Clinical Research
Key Dates for 2006 and 2007

- Basic Clinical Research Tools (biostatistics)
  June 2, 3, 30 and July 1 2006
- Biomedical Research Management Part 1:
  July 24, 25, 27 and 28th 2006
- Biomedical Research Management Part 2:
  August 28, 29, 30 and September 1 2006
- Symposium - Biomedical Research Management under the Microscope:
  September 1 2006
- Clinical Neuroscience Research, Methodology and Disease Applications (Part 2):
  August 21, 22, 23 and 29 2006
- Symposium - Nurturing Clinical Research in Australia:
  August 24 2006
- Immunisation Clinical Research:
  September 8 and 9 and October 13 and 14 2006
- Ethics and Responsibilities of Clinical Research:
  October 6 and 7 and November 3 and 4 2006
- Infectious Diseases Clinical Research:
  November 10 and 11 and December 8 and 9 2006
- Clinical Neuroscience Research, Methodology and Disease Applications (Part 1):
  March 19, 20, 22 and 23 2007
- Clinical Neuroscience Research, Methodology and Disease Applications (Part 2):
  August 2007 (dates to be confirmed)

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About the School of Enterprise
The School of Enterprise is a wholly owned company and is an academic school of The University of Melbourne. It has been established as a vehicle to leverage and make more accessible capital of The University of Melbourne is leveraged and made more accessible to corporate and government sectors.

Two 4-day short courses

New training in Clinical Research in Neurosciences successfully delivered

At the end of March Sam Berkovic and the CCRE for Neurosciences welcomed a capacity group of clinical research professionals and students to the Austin Repatriation Centre for Part 1 of Clinical Neuroscience Research: Methodology and Disease Applications. Seventeen leading presenters in all, including the three CCRE Neurosciences Chief Investigators based at Austin Health, as well as associated researchers from the Austin Neurology Department, the National Stroke Research Institute, Department of Medicine AIHNH, staff from Austim Library and top research experts from the Howard Florey Research Institute, the Centre for Neuroscience at the University of Melbourne and Monash Medical Centre, took part in delivering the program. Read more inside.

Below: Sam Berkovic with students Jaqui Wong, MD student, Noojan Kazemi (Jacqui and Noojan were presentation winners, Saul Mullen, the other team member, is missing from picture), Clair Pridmore and Laurence Chu at Part 1 of the Neurosciences course.

Barry Marshall to present at Neuroscience Symposium

A Symposium, "Nurturing Clinical Research in Australia" will be held at the Bio21 Institute on Thursday August 24th 2006, 1.00pm to 5.15pm. "We are delighted that Barry Marshall is able to make time in his busy schedule to speak at our Symposium" said Sam Berkovic, course coordinator for the Specialist Certificate in Neurosciences. "We have organised a great line up of speakers for the event, and they’re going to share their vision for growing Australia’s clinical research capability. The students who are enrolled on the award program will be doubly lucky to have the chance to have lunch with all the speakers as well", Sam added. Registration is open to non-enrolled students at a cost of $45 per person. Places are limited. To register contact Brad Atkins 03 9810 3185 or b.atkins@soe.unimelb.edu.au.
Part 1 discussed research methodologies with a major focus on epilepsy (day 1) and stroke (day 3), but also included research methods used in developmental, autoimmune and neuromuscular disorders. Several disciplines and approaches were involved such as genetics, mechanisms of disease, neuropharmacology, rehabilitation, epidemiology, clinical trials, health economics and public health. Based on the course evaluation, participants were enthused by the great overviews of current clinical (and basic) research questions, complex methodologies made simple, discussions on how to switch between clinical and basic science, the insights into building effective research collaborations and the common pitfalls of clinical trials. The hands-on computer sessions on literature search and reference management were reportedly very useful, in particular in view of the literature review required to be completed within 3 months after this intensive course week. The small group interactive teaching (maximum 20) was thought provoking, group activities and breaks were all conducive to networking among peers, as well as with the wide range of top presenters. Group presentations on the afternoon of the last day, which was also part of the assessment for some, were both of a high professional standard and fun (as demonstrated by the winners of the Best Group Presentation, see photo).

Most course participants were advanced trainees either wanting to start clinical research, or considering starting a postgraduate research degree, with some already involved in a PhD. Others were more junior trainees or had no previous clinical background. Two-thirds of the course participants were enrolled in the award course (i.e. completing formal assessment). The CCRE-associated postgraduates and research fellows, completing the course as a mandatory part of their training, added greatly to the mix and fun. Participants’ backgrounds were very diverse ranging from Neurology, Paediatric Neurology, Neurosurgery, Psychiatry, Rehabilitation Medicine and General Medicine, to Neuropsychology, Basic Science and Epidemiology. This promoted many multi-disciplinary exchanges. Just under two-thirds of course participants came from across Melbourne. The interstate and overseas participants enjoyed staying at a well-appointed nearby hotel, which offered special deals for course participants.

THE CENTRE OF CLINICAL RESEARCH EXCELLENCE IN NEUROSCIENCES

The Centre of Clinical Research Excellence in Neurosciences is an NHMRC-funded national research centre based at Austin Health in Melbourne. It focuses on innovative patient-centred research into stroke, epilepsy and other neurological disorders.

A new clinical research model has been developed, which integrates the entire spectrum of health disciplines from medicine to nursing and allied health, together with basic science disciplines, ultimately leading to high quality research and improved efficiency in training. The Centre provides a dynamic multi-disciplinary clinical research environment with a strong focus on training and research career development. It is at the forefront of clinical research education and training in Clinical Neuroscience.

Established in 2003, the Centre is headed by a multi-disciplinary team of chief investigators under the leadership of Professor Geoff Donnan, Director of the National Stroke Research Institute; Professor Sam Berkovic, Director of the Epilepsy Research Centre; Professor Mary Galia, Director of the Rehabilitation Sciences Research Centre; and Professor Judy Parker, former Head of the School of Nursing at The University of Melbourne. The Centre is administered by the Department of Medicine Austin Health, The University of Melbourne.

The Specialist Certificate in Clinical Research (Neuroscience) was offered for the first time in March 2006 (Part 1), while Part 2 will take place in August. The course comprises two subjects (12.5-points each), which can be taken either as the stand alone Specialist Certificate or as electives in the Master of Clinical Research (by coursework) or (by research) or Graduate Diploma in Clinical Research. These new courses are offered by the University of Melbourne’s School of Enterprise in conjunction with the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences. The Neurosciences course (Parts 1 and 2) was developed by the Centre of Clinical Research Excellence (CCRE) in Neurosciences, under the academic leadership of Professor Sam Berkovic. The course was piloted in 2004, in its unaccredited form which included 5 separate modules, and was delivered 3-hour weekly.