



Dementia Research in 2025



Dementia Australia
Research Foundation

Acknowledgement of Country

Dementia Australia Research Foundation acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters, and communities. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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Shining a Light: Research, Awareness and Hope

Dementia is the second leading cause of death in Australia, yet it often remains in the shadows of public awareness.

With an estimated 433,300 Australians living with dementia, and 1.7 million providing care for loved ones, investment in research is essential to change the trajectory of this disease.

The insights gained through innovative research can reduce stigma, empower families, and pave the way for life-saving treatments, ensuring everyone is supported to live life well.

Through our annual Dementia Grants Program, we fund Australia's brightest emerging researchers to tackle critical challenges, including:

- + Uncovering the root causes of dementia
- + Developing strategies to reduce risk and slow disease progression
- + Improving early diagnosis and timely interventions
- + Enhancing treatment and care for those living with dementia
- + Pursuing innovative pathways toward a cure

By supporting studies at every stage of the dementia journey, Dementia Australia Research Foundation fosters innovative solutions and practical applications to address the growing challenges posed by dementia.

TYPE OF RESEARCH FUNDED



Your support makes a difference

By supporting cutting-edge projects, you are not only advancing science, but helping to change the narrative around dementia, fostering a more informed and compassionate society.

The Dementia Australia Research Foundation relies entirely on the generosity of individuals and organisations to make our work possible. Every contribution drives real impact—fostering hope for a future where dementia no longer casts its long shadow.

Dementia Research in 2025

Post-doctoral Fellowships

Lead Investigator	Project Title	Institution
Dr Simon Maksour	Targeting microglial as a novel treatment strategy for Alzheimer's disease	University of Wollongong
Dr Magdalena Przybyla	On-demand gene therapy for dementia	Macquarie University
Dr Marta Woolford	Meaningful and Purpose-Centered Care (MPCC) Program for people living with and without dementia in residential aged care. A quasi-experimental study evaluating the MPCC Program	Monash University
Dr Kristina Chelberg	Promoting voice of people living with dementia in aged care improvement and reform: developing innovative approaches through participatory action research	University of Technology Sydney

Mid-Career Research Fellowships

Lead Investigator	Project Title	Institution
Dr Annika van Hummel	Piecing together the role of TDP-43 in the Alzheimer's disease puzzle	Macquarie University
Dr Marianne Coleman	Designing a dementia-friendly eyecare pathway to help people with dementia "see well, live well" in residential aged care	Monash University

Project Grants

Lead Investigator	Project Title	Institution
Dr Shanley Longfield	Unravelling nanoscale dynamics and dysfunction of tau in frontotemporal dementia	The University of Queensland
Dr Esteban Cruz	Targeted autophagosomal degradation of tau to treat Alzheimer's disease	The University of Queensland
Dr Sayanthoran Saravanabavan	Determining the role of a novel genetic material in frontotemporal dementia	Macquarie University
Dr Brandon Munn	Mapping multiscale brain changes in dementia: Towards early detection and intervention	The University of Sydney
Dr Eddy Roccati	Co-designing an interactive online dashboard to communicate biological and digital markers of dementia risk	University of Tasmania
Dr Wei Qi Koh	Supporting the ethical use of innovative technologies in dementia care	The University of Queensland
Dr Matthew Lennon	Genetic and clinical mapping of future treatments for vascular cognitive impairment and dementia	UNSW Sydney

Travel Grants

Lead Investigator	Project Title	Institution
Dr Pratishta Chatterjee	Advancing fluid biomarkers for dementia management	The University of Melbourne
Dr Gary Morris	Learning how to use brain banks to uncover new mechanisms linked to dementia	University of Tasmania
Dr Sharon Savage	Rare Dementia Support – Sharing knowledge to build resources for younger onset dementia	The University of Newcastle
Dr Kris Tulloch	A cross-cultural examination of dementia care in Australia and the Netherlands	University of the Sunshine Coast
Dr Hannah Fair	Personality, perceptions, and social propagation in dementia prevention: Concept validation, collaboration formation, and skill expansion	University of Tasmania
Dr Mohammad Shoaib Hamrah	Evaluation outcomes of the Hindi, Farsi, and Dari versions of the Preventing Dementia Massive Open Online Course among Indian, Iranian, and Afghan migrants	University of Tasmania

Clinical Practice Post-graduate Stipends

Lead Investigator	Project Title	Institution
Dr Antonia Clarke	Community, Country, and Cognition: Yarning to understand Place-based brain ageing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Monash University
Mr Nicholas Lawlis	The role of physical activity in preserving physical and cognitive health for people living with younger onset dementia	University of Canberra

