

Allied Health Research Strategic Plan

2022 – 2024



Acknowledgement of Country

Monash Health acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung People, who are part of the Kulin Nation. We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging whose ancestral land it is upon which we provide care to the community.

Prepared by Dr Abby Foster, Allied Health Research Advisor, on behalf of the Allied Health Research Committee and the Chief Allied Health Officer

September 2022

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Welcome to the Allied Health Research Strategic Plan

Danielle Ryan

Chief Allied Health Officer



Research is an integral part of the work of allied health clinicians and managers as we strive to provide excellent care and experiences and to develop the workforce of the future.

The time of great change that we have seen with the COVID-19 pandemic has brought challenges but also opportunities. We have embraced new ways of communicating, providing care and working together and the best of these will continue beyond the pandemic. Importantly, Allied Health has continued to engage in compelling research, answering the questions asked by our work.

One thing I love about allied health is our willingness to remain curious; to put patients at the centre of our work by providing evidence-based care and to notice what could be done better. These ideas are where research questions come from – they can start as small as updating a brochure to ensure it meets the needs of our consumers and can grow as large as a multi-centre research study. All are finding ways to improve our care and our systems. And I believe any could be a step towards a research career at Monash Health, should you wish it.

With this in mind, I have great pleasure in welcoming you to our Allied Health Research Strategic Plan. In doing so, I also share my sincere thanks to Dr Abby Foster, Dr Deb Mitchell and our Allied Health Research Committee for the wisdom and thought leadership contained in these pages.

Finally, regardless of your research experience, I encourage you to continue to notice the things that could be done better. And I encourage you to keep asking questions. Though your curiosity, we improve healthcare.

Preface

Dr Abby Foster

Allied Health Research Advisor



Dr Debra Mitchell

Former WISER Manager



Allied Health at Monash Health has a lot to be proud of. In our roles, it has been a pleasure to learn about and support the research-informed practice and practice-informed research allied health are engaging in across the organisation. The Allied Health Research Strategic Plan is an opportunity to celebrate our existing allied health research strengths and to move forward, expanding, extending and enriching our research culture and capability.

A strong motivator behind this plan is to create an opportunity for equity. It is our hope that this plan will help us make research part of the everyday for every allied health clinician across Monash Health. No matter who you are, no matter where you work, research is not out of reach.

As we continue to invest in and grow our allied health research, we look forward to seeing how the outcomes of our implementation and innovation will translate into improved health and wellbeing for our community.

Introduction to allied health research at Monash Health

Monash Health is Victoria's largest public health service. We provide healthcare across the entire lifespan to one quarter of Melbourne's population at more than 40 locations. Allied Health at Monash Health is made up of twenty-four professions under the governance of the Chief Allied Health Officer.

We have over 1,200 allied health employees working across four operational streams, meaning we have diverse research interest areas across the spectrum of healthcare. The Allied Health workforce includes both nationally registered (Australian Registration and Accreditation Scheme) and self-regulated allied health professionals and allied health assistants. This includes:

- Aboriginal Health Practitioners
- Allied Health Assistants
- Audiologists Art Therapists
- Biomechanists
- Child Life Therapists
- Community Development Workers
- Dietitians
- Exercise Physiologists
- Health Care Workers
- Health Promotion Practitioners
- Massage Therapists
- Music Therapists
- Naturopaths
- Neurophysiology Scientists
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Podiatrists
- Psychiatric
- Service Officers
- Social Workers
- Speech Pathologists
- Spiritual Care Workers
- Welfare Workers
- Youth Workers

Allied Health is committed to creating research evidence and implementing it into practice to improve clinical care and to advance the knowledge of our professions. With limited resources to commit, a strategic and measured approach is required.

Every allied health clinician has an ethical and professional responsibility to engage with research as part of their practice. The way we interact with research exists on a continuum and will vary depending on our roles, interests and professional goals. From those who understand and apply the evidence in practice right through to those who generate and translate research, research is important for everyone.

Reviewing our research activity over the last five years, it is clear that allied health has some significant strengths. We undertake high-quality research across diverse areas of practice. We share our research findings through journal publications and conference presentations. We seek and achieve success through research grant funding. But research success is about more than these traditional metrics.

In late 2019, the Allied Health Research Committee undertook a survey using the Research Capacity and Culture tool. Over 300 allied health clinicians from across the organisation participated in the survey. The findings of the survey identified our research strengths and areas for improvement, helping us to shape a targeted approach to supporting research in our organisation. Our allied health staff indicated the potential benefit of a coordinated and strategic approach to research. The findings also provided us with a baseline measure against which we can assess the impact of activities we undertake to achieve this goal.

"A clearly articulated allied health research strategy would support a coordinated and strategic approach to research within the organisation."

Grade 4, Allied Health & Patient Flow, Research Capacity & Culture survey 2019

Adopting a strategic approach to research in allied health is essential to culture and capacity building. Developing a coordinated and multidisciplinary approach is considered a critical success factor for allied health research.

The research landscape for allied health at Monash Health

Existing structures across Monash Health support us in building research culture and capability. The [Monash Health Strategic Plan 2023](#) includes research as a priority area. As employees, our intent is to be relentless in our pursuit of excellence. Research is explicitly valued, featured as one of the six Monash Health guiding principles: “*We integrate teaching, research and innovation to continuously learn and improve*”. Explicit links between this plan and the Monash Health Strategic Plan 2023 are evident in our description of our Research Focus Areas, which are linked in the footnotes to Monash Health values. In developing this document, we integrated and contextually interpreted the principles and values outlined in not only the Monash Health Strategic Plan 2023, but also the [Victorian Allied Health Research Framework](#) and the draft Monash Health Research Strategy.

People

Our people are at the heart of our research. They are our most important resource.

