Professor Kim Halford has been appointed director of the Griffith Institute of Health and Medical Research (GIHMR).

Currently director of the Griffith Psychological Health Research Centre, Professor Halford has worked at Griffith University for 12 years in positions including Dean of Innovation, Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor - Research, and Head of the School of Applied Psychology.

During the course of his career he has attracted significant funding from competitive research bodies including the NHMRC, ARC and the Queensland Cancer Fund.

His most recent win was $3.5 million from the United States Department of Health and Human Services Administration of Children and Families to deliver Couple CARE for Parents, an early intervention program for couples at high risk of relationship breakdown following the transition to parenthood.

Professor Halford said his vision for Griffith Institute of Health and Medical Research included a focus on challenges such as chronic diseases and equity in health outcomes.

“There are acute care needs associated with chronic disease such as cardiovascular disease and mental illness but health is not just about recovery from a heart attack or psychotic episode.”

“We need to know how to prevent disease or prevent its recurrence by setting in train the long term change in environment or individual and population behaviours that are necessary.”

Pro Vice Chancellor (Health) Professor Allan Cripps welcomed the appointment which he said would help draw together mutual research interests across disciplines and the wider health research community, and increase capacity to find answers for the tough questions in health.

Professor Halford brings to this position an international reputation in the area of psychological research, particularly related to couples relationships and the dynamics associated with major life events such as parenthood and serious illness.

He has an outstanding track record in regard to collaboration with multidisciplinary teams, developing programs of research that have a direct and practical benefit to the community, and experience in leading research teams in clinical settings.

Professor Halford takes up the new position in April and will be based at the Gold Coast campus. The new position also encompasses the role of Dean (Research) of the Health Group.
School of Dentistry and Oral Health
Head of School – Professor Newell Johnson

The School of Dentistry and Oral Health has completed its first three years and has graduated its first cohorts from the three-year Bachelor of Oral Health program in Oral Health Therapy, Dental Technology, and Dental Science. These are Griffith’s first sizable additions to the registered oral health workforce although we have already had two to three cohorts of academic upgaders, dental technologists and dental prosthetists. These are landmark events.

The Griffith Dental Clinic has been in existence for a year now and has built to approximately 500 appointments per week – mostly private patients. A formal agreement has been signed with Queensland Health for the University Clinic to provide care to public patients from 2006 to 2010, building to 500 children and 2200 adults per annum.

Senior specialist staff have been recruited from Germany, UK, Hong Kong, South Africa and Australia and bring a breadth of academic wisdom and research excellence. The School’s collective retrospective, research record, is impressive.

The School of Dentistry and Oral Health’s areas of research include Head and Neck Oncology; Oral Infectious Diseases (especially HIV); Cariology; Public Oral Health (especially Rural, Remote and Indigenous); Implantology; and Dental Education. The School has also enrolled its first Research Higher degree students and is hosting several visiting research fellows.

School of Medicine
Head of School – Professor Judy Searle

The School of Medicine continues to grow at an extraordinary rate and now has medical students in their clinical years, a highly regarded and Australian Medical Council accredited medical program, a growing research profile in population health and clinical sciences, and strong links with our local community.

Queensland Premier Peter Beattie and Health Minister Stephen Robertson visited in January to welcome our 3rd cohort of medical students. This year we have 150 new students - 50 of whom have taken up a Queensland Health Bonded Scholarship.

The same week 76 of our third year students ‘arrived for work’ in four of our partner teaching hospitals. This is the first year of full time clinical placements in all the major medical disciplines including internal medicine, surgery, children’s health, mental health, women’s health, aged care and cancer care.

The School has also had recent national success with Dr Cate Cameron and Dr Anneliese Spinks securing NHMRC Postdoctoral Fellowships. Both are involved in large population-based studies and are part of the 25-year Griffith Study of Population Health that commenced late last year. The School will also lead a national cohort study examining the predictors of career choice for medical graduates, supported by an ARC Discovery Grant. Community engagement and social responsibility are also key objectives of this School and none are more relevant than the activities of HOPE (Health Opportunities for People Everywhere). Recently this student initiative, along with their dental student colleagues, formed their own foundation called Hope4Health. They are currently raising funds to support a hospital in Ghana. Details of their activities can be found at www.hope4health.org.au.

