

SYDNEY INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

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Update from the Deputy Director

Welcome to the June 2024 newsletter from the Sydney Institute for Women, Children and their Families. We are excited to share what we have been working on in the first half of 2024, and what has been happening across our network.

In this edition, we have provided updates on the LifeLab Sydney program, our team and the services we provide, achievements across our network and recent and upcoming Institute events.

The Institute provides a range of services for our affiliates. Our student placement program is a key initiative to link post graduate students with our District affiliates to undertake and support research activities. In 2024, we have facilitated a number of Masters of Public Health students, and we are currently accepting project requests for the second half of the year. Please reach out to us if you are interested in supervising a student.

Earlier this year, we evaluated the pilot round of our Mentorship Program. We thank all the mentors and mentees who participated and for their invaluable feedback. We are excited to implement the 2024 iteration of the program, and registrations for mentors and mentees to participate will be open in June and July 2024.

In May we had the pleasure of inviting affiliates to meet with our Grant Review and Ideas Development Panel. The Panel reviewed draft grant applications from affiliates, and provided advice to help support their applications. Our next Panel meeting is in August 2024.

We have hosted two Research Network Meetings in 2024. We hope these meetings will help drive collaborative research opportunities and provide a platform to connect our affiliates with each other. Thank you to all of our affiliates who have joined us at the 2024 meetings so far.

The Institute is excited to continue supporting our Affiliate Network in 2024.



Ms Katie Perren
Deputy Director, Sydney Institute for
Women, Children and their Families

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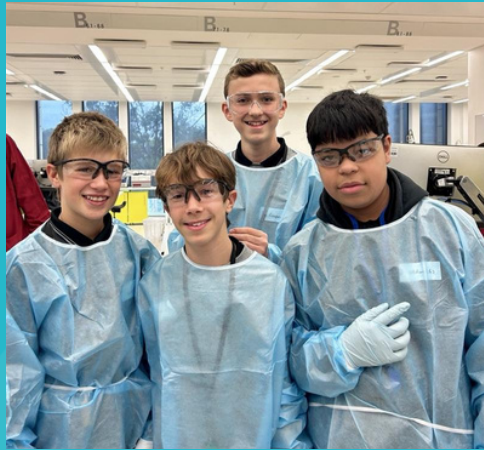


SYDNEY INSTITUTE FOR
**women, children
and their families**

The latest on LifeLab Sydney

LifeLab Sydney is the Institute's flagship education program. Launched in 2022, this program works with year 8 science classes in local high schools. Over the last two years, the program has grown and reached over 380 high school students across our District.

The program provides curriculum modules codesigned alongside science teachers and delivered in classrooms. Combined with an interactive excursion day at Charles Perkins Centre, at the University of Sydney, to immerse students in the science behind health messaging.



Students participating in excursion activities including the Health Circuit and laboratory experiments.

The Institute team hosted eight excursion days in November 2023, welcoming five local schools. We hosted a further two excursion days in June 2024. Our next program will be delivered in November 2024, with a plan to reach 300 students this year.



Students enjoying their Meet the Scientist session at their excursion with Dr Emily Appleby from Clinical Services Integration.

The LifeLab Global CoP meeting in Southampton, UK.

Ms Eva Breidenbach (LifeLab Program Manager) and A/Prof George Johnson (Institute Director) collaborated on an international grant last year, which led to a trip to the United Kingdom (UK), to visit the University of Southampton and the LifeLab UK team. This team are a key partner for LifeLab Sydney, and established their own LifeLab program over a decade ago.

A LifeLab Global Community of Practice (CoP) was established during this trip, with representatives from Ghana, Nepal, Ireland, South Africa, Australia and the UK. The LifeLab Global Community of Practice are continuing to collaborate on research opportunities, and this supports the Institute to increase our international connections.

Institute staff news



Congratulations, George! Institute Director, George Johnson, promoted to Adjunct Associate Professor

George was promoted to an Adjunct Associate Professor within the Sydney School of Public Health and Faculty of Medicine and Health at the University of Sydney in December 2023. This promotion reflects George's contributions to public health and research both at the university, and within his dual District appointment as General Manager Public Health and Institute Director.

