

**September 2008**

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## **Spotlight: Wendy Macdonald**

Wendy Macdonald is an Associate Professor at La Trobe University (LTU) in Melbourne, Australia, where she is the coordinator of a teaching and research program in ergonomics, safety and health. She is director of LTU's Centre for Ergonomics and Human Factors, which provides applied research and consultancy services to federal and state governments and the wider community, and is currently under designation as a member of the WHO Network of Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health.

Wendy has a BSc (Psychology) from University College London, a postgraduate degree in Occupational Psychology from the University of Melbourne, and a PhD from there also. She is a fellow of the Safety Institute of Australia, a founding member of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society of Australia, and a member of the Australian Psychological Society and the International Commission on Occupational Health.

For the first 20 years of her working life, Wendy worked mostly as a road safety researcher, before commencing work in 1987 at La Trobe University to teach cognitive ergonomics to postgraduate students whose main interests were in OSH. This triggered a change of research focus from road safety to OSH, and her expertise in 'driver workload' related to road safety was used to develop a research program on the impact of job demands on OSH, particularly issues concerning occupational stress and work-related musculoskeletal disorders. Wendy's work as AA1 Manager is enabling her to develop conventional systems-based models of risk management for application at a global level - which makes her very happy!

Work overlaps with family interests, since both of her daughters' doctoral thesis topics have implications



*Wendy Macdonald, AA1 Manager*

for OSH management at a global level. They are concerned with international political and economic systems, and the roles of nongovernmental organizations. Wendy's hobbies include playing with her baby granddaughter, spending time with her very elderly parents, gardening (occasionally) and sleeping!

## Indian Academics Visit National Institute for Occupational Health in South Africa

By Claudina Nogueira, Communication and International Liaison, National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOH), South Africa

As part of Activity Area 4 of the WHO Global Network of Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health Work Plan, the Analytical Services Section of NIOH in Johannesburg hosted three academic visitors from India for three weeks during the month of May 2008. The visitors were Dr. Krishnendu Mukhopadhyay, Mr. Ayyappam Ramalingam, and Mr. Venkatesan Dhaas from the Department of Environmental Health Engineering of Sri Ramachandra University in Chennai, India, which is a WHO CC in occupational health and an ILO-CIS Information Centre headed by Professor Kalpana Balakrishnan.



*Left to Right: Mr. V. Dhaas, Dr. K. Mukhopadhyay, and Mr. A. Ramalingam visited NIOH in May 2008 as part of NIOH Project CE3a - Developing capacity in biological monitoring in occupational and environmental health.*

The academic visitors received practical training in laboratory techniques to measure chemical exposures in biological and environmental samples for occupational and environmental health assessments. Dr. Mukhopadhyay and Mr. Ramalingam gave two presentations at a special NIOH Research Forum session, titled "An Overview of Occupational Health Status in India" and "Development of Simple Guidance (Risk Management Toolkit) for Controlling Occupational Exposure - an Indian Occupational Perspective", respectively.

The visiting academics received most of their training in the specialized laboratories of the Analytical Services Section, but also visited other sections of NIOH to become familiar with the research and routine work of the Institute. While in South Africa, they visited the refinery of Rustenburg Base Metals Mine in the North West Province.

This collaboration with Sri Ramachandra University was initiated in 2007 with the main objective of establishing the first biological monitoring laboratory in India. The collaboration is part of a proposed long-term programme with India for capacity-building in occupational health. NIOH, a designated WHO CC in occupational health since 2005, is actively involved in supporting occupational health development and building networks globally, and the collaboration with India is a good example of this commitment and core function. Training programmes are planned for late 2008 and 2009, which will be joint efforts between various WHO CCs in occupational health such as: the Health & Safety Laboratory in the United Kingdom, NIOH in South Africa, and Sri Ramachandra University in India. The programmes will incorporate seminars and workshops on "Biological Monitoring of Chemical Exposures in the Workplace", which will be partly sponsored by the British Occupational Hygiene Society.