L-R: Prof Judy Searle, Prof Ian O’Connor, Premier Peter Beattie, medical students Michelle Blandford, Garfield Wright and Liz Kitchin.

Applied Cognitive Neuroscience Research Centre
Director – Professor David Shum

The Applied Cognitive Neuroscience Research Centre (ACNRC) was established in 2003 under the directorship of Professor David Shum. The purpose of the Centre is to advance cognitive neuroscience research by bringing together experts in the fields of vision science, psychophysiology, neuropsycho, developmental, clinical, and cognitive psychology, exercise science, engineering, and education. The ACNRC comprises 19 academic staff and over 30 postgraduate students as well as a host of national and international collaborators.

Each year the centre invites a variety of international and national experts in the field of cognitive neuroscience to take part in its popular monthly seminar series.

At the recent ACNRC annual conference which provides an opportunity for centre staff and students to showcase their latest research findings and share feedback, students Gary Power and Matthew Guillo were awarded prizes for the best platform and poster presentations. The conference was also host to a variety of external guests including two internationally renowned keynote speakers, Professor Barbara Wilson (Medical Research Council, Cambridge) and Dr Michelle Craske (University of California, Los Angeles).

The growing success of the ACNRC is reflected in the various achievements by centre staff and students over the past six months. For example, with a reputation as one of the leading researchers in Neuropsychological Rehabilitation, Dr Tamara Ownsworth, was recently invited to join the Management Committee of the World Federation for NeuroRehabilitation. Dr Ownsworth will also speak at the pre-meeting of the American Congress of Rehabilitation in Washington later this year. Also, in a joint project with QMIR, Prof Graeme Halford, Dr Glenda Andrews and Prof David Shum were recently awarded a Griffith Medical Research College Collaborative Grant Scheme for a project aimed at identifying genetic markers for human reasoning processes. Prof Shum and Dr Ownsworth were also recently awarded funding to undertake a collaborative project with the Queensland Cancer Fund and student, Rebecca Kearney received an NHMRC PhD scholarship.
Staff Profiles

Dr Cate Cameron, BSc(Wk) (Hons 1), MPH, PhD
Research Fellow, School of Medicine

Over the past 13 years, Dr Cate Cameron has had local and international clinical experience working in the field of injuries and trauma, mental health and sexual assault. In 2005 Cate was awarded her PhD in injury epidemiology. Her thesis was a population-based matched cohort study of long-term morbidity and mortality in 21,000 injured adults, using linked administrative health data from Manitoba, Canada.

Cate is currently the manager of the Griffith Study of Population Health: Environments for Healthy Living, a longitudinal birth cohort study of children in South East Queensland and Tweed area, which is the flagship study for one of the five Griffith Strategic Research Programs. The focus of the research in the initial years includes issues such as growth restriction in infants, childhood obesity, children’s oral health and childhood injury.

In addition, Cate is continuing her injury and trauma research interests, currently working on a national study of trauma outcomes in Australia and New Zealand.

Dr Cameron was recently awarded an NHMRC (Public Health) Training Fellowship, to provide support for her research in developing the evidence-based and audit tools for improving national trauma care systems.

Associate Professor Jeroen Kroon, BChD (Hons), Dip Health Admin (Dent), Dip Public Health (Dent), MChD (Comm Dent), Dip Tert Instr (Pret)
Public Health, Community & Preventative Dentistry, School of Dentistry and Oral Health

After qualifying as a dentist in June 1985, Jeroen was offered a full-time appointment in the Faculty of Dentistry, University of Pretoria, South Africa in July 1987. In 2001 he was appointed as Head of Community Dentistry at the Faculty of Dentistry, University of Limpopo, a position he held until he joined Griffith University in March 2006.

His teaching and research interests are in preventive dentistry, epidemiology and public health and he was responsible for the implementation of several outreach projects in South Africa. He was also closely involved in developing new innovative curricula at both schools he was employed at.

Jeroen has served as President of the South African Division and as Regional Board Member of the International Association for Dental Research.

Dr David Neumann, BSc(Hons), PhD
Senior Lecturer, Applied Cognitive Neuroscience Research Centre

Subsequent to Dr David Neumann obtaining his BSc(Hons) and PhD he completed a post-doctoral appointment at the University of Western Australia in research leading to a Young Researchers Award by the ARC and the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science and Resources.