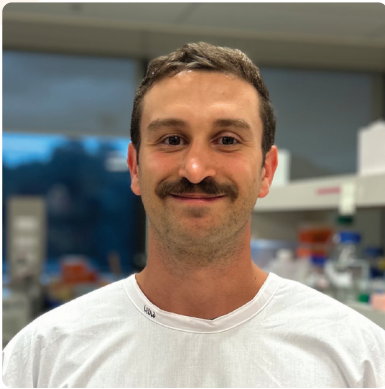
Research Translation Grants

Lead Investigator	Project Title	Institution
Associate Professor Kerry Pike	Providing access to cognitive interventions in regional memory clinics: Adaptation and implementation of a clinician training package	Griffith University

Other Awards

Lead Investigator	Project Title	Institution
Ms Shin Liao	Principles for optimising medicines management in older people living with frailty and dementia	Monash University
Dr Linda McAuliffe	Exploring connectedness in older people living with dementia in residential aged care: Experiences of ConnectO	La Trobe University

Post-doctoral Fellowship Summaries



DR SIMON MAKSOUR

University of Wollongong

Professor Lezanne Ooi,
University of Wollongong

Associate Professor Leszek Lisowski,
Children's Medical Research Institute

Professor Renzo Mancuso,
University of Antwerp



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Targeting microglial as a novel treatment strategy for Alzheimer's disease

FOCUS

This research aims to develop a groundbreaking gene therapy for Alzheimer's disease by restoring the function of microglia, the brain's immune cells.

Using advanced genetic techniques, the study will test whether delivering specific genes to microglia can return them to a healthy state.

The approach will be evaluated in lab models, including "mini-brains" and a humanised Alzheimer's disease mouse model, to determine its potential to protect against brain inflammation, loss of brain cells and cognitive decline.

IMPACT

Newly approved treatments are only mildly effective in slowing progression of symptoms and have significant side effects. Thus, there is an urgent need for new treatment approaches.

Microglial dysfunction is a key driver of Alzheimer's disease, contributing to toxic protein build-up and cell loss, and therefore restoring microglia function may be a promising treatment avenue.

This project tackles a critical gap by exploring a novel therapeutic approach in attempts to slow disease progression and protect brain cells from further degeneration. If successful, it may pave the way for innovative therapies not only for Alzheimer's disease but also for other neurodegenerative diseases.

FUNDED BY Race Against Dementia and Dementia Australia Research Foundation

POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP SUMMARIES



DR MAGDALENA PRZYBYLA

Macquarie University

Dr Janet van Eersel,
Macquarie University

Dr Daryl Ariawan,
Macquarie University

Professor Lars Ittner,
Macquarie University



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On-demand gene therapy for dementia

FOCUS

In dementia, brain cells can become "hyper-excitabile," causing uncontrolled behaviour, miscommunication between neurons, and cell death.

By targeting a specific brain protein, p38 γ kinase, which can regulate these harmful processes, this project seeks to create precise, on-demand gene therapies. These therapies will only be active in hyperactive brain cells, reducing cognitive decline and cell death while enhancing therapeutic safety and precision.

IMPACT

Dementia, including Alzheimer's disease and frontotemporal dementia, is a growing global health crisis with no cure. Current treatments provide limited relief and lack the ability to modify the disease's progression.

Brain cell hyperactivity is an early and critical driver of dementia, making it a promising therapeutic target. This research tackles major limitations of existing gene therapies, offering a safer, more effective approach to slow or prevent dementia progression, potentially transforming care for millions affected by these devastating diseases.

POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP SUMMARIES



**DR MARTA
WOOLFORD**

Monash University

**Associate Professor
Darshini Ayton,**
Monash University

Professor Janet Anderson,
Monash University

**Associate Professor
Sze-Ee Soh,**
Monash University



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Meaningful and Purpose-Centered Care (MPCC) Program for people living with and without dementia in residential aged care. A quasi-experimental study evaluating the MPCC Program

FOCUS

The Meaningful and Purpose-Centered Care (MPCC) Program is designed to improve the quality of care and life for residents in aged care homes, including those living with dementia.

The program focuses on creating engaging environments, supporting independence, enhancing social interaction, and practical changes like better lighting, activity spaces, and sensory features.

Aged care staff who provide care to residents will receive training to integrate person-centered strength-based care into daily routines. This whole-of-home approach ensures everyone works together to improve the quality of life for residents, and quality of care.

