

School of Population Health RHD Student Project

Title: Long-term effectiveness of health assessments in a cohort of adults with intellectual disability.

Supervisor: Dr Robert Ware – <http://researchers.uq.edu.au/researcher/1191>

Funding: Student Scholarship required, but top-up available

Project Outline:

People with intellectual disability experience markedly elevated rates of morbidity and mortality compared with the general population. Health assessments are the only primary-care based intervention that significantly increase short term health promotion and disease prevention activity in this population. However the long-term effects of health assessments remain unknown.

Beginning in 1999, School of Population Health and Queensland Centre for Intellectual and Developmental Disability (QCIDD) researchers conducted a randomised controlled trial investigating the short-term effect of health assessments in 453 adults with intellectual disability (Lennox 2007, Int J Epidemiol 36(1):139-146). All participants were clients of the Endeavour Foundation, Queensland's largest service provider for people with disability. The trial established the beneficial effects of the health assessment in the 12 months after the assessment was received, and as a result all Endeavour Foundation clients now receive annual health assessments.

The aim of the proposed RHD degree is to establish whether health assessments have a long-term effect on the health of this cohort of people with intellectual disability, by comparing the health outcomes and health service utilisation of cohort members against the frequency, and periodicity, of their health assessments through data linkage with state-wide and national health databases.