The population we provide healthcare to is vibrant and diverse. Ultimately, it is our consumers who will be most affected by or who may benefit from the research we undertake. Our patients, their families and the community can be actively engaged to ensure our research is truly *with the community*, acknowledging them as the most important element in clinical research.

Our clinicians are experts in their areas of practice. They can generate meaningful research questions that arise from their clinical work and that hold value for our local community.

Bringing together our clinicians, our consumers and research experts creates the foundation for excellent clinical research.

Research support

Monash Health Research Support Services is the research administration office for all research projects conducted at Monash Health. They are responsible for the ethical review, approval, monitoring and governance of Monash Health Human Ethics and Research.

The Monash Health Research Council provides leadership, strategy and governance to all research at Monash Health. Its membership is represented by the key research leaders at Monash Health, covering all research streams and health disciplines.

The Allied Health Research Committee's mandate is to support research projects and promote a positive research culture within allied health. With membership across professions and programs, the committee's role is to consult, provide advice and make recommendations to the Allied Health Leadership Committee regarding research prioritisation, support, resourcing, translation and capability building.

Collaborations & partnerships to enable research

Monash Health clinicians foster and nurture research partnerships and collaborations with multiple institutions close to home and further afield.

Monash Health has formal relationships with Monash University as a teaching hospital and as a research partner. In addition, we are members of Monash Partners, an innovative partnership between health service, research and teaching organisations. Through Monash Partners, our partners include Alfred Health, Monash University, Peninsula Health, Eastern Health, Cabrini Health, Epworth HealthCare, Burnet Institute, Hudson Institute and Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute. Our associate partners include La Trobe University and Latrobe Regional Hospital. The purpose of Monash Partners is to connect researchers, clinicians and the community to innovate for better health and wellbeing.

As practising clinicians, we are valuable partners. We can support those we collaborate with by identifying and addressing real-world research questions and supporting the recruitment of participants for research studies.

Research and academic appointments

Several allied health research support positions have been established. In addition to the Allied Health Research Advisor, based in the Workforce, Innovation, Strategy, Education & Research (WISER) unit, part-time research support roles now exist in physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech pathology. A number of allied health clinicians hold adjunct academic appointments based on their research profiles. These appointments enable Monash Health staff to supervise research students and access university facilities and libraries.

Funding for allied health research at Monash Health

Funding is not an essential requirement for research. Research can come from routine clinical activity without needing specific additional funding. However, funding helps create a context amenable to research. As a result, funding for research is always keenly sought but is often scarce. Local sources of funding for allied health research include the Monash Health Emerging Researcher Fellowships, the Lions John Cockayne Memorial Fellowship and other local philanthropic donors.

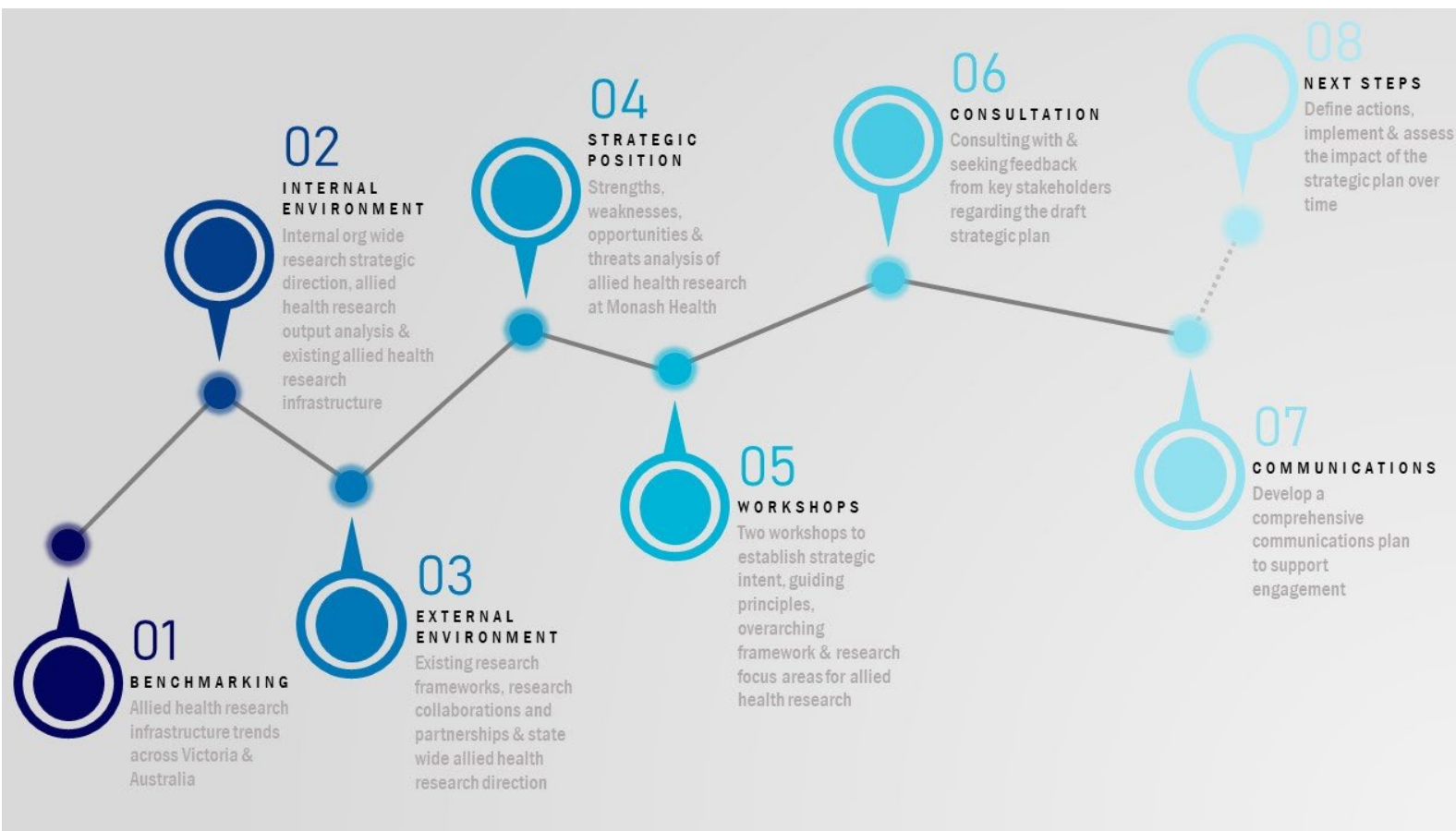
Library & information services

The Monash Health Library provides access to authoritative, high-quality information resources. Our library staff provide expert advice on systematic literature searching and evidence-based practice for Monash Health staff to support research in our services. They provide essential resources, education and support to researchers throughout their projects.