IMPACT

Despite Government regulations promoting person-centered care in aged care, it is often overlooked, with residents spending much of their time alone.

The MPCC Program addresses this by equipping staff with the skills, tools, and environments needed to improve care quality. Evidence shows this approach can boost residents' quality of life and reduce issues such as falls. By involving the entire system, MPCC creates sustainable improvements that benefit both residents and staff.

POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP SUMMARIES



DR KRISTINA CHELBERG

University of
Technology Sydney

Professor Shih-Ning Then,
Queensland University
of Technology

**Associate Professor
Linda Steele,**
University of
Technology Sydney

**Associate Professor
Lyn Phillipson,**
University of Wollongong

Ms Kate Swaffer,
University of South
Australia



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Promoting voice of people living with dementia in aged care improvement and reform: developing innovative approaches through participatory action research

FOCUS

This project seeks to develop innovative ways to include the voices of people living with dementia in shaping aged care services.

It will use methods like participatory action research and creative approaches in residential aged care facilities to improve how people with dementia can directly provide feedback about their care experiences.

An example of such methods includes talking mats, which are a visual communication tool that help individuals with dementia express their preferences and experiences effectively, enabling meaningful participation in aged care consultations.

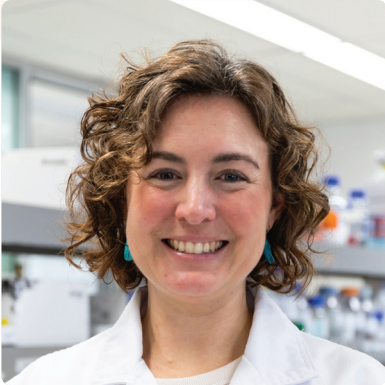
The goal is to create evidence-based strategies and resources that empower individuals living with dementia to contribute meaningfully to reforms and policies in aged care.

IMPACT

Despite making up the majority of aged care residents, people living with dementia are often excluded from consultations about their care due to assumptions about their ability to participate. This exclusion undermines reforms and decision-making processes meant to improve aged care.

By promoting inclusive approaches, this research ensures that dementia care reflects the lived experiences and needs of all residents, fostering dignity, respect, and better quality of life in aged care systems.

Mid-Career Research Fellowship Summaries



DR ANNIKA VAN HUMMEL

Macquarie University

Professor Lars Ittner,
Macquarie University

Professor Yazı Ke,
Macquarie University



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Piecing together the role of TDP-43 in the Alzheimer's disease puzzle

FOCUS

This research explores how the protein TDP-43 interacts with two key Alzheimer's disease proteins; amyloid-beta ($A\beta$) and tau. The theory is that these interactions might worsen brain pathology and speed up cognitive decline in Alzheimer's disease.

The study will use advanced genetic tools and mice models to investigate these relationships, assess the impact on brain function, and explore whether targeting the protein TDP-43 could improve treatment outcomes.

IMPACT

TDP-43, found in the brains of many people with Alzheimer's disease, is linked to more severe symptoms and faster disease progression. By understanding its role alongside $A\beta$ and tau, this research aims to uncover new therapeutic targets, paving the way for more effective treatments and personalised care for people living with Alzheimer's disease.

MID-CAREER RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP SUMMARIES



**DR MARIANNE
COLEMAN**

Monash University

**Associate Professor
Anita Goh,**

The University of
Melbourne

Professor Lisa Keay,
UNSW Sydney

**Professor
Lynette Joubert,**
The University of
Melbourne



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Designing a dementia-friendly eyecare pathway to help people with dementia “see well, live well” in residential aged care

FOCUS

By collaborating with eyecare professionals, aged care staff, people living with dementia, and their carers, the project will design a dementia friendly eyecare pathway that addresses barriers to regular eye exams, cataract surgery, and vision treatments.

The research will also develop training for optometry practice staff nationally, accessible by practitioners working in regional and rural areas.

Alongside these activities, new strategies and materials will be created to support adoption of the dementia friendly eyecare pathway by different communities.

IMPACT

Poor vision in people with dementia often goes unnoticed, leading to reduced quality of life, increased falls, and challenges in communication and participation in activities.

Despite the benefits of good eyecare, access to services remains fragmented in aged care settings.

This project addresses these gaps, aiming to improve visual health, independence, and wellbeing for thousands of Australians living with dementia, while providing a model for integrating specialised care into aged care systems.

