1. OVERVIEW

The Person Centred Rehabilitation Team (PCR Team) is one of the research groups making up the Health & Rehabilitation Research Centre at AUT University. It is a multidisciplinary team, lead by Dr Kathryn McPherson, Professor of Rehabilitation (Laura Fergusson Chair).

The team's research focuses on: investigating outcomes in ways that matter most to people with chronic conditions; improving the effectiveness of rehabilitation processes such as goal setting and promoting engagement in rehabilitation. We are also exploring how best to facilitate activity for people with chronic conditions and promoting wellbeing for families, as well as the person with the injury or illness.

Our work to date has mainly been with people who have had a brain injury, stroke, have multiple sclerosis or pain related conditions like back pain or arthritis. We use both quantitative and qualitative approaches and welcome collaboration with others interested in this field.

This Newsletter is intended to give a brief introduction to our team's work. If you would like more information about our team or our work, please contact us.

2. CURRENT RESEARCH THEMES

Our aims

- To enhance knowledge about individual and family/whanau experiences of disability
- To identify barriers to successful rehabilitation engagement and outcome
- To develop and test interventions to overcome these barriers
- To determine interventions that are most effective in promoting health, wellbeing and participation in a good quality life for people experiencing disability
3. SELECTION OF ACTIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS

Data collection is completed and funding has been sought from the HRC to do a full definitive trial of these promising approaches.
Contact Kathryn McPherson
Kathryn.McPherson@aut.ac.nz

Quality of life and Quality of care for people who experience disability - Part I & II
Kathryn McPherson, Nicola Kayes, Kate Diesfeld, Philip Pat- ston, Rex Billington, Will Taylor, Joanna Fadyl – in collaboration with the European WHOQoL-Dis group
Funding—AUT Contestable Fund
The initial focus groups requested by the European commission have been completed, and additional groups are now beginning with specific populations to get a broader perspective. Plans are also underway to pilot the new WHOQoL-disability measure and other measures that have been developed from the initial focus group work.
Contact Kathryn McPherson or Jo Fadyl
Kathryn.McPherson@aut.ac.nz, jfadyl@aut.ac.nz

Funding—Accident Compensation Corporation
An evaluation project was commissioned by ACC and undertaken by AUT University in 2006 as a step towards improving vocational rehabilitation by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of current approaches in relation to the goals and intent of the IPRC Act 2001. Report published March 2007 with expanded findings and expanded set of recommendations commissioned, to be submitted early June.
Contact Kathryn McPherson,
Kathryn.McPherson@aut.ac.nz

Community participation for New Zealand Children who have had a Traumatic Brain Injury
Researcher: Margaret Jones. Supervisors: Professor Kathryn McPherson and Dr Clare Hocking
Funding—Health Research Council PhD Award
The first phase of this study employs Case Study Methodology to explore the perceptions of children and other key stakeholders. Semi-structured interviews and participant observations will be completed at homes, school, and other significant community settings. The second phase will explore suitable measures of participation for the group using criteria derived from Phase 1. Phase 3 will use the measure to describe children’s participation.
Contact Margaret Jones
Marajone@aut.ac.nz

Barriers and facilitators to activity in people with chronic neurological conditions: Multiple sclerosis & Stroke
Kathryn McPherson, Denise Taylor, Harry McNaughton, Nicola Kayes, Philip Schluter, Gregory Kolt
Funding—Health Research Council; AUT Summer Studentship
People with neurological disabilities, particularly MS, have very low levels of physical activity. This causes risk for their physical and mental wellbeing and yet, we don’t yet know the best way to facilitate their engagement in more physical activity. This study is currently recruiting participants and identifying new ways to promote health in this population and measure meaningful change.
Contact Kathryn McPherson or Nicola Kayes
Kathryn.McPherson@aut.ac.nz, nkayes@aut.ac.nz

Validity and reliability of accelerometers in quantifying physical activity in people with chronic neurological conditions
Nicola Kayes, Kathryn McPherson, Philip Schluter, Denise Taylor, and Grant Mawston, Sarah Johnston, Philippa Charlesworth, Harry McNaughton
Funding—HRC; AUT Summer Studentship
Preliminary analyses of data from the stroke is being re-analysed, and recruitment for volunteers for the study investigating use of accelerometers in people with multiple sclerosis is about to begin.
Contact Nicola Kayes, nkayes@aut.ac.nz

The Physical Activity and Disability Survey (PADS): reliability, validity and acceptability in people with multiple sclerosis.
Nicola Kayes, Kathryn McPherson, Denise Taylor, Philip Schluter, Bobbie-Jo Wilson, Gregory Kolt
Funding—AUT faculty of Health summer Studentship; AUT Contestable Grant
This project set out to test validity, reliability and acceptability of PADS. As a result, amendments to the original PADS have been tested, and a new scoring system is being developed.
Contact Nicola Kayes nkayes@aut.ac.nz

Evaluation of a stroke service designed to increase community integration and participation for the chronic stroke survivor.
McPherson K, Parr R, Alexander S, Moloczij N, Kayes N
Funding—Laura Fergusson Trust
About to begin recruiting, the aim of this study is to explore the nature and impact of the Laura Fergusson stroke service programme which is focused on improving function and participation for stroke survivors.
Contact Kathryn McPherson or Natasha Moloczij
Kathryn.McPherson@aut.ac.nz, nmoloczij@aut.ac.nz

Managing Multiple Sclerosis and motherhood: Women’s stories
Debbie Payne, Kathryn McPherson, and Susan Crerar
Funding - The Families Commission, Blue Skies Fund
This study identified a number of key strategies women with MS use to balance their disease and resulting impairment with consideration and managing pregnancy and motherhood. The published report is available from The Families Commission from June 2007.
Contact Debbie Payne or Kathryn McPherson
Dpayne@aut.ac.nz, Kathryn.McPherson@aut.ac.nz

PCR contributions to other current funded projects
- Tai Chi and Falls Prevention
  Taylor lead at AUT, Funding ACC
- Development of the ICF Core Sets
  Hocking lead, AUT, Funding AUT
- Improving stroke rehabilitation for Maori & Pacific people
  Harwood lead, MRINZ, Funding HRC
Recent peer-reviewed publications


Other peer reviewed publications


Oral presentations (selection)
Invited keynote presentations


Other peer reviewed presentations


4. RESEARCH OUTPUTS CONT/D...


Jones, K on behalf of the EVRNZ group. (2007) Return to work after injury: a return to the same employment role for most working people. National Institute of Rehabilitation Research and New Zealand Rehabilitation Association Conference, Rotorua 16 – 18 Feb


**Poster presentations**


Dumble S, Dickson J, McPherson, KM. Living with my disability National Institute of Rehabilitation Research and New Zealand Rehabilitation Association Conference, Rotorua 16 – 18 February 2007

5. CONTACTS

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Our national and international links are available on request. We are founding members of two collaborative groups linking rehabilitation researchers and clinicians throughout New Zealand: the NIRR (National Institute of Rehabilitation Research) and the NRC (Northern Rehabilitation Consortium).

6. STAFF NEWS

Christine Cummins (front row, left)

Chris joined the team in 2006 to work on the Vocational Rehabilitation project funded by ACC. Christine has a degree in Sociology from the University of Auckland and has commenced her postgraduate studies this year.

**The News:** Christine won the prize for best poster at the recent international Innovation in Rehabilitation Conference, February 2007 coordinated by the National Institute of Rehabilitation Research and the NZ Rehab Association.

Abstracts for presentations and posters will be published in a special issue of Disability & Rehabilitation later in 2007 (McPherson and Siegert guest editors).