Developing the Allied Health Research Strategic Plan

A multi-phase process was used to design the Allied Health Research Strategic Plan, based on the [Strategic planning guidelines for Victorian health services](#) and using a vision-based strategic planning approach. A comprehensive, iterative process of development was undertaken.

The process involved seven stages: benchmarking, analysis of the internal environment, analysis of the external environment, identification of strategic position, strategic planning workshops, stakeholder consultations and communications.



The Allied Health Research Committee is grateful that this plan has, following review, received endorsement from the following groups and individuals:

- Danielle Ryan, Chief Allied Health Officer
- Dr Angus Henderson, Director of Enterprise Strategy & Development
- Associate Professor Anjali Dhulia, Chief Medical Officer
- Allied Health Research Committee
- Allied Health Leadership Committee
- Monash Health Research Council
- Monash Health Executive Committee

Our strategic intent

Our practice informs
research and our
research informs practice;
we innovate and
collaborate to improve the
health of our community,
relentless in our pursuit of
excellence in allied health
research





Our guiding principles

01

**Our research is
consumer-
driven**

02

**Our research is
collaborative**

03

**Our research is
core**

04

**Our research is
communicated**

01 **Our research is consumer-driven**

Placing consumers at the centre of our research, we do research with and for our community



Mary Danoudis

Research Physiotherapist
Clinical Research Centre for Movement Disorders & Gait

Mary has been the lead and co-investigator for several research projects in the field of movement disorders. She has published over 20 peer-reviewed articles and several book chapters. Her most recent work amplifies the voices of people with lived experience. Projects include a survey of the health care experiences of people living with Parkinson's disease and the consumer-driven development of the Monash Health Movement Disorders Program website.



Katie Palmer

Senior Physiotherapist
Acute & Complex Care Stream

Katie has extensive clinical experience in cardiac and chronic heart failure management across the continuum of care. She is currently completing her PhD with Monash University, investigating engagement in chronic heart failure and strategies to improve both referral and uptake. The experiences of individuals living with chronic heart failure are central to her findings and recommendations. Her research has been presented internationally, with several studies in publication.

Our research is collaborative 02

We work across professions, with our Monash Health colleagues and with our external research partners

Jacinta Winderlich

Paediatric Clinical Specialist Dietitian
Monash Children's Hospital

Jacinta is a clinician-researcher and PhD candidate through the Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Research Centre at Monash University. Her research is a multi-centre, observational study of nutrition in critically ill children. Jacinta leads the study, working with nine paediatric intensive care units across Australia and New Zealand. In addition, she is the Monash Children's Hospital Allied Health Research Chair.



Dr Corey Joseph

Biomechanist
Clinical Gait Analysis Service

Since graduating with a PhD from Australian Catholic University in 2012, Corey has worked in a variety of academic, government and healthcare research roles in both Australia and the UK. An excellent science communicator, Corey's extensive publications have been widely cited. In his role as senior evidence analyst at the Centre for Clinical Effectiveness, Corey collaborated broadly with staff from across the organisation to undertake reviews of the evidence to inform decision-making for clinical practice, policy and quality improvement initiatives. His current gait lab research sees him collaborating with physiotherapists at Monash Children's Hospital and in specialist clinics.



03 **Our research is core**

Clinical practice drives our research
and our research drives clinical
practice



Hannah Ross

Clinical Physiotherapist and Research Project Officer
Monash Health Community

Hannah is a physiotherapist with a keen interest in research. In 2021, she took on a role as a research project officer to build her research skills. The project, led by physiotherapy manager Liz Dalla Santa, explores the translation of evidence into practice in balance exercise prescription. The project is a collaboration between Monash Health and Monash University researcher Dr Melanie Farlie. The research team aims to bridge the gap between research and practice by implementing the world first interval rating of balance exercise intensity, the Balance Intensity Scale.



Siew-Lian Crossley

Professional Lead Speech Pathologist
Monash Children's Hospital

Siew-Lian is a speech pathologist who is passionate about supporting early feeding and interaction skills of infants and young children. Siew-Lian commenced her journey as a researcher during her time working in the UK. Recently, a clinical quandary regarding how to select appropriate bottles for babies in the NICU prompted Siew-Lian and her colleagues to undertake research determining the flow rate of different teats. The findings will help clinicians working in this space to select supportive feeding equipment for preterm infants.

Our research is 04 communicated

We share what we find and what we learn with others

Dr Antoni Caserta

Senior Paediatric Podiatrist
Child & Family Team, Monash Health Community

Antoni works within a multidisciplinary paediatric team where he co-consults with a paediatric physiotherapist. He is a PhD candidate at Monash University undertaking research to better understand the lower limb profile of children with an idiopathic toe-walking gait. In addition, he is currently working on research projects relating to podiatry outcome measures and diagnostic tools. Antoni is passionate about sharing the findings of his research. He has presented numerous times at special interest groups, national and international conferences and has also published several articles. In addition, Antoni collaborates with Children's Podiatry, an online platform providing workshops, webinars, mentoring and video consultations for paediatrics in podiatry.