Project Grant Summaries



**DR SHANLEY
LONGFIELD**

The University of
Queensland

**Professor
Frederic Meunier,**
The University of
Queensland

Unravelling nanoscale dynamics and dysfunction of tau in frontotemporal dementia

FOCUS

Dr Longfield's project focuses on understanding how mutations in the tau protein, associated with frontotemporal dementia, affect its behaviour in brain cells.

Specifically, the study will investigate how a mutation in tau disrupts the organisation of nanoscale biomolecular condensates (BMCs) and synaptic vesicles. BMCs are tiny clusters of molecules that organise cellular processes, while synaptic vesicles are small bubbles in brain cells that release chemicals to transmit signals in the brain. Both are critical for effective brain communication.

Using advanced imaging techniques, the project aims to uncover how these changes contribute to loss of brain cell communication, and further, the complete loss of brain cells altogether.

IMPACT

Frontotemporal dementia is a devastating condition with no current cure, and the tau protein plays a central role in its progression. Mutations in tau protein disrupt the tau's normal functions, but the exact mechanisms remain unclear.

By exploring these nanoscale changes, this research could reveal key insights into how brain cell communication fails in frontotemporal dementia, paving the way for new therapeutic strategies to slow or prevent disease progression.

FUNDED BY Dementia Research Community - Bondi2Berry

PROJECT GRANT SUMMARIES



DR ESTEBAN CRUZ

The University of
Queensland

Professor Jürgen Götz,

The University of
Queensland

Targeted autophagosomal degradation of tau to treat Alzheimer's disease

FOCUS

To tackle Alzheimer's disease, Dr Cruz is developing a groundbreaking therapy that boosts the body's natural processes to clear harmful tau protein clumps, which play a central role in the disease.

Using cutting-edge protein engineering, the project will create "targeted autophagy adaptors" that link tau aggregates to the cellular machinery responsible for breaking down unwanted proteins. Autophagy, the Greek meaning "self-eating", is the process where cells clean up and recycle their damaged parts to stay healthy. These adaptors will be tested in cell models to evaluate their ability to reduce tau pathology and protect brain cells.

IMPACT

Tau protein aggregation is a hallmark of Alzheimer's disease and other neurodegenerative diseases, yet it remains a challenging therapeutic target. By selectively clearing tau aggregates, this project offers a novel approach to slow or stop disease progression.

If successful, the method could be adapted to treat other diseases caused by protein aggregation, such as Parkinson's disease.

FUNDED BY Dementia Research Community -
Bondi2Byron

PROJECT GRANT SUMMARIES



**DR SAYANTHOORAN
SARAVANABAVAN**

Macquarie University

Professor Julie Atkin,
Macquarie University



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Determining the role of a novel genetic material in frontotemporal dementia

FOCUS

This research explores how a recently recognised class of molecules that regulate gene and protein activity, called circular RNA (or circRNA), might contribute to the development of frontotemporal dementia.

CircRNAs have a unique looped structure that increases their stability, allowing them to build up in the body over time. The study will investigate how ageing and DNA damage affect circRNAs and their interactions with specific proteins, such as TDP-43 and FUS, which are known to be involved in frontotemporal dementia.

By understanding these processes, the project aims to determine whether circRNAs could serve as targets for treatment or as markers to diagnose frontotemporal dementia, potentially offering new ways to monitor and address the disease.

IMPACT

While it is known that proteins like TDP-43 and FUS play a key role in frontotemporal dementia, the underlying reasons for their malfunction remain unclear. Investigating the role of circRNAs in this process could lead to new approaches for detecting and managing frontotemporal dementia.

These insights have the potential to improve patient outcomes and contribute to the development of preventative treatments in the future.

PROJECT GRANT SUMMARIES



DR BRANDON MUNN
The University of Sydney

**Associate Professor
James Shine,**
The University of Sydney



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Mapping multiscale brain changes in dementia: Towards early detection and intervention

FOCUS

Dr Munn's research seeks to develop innovative tools to detect and understand brain dysfunction in dementia.

By focusing on the locus coeruleus, a critical brain region involved in memory and attention, the project combines advanced neuroimaging techniques with physics-inspired computational models.

The goal is to identify early biomarkers of cognitive decline and link these to the cellular mechanisms driving dementia. The research also aims to create open-source tools for broader use in understanding various brain disorders.

IMPACT

Early intervention through diagnosis is vital, but current methods often lack precision in identifying at-risk individuals or understanding the biological processes involved.

By bridging the gap between brain imaging and cellular science, this project could redefine early detection and treatment strategies, helping millions of people at risk of dementia and providing a foundation for future breakthroughs in brain health.

PROJECT GRANT SUMMARIES



DR EDDY ROCCATI
University of Tasmania

Professor James Vickers,
University of Tasmania

Professor Anna King,
University of Tasmania

**Associate Professor
Jane Alty,**
University of Tasmania



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Co-designing an interactive online dashboard to communicate biological and digital markers of dementia risk

FOCUS

This project aims to create an interactive online dashboard, available on personal devices, that provides individuals with personalised information about their biological and lifestyle factors that affect dementia risk.

Co-designed with diverse stakeholders, the dashboard will deliver evidence-based recommendations tailored to the user's specific risk profile.

By offering actionable insights, the tool seeks to empower individuals to make healthier lifestyle choices, reduce dementia risk, and improve their quality of life.

IMPACT

Dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, is a significant health challenge, but up to 40% of cases may be preventable through lifestyle changes. Many Australians are unaware of their modifiable risk factors, and generalised health advice often fails to inspire action.

This project addresses the gap by presenting personalised, relatable, and scientifically grounded information to catalyse behaviour change. It leverages early detection and personalised feedback to enhance public engagement, enabling individuals to take proactive steps toward healthier ageing and dementia prevention.

PROJECT GRANT SUMMARIES



DR WEI QI KOH

The University of
Queensland

Associate Professor Jacki Liddle,

The University of
Queensland and Princess
Alexandra Hospital

Dr Aisling Flynn,

Bournemouth
University, UK



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Supporting the ethical use of innovative technologies in dementia care

FOCUS

Dr Koh will explore how innovative technologies, such as robotic pets and virtual reality, can be ethically integrated into dementia care in residential aged care facilities.

Gathering perspectives from people living with dementia, their caregivers, and residential aged care staff to understand the experiences of people living with dementia and their concerns, the study will build a consensus on best practices for ethical implementation of these technologies while addressing complex moral challenges.

IMPACT

Technologies like robotic pets and virtual reality have shown promise in enhancing the well-being of people with dementia by reducing agitation and improving social engagement. However, their use raises ethical questions, such as the potential for deception or emotional dependence.

This research aims to create practical, ethical guidelines to ensure these technologies benefit residents while respecting their dignity and autonomy, ultimately improving the quality of dementia care in residential aged care facilities.

FUNDED BY Hazel Hawke Alzheimer's Research and Care Fund

PROJECT GRANT SUMMARIES



DR MATTHEW LENNON

UNSW Sydney

**Professor
Perminder Sachdev,**
UNSW Sydney

**Dr Anbupalam
Thalamuthu,**
UNSW Sydney

Dr Karen Mather,
UNSW Sydney

Genetic and clinical mapping of future treatments for vascular cognitive impairment and dementia

FOCUS

Dr Lennon's research aims to map current and potential future treatments for vascular cognitive impairment and dementia (VCID), a leading cause of cognitive decline.

The project involves two key components:

- + systematic review of clinical trials to evaluate existing and emerging therapies
- + genetic analysis to identify new drug targets using advanced genomic techniques.

Findings will be compiled into a publicly accessible database, offering a comprehensive resource for researchers and clinicians.

IMPACT

Despite being a major health burden, with cases expected to triple by 2050, VCID lacks specific treatments and research remains limited.

By identifying promising drugs and genetic targets, this project addresses a critical gap, paving the way for new treatments. The database and insights from this study could accelerate drug development and improve care for millions at risk of VCID globally.

FUNDED BY The Royce Simmons Foundation

Travel Grant Summaries



DR PRATISHTHA CHATTERJEE

The University of Melbourne

Professor Charlotte Teunissen,
Amsterdam University Medical Centres and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam



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Advancing fluid biomarkers for dementia management

FOCUS

This project focuses on improving the diagnosis and management of two challenging dementia types: Dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB) and Alzheimer's disease with atypical pathology.

By identifying specific blood biomarkers, the research aims to predict how rapidly DLB will progress and better understand Alzheimer's disease in cases where the biological indicators that reflect the core hallmarks of Alzheimer's disease are not present.

The project includes collaborating with global experts, analysing large datasets, and presenting findings at international conferences to refine methods and accelerate progress.

IMPACT

Current diagnostic methods for these dementias rely on costly or invasive tests and can often be inconclusive. By developing accessible blood tests, this research could enable earlier, more accurate diagnoses and tailored treatments.

