

Townsville
Hospital
and Health
Service

2023

Townsville Hospital and Health Service

Research Annual Report



Townsville Hospital and Health Service Research Annual Report 2023
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Message from the Health Service Chief Executive

It's my great pleasure, once again, to be invited to contribute to the Townsville Hospital and Health Service (HHS) Research Annual Report.

Research is the bedrock of innovation, continuous improvement, and quality care. In 2023, the HHS's Study Education Research Trust Account (SERTA) grants totalled more than \$1.4 million. These grants, along with external grants, national clinical trials, and research education and training, continue to propel us toward our strategic vision of world-class healthcare for northern Queensland and our purpose of great care every day. This report reflects the research excellence and commitment of health service staff toward that goal. It was very gratifying to see this rewarded in the past 12 months at the TropiQ Townsville Research Symposium and the Research Excellence Awards, with local researchers acknowledged and celebrated for their work. The novel 'Shark Tank' challenge awarded \$24,000 to six projects to improve patient outcomes and care. It's been wonderful to see the cross-fertilisation of specialities and disciplines collaborating on research, each bringing their unique experience, expertise, and ideas to the table.

When this report is published each year, I'm reminded of the great advances in healthcare throughout history. From vaccines, anaesthesia, and germ theory to antibiotics, antivirals, and stem cell therapy, at their very core was a researcher (before the word was invented) who was brave enough to give an idea a go. As Albert Einstein said: 'If we knew what we were doing, it wouldn't be called research would it?' Thank you to the courageous, curious researchers who continue to give their ideas a go.

Congratulations to the team of the Townsville Institute of Health Research and Innovation and Director Professor Andrew Mallett for their passion and meticulous professional guidance that are seeing our people and projects emerge as a tour de force in clinical research in Australia and around the world.

Kieran Keyes

Health Service Chief Executive
Townsville Hospital and Health Service





Message from the Executive Director of Clinical Governance and Director of Clinical Research

In 2023 researchers across Townsville Hospital and Health Service continued to excel in undertaking research that improves knowledge as well as the care and outcomes for patients. The commencement of a new Research Strategic Plan has given more focus and form to collective research efforts seeking to generate impact and translation. Partnering with the substantial efforts of staff broadly throughout THHS has been additional capacity to facilitate and support these efforts by the Townsville Institute of Health Research and Innovation. Not only were more ethics and governance approvals granted than in previous years, but they were approved more efficiently and expeditiously as well.

An especial research facilitation milestone in 2023 has been the commencement of the THHS Research Data Lab. Aligned to the strategic theme of digital health research, this new capability is transforming the way that THHS staff access data for their research whilst also enabling new collaborations such as with the Queensland Digital Health Centre. With strengthened oversight and support, THHS researchers are now meaningfully decreasing the time from asking a question to having answers that they can translate into clinical excellence and everyday clinical care.

Clinical trials across THHS also continue to grow and thrive across a broadening number of clinical services. The opportunity to partner with trial sponsors within

a robust governance framework and organisational support is delivering clear and growing benefits for staff and especially patients. This stands THHS in good stead for implementation of the National Clinical Trials Framework through to 2025.

Whilst never all of the story, it is also important to recognise the sustained and robust portfolio of research products including research articles and external grants attributed to THHS researchers. These point to an emerging and thriving local research ecosystem, which is now well complemented by the undeniable energy and success of the 2023 tropiQ Research Symposium hosted by THHS. As a visible local opportunity to recognise research excellence and share research findings, this annual event now memorably also embraces opportunities to support innovation including via a Shark Tank event. Thank you to all staff for their considerable endeavours and support of these events.

We now eagerly look towards the opportunities and potential further growth in THHS research activities in the coming years. The success and development of a thriving research community within THHS is entirely attributable to THHS staff and researchers. Congratulations one and all on your work that is benefiting patients, families and the community every single day.

Marina Daly

Executive Director Clinical Governance

Professor Andrew Mallett

Director of Clinical Research

2023 Research Highlights



236

Peer reviewed publications

Field Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) for THHS publications

1.26

(26% higher than the global average)



87

New projects authorized

Active registered clinical trials

78

673

Active research projects

Active (publishing) researchers

154



Funding awarded from external grants in 2023
(on which THHS staff were named investigators)

\$21,951,024

Total active grant funds

(grants received in, and prior to, 2023 on which THHS staff were named investigators)

\$58,303,017

Funding awarded internally through THHS SERTA grants in 2023

\$1,465,860



17

Research education and training sessions delivered

83

Ethics applications reviewed

126



Audit, Quality and Innovation Review (AQUIRE) process applications reviewed

2023 TropiQ Research Symposium

The 2023 Townsville TropiQ Research Symposium was held on 17th October and showcased research excellence, innovation and translation from across our region.