David joined the School of Psychology at Griffith University in late 2002. He has since studied attentional focus strategies in elite athletes following the award of an ARC Linkage Grant. He has also established programs to study the effects of smoking on cognitive functions and to examine Pavlovian conditioning.

David was awarded the Griffith Health Faculty Learning and Teaching Citation in 2005 and received a Highly Commended Early Career Award in the 2006 Griffith Awards for Excellence in Teaching.

Griffith Institute for Medical Research Conference

Building on the success of the Gold Coast Christmas Medical Research Conference organized by the School of Medical Science in December 2005, the Gold Coast Health and Medical Research Conference 2006 was held 14-15 December 2006 as an initiative of the Griffith Institute of Health and Medical Research. The two-day meeting comprised 37 oral presentations spanning the research interests of the schools within Griffith Health, and included invited talks by Prof Mike Jennings, UQ and Dr Doug Shelton, Queensland Health. The meeting attracted 128 registered participants, contributing 93 published abstracts in the six symposium sessions and plenary lectures. The symposia at GCHMRC2006 covered a wide-range of research areas, from psychology to molecular biology, infectious disease to neurological disease, with each session stimulating lively discussion and debate across disciplines. Much networking took place in the less formal atmosphere of the poster session and the conference banquet, with the prize for the best student poster being awarded to Ms Mary Pagendam-Turner, Eskitis Institute. The conference was rounded off by a round table discussion focussing on how to succeed with the NHMRC. The Gold Coast Clinical Neuroscience Research Forum annual meeting followed the main conference programme.

The organizing committee would like to thank all those who participated in the 2006 GCHMRC Conference. In addition to funding provided by Griffith Health, the meeting was supported by donations from 10 commercial donors, several naming conference sessions.
### Staff News

**Australia Day honour award**

Ms Christine Brierley, Business Development Manager, Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Prevention (AISRAP), has been awarded an OAM for service to women’s cricket as a player, official and promoter of the sport, and as a contributor to amalgamation with the International Cricket Council.

**Book launch**

The Palgrave Macmillan text Solution Focused Nursing, edited and authored by Associate Professor Margaret McAllister, was launched at the RCCPI recently. Associate Professor McAllister celebrated with fellow chapter authors, Dr Jennifer Rowe and Professor Wendy Moyle, as well as past graduates of Griffith (Beth Matarasso and Craig Shepherd) who inspired some of the key stories that appear in the book. Solution Focused Nursing is the philosophy that underpins the Bachelor of Nursing program at Griffith and the Master of Advanced Practice, Mental Health Nursing.

**Education Excellence Committee**

Associate Professor Keithia Wilson has accepted the appointment of Chair of the university level 2007 Education Excellence Committee.

### Student News

**Research award**

Kim Foster, a recent PhD graduate in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, supervised by A/Prof Margaret McAllister, was awarded the Research Award at the Australian and New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses 32nd International Conference held in Alice Springs in October. The award is given in recognition of the best research paper presented at the conference.

Kim’s paper titled Transformational Stories: Learning from adult children of parents with serious mental illness was a presentation of some of the major findings from her doctoral thesis: A narrative inquiry into the experiences of adult children of parents with serious mental illness.

**Aurukun Smiles grant funding**

Congratulations to the School of Dentistry and Oral Health students who have been awarded $10,000 from the Perpetual Foundation towards their Community Research Placements program, entitled “Oral Health Attitudes, Knowledge and Behaviour among Indigenous Primary School Children Residing in Aurukun”.

The Aurukun Smiles team will assess the oral health attitudes, knowledge and behaviour of indigenous primary school children residing in Aurukun, far north Queensland. An oral health promotion and tooth-brushing program will also be implemented at the Koolkan Primary School including interactive demonstrations with the children. Visit www.aurukunsmiles.com for further information.

**Griffith Innovation Challenge winners**

Bachelor of Exercise Science/Bachelor of Physiotherapy students Erin Kingston, Taryn Mann and Michelle Nankervis (pictured L-R with Course Convenor Greg Reddan) won the Griffith Health section of the Griffith Innovation Challenge for their entry Tummies to Toddlers. As part of the program 3008PES (Health and Exercise Organisations) students are required to develop a group business plan focused on a business idea related to exercise science or physiotherapy.