This approach addresses critical gaps in dementia care, offering hope for improving quality of life for people living with dementia and advancing the field of dementia research globally. Insights could lead to transformative changes in how these diseases are detected and managed.

TRAVEL GRANT SUMMARIES



DR GARY MORRIS
University of Tasmania

**Associate Professor
Brad Sutherland,**
University of Tasmania

Professor Anna King,
University of Tasmania

**Professor
Gabriele De Luca,**
University of Oxford



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SUPPORT**

Learning how to use brain banks to uncover new mechanisms linked to dementia

FOCUS

Dr Morris' project focuses on using human brain tissue to uncover new mechanisms involved in Alzheimer's disease.

Dr Morris will travel to Oxford University to learn advanced tissue analysis techniques, such as multiplex immunohistochemistry, which allows the study of multiple markers in a single brain sample.

Immunohistochemistry is a method used to find and highlight specific proteins in a tissue sample by attaching special markers to them, making them visible under a microscope. The goal is to investigate how microglia (immune cells in the brain) interact with blood vessels, aiming to understand their role in maintaining brain health and contributing to Alzheimer's disease pathology.

IMPACT

Alzheimer's disease is a leading cause of dementia, but its underlying mechanisms remain poorly understood. Vascular dysfunction and the interactions between brain cells like microglia and blood vessels are increasingly recognised as key factors.

This project could identify new therapeutic targets and advance our understanding of Alzheimer's disease, helping pave the way for better treatments and preventive strategies for this devastating condition.

TRAVEL GRANT SUMMARIES



DR SHARON SAVAGE

The University of
Newcastle

Dr Aida Suarez-Gonzalez,
University College London

Professor Eneida Mioshi,
University of East Anglia

Rare Dementia Support – Sharing knowledge to build resources for younger onset dementia

FOCUS

This project focuses on addressing the needs of people with younger onset dementia, a condition where dementia begins before age 65.

Dr Savage will visit leading UK institutions to gain expertise in the design and running of interventions specifically for people with younger onset dementia. She will focus in particular on approaches that support people with frontotemporal dementia or posterior cortical atrophy.

The visit will include collaborating with dementia experts, observing clinical practices, and co-developing a practical handbook that can guide clinicians on the specific “how to” details when setting up evidence-based programs to support patient wellbeing and function.

This project will also involve consultation with people living with younger onset dementia to ensure resources are meaningful and appropriately designed.

IMPACT

People with younger onset dementia often face unique challenges, together with delays in receiving a diagnosis, and gaps in specialised care. This all results in unmet needs. Tailored interventions can improve quality of life, but there is little guidance on how to implement them.

This proposal seeks to fill that gap by creating evidence-based resources and establishing international collaborations to enhance care and support for these individuals and their families.

FUNDED BY Lucas’ Papaw Foundation

TRAVEL GRANT SUMMARIES



DR KRIS TULLOCH

University of the
Sunshine Coast

Dr Prudence Millear,

University of the
Sunshine Coast

Ms Mara Brouwers,

Maastricht University

Dr Bram de Boer,

Maastricht University



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A cross-cultural examination of dementia care in Australia and the Netherlands

FOCUS

Dr Tulloch's research focuses on improving dementia care by studying innovative care facilities in the Netherlands and comparing them to Australian models.

Dutch innovative care facilities are globally recognised for their person-centered care and connection to community, offering valuable insights for enhancing care in multicultural settings like Australia.

Dr Tulloch will collaborate with leading Dutch researchers, visit care facilities, and conduct a cross-cultural study to identify practices that could improve the quality of life for people living with dementia.

IMPACT

Dementia care in Australia is under scrutiny, with calls for innovative approaches to meet the needs of people living with dementia. Dutch care models excel in promoting autonomy and well-being, offering lessons for adaptation in Australia.

By learning from Dutch experts and incorporating these insights, Dr Tulloch aims to foster international collaborations, improve care practices, and advocate for strategies that could enrich lives and support caregivers in diverse communities.

TRAVEL GRANT SUMMARIES



DR HANNAH FAIR
University of Tasmania

Mr James Brady,
University of Tasmania

Dr Kathleen Doherty,
University of Tasmania

Professor James Vickers,
University of Tasmania



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Personality, perceptions, and social propagation in dementia prevention: Concept validation, collaboration formation, and skill expansion

FOCUS

Dr Fair's project explores how personality traits (such as introversion) and loneliness influence the link between social engagement and dementia risk.

Using data from a large Tasmanian cohort, entitled the ISLAND project, the research will investigate how individual personality traits change the impact of social engagement and loneliness on cognitive decline.