Annual research & innovation showcases

Each year, Monash Health hosts the annual Physiotherapy, Exercise Physiology & Neurophysiology Science Research and Innovation Conference. Presentations are diverse and cover the continuum of care from acute through sub-acute to the community. Monash Children's Allied Health & Psychology Research Forum is also held annually. The multidisciplinary nature of the conference is an excellent opportunity to see how the allied health professions work together.

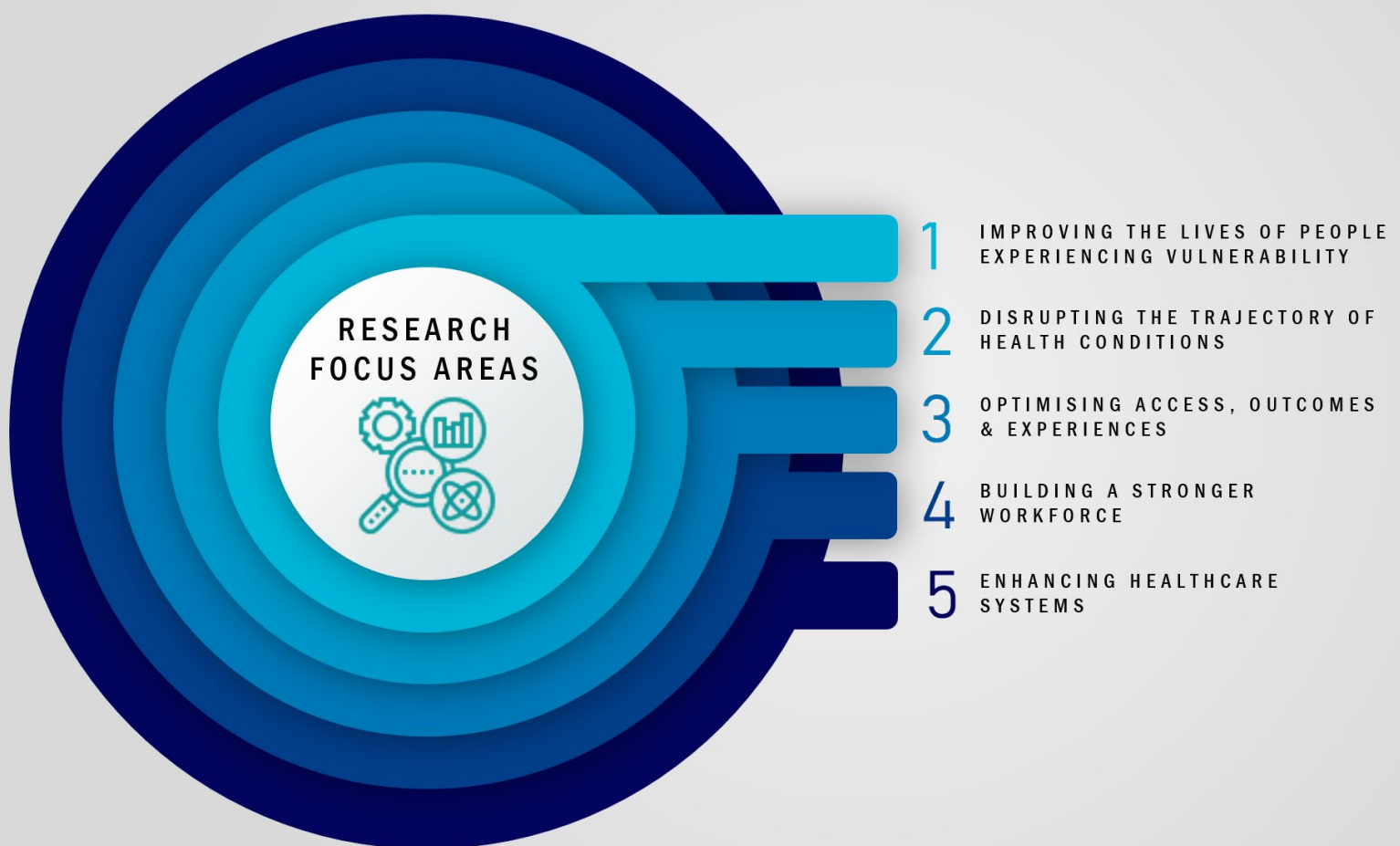
These showcases are a fantastic opportunity to hear about the incredible research taking place and see how the research culture and capability are growing within allied health at Monash Health.



Research focus areas



Research focus areas use a theme-based approach to leverage knowledge fields for the greatest impact. They promote the concentration of resources on relevant research to consolidate and strengthen research culture and capacity. These were developed by thematically examining our existing research activity and expertise and aligning these with the guiding principles from the *Monash Health Strategic Plan 2023*. Five research focus areas will shape our research moving forward.



Improving the lives of people experiencing vulnerability

Research that aims to improve the health and social wellbeing of the members of our community at risk of poor health and health care disparities as a result of vulnerabilities

Justine Little & Colleen Williams
Social Workers



There is a lot of evidence supporting the value of early intervention across the lifespan, however there is little research in Australia that focuses on the impact of early social work intervention in the antenatal period. Interventions that are crisis-driven at the time of birth often lead to high levels of distress, particularly if concerns relate to the safety and wellbeing of the newborn baby. Justine and Colleen's research will compare the outcomes and experiences of those who have contact with a social worker prior to the birth of their baby with those whose social work intervention commences antenatally. The findings of this project will demonstrate the impact of early social work intervention on outcomes for birthing people and their unborn babies.

