



## Off and Running

As the second issue of **ACCEPtability** goes to press, the **Australian Chlamydia Control Effectiveness Pilot** is picking up pace.

ACCEPt is well and truly underway, with eight general practice clinics already signed up to the project. Select clinics in Metropolitan Melbourne and the North Eastern Victorian Division of General Practice have been the first areas targeted in our recruitment drive.

The prevalence survey has also been completed at one of our Melbourne clinics, thanks to the enormous support of GPs, practice nurses, receptionists and patients.

Over the next few months, ACCEPt staff will be contacting Divisions of General Practice, general practice clinics and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services in townships across Victoria, New South Wales and South East Queensland. To achieve this mammoth task, our team has been growing. You can meet our new Project Officers in this issue of **ACCEPtability**.

Dr Jane Hocking

Principal Investigator, ACCEPt

## Prevalence Survey Commences

The baseline prevalence survey is underway and has already been completed at one of our Metropolitan Melbourne practices. Researchers wielding palm pilots (pictured) and participant packs have been busy recruiting consecutive young people to get tested for chlamydia and complete a 10 minute questionnaire.

Free condoms and lube for men and women, and sanitary pads for women have been kindly donated by Marie Stopes International, The Alfred Education and Resource Centre, Moxie, Four Seasons, Glyde, Ansell and Sax Health Care as thanks for participants' time.

The prevalence survey will measure the rate of chlamydia in ACCEPt clinics prior to commencement of the randomised intervention to increase chlamydia testing. A prevalence survey will also be conducted at the conclusion of the project.

ACCEPt representatives will be looking for research staff to help out with the prevalence survey in ACCEPt clinics. For further information, contact ACCEPt at [info@accept.org.au](mailto:info@accept.org.au).

## General Practice – a Key to Reaching Young People

Chlamydia notification data show that the greatest burden of chlamydia infection is among young people under the age of 30 years. Youth is a proven risk factor for chlamydia, and with over 3.7 million young Australians being under 30, there are many at risk of infection.

In most rural and remote regions of Australia, there are few if any health services specifically catering to sexual health, and so sexual health concerns fall to local general practitioners to address. In addition, most people with chlamydia are unaware of the infection, as it is often asymptomatic. They will therefore not seek medical care or ask to be tested.

Young people are a highly diverse and mobile group, and screening in schools, universities, sports centres and other venues is bound to miss many who should be tested. One thing that young Australians do share, is that most of them visit a doctor once a year. For all of these reasons, general practice is an ideal place to opportunistically test young people for chlamydia as part of a preventive health strategy.

## Did you know...?

- **90 percent** of young women and **70 percent** of young men visit their doctor at least once a year.
- There are over **3.7 million** Australians in the 16–29 year age group.
- Young people living in rural and remote areas make up around **31 percent** of the total Australian population of 15–24 year olds.



## Alpine Valley Clinics Get Onboard



ACCEPt has recently been launched in rural Victoria. Clinics in the North Eastern Victorian Division of General Practice (NEVDGP) are some of the first to be contacted by local ACCEPt Project Officer, Anne Shaw. A Wangaratta local since the early 80s, Anne has worked in both education and the health sector. Prior to working for ACCEPt, Anne worked for the NEVDGP, running the "Help for You" sexual health program for Year 9 secondary school students.

Like most of the areas that ACCEPt is targeting, Wangaratta is a rural township with between 1000 and 3000 young people between 16 and 29 years. So far, Anne's response from GPs in the area has been positive, and she is looking forward to travelling to towns across scenic north eastern Victoria to recruit clinics into ACCEPt.

## ACCEPt Welcomes its New Project Officers:

The ACCEPt team has recently been joined by a number of Project Officers who will be contacting general practice clinics across Victoria, New South Wales and South East Queensland over the next few months.

### ACCEPt Project Officers



#### Jennifer Walker

Jenny is a primary care researcher with experience in sexual health research. She is currently completing a PhD on chlamydia, *Mycoplasma genitalium* and Bacterial vaginosis in young Australian women for the Chlamydia Incidence and Re-Infection Rates Study (CIRIS). She has conducted primary care research specifically related to chlamydia.



#### Chantal Maloney

Prior to working for ACCEPt, Chantal worked as a secondary school health promotion nurse for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. She has worked on several community-based adolescent health projects and has qualifications in adolescent health and welfare, and sexual health. Chantal is interested in all aspects of young peoples' health, particularly sexual health.



#### Danielle Newton

Danielle is a Health Psychologist with research and clinical experience in sexual and reproductive health. Her PhD investigated the impact of sexually transmitted infections on individuals and their relationships, and subsequent research has examined the impact of chlamydia and pelvic inflammatory disease on women.



#### Lisa Edward

Lisa is a public health professional with 20 years experience working in the health sector. She has worked at universities, hospitals, Divisions of General Practice, Community Health Services and International Development Organisations, the most recent being Marie Stopes International Australia. Lisa, who now lives on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland will be working with clinics in QLD and NSW.



#### Anna Wood

Anna is a registered nurse with qualifications and experience in midwifery and mental health. Through her work with the Divisions of General Practice in Melbourne, Anna has been involved in preventive health and GP engagement projects in general practice. As a general practice nurse, she managed nurse-led chronic disease programs in general practices in QLD.



#### Eris Smyth

Eris's background is in primary care research and teaching. She has worked on several research projects, covering topics spanning youth and aged care in general practice. Most recently, Eris has worked on the Chlamydia Incidence and Re-Infection Rates Study (CIRIS) with Jane Hocking and other members of the ACCEPt research team. Eris also teaches literacy to prisoners through Corrections Victoria.



#### Rebecca Lorch

Rebecca is a UK-trained nurse and midwife who has been living in Australia for the past six years. Having worked as a clinical nurse specialist at the Sydney Sexual Health Centre, Rebecca is an experienced sexual health nurse. She is now based at the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research at the University of New South Wales in Sydney.

## Showcasing ACCEPt

- Jane Hocking gave an oral presentation about ACCEPt at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Human Chlamydial Infections, held in Salzburg, Austria, 20–25 June, 2010. [www.chlamydia-symposia.org](http://www.chlamydia-symposia.org)
- Meredith Temple-Smith presented an ACCEPt poster at the Primary Health Care Research Conference, held in Darwin, 30 June – 2 July, 2010. [www.phcris.org.au/conference/2010](http://www.phcris.org.au/conference/2010)

This project has been commissioned and is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

Australian Chlamydia Control Effectiveness Pilot  
Melbourne School of Population Health  
The University of Melbourne  
Melbourne VIC 3010

For more information, please contact us on  
03 8344 0792  
[info@accept.org.au](mailto:info@accept.org.au)  
[www.accept.org.au](http://www.accept.org.au)