Dr Fair will travel to regional centres within Tasmania to collaborate with participants of the ISLAND study, as well as travel to Perth to attend the Australian Dementia Research Forum, where they will share findings and build collaborations with experts in dementia prevention.

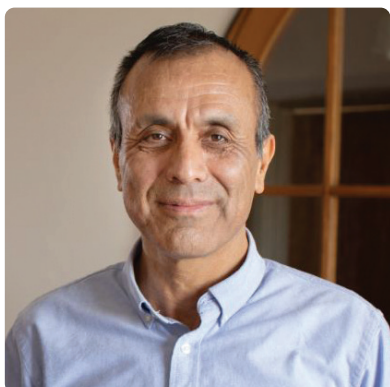
Additionally, they will travel to Melbourne, to participate in a week-long workshop on social network analysis, enhancing their skills and supporting future research into how social behaviours spread within communities and impact health outcomes.

IMPACT

Social engagement is widely promoted to reduce dementia risk. However, the impact that factors like personality and perceived loneliness have on socialising to reduce dementia risk remains largely unknown.

By understanding these dynamics, the project can help create personalised strategies for dementia prevention. Additionally, exploring how health behaviours spread in social networks offers a unique opportunity to amplify positive changes by leveraging them for effective public health interventions to reduce dementia risk across communities.

TRAVEL GRANT SUMMARIES



**DR MOHAMMAD
SHOAIB HAMRAH**

University of Tasmania

Professor James Vickers,
University of Tasmania

**Associate Professor
Jane Alty,**
University of Tasmania

Dr Kathleen Doherty,
University of Tasmania



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Evaluation outcomes of the Hindi, Farsi, and Dari versions of the Preventing Dementia Massive Open Online Course among Indian, Iranian, and Afghan migrants

FOCUS

This project will focus on adapting the Preventing Dementia Massive Open Online Course, which is offered through the University of Tasmania for Indian, Iranian, and Afghan migrants in Australia.

By translating the course into Hindi, Farsi, and Dari and tailoring it to cultural contexts, the study aims to improve dementia health literacy.

Workshops and collaborations with experts and communities will refine the course to better meet the needs of these migrant groups, enabling them to manage modifiable dementia risk factors effectively.

IMPACT

Migrants from India, Iran, and Afghanistan often face barriers such as low health literacy, language challenges, and limited access to culturally relevant resources. These issues increase their risk of dementia-related health disparities.

This project addresses these gaps, helping to enhance health outcomes, reduce healthcare costs, and promote dementia prevention. The project targets migrants in Australia as a whole, not just Tasmania, but workshops and community consultations are planned for locations in Tasmania to refine the content and accessibility for these groups.

The course also has potential for global reach, as collaborators in India and Dubai are involved in the adaptation process to ensure cultural and linguistic relevance.

Clinical Practice Post-graduate Stipend Summaries



DR ANTONIA CLARKE
Monash University

Professor Amy Brodtmann,
Monash University

**Associate Professor
Adrienne Withall,**
UNSW Sydney

Dr Kylie Radford,
Neuroscience Research
Australia



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Community, Country, and Cognition: Yarning to understand Place-based brain ageing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

FOCUS

This research explores how connection to Culture, Community, and Country influences healthy brain ageing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly in rural areas.

Through “yarning” (a traditional storytelling method), the project will engage community members and healthcare staff across New South Wales and Victoria to understand perspectives on dementia, brain health, and barriers to best practice dementia care.

Findings will inform culturally appropriate, Place-based strategies for dementia prevention and care.

IMPACT

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples face higher rates of dementia at younger ages, with rural communities experiencing greater disparities in access to care.

By focusing on strengths within these communities and emphasising holistic, culturally informed approaches, the project aims to address brain health inequities and support long-term wellbeing.

Insights will help shape healthcare policies, educational resources, and locally tailored programs that empower communities to improve brain health across generations.

CLINICAL PRACTICE POST-GRADUATE STIPEND SUMMARIES



MR NICHOLAS LAWLIS
University of Canberra

Associate Professor Joseph Northey,
University of Canberra

Associate Professor Nathan D’Cunha,
University of Canberra

Professor Ben Rattray,
University of Canberra



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The role of physical activity in preserving physical and cognitive health for people living with younger onset dementia

FOCUS

Mr Lawlis’ research investigates the role of physical activity in preserving physical and cognitive health among individuals with younger onset dementia (diagnosed before age 65).

