, and discuss issues related to health behaviour research.

Comparisons were made regarding the work PROS undertake and the work of the Jiangsu Centre. Anne presented about the health risk behaviour of people in Australia, focusing on the population in South Australia, and explained how PROS monitor health risk behaviour outcomes, as well as presenting the challenges faced.

Anne and Zumin were invited to participate in academic exchanges, and meet with Xu Yan, deputy secretary of Party Committee. Discussions included the evaluation of food safety, and the control of chronic non-communicable diseases. After the discussion, personnel involved in the monitoring of population health risk behaviours participated in in-depth discussion with Anne. Finally, Anne visited the Centre for Food Safety and the pathogen testing laboratories. Anne and Zumin’s visit was met with much enthusiasm with our Chinese colleagues.
The PROS Research team

A/Prof Anne Taylor,
Head
t: +61 8 8313 1211
e: anne.taylor@adelaide.edu.au

Leanne Hornibrook,
Administration Officer
t: +61 8 8313 1214
e: leanne.hornibrook@adelaide.edu.au

Jodie Avery,
Senior Research Associate, PhD Candidate
t: +61 8 8313 1217
e: jodie.avery@adelaide.edu.au

Eleonora Dal Grande,
Senior Research Associate
t: +61 8 8313 1208
e: eleonora.dalgrande@adelaide.edu.au

Dr Kerena Eckert,
Research Fellow
t: +61 8 8313 1216
e: kerena.eckert@adelaide.edu.au

Simon Fullerton,
Research Associate
t: +61 8 8313 1199
e: simon.fullerton@adelaide.edu.au

Janet Grant,
Senior Research Associate
t: +61 8 8313 1212
e: janet.grant@adelaide.edu.au

Tania Marin,
Research Associate
t: +61 8 8313 1218
e: tania.marin@adelaide.edu.au

Alicia Montgomery,
Senior Research Associate
t: +61 8 8313 1209
e: alicia.montgomery@adelaide.edu.au

Dr Zumin Shi,
Research Fellow
t: +61 8 8313 1188
e: zumin.shi@adelaide.edu.au

PROS Students and Postdoctoral Fellows

Dr Tiffany Gill,
NHMRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow
t: +61 8 8313 1206
e: tiffany.gill@adelaide.edu.au

Rhiannon Pilkington,
PhD Candidate
t: +61 8 8313 1209
e: rhiannon.pilkington@adelaide.edu.au

Constance Kourbelis,
PhD Candidate
t: +61 8 8313 1213
e: constance.kourbelis@adelaide.edu.au

Peter Bai,
Future PhD Candidate
t: +61 9 8313 0126
e: peter.bai@adelaide.edu.au

Dr Jing Wu,
ARC Research Associate
t: +61 9 8313 0126
e: jing.wu@adelaide.edu.au

If you would like any more information about PROS services or your population research needs, please don't hesitate to contact us. We have survey vehicles available for diverse research methodologies, as well as experts in a number of different areas.

Additionally, if you are a student, we have a number of different projects available. Contact A/Prof Anne Taylor, 8313 1211, for more information.