**RANZCP essay winner**

Congratulations to Ashley Sturm Advanced Cognitive Psychology student (2006) who’s essay titled “The Frontal Lobe Theory of Cognitive Aging and Inhibition” won First Prize in the RANZCP Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age essay competition.

**Pharmacy Student of the Year - wild card entry**

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia runs an annual Pharmacy Student of the Year competition.

At the National Australian Pharmacy Student Association Congress held recently in Melbourne, the NAPSA held a Pharmacy Student of the Year final competition with the winner receiving a wild card entry into the finals to be held at the Pharmacy Australia Congress in Melbourne later this year.

Rowan Lowe (MPharm student and Griffith Association of Pharmacy Students President) won the wild card entry. Rowan is pictured receiving his finalist award from John Bell.
Group News

Dental care for kids visiting the Gold Coast
Children from the Cherbourg Aboriginal community north-west of Brisbane visited the Gold Coast earlier this year and received assessment and treatment at Griffith University’s dental clinic. Queensland Health funded the visit which also supports a Memorandum of Understanding signed last year between Griffith and Barambah Regional Medical Services, the provider of health services to Cherbourg and the wider community in the South Burnett region.

The children, from one to 12 years of age, were assessed and treated by Griffith’s fourth year students under the supervision of senior staff.

Griffith’s Dean of Dentistry and Oral Health, Professor Newell Johnson said the national shortage of oral health professionals particularly in rural areas meant dental services available to the Cherbourg community were insufficient to meet demand. The initiative is also of educational value to our student body, some of whom we hope will be motivated to consider a future career working in indigenous communities, he said.

Sharing nursing research expertise
The Research Centre for Clinical Practice Innovation and School of Nursing and Midwifery have benefited from a return visit by Dr Denise Polit, author of the world’s best selling nursing research texts.

Dr Polit (pictured at right in photo), a research methodologist and statistician, has been sharing her expertise in all aspects of research design and practice. She said her forthcoming 8th edition of Nursing Research: Generating and Assessing Evidence for Nursing Practice is her best work ever – with many of the ideas for new and expanded content coming from her first visit to Griffith in late 2005.

The opportunity to interact with students, clinicians and researchers was an enriching experience with potentially useful collaborations, she said. Dr Polit hopes her current visit will similarly inspire important new content in the 7th edition of her undergraduate book, Essentials for Nursing Research, which she will work on when she returns to the United States.

Physiotherapy and Exercise Science - visit from Japanese College
The School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science recently hosted a visit by first year physiotherapy students from the AST Kansai College in Japan.

The students enjoyed lectures and workshops focussing on manual therapy of the cervical spine. Australia leads the world in manual therapy techniques and such visits offer opportunities for internationalisation of our programs and future exchange of staff and students.

Common first year for health students
Griffith Health has introduced a common first year program for students in health science, physiotherapy and exercise science, dentistry and oral health, medical science, biomedical science and pharmacy. The Foundation Year has been designed to improve consistency of teaching in core content areas such as chemistry, cell biology, anatomy and physiology. It also provides greater flexibility for students wanting to move across programs at the end of their first year.

New appointments
Dr Belinda Beck, Head of School, School of Anatomy
Anur Itthagarun, Associate Lecturer, School of Dentistry and Oral Health
Jane Manai, Lecturer, School of Dentistry and Oral Health
Donna McAuliffe, Senior Lecturer, School of Human Services
Dr Joanne Lewohl, Lecturer, School of Medical Sciences
Helen Naug, Associate Lecturer, School of Medical Sciences
Megan Young, Lecturer, School of Medicine
Elizabeth Emanuel, Associate Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Anne Evans-Murray, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Melanie Jessup, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Ingrid Ostbye, Associate Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Bridget Gillespie, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Carol Jeffrey, Associate Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Frances Lin, Associate Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Karen Wallen, Associate Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Dr Michael Leveritt, Senior Lecturer, School of Public Health
Ms Vanessa Lee, Associate Lecturer, School of Public Health