Institute support services in 2024



Our team are here to support you

The Institute team are working to deliver a variety of support services to affiliates in 2024 from the LifeLab program, student placements, database consultation, Consumer Connect, the Grant Review and Ideas Development Panel and the Research Networking Meetings. We are keen to collaborate with and support our affiliates.

You can reach our team with any enquiries for support via email:
SLHD-SydneyInstituteforWCF@health.nsw.gov.au.

Engage with two of our new consultation services

Looking to engage with an individual consumer or a consumer group for your research? Consider making an enquiry to our **Consumer Connect** program, where the Institute can help identify and link you with suitable consumers for your work.

Our Database Manager, Pejman Adily, provides a **database consultation** service to support your research, answer questions about quantitative data analysis, and provide advice around data management.

Coming up soon

Interested in mentorship? Across June and July 2024 we will be taking registrations for both mentors and mentees to participate in the next round of our **Mentorship Program**.

We are accepting expressions of interest to propose projects and supervise postgraduate students in our **Student Placement Program** in June 2024.

Have a research idea that you'd like to develop, or a draft grant application you'd like reviewed before submission? Work on this alongside experts at our **Grant Review and Ideas Development Panel** - next meeting in August 2024!

Achievements



Congratulations, Sue! Co-Chair grant success

Professor Sue Woolfenden has recently collaborated on two successful grants:

- Equitable pathways and integrated care in cerebral palsy (MRFF Consumer Led Research).
- Co-creating accessible patient experience measures with people with intellectual disability to improve healthcare quality and outcomes (MRFF Clinical Researcher).

These grants total nearly **\$2.5 million**, and involve collaborations with Sydney Local Health District services, the University of Sydney, the University of New South Wales and Macquarie University.

Management Group member presents at international conference Associate Professor Brad De Vries presents abstract at Society for Maternal and Fetal Medicine (SMFM) Pregnancy Meeting 2024 in Washington DC

Brad attended the eminent SMFM Pregnancy Meeting in February 2024 to present an important study led by himself and Institute Database Manager, Pejman Adily.

The study, inter-pregnancy interval and uterine rupture among more than 500,000 Trials Of Labor After Caesarean (TOLAC), is a retrospective cohort study utilising data in collaboration with Professor Vincenzo Berghella from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. You can read about Brad's presentation [here](#).



Sydney Health Partners Clinical Academic Groups success Our two Clinical Academic Groups receive continued funding



The Institute's Co-Chairs, Professor Adrienne Gordon and Professor Sue Woolfenden, each co-chair a Sydney Health Partners Clinical Academic Group (CAG). We are pleased to share that both of these groups have received a further two years worth of funding valued at \$140,000.

Sue co-chairs the Child and Adolescent Health CAG, while Adrienne co-chairs the Reproductive, Maternal and Newborn Health CAG. Both CAGs are using their funding to support activities including clinician researcher fellowships, delivering scholarships for early to mid-career researchers and research workshops.

The Institute is proud to support and be linked with both of these CAGs, and we will keep you up to date on relevant activities and opportunities.

Events

Institute Research Networking Meetings in 2024

The Institute has enjoyed hosting a diverse mix of affiliates at two Research Networking Meetings so far in 2024, with the first in March and the second in May.

Our first meeting involved a presentation from Ms Karin Birkner, Research Midwife at the University of Sydney. Karin presented on her research in Aboriginal breastfeeding practices, with a focus on collaborating with Aboriginal midwives. This meeting was attended by affiliates from backgrounds including nursing, midwifery, psychology, community health, obstetrics and more.

Dr James Smallcombe, Senior Research Associate from the Heat and Health Research Incubator at the University of Sydney presented at our second meeting. James presented the latest research being undertaken at the Heat and Health Research Incubator, sharing information about their extensive international collaborations. We had affiliates from nursing, oral health, dietetics and endocrinology join us at this meeting.



Dr Marjan Haghighi facilitating the March Research Networking Meeting.

Dr James Smallcombe presenting on the Heat and Health Research Incubator.

