



## VIHSP 2005 Update

It's an exciting and busy time at the VIHSP office as the February 28<sup>th</sup> starting date for universal screening in all VIHSP hospital sites approaches.

The Screening and Diagnostic Working groups have finalised screening and diagnostic audiology protocols.

Information documents have also been finalised, and regular meetings have been held at each hospital regarding set-up of the program on-site.

## Parent information and consent

Three Parent information brochures have been written and are currently being designed and printed. The first brochure is a general information brochure that all parents will receive (ideally as part of antenatal hospital information packages) prior to being offered the screen. A second brochure is given to parents following their baby's screen according to the result obtained.

Parents will also be asked to sign a written consent form prior to the screen being performed.

The brochures and consent form will be translated into the following ten languages: Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Amharic, Spanish, Turkish, Lebanese and Serbian.

All will be soon be available on the VIHSP website.

## Equipment

Algo 3i AABR screening units will be used for the VIHSP universal screening. These hand-held devices run on rechargeable batteries, and are lightweight and easy to transport. They are now undergoing the relevant checks/clearances required by each hospital.

## Personnel

We welcome the two VIHSP Area Coordinators who commenced in January 2005. Bernie McCudden, who has a varied background in population child health and nursing research, will be based at the Royal Women's Hospital, and Carol Matthews, a former teacher of the Deaf, will be based at the Mercy Hospital for Women. Bernie and Carol have been assisting coordinating set-up at their respective sites. Applications for the Monash Medical Centre position are being reviewed.

Applicants for hearing screener positions were numerous and of a very high calibre. Interviews are complete and appointments will be finalised this week.

## Training

The VIHSP team is organising a week-long training program for the Screeners to be held the week of

February 14<sup>th</sup>. It will include training by Scanmedics (Algo) representatives in use of the ABBR, speakers for diagnostic audiology and early intervention services, and in-house training in protocols, communication and data management. Part of the training will occur in hospital sites, so that screeners can successfully screen an infant's hearing by the end of the week.

## Artwork/ Design

You will have noticed the new VIHSP logo. This was designed by Greer Samson of Women's and Children's Health (Educational Resource Centre). The logo will feature on all VIHSP documents, uniforms and all communications. This logo will soon replace the former VIHSP logo that still features on VIHSP risk factor referral forms.

## On-site

Regular site meetings have been held at each site throughout December and January regarding implementation and running of the program in the wards. VIHSP offices are being established at the Royal Women's Hospital, the Mercy Hospital for Women and Monash Medical Centre.

A series of In-Services for hospital staff are also currently being held at each site. These information sessions aim to inform staff of development and changes to VIHSP and screening services in Victoria, anticipated benefits of the program, and what to expect in the wards. Responses from staff so far have been very interested and positive.

## Other news

**Information packs** for paediatricians, maternity hospitals, Maternal and Child Health Nurses, and other professionals regarding the changes to VIHSP will be sent later this month.

An **article about VIHSP** will appear later this month in this season's edition of ASA's 'Audiology Now'.

**South Australia** has announced that, like Qld, ACT and NSW, it too will soon offer statewide newborn hearing screening. From the press release: "Health Minister Lea Stevens says the program, which currently reaches about 35% of the 18,000 babies born in South Australia each year, will be extended to reach all newborns by the end of 2005." The program will be run by the Child and Youth Health service.

This newsletter is produced by the Victorian Infant Hearing Screening Program Implementation Team for the various professional groups involved in infant hearing screening in Victoria. These include Maternal & Child Health nurses, audiologists, paediatricians, midwifery and neonatal care staff, early intervention staff and key government staff.