

Professor. John Snowdon – Clinical Professor, Area Mental Health

### **1. Our Research**

Researchers in our department have gathered data about medication use in our nursing homes. We have documented data obtained in cases of severe domestic squalor. We are currently examining data concerning cases of delusional disorder, and are looking at the use of anti-dementia drugs in nursing homes. One of us (JS) has collaborated with others in studies of late life suicide and of late life depression. We (GH and others) are collecting data about our use of electroconvulsive therapy, looking particularly at late-onset depression and outcomes following treatment (compared with earlier onset cases). Suicide data from New Zealand are being analysed. Data have been collected by the RSPCA for a study of animal hoarding.

### **2. Key Achievements, 2013 - 2014**

Squalor and hoarding: Publications include our book, 'Severe Domestic Squalor' (Snowdon, Halliday and Banerjee; Cambridge University Press), and papers on "Two types of squalor" (J.Snowdon, G.Halliday, G.Hunt) and on the need for assertive intervention in cases of hoarding and squalor.

Suicide: Publications (with D.De Leo, B.Draper, K.Kolves) about our ARC-funded psychological autopsy study of suicide in middle and old age, looking at personality and mental disorders, and contact with health professionals before death.

### **3. Research Staff**

Clinical Professor John Snowdon and Dr Graeme Halliday, old age psychiatrists. Dr Kerryn Loftus and Dr Janani Nagendra, advanced trainees in old age psychiatry. Dr Charles Chan (psychiatrist) has worked with us in initiating a study of animal hoarding. Assoc Prof Glenn Hunt has provided statistical and organizational assistance.

### **4. Prestigious Awards / Medals, 2013**

John Snowdon has been awarded the Chad Buckle Fellowship to visit New Zealand in 2014.

### **5. Higher Degree Students**

Marcello Rodriguez submitted a Ph D thesis in 2014 (co-supervised by Prof Snowdon)

### **6. Publications and Presentations, 2013-14**

#### Clinical Professor John Snowdon and collaborators:

Suicides in older adults: A case-control psychological autopsy study in Australia (by D.De Leo, B.M.Draper, J.Snowdon, K.Kolves). Journal of Psychiatric Research, 2013, 47, 980-988.

Two types of squalor: findings from a factor analysis of the Environmental Cleanliness and Clutter Scale (ECCS) (by J.Snowdon, G.Halliday, G.Hunt). *International Psychogeriatrics*, 2013, 25, 1191-1198.

Should psychomotor disturbance be an essential criterion for a DSM-5 diagnosis of melancholia? *BMC Psychiatry* 2013, 13, 160. On-line June 2013.

Contacts with health professionals before suicide: missed opportunities for prevention (by D.De Leo, B.M.Draper, J.Snowdon and K.Kölves). *Comprehensive Psychiatry* 2013, 54, 1117-1123.

A controlled study of suicide in middle-aged and older people: personality traits, age and psychiatric disorders (by B.Draper, K.Kolves, D.De Leo and J.Snowdon). *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 2014, 44 (2), 130-138.

Severe domestic squalor: time to sort out the mess. Commentary. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 2014. On-line April 29. DOI: 10.1177/0004867414533160

#### Presentations by Clinical Professor John Snowdon:

2013 March – Late life depression. Australian Doctor seminar for general practitioners, Sydney University.

2013 March – Understanding squalor and hoarding. Royal College of Psychiatrists Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age and European Association of Geriatric Psychiatry joint annual scientific meeting. Manchester, UK.

2013 May – Establishing the RANZCP's Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age. RANZCP 2013 Congress, Sydney.

2013 May – Severe domestic squalor: what are we talking about? Symposium, RANZCP 2013 Congress, Sydney.

2013 September – The development of old age psychiatry services in Thailand. Siriraj Hospital, Bangkok.

2013 October – Do brain changes augur a poor response to ECT? IPA congress, Seoul, Korea.

2013 October – The interaction of stress, psychiatric disorders and personality in the development of suicidal behaviour in later life by B.Draper, J.Snowdon, D.De Leo, K.Kolves. IPA congress, Seoul, Korea.

2013 December – Poster: Study on animal hoarding in New South Wales, Australia (by C.Chan, J.Snowdon, G.Halliday). Australian Society for Psychiatric Research conference, Melbourne.

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