9. Burns Injury research

During 2008, the Burns Injury project was established within the CPHR as a collaborative research program with Professor Fiona Wood from the WA Burns Unit to use record linkage to examine the epidemiology of severe burns, the use of health care services, the treatment of burns patients and to evaluate the outcomes of treatment. Data was used from the WA Burns Data linked to the WADLS and will be used for the development of best practice guidelines and for the development of health policy. An NHMRC grant was approved for the period 2009-2011 to pursue this initiative. Dr Janine Duke was the researcher appointed to coordinate the project.

Burn is a devastating injury for the patient but also puts a great burden on society by consuming relatively large amounts of health care resources. The research proposal outlines a new population-based collaborative research initiative between the Burn Service of WA and the CPHR – the research infrastructure of the SQSCP will complement this initiative. The initiative will provide the foundation for an ongoing multidisciplinary research partnership that will include specialist burn surgeons, nurses, allied health professionals, health economists, biostatisticians, health service researchers with specialist epidemiological and record linkage expertise, and consumers and provide a unique clinical research program that is currently unavailable. The assessment of the epidemiology, treatment pathways, health care utilisation, economic cost and outcomes will establish evidence-based knowledge to determine best-practice treatment for burns patients.

This initiative will provide new and important information for Australians coping with the major disabilities following the trauma of major burn injuries. Important issues such as how health services utilisation and treatment pathways affect final patient outcomes such as the disfiguring effects of scarring, the adjustment to disability and re-integration into the community. The impact of living in rural and remote areas will be established to inform the direction of future education campaigns and clinical practice. The areas of prevention, treatment, disaster response, education and the costs involved in treatment all have direct community impact. The composite entity is well placed to make a significant local and global contribution to burn care and will enormously enhance the national and international capacity for burns research.

Lead: Professor James Semmens
Team: Dr Janine Duke
Dr Katrina Spilsbury
Dr Delia Hendrie
Collaborators: Professor Fiona Wood

Recent publications:


