

# SYDNEY INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

JANUARY 2023 | NEWSLETTER EDITION 6

## Update from the Director

Welcome to our summer newsletter edition. Since our last update, the Institute has initiated our Institute Mentorship Program, with ten pairs of mentors and mentees, which will run for an initial period of six months, and will then be evaluated.

We released our 2021 Institute Annual Report in September, highlighting our affiliates' exceptional research contributions and the growth of the Institute's network. The Annual Report can be found at [slhd.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/Institute-Annual-Report-2021.pdf](https://slhd.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/Institute-Annual-Report-2021.pdf)

In October, we delivered a Health Policy Webinar on Domestic Violence Screening Programs in collaboration with the District's Domestic Violence Strategy Unit; and we organised our first Research Network Meetings to allow researchers to come together to discuss their research topics and areas.

The Institute implemented an exciting program called 'LifeLab Sydney', a novel interactive health education initiative, delivering science based exploration for school adolescents, with an aim to positively impact health literacy and health behaviours. We greatly appreciate the support from District staff, affiliates, schools, and partners in the development and delivery of this program. A special thank you to the Charles Perkins Centre for their collaboration and providing the laboratory site, facilities and their expertise for the LifeLab Program.

Finally, in November we delivered an important webinar by Dr Tamika Heiden of the Research Impact Academy, who presented a one-hour presentation on the current requirements around research impact and what researchers, and practitioners can do to facilitate research impact.

### Dr George Johnson

Institute Director



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# Welcome Institute Co-Chairs, Professor Sue Woolfenden and Professor Adrienne Gordon

We are pleased to announce the appointment of two new Institute Co-Chairs, Professor Sue Woolfenden and Professor Adrienne Gordon.



**Professor Susan Woolfenden**

Sue is the Director for Community Paediatrics in Sydney Local Health District. She is also an NHMRC Senior Research Fellow with the University of New South Wales School of Women's and Children's Health; a Clinical Professor in the University of Sydney Faculty of Medicine and Health; co-leads the Population Child Health Group at University of New South Wales; and is the Deputy Director of the Early Life of Determinants Health Clinical Academic Group of the Sydney Partnership for Health, Education, Research and Enterprise (SPHERE).

In her clinical, service development and research roles, Sue aims to address child health and healthcare inequities in Australia and globally, particularly for children at risk of, or with, neurodevelopmental problems. She was co-Chair of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians Working Group for Inequities in Child Health Position Statement.



**Professor Adrienne Gordon**

Adrienne is a Senior Staff Specialist Neonatologist at RPA Women and Babies, and an NHMRC Early Career Fellow in the Discipline of Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Neonatology at the University of Sydney. Adrienne has a strong research interest in perinatal topics that can improve pregnancy and newborn outcomes. She has a Master of Public Health and completed a PhD on risk factors for stillbirth.

She has led numerous largescale studies, trials and research collaborations that investigate the causes and risk factors for stillbirth and perinatal death, prevention and care. They include a study which examined the risk for late pregnancy stillbirth in nine hospitals and led to the creation of a follow-up service for families following stillbirth or neonatal death.

Adrienne is leading BABY1000, a longitudinal pregnancy and birth cohort study assessing modifiable risks and interventions in the first 1000 days of life that impact on later life health.

## Congratulations to our Co-Chairs on their Clinical Academic Group (CAG) program appointments

Our Co-Chairs Professor Adrienne Gordon and Professor Sue Woolfenden were successful in applying to establish two Sydney Health Partner, Clinical Academic Groups (CAGs).

Professor Adrienne Gordon and Professor Dharmintra will focus on reducing unwanted variations and improving outcomes in the care for women and babies before, during and following pregnancy through their **Reproductive, Maternal and Newborn Health CAG**.

Professor Russell Dale and Professor Sue Woolfenden will focus on addressing the inequities in child and adolescent health through their **Child and Adolescent Health CAG**, by critically evaluating and addressing the needs for children and adolescents in a collaboration between clinicians, researchers, and members of the community.

