Primary Care Research

Dr Julie McDonald

The Health-Science Alliance Symposium
19 Nov 2015
The impact of primary health care

• Countries with strong primary care systems have:
  – Improved health status
  – Less health inequalities
  – Higher satisfaction in relation to overall costs

(Starfield, Macinko, Bunker, Shi. The Milbank Quarterly 2005)

• Well functioning PHC systems are associated with better integration & coordination & more effective CDM

(Kringos, et al BMC Health Services Research, 2010)
The challenges

- 35% (7 million) Australians have a chronic condition

- Many experience multiple chronic conditions

- Behavioural risk factors are high & increasing

- Current health system not set up to effectively manage long-term conditions

*(PHC advisory group discussion paper, 2015)*
Who are we?
A research centre within the Faculty of Medicine at UNSW, studying and supporting PHC development since 1996.

What do we do?
Research, evaluation & development that strengthen primary health care & address health inequities, with the aim of contributing to better, fairer health in the community.

Work in partnerships with health & related services to foster policy & practice relevant research & dissemination.
4 major research streams

Prevention & management of chronic disease
- Obesity mgt for patients with low literacy
- Absolute cardiovascular risk assessment & mgt
- Role of practice nurses in asthma & COPD

Primary health care system development
- How multidisciplinary PHC centres achieve accessible & integrated services
- Cancer pathways
- Access to PHC for vulnerable populations
- Evaluation of primary health networks

Commissioning review

UNSW research centre for primary health care and equity
Research streams

Primary health care informatics

• M health & Facebook in prevention of chronic disease
• ePBRN - a network of computerised general practices & health services

Equity in action

• Organisational health literacy
• Gudaga studies
• Indigenous prisoner health
• Equity focused health impact assessment
• Refugee health

UNSW research centre for primary health care and equity
3 research hubs

SEaRCH: South Eastern Sydney Research Collaboration Hub
(South Eastern Sydney LHD)

HERDU: Health Equity Research & Development Unit
(Sydney LHD)

CHETRE: Centre for Health Equity, Training, Research & Evaluation
(South Western Sydney LHD)
• Use of patient activation & health literacy measures to improve quality of care
• Evaluation of Arabic mindfulness meditation intervention
• Data linkage projects (45+ longitudinal population cohort), with Sydney LHD
  • Processes and impacts of integrated care for ‘high risk’ patients
  • Attendance at general practice following an acute care admission
  • Analysis of falls
• Evaluating models of universal home health visiting with Sydney LHD & SCHN
For further information

http://cphce.unsw.edu.au/

Prof Mark Harris: m.f.harris@unsw.edu.au
Dr Julie McDonald: j.mcdonald@unsw.edu.au
Prof Siaw-Teng Liaw: siaw@unsw.edu.au
Prof Evelyne de Leeuw e.deleeuw@unsw.edu.au
A/Prof Terry Findlay: t.findlay@unsw.edu.au