Promotions
Jenny Gamble, Senior Lecturer
Sandie McArthy, Senior Lecturer
Marion Mitchell, Senior Lecturer
Dr Belinda Beck, Head of School, School of Anatomy
Anur Itthagarun, Associate Lecturer, School of Dentistry and Oral Health
Jane Manai, Lecturer, School of Dentistry and Oral Health
Donna McAuliffe, Senior Lecturer, School of Human Services
Dr Joanne Lewohl, Lecturer, School of Medical Sciences
Helen Naug, Associate Lecturer, School of Medical Sciences
Megan Young, Lecturer, School of Medicine
Elizabeth Emanuel, Associate Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Anne Evans-Murray, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Melanie Jessup, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Ingrid Ostbye, Associate Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Bridget Gillespie, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Carol Jeffrey, Associate Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Frances Lin, Associate Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Karen Wallen, Associate Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Dr Michael Leveritt, Senior Lecturer, School of Public Health
Ms Vanessa Lee, Associate Lecturer, School of Public Health
Research Update

Skin cancer research

Funds recently received by the School of Medical Sciences from the Healthscope Qld Facilities and Gribbles Pathology annual corporate golf day will help to support research into developing ways of preventing skin cancer cells from suppressing the immune responses raised against them. It has come to light recently that cancer cells produce molecules that act as a defense barrier, blocking the immune cells and preventing them from being able to kill the cancer cells. The cancer cells secrete proteins that bind to the surface of the immune cells, inactivating them. If we can develop ways to intervene and overcome the cancer secreted proteins, then the immune system will have a greater chance to eliminate the cancer cells.

Dr Ralph is also collaborating with Assoc Prof Neuzil’s cancer research group in developing anti-skin cancer treatments with less side-effects and more selective eradication of cancer cells. These novel drugs target the mitochondria or powerhouse inside cancer cells, thereby selectively bringing about their death. The research into these novel anti-cancer drugs will complement the development of skin cancer vaccines currently already under development in Dr Ralph’s laboratory.

Griffith University is to become the Queensland home of Australia’s new cancer research centre. The $148 million Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Cancer Therapeutics will be headquartered at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute Biotechnology Centre in Victoria, with Griffith the only Queensland partner. Professor Ron Quinn, director of Griffith’s Eskitis Institute for Cell and Molecular Therapies, said Griffith’s contribution would include developing chemical libraries, high throughput screening, structural biology and medicinal chemistry.

The Best RAs work at the Disability Research Unit (Logan)

The Disability Research Unit at Logan, auspiced by the Research Centre for Practice Innovation, encourages and supports the career path of many early career researchers. The Unit, to date, has produced two PhD graduates whose theses remained unchanged by their markers and were placed on the Dean’s List of Excellence. They have also produced two Masters Graduates whom were awarded ‘Excellence’ for their research. Recently, several of the part-time research assistants have been placed in the top five per cent of the University for their area of study. Many of the research graduates are also avid publishers of their findings in peer-review journals.

Grant Funding

Alexander H, Teadman R, Shaban R, McCarthy A. Cultural Sensitivity in Health Group Students in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Care. Griffith Grant for Learning and Teaching $7,000

Carney D, Clayton S, Atken L. Adaptation and validation of the QualPaCS to measure quality of patient care in ICU. QH Nursing Research Grants $9,841

Fernandez F. Investigation of the role of GABA related genes in migraine Griffith University New Researchers Grant Scheme $10,000


McAllister M, Seaton P, Mitchell M. Solution Focused Nursing Enhancement Grant. Griffith University $21,680

McCarthy A, Shaban RZ, Winch S, Clavaron A. A pilot study of the factors that influence the health promotion and risk-reduction behaviours of younger female survivors of breast and haematological cancers. Griffith University Research Grants $24,506

Mitchell M. The Development of Efficient and Effective Objective Simulated Clinical Assessments in the Health Group to Support Clinical Competence of Graduates. Griffith University Teaching and Learning Grant $49,434

Seaton P, St John W, Lin F, Lee D, Owen S. The Meeting Place: Cultural Boundary Clarification Strategies for Clinical Teaching and Learning. Griffith University Teaching & Learning Grant $9,988

Vischier P, Griffiths L. New methods to map disease genes in an admixture founder population. GMRC Research Collaborative Scheme $34,822

Conference Presentations

Dean J. Facilitator HIV prevention. HIV & Overseas Work Melbourne, University of Queensland. 8-9 Feb 2007