The day was bookended by plenary presentations from two eminent speakers:



Professor Virginia (Ginny) Barbour, the Editor-in-Chief of the Medical Journal of Australia and Director of Open Access Australasia. Ginny outlined key challenges facing health and medical publishing in 2023, and approaches that she and other leading journal editors have been taking to support quality open access publication in what is a new era of innovation and disruption in the publication industry.



Professor Julie White, Executive Director of the Queensland Health Office of Research and Innovation (ORI). Julie outlined the many new developments and initiatives that are rolling out within ORI to support research, with a focus on translation.

Best poster and best presentation awards from the Symposium were awarded to:



Best Presentation: **Ms Marina Bogiatzis** for her presentation 'Electronic medical records – no magic bullet' (Smyth W, Irving L, Morton J, Holland S, Nagle C).



Best Poster: **Ms Julia Chequer de Souza** / for her poster entitled: The Burden of Head Trauma in North Queensland (Chequer de Souza J, Letson HL, Gibbs CR, Dobson GP).

SHARK TANK

Research Translation Challenge

In a first for Townsville HHS, the Symposium included a new session in which staff were invited to pitch to a panel of judges their ideas for translational projects that could lead to improved health outcomes for individuals, communities, and the functioning of the health system.

While the event encouraged energy and entertainment, and the presenters certainly delivered this, the projects pitched were, without exception, innovations that had real potential to deliver positive outcomes for patients and the health service. Presenters' passion for their work and their patients was clearly evident.

Presentations included:

Team Members	Project
Dr Vinay Gangathimmaiah, Staff Specialist ED Dr Karen Carlisle, JCU Dr Rebecca Evans, JCU Dr Nishila Moodley, JCU Prof Tarun Sen Gupta, JCU	DE-implementation of Low Value Emergency tests (DELVE)
Kerrie Hinschen, Clinical Nurse Peter Westwood, Manager Research Kelvin Roberston, Director, Pharmacy Michael Wilhelm, Laboratory Manager, Pathology Louise Hayes, Executive Director Digital Health & Knowledge Scott Goddard, Director Facilities, Infrastructure & Support Services	Townsville Connect: Drone Medical Delivery in the North
Vanessa Evans, Clinical Nurse Eve Eynon, CN Consultant Catherine Hobson, Registered Nurse Terese Stockdale, Registered Nurse Briana Fidoe, Nurse Unit Manager Dr Susan Hewitt, Director Radiation Oncology Dr Timothy Squire, Radiation Oncologist Dr Daniel Xing, Radiation Oncologist Dr James Gallo, Radiation Oncologist Dr Jane Windsor, Radiation Oncologist Dr Marcus Hu, Radiation Oncologist Dr Amy Brown, Research Fellow	Implementing and evaluating a new skin-care product in the prevention of radiation-induced skin reaction for patients undergoing radiation therapy treatment

Assoc Prof Colin Banks, Staff Specialist ED Dr Vinay Gangathimmaiah, Staff Specialist ED Courtney West, Clinical Research Coordinator	Suspected Pulmonary Embolism Exclusion with D-dimers in the Emergency Department SPEED-ED
Ife Tokun, Podiatrist Trent Johnson, Director Podiatry Christine Hobbs, Senior Podiatrist Henry Wang, Senior Podiatrist Jacqueline Harbour, Senior Podiatrist Claire Anning, Sub-Acute Podiatrist Ian Anderson, Senior Podiatrist Teresa Matai, Podiatrist	Implementing Podiatrist-Led casting within THHS
Marina Bogiatzis, a/Nurse Researcher) Karen Gerrard, Clinical Research Coordinator Cate Nagle, Professor of Nursing and Midwifery Carol Shefford, Stomal Nurse Michellina Davies, Nursing Director- Surgical Services Rebecca Furlong, a/Nursing Director- Surgery, Cardiac, Critical Care Lauren Barrie, Clinical Nurse Consultant Surg 2 Erin Tomlin, a/Nurse Unit Manager Surg 2	Waking up with a stoma...Can Virtual Reality prepare patients for Actual Reality?
Corey Patterson, Speech Pathologist Narissa Gracia, Speech Pathologist Courtney Fisher, Speech Pathologist Amy Bogotto, Speech Pathologist	The delivery of better value care in outpatient head and neck cancer
Felicity Dick, Dietitian Katherine Lovell, Dietitian Samantha Scotney, Dietitian Corey Patterson, Speech Pathologist Rachel McMahon, Dietitian Nutritionist Lauren Matheson, Senior Allied Health Clinician	The HOPE Project – Helping Older Patients Eat

At the end of the day the judging panel (our sharks) awarded \$24,000 in prize money to six of the eight projects, with the remaining two projects taken by service group Executive Directors to progress implementation offline.