## XVIII World Congress on Safety and Health at Work

The World Congress on Safety and Health at Work, organized by the Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency,

International Labour Organization, and International Social Security Association, was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea from June 29-July 2, 2008. The congress was attended by over 4,000 participants from over 100 countries and provided a forum for the exchange of new information and practices with the aim of promoting safety and health at work.



*Participants at the meeting of the WHO Network of Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health*

As part of the congress, the WHO Network of Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health met to discuss the transition from the current 2006-2010 Network Work Plan to a new 2009-2012 Work Plan. Fifty-four participants from WHO, ILO, Collaborating Centres, NGOs, Health and Labour

Ministries, and other occupational health and safety experts attended the meeting. The new 2009-2012 Work Plan will intensively focus the contributions of the WHO Collaborating Centres on assisting the countries and WHO to achieve the commitments of the Global Plan of Action for Workers' Health, Resolution 60.26, endorsed by the Member States at the May 2007 World Health Assembly. We will share with you the final design of the 2009-2012 Work Plan when it is ready. Thank you to all who participated in this meeting. Your input is valuable.

## **Munich Meeting of WHO Network of Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health**

The Planning Committee of the Global Network of the WHO Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health convened in Munich, Germany from September 15-16, 2008. The purpose of the meeting was to draft plans for inviting projects from the CC Directors to fill gaps in the 2009-2012 Work Plan of the WHO CC Network with respect to advancing key priorities endorsed by member states in the Global Plan of Action for Workers' Health. WHO will be contacting you in the near future.



*David Rees, Eduardo Algranti, Suvi Lehtinen, Leslie Nickels, Sin Eng Chia, Max Lum, and Marilyn Fingerhut at the Munich meeting.*

## Cancellation of Cape Town Meeting of the WHO Global Network of Collaborating Centres

Dear CC colleagues,

We had expected to be able to hold the next meeting of the WHO Global Network of Collaborating Centres in Cape Town, on 19-20 March 2009, back-to-back with the ICOH Congress. Due to a number of unfavourable circumstances, the WHO management had no choice but to decide to transfer that meeting to another venue, later in 2009. We hope that this does not cause any inconvenience to your travel plans.

The next meeting of the Global Network of Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health will be held at WHO headquarters in Geneva in September 2009, and we will confirm the exact dates as soon as they are known. At this point, we are collecting information about any competing events. Having this meeting in Geneva will provide an opportunity for contacts with a number of WHO disease treatment and prevention programmes, as well as foster contacts with other stakeholders.

We look forward to continuing and developing further our excellent collaboration towards the successful implementation of the GPA. Please also let Evelyn know ([kortume@who.int](mailto:kortume@who.int)) if you know of any competing events in September 2009. There will be a meeting organized within the ICOH2009 Congress for all Collaborating Centre attendees at ICOH2009. The topic will be the advancement of the Global Plan of Action.

*Carlos Dora, PhD  
Acting Coordinator  
Interventions for Healthy Environments Unit  
Public Health and the Environment Department  
World Health Organization*

## You are Invited to the International Conference on Road Safety at Work

The International Conference on Road Safety at Work will take place from February 16-18, 2009, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C., USA. The conference will provide a forum for business, labour, policy makers, and

the research community to discuss strategies to prevent road traffic crashes, a leading cause of workplace death, injury, and disability in countries around the world. Internationally recognized speakers will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience, and participants from around the world will offer delegates a unique opportunity to exchange ideas and forge partnerships. The conference is being organized by the U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) with co-sponsors: the World Health Organization, Pan American Health Organization, International Labour Organization, and National Safety Council.



Conference Registration: <http://www.nsc.org/forms/divisions/NIOSH.aspx>

Hotel Reservations: Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, 2660 Woodley Road, NW Washington, DC 20008 USA

Phone Number: +1-202-328-2000

Online hotel reservations: <http://cwp.marriott.com/wasdt/nioshroadsafety>

For more information on the International Conference on Road Safety at Work, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/twu/global/>.

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