



DARE Newsletter

1st February 2008

Welcome to the first DARE Newsletter

This newsletter is for everyone involved in the DARE Project, whether you are in the Depression Relapse Active Monitoring (DRAM) group, the Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) + DRAM group or waiting to be assigned to either group. It is our way of keeping you in touch with how the project is going. We plan to produce newsletters every few months during the course of the project. If you don't wish to be kept up to date on DARE by this newsletter, just let us know and we will take you off the mailing list.

Research in the 21st Century

DARE is a modern project that is seeking to rely on internet-based systems as much as possible. We are pleased to announce the launch of our DARE website: www.dare.org.au. While work on the website is continuing, it is now functional allowing you to keep up to date with developments on the project, download our newsletters and complete your DRAM Patient Health Questionnaire each month. We hope to have the three-monthly questionnaire pack available to complete via the website by early March 2008.

If you have access to the internet, this is the quickest and simplest way of completing project questionnaires and your data is stored very securely. We encourage you to give it a go when your next set of questionnaires is due (we will let you know when this is). We have sent your DARE card with this newsletter which has your unique project ID and password. Each time you complete questionnaires through the website, you will be requested to enter this information.

A snapshot of progress to date:

- 18 people are enrolled in the project
- First research MBCT group successfully completed
- New website launched: www.dare.org.au
- 8 research interviewers and 10 new MBCT practitioners trained
- Refresher training for 6 established MBCT practitioners provided
- DARE is now expanding out from Dandenong to other regions, including the inner city, Mornington Peninsula and Geelong

Why "DARE" and why the logo?



We chose the DARE acronym to reflect the courage and effort involved in participating in this research trial and being prepared to attempt something new to try and make a difference to relapse in depression. We wanted a logo for the project to reflect the key themes of our work. We selected the idea of a swing to represent the up and down mood states in recurring depression and the hope of our work to be able to "jump off" that cycle - to be able to stand firm and keep stable.

Meet the project team

Each newsletter we would like to introduce members of the project team. This month we feature Professor Graham Meadows, who is the Principal Researcher on the project, and Dr Fran Shawyer, who is the project manager.

Graham has trained and worked in various branches of medicine. For 20 years Graham has practiced as a psychiatrist; he has been a Professor of Psychiatry at Monash for four years. Outside of work he enjoys bushwalking and cycling.



(Prof. Graham Meadows)

Fran has primarily worked as a researcher and clinician in the mental health field since being registered as a psychologist in 1993. Fran loves swimming, gardening, reading, her pet cat "Elfy" and anything art deco.



(Fran's cat, Elfy)

Spreading the word

A vital part of good research is making sure the world hears about it. November 2007 saw Professor Graham Meadows present the work of the DARE project to the World Psychiatric Association in Melbourne. Graham's talk was very well received and generated a lot of interest. During 2007, Graham was also invited to give a talk to clinicians at the Peter MacCallum Institute about DARE, since their work with cancer brings them into regular contact with people experiencing depression.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY!

Have you any positive experiences of being in the DARE project that you would be interested in sharing with the community? The Dandenong Leader published a couple of articles about our work last year and has expressed interest in writing a follow up story that features one of our participants who live in the area of the City of Dandenong. If you have been allocated to a treatment group and would be happy to chat to a Leader journalist about how you've found being in DARE, please call Fran on 95541585 by **Wednesday 13th February** to discuss. The interview can be conducted over the phone. If you prefer, your identity can remain anonymous – in which case we will check the story prior to it being published to ensure no identifying material has been included.