

## VIHSP 2005 Update

It has been a busy though very productive period for the VIHSP team in the lead-up to the Christmas break. Among other things, a logo design has been selected, and parent information brochures will be ready for distribution to hospital sites by the end of January. These brochures will be translated into the 10 languages most requested by the VIHSP screening hospitals.

## VIHSP Positions

Processing applications and organising interviews has been one of the most pressing tasks for the implementation team during November and December. Interviews for the three Area Coordinator positions (to supervise the screeners and coordinate referrals at each hospital) have been held recently, as have interviews for the VIHSP Program Director.

An overwhelming number of applications for the Screener positions from applicants from a wide range of backgrounds have also been received. Interviews for the Screener positions will be held in mid-January.

## On-Site

A series of on-site meetings have been held between members of the implementation team and key liaison representatives at each VIHSP screening hospital site. These meetings have been very productive in terms of establishing the logistics and requirements for on-site set up and day-to-day running of VIHSP. Important issues include how VIHSP employees will be incorporated, establishing key contacts for each unit and site, and addressing each hospital's requirements for employment, translations and infection control.

Office space for VIHSP has been identified at each site! This proved no easy task, and we thank each of the VIHSP hospital liaison representatives for their perseverance and assistance with this.

## VIHSP Protocols

The relevant working groups have completed VIHSP screening and diagnostic audiology protocols. These will be presented to the Steering Committee in mid-January.

Key features include a revised list of risk factors for progressive hearing loss and protocols for risk factor ascertainment by screeners, and notification

protocols for infants with a refer result or identified risk factor. Stickers will be placed in the Child Health Record of all children receiving a VIHSP screen, and letters will be sent to MCHNs notifying them of a refer result or risk factor. Follow-up audiology assessments for children receiving a refer result will be arranged directly by VIHSP coordinators.

## Equipment and information systems

A purchase order has been placed for the Algo 3i screening equipment for the program. We expect to receive them in early February, in good time for testing and training of VIHSP coordinators and screeners prior to commencement of full screening in late February.

A final business plan regarding choice of a robust information system to support VIHSP has been submitted to the DHS following consultation with IT representatives from each hospital site.

## Media update & news

Articles have been submitted to ASA Audiology Now (summer edition) and to the GPDV monthly e-bulletin for January publication. Zeffie Poulakis presented to Deaf Children Australia's AGM recently, alongside a National Newborn Hearing Screening Committee representative and a parent of a child with a hearing impairment.

An expanded VIHSP website is now live, and will continue to be updated throughout 2005.

The NSW Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children ([www.ridbc.org.au](http://www.ridbc.org.au)) recently announced federal funding for a new National Remote Early Learning Program, to be available to families in all states and territories from early in 2005.

Interested in what's happening in New Zealand? – visit Project HIEDI at:  
[http://www.nfd.org.nz/documents/Hiedi\\_22.pdf](http://www.nfd.org.nz/documents/Hiedi_22.pdf)

## Merry Christmas

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed and expressed an interest in VIHSP this year, and to wish all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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.