# LifeLab Sydney

**LifeLab Sydney is an innovative adolescent health education program providing school students opportunities to learn the science behind health messages.**

LifeLab Sydney's pilot program saw the Institute develop integral partnerships with four local Sydney schools, Wiley Park Girls High School, Alexandria Park Community School, Concord High School, and Newtown High School of Performing Arts.

LifeLab Sydney aims to increase science and health literacy in children, to positively impact young people's health behaviours.

From September 2022, LifeLab Sydney came to life as we worked with Year 8 students and teachers from the four local schools. Science teachers taught the curriculum, utilising health data as learning content. The students were encouraged to follow the path of enquiry-based learning throughout the term to learn the science behind health messages.

The program included a full day excursion to the Charles Perkins Centre where students experienced state-of-the-art facilities, learnt how clinicians measure health, and worked on experiments, all while engaging with researchers, scientists, and clinicians.

Many thanks to the hardworking school teachers for their commitment to LifeLab Sydney. Their willingness to integrate the content into the curriculum, their dedication and time, and their passion for the program all made LifeLab Sydney possible.

Thanks to Professor Stephen Simpson, Academic Director, Charles Perkins Centre (CPC) and the staff at CPC, for generously sharing facilities, resources, and time, to help deliver LifeLab Sydney.

Thank you to our Chief Executive, Dr Teresa Anderson AM, SLHD for supporting this important initiative from its early concept and continual development.

We are in the process of evaluating the program in 2022, and also planning for 2023.

Please see below quotes from the LifeLab Program in 2022, which captures how the program helps students reflect on their own health.

*"Once you become an adult, you can't fix your health completely, so you have to be healthy at a young age."*

**Student, Wiley Park Girls High School**

*"I feel confident with the changes I want to make because I'm doing something for my future kids."*

**Student, Newtown High School of the Performing Arts**





## Our 2022 end of year events

### **Research Impact Academy: *What is impact?***

In partnership with the Research Impact Academy, led by Dr Tamika Heiden, the Institute hosted a webinar in late November related to research impact.

The presentation talked about the current requirements around impact and introduced concepts of research impact and how it is created or accelerated, terminology and definitions to be aware of, roles of different types of researchers and practitioners, and ways to communicate impact.

There was a collective appreciation of Tamika's knowledge and ability to articulate how to facilitate impact. We hope the attendees benefitted from the presentation, and are now armed with practical and achievable steps to enhance the impact of their research.

### **Health Policy Webinar: *Domestic violence screening programs***

As part of the Institute's series of educational webinars, we held our second webinar in partnership with the SLHD Domestic Violence Strategy Unit on Thursday 27 October.

The webinar presented on NSW Health Domestic and Family Violence Policy and related strategies, as well as the important work being done by the Domestic Violence Strategy Unit in supporting District Services to effectively identify and respond to domestic and family violence. The webinar shared research related to screening programs in the oral health and midwifery spaces.

Thank you to the speakers, Ms Mandeep Paddam, Ms Renee Lovell, Ms Cecilia Correy, Professor Kathleen Baird, and to the convenor Associate Professor Hala Phipps.



### **Research Networking Meetings**

Thank you to our affiliates who joined our first research network meetings in October and December. The meetings included a quick round of 'speed networking' which provided everyone an opportunity to share a bit about themselves, and to learn about the work of their peers.

We were thrilled with the engaging conversations, meaningful connections and opportunities for future collaboration. The room was buzzing and we can't wait for our next networking meetings in 2023.

Special thanks to our Co-Chairs Professor Adrienne Gordon and Professor Sue Woolfenden for hosting and guest speaker, Associate Professor Hala Phipps.

## Awards & achievements

### 'The Pitch' winners, October 2022 COOL Helmets for Happy Heads



Congratulations to our affiliate, Kai Cheng, Surgical Innovation Research Manager at the Institute of Academic Surgery at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital

The Head of Royal Prince Alfred's Department of Orthotics, Alan Miller and his team, including Kai Cheng, won \$50 000 for their pitch 'COOL Helmets for Happy Heads.'

