

## Introducing the new Editors

**Ben Smith, Helen Keleher and Craig Fry**

With this August issue, the editorship of the *Health Promotion Journal of Australia* is being passed on to a new team. Chris Rissel, Jan Ritchie and Adrian Bauman have done an outstanding job over their six years of service to the Journal, as any reader would appreciate. Among their achievements have been maintaining the quality and relevance of articles, establishing a large group of reviewers, achieving indexing in MEDLINE and other databases, facilitating media coverage to raise the profile of the journal and publishing several excellent theme issues.

As new Editors it is an honour to be following in their footsteps and, indeed, a privilege to have the opportunity to serve the field of health promotion in this way. But, at least some of you may be wondering, who are we? What do we bring to this role? In our first contribution as Editors we would like to introduce ourselves and discuss how we wish to perform this role to ensure that the Journal remains a valuable resource for health promotion in Australia, New Zealand and beyond.

We are a team of three, based in Melbourne, with diverse experience as practitioners, researchers and teachers. Here are a few introductory lines from each of us.

**Ben Smith:** I am Senior Lecturer in the Department of Health Science at Monash University. I made the move from community work into health promotion 15 years ago while doing a Master of Public Health at the University of Sydney. Over that time I have worked at the local government and regional health service levels and as a consultant to State and Commonwealth agencies, across a broad range of issues (e.g. older people's health, physical activity, sun protection, blood borne viruses, immunisation). I have been a full-time academic since 2000, with research interests in chronic disease prevention strategies, concentrating mainly on physical activity, strategies to tackle health inequalities, the role of the media in health promotion and population health needs in developing countries. My international work has involved research consultancies for WHO, UNICEF and health departments in the Asia and Pacific region. At Monash I teach health promotion to undergraduate and postgraduate students and through short courses for professionals. Before taking on the Editor's role I was the Book Reviews editor for the Journal.

**Helen Keleher:** I am Professor of Health Science and Head of the Department of Health Science at Monash University. I am also a Board member of the Public Health Association of Australia and the Victorian PHAA Branch President. During 2006/07 I was a member of the Women and Gender Equity

Knowledge Network of the WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health. My field of research is public health social science and my first career in nursing still informs my work on primary health care. I am particularly interested in how we translate knowledge about the social determinants of health into health promotion approaches to address disadvantage and inequity and understanding what health promotion and health care delivery systems and structures will effect change that is effective in tackling health inequities. At a big picture level, I am involved in both policy and the politics of health and have recently come to appreciate the role of health impact assessment in healthy public policy.

**Craig Fry:** I am a Senior Research Fellow and NHMRC Australian Public Health Postdoctoral Fellow, with a joint appointment at the Centre for Children's Bioethics in the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute and the Centre for Applied Philosophy & Public Ethics at the University of Melbourne. My academic training is in the areas of psychology, public health and applied ethics. I have worked in the forensic setting, community organisations and at a number of universities. My research focus and published work spans alcohol and drug use, methods development in public health research and prevention and health ethics. I am especially interested in how different models of participation and identity shape public health research, practice and policy and the practical implications of this for us all. I have been an ethics consultant to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and to the Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia and I give occasional lectures, seminars and workshops on the above topics.

As we step into this role our intention is that the journal continues to be a leading publication for the dissemination of evidence about health promotion, communication on technical and theoretical topics and discussion about contemporary issues facing policy-makers, practitioners and researchers. In considering how to approach the editorship, we have elected to work with the following principles in mind:

- maintaining standards of methodological rigour and academic writing appropriate for a peer-reviewed journal;
- an emphasis on publication of practical examples of programs and policies;
- representing the diversity of issues, strategies, research and evaluation methods and viewpoints that are relevant to health promotion;
- fairness in the peer-review process;
- efficiency in handling of submitted manuscripts; and
- ensuring feedback to authors is balanced and constructive.

Looking forward, we have been considering the role of the journal into the future, so our thinking has been naturally drawn to the needs and challenges for the field of health promotion. These include the continuing and growing inequalities in health within populations, shown most clearly by the poor health status of Indigenous people and the health needs of marginalised groups like refugees and asylum seekers.

We see the Journal as contributing guidance to the field about effective strategies to improve health equity. There is the growing burden of diabetes and other continuing and serious illnesses, the questions here concern the policy and upstream actions that will be beneficial at the population level.

The journal also has a valuable role to play in relation to the theory and practice of partnerships and participation in health promotion and addressing important questions about how we can best build cross sectoral capacity for health promotion.

No doubt there are other important issues that readers can identify. Our intention is that through editorials, invited papers, theme issues and the use of the letters section for debate and ideas sharing, the journal is not only relevant, but also at the cutting edge of research and practice. Our hope is that it serves to advance the quality and impact of health promotion across all of its research, practice and policy domains.

To conclude, we can say that we are very pleased to be working with the experienced team at our publishing house, Substitution, who are slowly but surely whipping us into shape as editors. We have been fortunate to attract a wonderfully diverse and skilled group of editorial advisers and we are looking forward working with them. And of course, to you who are authors, reviewers and readers, we welcome your contributions and look forward to working with you to achieve the continued success of the *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*.

And lastly, on a different note, the Editors and the Health Promotion community were saddened recently to hear of the passing of Ray James, a founding member of AHPA and Editor of the Journal. On page p 84, Charles Watson and Trevor Shilton share their reflections on Ray's extensive and pioneering contributions to the field of health promotion.

## The 2020 Summit: Messages for health promotion

**Helen Keleher**

The 2020 Summit held at Parliament House on 19 and 20 April 2008 was convened by the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd with the intention of shaping a long-term strategy for the nation's future. The Summit brought together 1,000 people from across the nation to debate options for long-term challenges confronting Australia's future. I was fortunate to be selected to join the Health Stream titled: 'Towards a long-term health strategy'. Debate and discussion between participants began two weeks before the Summit via 2020 website blogs set up for sharing of early 'big ideas'. This informed the Stream Chairs in their working up of themes which formed the working groups during the Summit.

For me, being a participant in Australia's 2020 Summit was an inspiring experience – to work alongside people filled with optimism and focused on the future is a rare opportunity. Logistically, the whole event was extremely well-organised, with a good balance between formal sessions and networking breaks that enabled conversations between people from other streams. The atmosphere was uplifting and often moving. I will always remember the comments from Indigenous friends and colleagues about how they felt able to sing the National Anthem during the Summit opening ceremony with pride and a sense of belonging for the first time.

The final session was also a highlight. In pairs (the Stream Chair and the appropriate Minister) reported back on the work from their stream - their 'big ideas' (no more than five) and their policy proposals (one of which had to be cost neutral). Then, by 3pm on Sunday, the draft report, containing the proposals of all the groups, was presented to the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, in a bound document. We all realised how much had been achieved in such a short time – how well the groups had worked together and just what can be done when there is a strong willingness to tackle big issues and develop solutions.

The final report of the Australia 2020 Summit is available from the website (<http://www.australia2020.gov.au/>). From the perspective of health promotion, the chapter reporting on the health stream is worthy of some examination. Of course, it should be noted that neither the Summit nor its report have the weight of policy or strategy – the Summit was a weekend of discussions and the report is a record of those discussions. Nonetheless, if the Summit did indeed catch the pulse of a nation, then it is illuminating to ask, how is health promotion represented in the report and what messages can be discerned from the Summit, for the field of health promotion?