Laura Harrison & Heather Davey
Early in Life Mental Health Service



COVID-19 resulted in a significant increase in mental health presentations to emergency departments by children and youth. At Monash Health, our Early in Life Mental Health clinicians provide mental health support to children, youth and their families in inpatient and community-based settings. COVID-19 has significantly changed how health services are delivered, altering the medium of service delivery for young people experiencing vulnerability. The purpose of Laura and Heather's study was to determine clinician's perceptions of client engagement and treatment effectiveness in the telehealth modality. In addition, clinicians' experiences of client engagement, the effectiveness of telehealth, and the benefits and barriers that clinicians face were examined.

Disrupting the trajectory of health conditions

Any research that aims to alter the trajectory or increase our understanding of acute or chronic health conditions. This research may explore how we can prevent or improve the impairments, limitations, participation restrictions, environmental factors and/or personal factors experienced by those living with (or at risk of living with) health conditions, their families and their communities

Danielle Byrne

Cognition Clinical Lead
Rehabilitation & Aged Care Services



Occupational therapists play an important role in the assessment and treatment of sensory impairment of the upper limb following stroke. Inconsistent approaches used to assess sensation by occupational therapists mean sensory impairments can be missed. Danielle's master's research showed that the biggest barrier to assessment in the acute setting was the lack of a suitable assessment tool which is easily transportable, time efficient and considers the different patient factors that arise in the acute phases post stroke. She is now undertaking research to modify an existing screening tool to be able to screen acute stroke patients and investigate the feasibility of implementing this.

Michelle Paton

Advanced Clinical Physiotherapist
Critical Care & Cardiorespiratory stream



Michelle is a PhD candidate with the Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, Monash University. She has a passion for critical care physiotherapy. Her doctoral research focuses on the impact of exercise dosage during critical illness on functional recovery. It is hoped that trends will be identified to assist healthcare professionals in the prescription of exercise in the intensive care unit to improve outcomes for patients.

Karen Foreman, Laura Finn, Ella Barry & Rachel Kerr

Victorian Paediatric Rehabilitation Service



Until recently, children needed to be over two years old to be diagnosed with cerebral palsy. As such, there was limited understanding of the early natural development of cerebral palsy. The Early Natural History of Cerebral Palsy study is a multinational, multi-centre study exploring how different aspects of development such as movement and communication develop in babies (aged 0-2) with cerebral palsy or at high-risk of cerebral palsy. Monash Children's Hospital is one of the Australian sites. Karen Foreman (senior physiotherapist), Laura Finn (senior occupational therapist), Ella Barry (senior occupational therapist), and Rachel Kerr (senior speech pathologist) recruit eligible babies and complete a range of assessments at set time points to help understand the development of this cohort.

Optimising access, outcomes & experiences

Research that examines how service delivery can be optimised to provide a connected, targeted, efficient, sustainable and responsive system of care to optimise access, outcomes and experiences for our community

Katrina Kenah
Physiotherapist
Monash Health Community



Katrina stepped into research after working alongside researchers leading a rehabilitation trial on one of the wards at the Kingston Centre. As a clinician, Katrina was frustrated by her patients spending large amounts of their day inactive, alone and bored in their room, despite staff working flat out and having limited capacity to facilitate increased patient activity. Her PhD, through The University of Newcastle, investigates the prevalence and experience of boredom amongst stroke survivors in inpatient rehabilitation and the personal and environmental factors that contribute to boredom. The findings will inform strategies to create rehabilitation environments that enhance engagement in meaningful physical, cognitive and social activity following stroke to optimise learning, wellbeing and stroke recovery.

Roz Shand
Speech Pathologist
Monash Health Community



Passionate about supporting people with communication disability to actively participate in their healthcare, Roz commenced her research journey while working as a clinician at Monash Health. Roz received an Emerging Researcher Fellowship to partner with nursing staff to investigate patient communication needs and potential supports. The findings of Roz's project will help to understand the specific healthcare communication situations that are most challenging and the strategies that facilitate effective communication in these situations.

Ashliegh Cairns
Exercise Physiologist
Monash Health Community



Current best-practice in oncology has moved from rest and recovery to maintaining strength and physical activity. Despite an increased demand for oncology rehabilitation within Monash Health Community, no direct access pathway was in place. Ashliegh used the evidence-base to design and implement an online oncology rehabilitation group with the aim of providing a direct referral pathway for these people. The group is run through telehealth with individually tailored exercises to serve an immunocompromised population safely and effectively.

Health systems can only function with a strong healthcare workforce. Improving health services and achieving the highest level of health in our community is dependent on the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of our health workforce. Research focused on building a stronger allied health workforce may address whether the size of the allied health workforce is sufficient, whether they are being adequately trained, if their skills are being used to the fullest, and whether they are appropriately distributed between and within services.

Building a stronger workforce

Carla Gordon

Clinical Lead Physiotherapist



Carla is a Clinical Lead Physiotherapist. She completed her Clinical Masters in Cardiorespiratory Physiotherapy in 2010. Carla maintains an active portfolio of research projects, often in collaboration with academic and healthcare partners. A recently published project Carla worked on with colleagues from Eastern Health, La Trobe University and Monash University aimed to understand the work-readiness and perceptions of Australian physiotherapists working in cancer care. The findings identified that physiotherapists feel underprepared to work in cancer care, with the need for professional development opportunities identified.

Dr Jo-Anne Pinson

Former research coordinator, Medical Imaging



Jo completed her PhD in medicinal chemistry in 2011. Since then, she has collaborated with local, national and international partners, producing papers, patents and conference presentations and supervising students. She is currently a Department of Health & Human Services Allied Health Research and Translation Lead, working as a research coordinator in medical imaging across Monash Health and Peninsula Health. She is currently working with colleagues across four health networks to explore the roles and responsibilities across the allied health assistant workforce, undertaking a time-in-motion study with complementary participant interviews. The findings will determine the clinical and non-clinical duties of allied health assistants working in both allied health therapy and science streams.