This innovation will design and manufacture new types of helmets for patients who require post-operative head protection for craniectomy, using artificial intelligence and state-of-the-art 3D printing.

### Co-designing and co-facilitating online early childhood nutrition workshops for culturally and linguistically diverse families.



Congratulations to our affiliate, Dr Erin Kerr, Research Coordinator at the SLHD Population Health Research and Evaluation for a winning pitch.

Under the project, the District's Healthy Beginnings and Connecting the Dots teams will partner with the Cultural Support Program to adapt, develop, and translate parenting workshops with Arabic and Mongolian communities and co-facilitate workshops with cultural support workers.

## Welcome to our new Institute team members

To support the growth of the Institute and our ability to meet our strategic objectives, the last few months has seen the Institute welcome three new members to the team.



Ms Natasha Skews  
Acting Senior Research and  
Project Officer



Ms Linda Mirabilio  
Senior Research and Project  
Officer/CAG Coordinator



Mr Pejman Adily  
Database Manager

## Recent affiliate publications

A snapshot of our affiliates' recent publications:

**Appleton J**, Russell C, Fowler C, Jansen E, Burnett AJ, Rossiter C & Denney-Wilson E. Informing infant nutrition: Timing of infant formula advice, infant formula choice and preparation in the first six months of life. 2022, 54;10, 908-915. 2022 Oct; doi: 10.1016/j.jneb.2022.06.002

Hasmat, S., Wanasinghe, D. & **Cheng, K.**, Suaning, G., Lovell, N., Low, T., Clark, J. (2021). Plastic and Aesthetic Research Characterization of temporal soft tissue space to aid the design of implants aimed at restoring function in facial paralysis. *Plastic and Aesthetic Research*. 2021. 17. doi: 10.20517/2347-9264.2020.221.

Venchiarutti RL, Dunn M, Charters E, **Cheng K.**, Froggatt C, Mukherjee P, Wallace C, Howes D, Leinkram D, Singh J, Nguyen K, Low T-H, Ch'ng S, Wykes J, Wu R, Clark JR. Effect of Radiotherapy on Functional and Health-Related Quality of Life Outcomes after Jaw Reconstruction. *Cancers*. 2022 Sep; 14(19):4557. doi: 10.3390/cancers14194557

Al Maruf DSA., Ghosh YA., Xin H., **Cheng K.**, Mukherjee P., Crook JM., Wallace GG., Klein TJ., Clark JR. Hydrogel: A Potential Material for Bone Tissue Engineering Repairing the Segmental Mandibular Defect. *Polymers*. 2022 Sep; 14(19):4186. doi: 10.3390/polym14194186

**Rungan, S.**, Denzil, T., Daley, D., Edwige, V., (2022). What does the term childhood behavioural disorders mean in the context of Aboriginal culture within Australia? Part 2: 'Historical and social context' in *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health*. 2022 Oct; doi: 10.1111/jpc.16219

**Rungan, S.**, Denzil, T., Daley, D., Edwige, V. (2022). What does the term childhood behavioural disorders mean in the context of Aboriginal culture within Australia? Part 1: 'Not just using the words' in *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health*. 2022 Oct; doi: 10.1111/jpc.16232

**Stockton, D.A.**, Fowler, C., Debono, D., & Travaglia, J. (2022). Adapting community child and family health service models for rural and other diverse settings: A modified Delphi study to identify key elements. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, 00, 1-18. 2022 Oct; doi: 10.1111/hsc.14052

**Stockton, D.A.**, Fowler, C., Debono, D., & Travaglia, J. (2022). Development of a framework for the collaborative adaptation of service models for child and family health in diverse settings (CASCADES), *Journal of Child Health Care*, 2022 Oct; doi: 10.1177/13674935221129003

## Become an Institute affiliate

We invite researchers, clinicians, educators, and partners to formalise their affiliation with the Institute. Benefits of an affiliation with the Institute include networking, collaboration, and training and education opportunities. If you would like to know more about becoming an affiliate, email: [SLHD-SydneyInstituteForWCF@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SLHD-SydneyInstituteForWCF@health.nsw.gov.au)



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