



DARE News

News and updates for friends and supporters of the DARE project.
Issue 6 – September 2009

Welcome to the September DARE newsletter, which has been freshened up for Spring with a brand new look. We hope you enjoy it.

Lately at DARE...

Thanks to your tremendous support, DARE continues to progress well. The second group of participants recently completed their 14 month face-to-face assessment, which means 31 participants are now past their personal halfway mark.

From the end of this month to the end of December we will be organising around 80 face-to-face assessments across all of our sites.

This includes the final assessment for the first group of 13 participants to join the project. Completing the full 26 months in the project is a huge contribution to research and we look forward to acknowledging this fantastic achievement.

A further 94 face-to-face assessments for 14 months will be due around March to April 2010.

As you can imagine, arranging all these appointments over a relatively short time frame is another huge organisational task for our admin team. The priority, of course, is to find a time to best suit each participant.

But, this time then needs to be matched with the availability of a research interviewer, and an interview room at the relevant sites. The three-way match doesn't always work first go, so sometimes there is a bit of going back and forth. We appreciate your patience and understanding, as Karen and Debbie, our able administration assistants, do their best to find an interview time that will suit you.

They were rapt with how smoothly the last group of interviews went and want to say a big thank you to those involved. We are keeping track of the time taken to complete the 14 month face-to-face interviews. To date, it has ranged between one and a quarter hours to three hours, with an average time of two hours.



Photograph taken by: Debbie Lang

DARE today

- Nearly 200 participants are continuing to give their time to the DARE study.
- Thirty-one participants have passed their halfway mark.
- 1956 assessments have been sent out with a return rate of 92 per cent. This is over a third of the assessments for the entire project. If DARE was a drive to Sydney, right now we'd be passing Albury.



Meet the team: your research interviewers

We carefully select and train the research interviewers who complete your assessments. Because interviews occur irregularly and take place across a number of sites, we employ an enthusiastic group of casual assessors for face-to-face assessments.

The DARE research interviewers are all postgraduates in the health science sector. We run intensive workshops for them when they first join. They also work through a special 30-page manual that has been developed over many years. The researchers study a range of topics: the theory and practice of research interviewing, clinical risk management, professional and ethical conduct, data management, and confidentiality.

We also conduct refresher workshops. Five workshops have now been conducted for this project and more refresher workshops are planned. A number of our interviewers also work as researchers or clinicians in the various health services linked to DARE. So, by building their skills, a useful by-product of this project has been to contribute to building capacity within these services.



*There are three things I always forget.
Names, faces, and the third
I can't remember. Italo Svevo*

*We are here on Earth to do good to
others. What the others are here for,
I don't know. WH Auden*

Brains on the web

Two academics in the Monash University School of Psychology, Psychiatry and



Psychological Medicine have developed a website to present the latest news about psychology in an exciting and practical way.

Psychlopedia, a site created by Dr Simon Moss and Dr Sam Wilson, only takes contributions from psychologists, academics, and some students, ensuring accuracy and credibility. This is a more rigorous process than for sites such as Wikipedia.

This site is useful for anyone seeking information about psychological issues. One interesting page lists findings that are unexpected or 'unintuitive' – but it also seems to include the down-right bizarre!

For example, in one of the studies listed, Fujita & Han (2009) found that "After individuals consider the categories to which various words belong – such as 'dog' belongs to the category 'animals' and 'pen' belongs to the category 'stationary' – their inclination to resist temptations becomes stronger".

There are lots of other fascinating pages such as practical solutions to various issues – including mood problems – and many interesting questionnaires with individualised feedback.

www.psych-it.com.au/psychlopedia.asp



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News for DARE?

Keen to share your favourite recipe, an uplifting poem, or a few handy tips? We'd love to publish your contributions in this newsletter. Contact our editor at the email address below.

Contact DARE

Contact us with feedback, questions, or to unsubscribe from this newsletter.

See past editions: www.dare.org.au

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Upgrade to web-based data collection

In response to participant feedback, we have added flexibility to the way prescription medications are entered in the three-monthly assessment to better encompass the range and types of medications.

For example, if you have more than twelve prescribed medications, you can now enter the additional medications in a text box at the end of the section.

If you take medication weekly rather than daily, this can also be entered in an 'additional comment' field under each medication box.

We always welcome your feedback to improve any aspect of this project.



The information in this newsletter was correct at the time of publication. Monash University reserves the right to alter this information should the need arise. September 2009. CRICOS provider: Monash University 00008C TSG229855