Fiona Sham, Sheryl Mailing & Louise Britzman

Music Therapist, Speech Pathologist & Allied Health Assistant



Music therapy is a research-based profession in which music is used to actively support people as they strive to improve their health, functioning and wellbeing. ParkinSong, a collaboration with Parkinson's Victoria and The University of Melbourne, is the research project that launched the first Monash Health allied health assistant into the music therapy space, extending their scope of practice. The project recognised and utilised allied health assistant Louise Britzman's background in singing training and as a community choir director. Louise's expertise was complemented by that of clinician researchers Fiona Sham and Sheryl Mailing and their academic partner. The outcomes of the project resulted in the proliferation of music therapy groups across Monash Health, and the growth of community music groups across Victoria with the support of Parkinson's Victoria.

Enhancing healthcare systems

Research that seeks to understand and improve how we organise ourselves to make healthcare affordable, safe, effective, equitable, accessible and consumer-centred, in order to achieve collective health and wellbeing goals for our community. Research activities may identify affordable models of healthcare and innovative approaches to the treatment and management of disease.

Susan Fone & Sarah Brown
Occupational Therapy managers



In partnership with the Australian Catholic University, Susan and Sarah used mixed methods to examine the current practices and the clinical reasoning that occupational therapists use to decide whether to conduct a home assessment from the adult, sub-acute, bed-based service. The outcomes of this study will be used to develop a set of clinical guidelines so that consistent, cost-effective and evidence-based practice will be implemented by occupational therapists.

Dr Debra Mitchell
Former WISER Manager



In 2021, Deb was awarded her PhD from Monash University. Her PhD examined the responses of health care staff to disinvestment, the process of withdrawing resources from practices that deliver low gain for their cost and reallocating these toward practices that are more effective, efficient, and cost-effective. Understanding staff experiences of disinvestment from weekend allied health services helps us to understand strategies that may ease the transition, including change management strategies such as the provision of data and clear and persistent communication approaches.

Liz Dalla Santa & Fiona Barton
Physiotherapists



Prior to 2019, there was no dedicated paediatric oncology physiotherapist at Monash Children's Hospital. This was a significant clinical gap; children were missing out on this service. Philanthropic research funding was secured to design and objectively evaluate the feasibility of a new holistic physiotherapy model of care for children during the intensive phase of cancer treatment. This work, led by a project team of Liz Dalla Santa (Manager, TCP and ACAS) and Fiona Barton (Grade 2 Paediatric Physiotherapist), demonstrated the value of physiotherapy input and helped to secure ongoing funding for a paediatric oncology physiotherapist, embedding the model of care as standard practice.

Key strategic themes

for enhancing research culture & capability



The development of our evidence-based key strategic themes was informed by both the Victorian Allied Health Research Framework and the draft Monash Health Research Strategy. Our strategic themes are the vital components essential to fostering, enabling and embedding research culture and capability for allied health professionals.





Leadership

Driving excellence in allied health research through research leadership, fostering research culture and capability for our allied health professionals and teams through skill development and mentoring.



Zoe Weber

Clinical Expert & Research Lead,
Occupational Therapy

Zoe is the Clinical Expert & Research Lead in occupational therapy. She holds a Master of Public Health. She is passionate about transforming culture and practice in her profession. Since commencing in her role, Zoe has developed the Occupational Therapy Quality and Research Best Practice Framework. The document provides information about why and how best practice activities are undertaken within occupational therapy. The framework acts as a roadmap for quality and research activities, guiding clinicians regardless of where they are on the research continuum.



Peter Coombs

Sonographer in Charge, Medical
Imaging

Peter is the clinical expert, research lead and head of the Ultrasound Department in Medical Imaging. He holds a Master of Medical Ultrasound. Peter is a visionary, passionate about developing and fostering strong evidence and research culture to support clinical practice. This is exemplified in his development and implementation of a large clinical audit program, Australia's first collaborative Point of Care Ultrasound program. He has achieved this through strong leadership, mentoring and practical training, as evidenced by Monash Health's very strong representation at national sonography conferences. He is very dedicated to the profession and has been a recipient of many Society awards. Most recently he was awarded Humanitarian of the Year for his international volunteer work over the last 15 years. This has included projects in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Nauru, Cambodia and most recently, Ethiopia, where he provided education and support to a major rural hospital for five months. He represents Monash Health at national and international conferences and is the author of over 40 publications and a book chapter. Peter's greatest joy is watching his team and profession thrive.

Victorian Allied Health Research Framework domains of action
Leadership & management
Allied health clinicians and researcher attributes

Communication



Advancing and celebrating our research achievements by sharing our research process, findings and experiences with our peers and the public. Recognising research as a central pillar of the care provided by Monash Health and supporting the translation of research to practice.



Dr Andrea Bramley

Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian, Allied Health Education Lead

Andrea is an Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian with extensive experience in clinical dietetics, private practice, the health industry and academia.

She recently completed her PhD through La Trobe University, exploring the development and use of novel methods to support dietetic competency development.

In addition to publishing her research in academic journals and presenting at national and international conferences, Andrea finds other ways to share her research findings. She was recently interviewed by an independent global medical news site about her work exploring the high rates of disordered eating in people with Type 1 diabetes. She is also featured in a podcast with the editor of *Medical Education* about her recently published PhD research.



Collaboration

Valuing and facilitating research collaboration across professions, with our Monash Health colleagues and with our external research partners to support evidence generation, knowledge exchange and research implementation.



Alice Robins

Speech pathologist

Alice, a proud Yuin woman, commenced her speech pathology career at Monash Health, was the inaugural Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander early career speech pathologist and is now a permanent staff member in the speech pathology Grade 1 rotational program.

Alice is part of a multidisciplinary collaborative research team implementing and evaluating a mentoring program for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students and graduates of the ear and hearing health professions. The multidisciplinary research team includes researchers from Monash Health, La Trobe University, Menzies School of Health Research and Indigenous Allied Health Australia. Together, the team have successfully secured close to \$45,000 in external grant funding.