It explores barriers and enablers to exercise, compares physical activity levels and capacities across dementia types, and examines the potential benefit of physical activity interventions tailored for those with younger onset dementia.

The project combines qualitative and quantitative methodologies to inform tailored clinical guidelines and interventions.

IMPACT

This study addresses a critical gap in understanding physical activity’s role for younger onset dementia, offering actionable insights to improve care.

By informing health practitioners, caregivers, and policymakers, the findings will enhance treatment strategies, promote independence, and improve quality of life for this population.

Additionally, the research will serve as a foundation for future studies, fostering better integration of physical activity into therapeutic frameworks for cognitive and physical health benefits.

Research Translation Grant Summaries



ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KERRYN PIKE

Griffith University

Professor Sharon Naismith,
The University of Sydney

Dr Alex Bahar-Fuchs,
Deakin University

Professor Alison Hutchinson,
Deakin University

Professor Edward Strivens,
Cairns and Hinterland
Hospital and Health Service

Mr Joshua Nash,
Bendigo Health

Dr Eleanor Hammersley,
Grampians Health

**Associate Professor
Sarah Russell,**
James Cook University

Mr Aitan Schmideg,
Griffith University

Ms Annika Stenstrom,
Griffith University

Providing access to cognitive interventions in regional memory clinics: Adaptation and implementation of a clinician training package

FOCUS

Associate Professor Pike's research focuses on improving access to cognitive interventions for individuals at risk of developing dementia in regional Australia.

The team will adapt an existing clinician training package, initially developed for metropolitan memory clinics, to address the unique challenges faced in regional areas.

The program includes online modules, interactive workshops, and peer support, equipping clinicians with the tools to deliver evidence-based interventions such as memory training and goal-oriented strategies tailored to people with mild cognitive impairment or subjective cognitive decline.

IMPACT

Cognitive interventions can delay the onset and progression of dementia, but people in regional areas often lack access to such services.

Regional memory clinics face barriers like geographic isolation, limited resources, and diverse patient needs.

By bridging this gap, the project aims to enhance the quality of care, empower clinicians, and improve the cognitive health and wellbeing of underserved communities, ultimately reducing dementia risks and health disparities.

FUNDED BY Bartle Pathway to Care

Other Awards

MS SHIN LIAU

Monash University

Dr Emily Reeve,

Monash University

Dr Jane Thompson

Dr Mouna Sawan,

The University of Sydney



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SUPPORT**

Principles for optimising medicines management in older people living with frailty and dementia

FOCUS

This research project focuses on optimising medicines management for older adults with frailty and dementia.

This study will involve older adults (individuals aged 65 years or older) living with frailty and dementia, their carers, and families in structured discussions to refine and prioritise a set of principles previously developed by healthcare professionals without their input.

Participants will also have the opportunity to contribute additional principles. The goal is to ensure the principles better reflect the preferences and needs of consumers, enabling more personalised care.

IMPACT

Older adults with frailty and dementia often face challenges managing complex medicine regimens, increasing their risk of adverse effects and reducing quality of life.

Current medicines management guidelines may not fully reflect the needs and perspectives of those directly affected.

By incorporating consumer input, this project aims to promote a patient-centred approach to care, improve medicines safety, and inform the development of tools, education, and policies that support the wellbeing of older Australians.

SUPPORTED BY Australian Association of Gerontology Research Trust

OTHER AWARDS



DR LINDA MCAULIFFE

La Trobe University

Professor Yvonne Wells,

La Trobe University

Ilsa Hampton,

Australian Dental
Association

Exploring connectedness in older people living with dementia in residential aged care: Experiences of Connecto

FOCUS

Dr McAuliffe's research project explores the spiritual and psychosocial connectedness of older adults living with dementia in residential aged care using a tool called Connecto.

Through interviews, focus groups, and data analysis, this project seeks to understand how Connecto can assess spiritual and psychosocial connection needs and improve care.

The project will also evaluate whether people with dementia have unique needs compared to those without dementia, aiming to enhance the tool's usability for this group.

IMPACT

Dementia significantly affects quality of life, and spiritual and psychosocial well-being is a critical but often overlooked aspect of care. Current assessments lack standardisation and inclusivity for residents with dementia.

This project could lead to better understanding and meeting of spiritual and psychosocial connection needs, improving residents' well-being and potentially reducing behavioural symptoms.

The findings may inform future modifications of Connecto, advancing personalised and holistic care in aged care facilities.

SUPPORTED BY Australian Association of Gerontology
Research Trust

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