Following presentations at these meetings, affiliates in attendance get to meet one another in an informal setting, discuss their work and research goals, and make new connections. When reflecting on their attendance at Research Networking Meetings, affiliates have shared:

“I loved meeting researchers from a range of different disciplines, who were focusing on such different and interesting topics.”

“The networking was great. I learned about some very interesting projects currently underway and have some useful new contacts.”

“There is so much potential for collaboration with those at the meeting.”

Places at these meetings are strictly limited so early registration is essential to not miss out!

We will soon be sending information about the next meetings in 2024 - please reach out to us via email if you would like to know more: SLHD-SydneyInstituteforWCF@health.nsw.gov.au.

First 2000 Days Webinar - Thursday 27 June 2024 - 12.00pm

Register [here](#) for our next webinar, in collaboration with the Parenting Research Centre

The Institute, the Clinical Academic Group for Child and Adolescent Health and the Clinical Academic Group for Reproductive, Maternal and Newborn Health are proud to present a First 2000 Days webinar in collaboration with our colleagues from the Parenting Research Centre.

Register and join us to hear about how content experts at the Parenting Research Centre draw on research and the evidence base to provide practical advice to families and health professionals during the First 2000 Days.

A snapshot of recent affiliate publications

Cheney, K., Black, K., Pelosi, M., & Dorney, E. (2023). Introduction of the London Measure of Unplanned Pregnancy at the booking visit and the midwives' perspective. *BMJ sexual & reproductive health*, 49(2), 112–117. doi: [10.1136/bmjsex-2022-201576](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjsex-2022-201576).

Goldfeld, S., Francis, K. L., O'Connor, E., Ludvigsson, J., Faresjö, T., Nikiema, B., Gauvin, L., Yang-Huang, J., Abu Awad, Y., McGrath, J. J., Goldhaber-Fiebert, J. D., Faresjo, Å., Raat, H., Kragt, L., Mensah, F. K., (2022). Comparative inequalities in child dental caries across four countries: Examination of international birth cohorts and implications for oral health policy. *PloS one*. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0268899>

Wen, L. M., Xu, H., Phongsavan, P., Rissel, C., **Hayes, A., Taki, S.,** & Baur, L. A. (2023). 12-month effectiveness of telephone and SMS support to mothers with children aged 2 years in reducing children's BMI: an RCT. *International Journal of Obesity*, 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41366-023-01311-7>

Bahanan, L., Scott, T., Kaye, E., & **Sohn, W.** (2023). Response to commentary: See Original Article here. *Community Dentistry and Oral Epidemiology*, 51(2), 167-168. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdoe.12740>

Scott, F., Smet, M. E., Elhindi, J., **Mogra, R.,** Sunderland, L., Ferreira, A., & McLennan, A. (2023). Late first-trimester ultrasound findings can alter management after high-risk NIPT result. *Ultrasound in Obstetrics & Gynecology*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/uog.26272>

Boulton, K. A., **Guastella, A. J.,** Hodge, M. A., Demetriou, E. A., **Ong, N.,** & Silove, N. (2023). Mental health concerns in children with neurodevelopmental conditions attending a developmental assessment service. *Journal of Affective Disorders*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2023.04.098>

Tsantefski, M., Humphreys, C., Wilde, T., Young, A., **Heward-Belle, S.,** & O'Leary, P. (2023). Worker Safety in High-risk Child Protection and Domestic Violence Cases. *Journal of Family Violence*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2023.04.098>

Parter, C., Rambaldini, B., Wilson, S., Gwynn, J., **Skinner, J.,** & Calma Ao T. Heal country, heal our nation: Talking up racism. *Aust N Z J Public Health*. 2023 Apr;47(2):100037. Epub 2023 Apr 4. PMID: 37023483. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anzjph.2023.100037>

Follow the Institute on LinkedIn



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You can find us here: [@sydney-institute-for-women-children-and-their-families](https://www.linkedin.com/company/sydney-institute-for-women-children-and-their-families)

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, get in touch via email:

SLHD-SydneyInstituteforWCF@health.nsw.gov.au



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