Jeff Chen

MRI supervisor, Medical Imaging

Jeff has been a dedicated paediatric radiographer for approximately 10 years and is the MRI supervisor for Monash Children's. He is passionate about providing the best care and experience for both parents and paediatric patients undergoing MRI scans. To meet this aim, Jeff collaborated with Child Life Therapy and Philips Healthcare's Ambient Experience, using virtual reality to reduce fear of intravenous cannulation for children. His research saw him awarded the Monash Health Award and the Minister of Health State Award for the Improving Children's Health Category. He looks forward to using new technologies to improve a child's experience in Medical Imaging.

Support

Supporting research and translation through the provision of strategic education, mentoring and local research services and systems.



Tanja Ivacic-Ramljak
Former Library Manager

Tanja is the Library Manager at Monash Health and a member of the Allied Health Research Committee. Tanja is committed to delivering exceptional research services and meeting the needs of allied health clinicians. Tanja is also an experienced web developer who loves sharing her skills to promote accessible and engaging scientific communication.

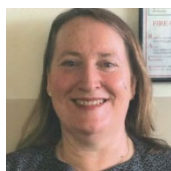
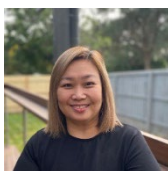
In recent years Monash Health's Library has undergone a digital transformation to put high quality information at your fingertips. Visit the www.monashhealth.org/library to browse extensive resources that you can easily access anytime, anywhere. Research support and training are also available to ensure that clinical care, research and service planning are informed by the best available evidence. You can register for practical training courses on the library website, from literature searching to visual design.

Tanja encourages you to reach out to the librarians if you have questions about research or library services



Strategy

Crafting, promoting and embedding a strategic approach to fostering a culture of allied health enquiry and evidence.



Rachel Corea, Katrina Stevens & Jacinta Re

Social Work & Community Rehabilitation

Restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic require healthcare staff to innovate. This is especially true in relation to clinical education. In response to limitations to students having direct clinical contact, Monash Health embedded a quality improvement or research project in all student placements. This allowed allied health at Monash Health to maintain high numbers of clinical placements while upskilling staff and students in research, increasing research culture and capability in our current and future allied health workforce.

A project arising from this model was a scoping review undertaken by social work students in Monash Health Community under the supervision of a senior social worker. Social Work Student Coordinator Rachel Corea, Community Rehabilitation Manager Katrina Stevens and Social Work Head of Profession Jacinta Re worked together to select the topic, support the model of student supervision and champion the research project. The students' research explored the different modalities of providing social work services within a community rehabilitation setting, a topic strategically selected for its capacity to directly impact service delivery models in community rehabilitation. A small project with a big impact for students, clinicians and the service, this research was showcased at Monash Health World Social Work Day.



Amy Thomas

Head of Music, Art & Child Life Therapies

During the pandemic, music therapy managers in hospitals are responsible for supporting their teams through the planning and implementation of change. The trans-national Creative Arts Therapies Managers' Network was established for members to collectively identify key factors about their hospitals and the capacities of their teams to make and implement decisions about virtual services. Together, the network undertook a research project to examine the lived experience of their membership as music therapy managers in hospitals. The manuscript arising from this research was recently submitted for publication.

For Amy, membership of this network and participation in research is a strategic opportunity to build international collaborations, further develop her research skills and model engagement in research for her team.

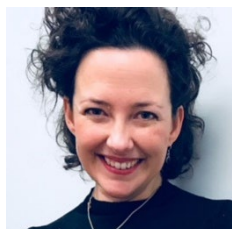
Victorian Allied Health Research Framework domains of action

Systems, policies and governance

System structures and resource allocation

Funding

Building a solid funding base by supporting high-quality project design and grant applications to strengthen capability and champion promising research.

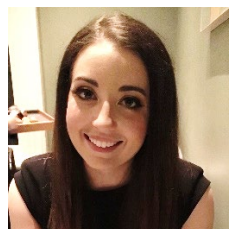


Dr Caroline Baker

Research & Clinical Practice Lead,
Speech Pathology

Caroline has been a speech pathologist at Monash Health for over 14 years. In 2018, she completed her PhD at The University of Queensland. In addition to her role as Research & Clinical Practice Lead for speech pathology, Caroline is a post-doctoral research fellow at the National Health & Medical Research Council's Centre for Research Excellence in Aphasia Rehabilitation & Recovery.

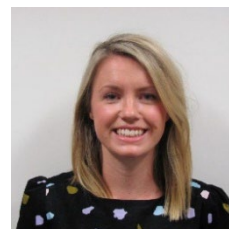
Caroline leads a multidisciplinary research team in speech pathology, psychology and health service delivery. In 2019, Caroline was awarded a \$15,000 New Researcher Grant from Speech Pathology Australia for a project entitled Aphasia PRevention Intervention and Support in Mental Health (PRISM). In 2021, she was awarded an additional \$50,000 Seed Grant from the Stroke Foundation to support an extension of this project, examining the use of this model via telehealth for people with aphasia in regional and rural areas.



Mollie Rumble

Podiatrist

Mollie has five years' experience as a clinical podiatrist. She specialises in high-risk podiatry. Mollie was supported by her mentors within the multidisciplinary High Risk Foot Clinic team to apply for an Emerging Research Fellowships in 2021. Monash Health Emerging Researcher Fellowships are designed to invest in early research career individuals with significant potential for a research career. Mollie was awarded \$15,000 to explore best-practice in a common condition in podiatry called Charcot Neuroarthropathy, a progressive and destructive condition that occurs when there is nerve damage in the foot resulting in bones becoming weak and fracturing.



Caitlin Watson

Dietitian

Caitlin Watson, a senior paediatric dietitian, was also awarded an Emerging Research Fellowship in 2021 for her project exploring body composition of infants who have had surgery in the neonatal period.

Our community, our research

Consumer snapshots



Maja is fighting fit

In November 2019, Maya was five years old and in her final weeks of kindergarten when she was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, a type of cancer that affects the blood and bone marrow. At the time of her diagnosis, Maya became critically unwell and spent time in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) at Monash Children's Hospital. Maya's parents, Alexia and Adam, describe this as an incredibly challenging time, with Maya experiencing a loss of conditioning that meant she was unable to stand independently or get around by herself.

Maya and her family made the decision to take part in the FITChild Project, a philanthropically funded research project exploring physiotherapy care for children during cancer treatment. "As a family, we felt it was important to give back to the services that had provided Maya the care and support she needed during her treatment for leukaemia," said Maya's mother Alexia. "We are also aware of the importance of research in advancing treatment, and we were therefore happy to contribute to and support the project as best we could."

Maya attended sessions with a physiotherapist as part of the research project. She was receiving intensive chemotherapy while she participated in the project and her parents say that, "despite being very unwell, Maya always found the sessions fun and the opportunity to have her own Fitbit at the end was very motivating!"

Participating in research had benefits for Maya, her parents say. "It meant we had access to additional physiotherapy support and could track her progress over time." Physiotherapy was critical in helping Maya regain her strength after a long stay in PICU and this enabled her to start school with her peers and participate in all the usual activities young children love. She is now an active swimmer, tennis player and netballer, who loves playing with her younger brother Jack and is busily planning her upcoming birthday party.

In addition to the benefits for their daughter, Alexia and Adam had an altruistic motivation for taking part in the project. "We hope that Maya's participation led to some important findings that will improve the outcomes and experiences of other children and their families into the future."



Giving back through research

Elizabeth's involvement in allied health research was driven by her desire to give back. "For me, if I can help anyone, I will do anything I can," she said. A community-minded woman, Elizabeth saw taking part in the Victorian Allied Health Assistant Workforce Project as a chance to make a meaningful contribution. As a Consumer Advisor on the project, Elizabeth took part in a consumer focus group and reviewed drafts of the allied health assistant recommendations. Her experiences and perspectives were essential in shaping the outcome of this research.

After a stroke in 2012, Elizabeth had difficulties walking and speaking that impacted her ability to do the things that were important to her. She worked with the Monash Health allied health team in hospital and continued to receive support from allied health clinicians once she returned home. "Allied health played a huge role in my recovery," she said. "I was very lucky that I had therapists who stoked the fire in my belly. They were instrumental in getting me back to doing the things I wanted to do. The whole allied health team were so fabulous".

Following her stroke, Elizabeth committed to volunteering with Monash Health. Research participation is just one string to her bow. Of her reason for taking part, Elizabeth said, "I did it for the joy of doing it, to keep busy and to be involved". Participation in research like this is important. "After my stroke, I was unable to return to work. Taking part gives me a reason to get up in the morning. I am helping myself as well as helping others". Why allied health research? Because, says Elizabeth, "I'm in awe of everyone. The work allied health do is incredible".

Putting the Allied Health Research Strategic Plan into action

Our key strategic themes are the vital components essential to fostering, enabling and embedding research culture and capability for our allied health professionals.

With the clear vision and priorities provided by this strategic plan in place, the Allied Health Research Committee will now work collaboratively with clinicians, managers and those who use our services to co-create and implement an operational plan.

We will draw on the Allied Health Research Strategic Plan to map out specific goals, actions, timeframes, resources, and responsibilities to bring this plan to life. The aim is to foster behaviours and decisions at a local level that support the organisation, and its allied health employees, to successfully implement the strategic plan.

Allied Health Research Committee membership

Alice Anderson	Director, Library Services
Dr Caroline Baker	Speech Pathology Research & Clinical Lead, Allied Health & Patient Flow
Annette Baron	Senior Music Therapist, Monash Children's Hospital
Dr Antoni Caserta	Senior Podiatrist (Paediatrics), Child & Family Team, Monash Health Community
Dr Annette Davis	Director – Strategy and Support (Podiatrist), Monash Health Community
Dr Abby Foster	Allied Health Research Advisor (Speech Pathologist), Workforce, Innovation, Strategy, Education & Research (WISER) Unit
Dr Corey Joseph	Biomechanist, Clinical Gait Analysis Service, Specialist Clinics
Justine Little	Social Work Clinical Lead, Allied Health & Patient Flow
Glenda McLean	Research Coordinator, Medical Imaging
Dr Sarah Milne	Physiotherapy Research Lead, Allied Health & Patient Flow
Katie Palmer	Physiotherapist, Allied Health & Patient Flow
Danielle Ryan	Chief Allied Health Officer (Physiotherapist)
Zoe Weber	Occupational Therapy Clinical Expert & Research Lead, Allied Health & Patient Flow
Lucy Whelan	Interim Manager (Physiotherapist), WISER Unit
Jacinta Winderlich	Paediatric Clinical Specialist Dietitian, Monash Children's Hospital

Contributing past members

Dr Andrea Bramley	Former Allied Health Education Lead (Dietitian), WISER Unit
Kelly Briody	Acute Hand Therapy Service Stream Leader (Occupational Therapist), Allied Health & Patient Flow
Siew-Lian Crossley	Speech Pathology Professional Lead, Monash Children's Hospital
Anna Ewen	Former Speech Pathologist, Mental Health
Janet Golder	Former Senior Dietitian, Allied Health & Patient Flow
Tanja Ivacic-Ramljak	Former Medical Librarian
Dr Debra Mitchell	Former Manager and Chief Allied Health Officer (Physiotherapist), WISER Unit
Dr Peter Nicklen	Former Physiotherapy Research Lead, Allied Health & Patient Flow
Amber O'Brien	Former Senior Occupational Therapist, Allied Health & Patient Flow
Dr Joanne Pinson	Former Research Coordinator, Medical Imaging



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