Associate Professor Colin Banks expounding the effectiveness (in song) of the D-dimer test in place of chest imaging for investigating suspected pulmonary embolism in patients presenting to the Emergency Department.



The HOPE team presenting their Shark Tank proposal.

Shark Tank Winners

Two presentations were recognised as joint winners of the Shark Tank challenge. Each winning project received a trophy and funding of \$8,000 to support the next stage of development of their projects.

In addition, the HOPE project team was awarded an 18-month tailored package of support and mentorship in research translation methods from our partner, the Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC).

Marina Bogiatzis

Waking up with
a stoma...
Can Virtual Reality
prepare patients
for Actual Reality?



Prof Cate Nagle, Marina Bogiatzis, Carol Shefford , and Karen Gerrard.

The HOPE Project

Helping Older
Patients Eat.



Tropical
Australian
Academic
Health
Centre



The HOPE team: Rachel McMahon, Samantha Scotney, Kate Lovell, Corey Patterson, Felicity Dick (and Lauren Matheson – not pictured).

2023 Research Excellence Awards

The 2023 Research Excellence Awards were presented by THHS Board members Debra Burden and Luke Guazzo at the Symposium dinner following the TropIQ Research Symposium.

Award recipients included:

Researcher of the Year Professor Jonathon Golledge



Debra Burden, Professor Jonathon Golledge, Luke Guazzo



Runner Up: Professor Yoga Kandasamy

Research Group of the Year Department of Pharmacy (led by Dr Stevie Perks and Dr Kelvin Robertson)



Debra Burden, Dr Stevie Perks, Dr Kelvin Robertson, Luke Guazzo

Rising Star Award

Dr Amy Brown



Debra Burden, Dr Amy Brown, Luke Guazzo



Runner Up: Nathan Engstrom

Research Support Award

Co-winners: Melanie Taylor and Dr Vengkat Vangaveti



Melanie Taylor, Dr Venkat Vangaveti

External Grants

THHS staff were investigators on a number of prestigious external grants awarded in 2023 including:

THHS Principal Investigator	Service Group	Funding Body	Grant/Project Title	Awarded (\$)
Andrew Mallett	Corporate	Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF)	Introducing Mitochondrial Donation into Australia: The mitoHOPE (Healthy Outcomes Pilot and Evaluation) Program	\$15,000,000
Vinay Gangathimmaiah	Medical	Emergency Medicine Foundation (EMF)	Research Capacity Building Grant for Townsville University Hospital	\$98,108
A/Prof Colin Banks	Medical	Emergency Medicine Foundation (EMF)	Suspected Pulmonary Embolism Exclusion with D-dimers in Emergency Departments (SPEED-ED)	\$169,095
Courtney West	Medical	Emergency Medicine Foundation (EMF)	Contactless vital sign monitoring to improve Patient Safety in Emergency Department Waiting Rooms: A prospective, single-site, pilot study	\$31,987
Dr Tao Daniel Xing	Medical	Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC)	Implementation of intracranial stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS) service for brain metastasis in North Queensland	\$50,000
Dr Eun Jin Sun	Medical	Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC)	Establishing a North Queensland Liver Tumour Library: New therapeutic approaches for advanced Hepatocellular Carcinoma	\$19,903
Prof Usman Malabu	Medical	Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC)	Culturally Responsive Diabetes Prevention (CDP) Program for Children of First Nations in North Queensland - A Pilot Study	\$50,000
Xin Wen	Surgical	Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC)	Investigating a novel potential therapy for abdominal aortic aneurysm	\$23,726
Prof Jonathan Golledge	Surgical	National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC)	AAA-MEDICAL: integrating synergistic expertise for better treatment of abdominal aortic aneurysm	\$5,000,000
Robert Norton	Medical	National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC)	Melioidosis on the move: Informing the public health response.	\$1,505,205
Ben Freedman	Mental Health	James Cook University	Facilitating the utilization of a Qualtrics Research panel for the survey phase of his research project	\$3,000

2023 Study Education Research Trust Account (SERTA) Grants

The SERTA grant scheme provides an important research funding stream supporting:

- THHS staff to advance research and develop research capacity and capability; and
- Discovery and translation through projects that have potential to lead to better health outcomes and/or service delivery improvements for the benefit of northern Queensland communities.

A total of \$1,465,860 was awarded across five grant categories in 2023.

Project Grants

Research Project Grants support the engagement of specialised external expertise, the acquisition of equipment, software, tests and other operating costs associated with the research team or study participants, and study dissemination.

Investigator	Grant/Project Title	Service Group	Awarded (\$)
Prof Jonathan Golledge	Developing personalised management of abdominal aortic aneurysm	Surgical Services Group	\$50,000
Dr Yogavijayan Kandasamy	Monitoring renal perfusion non-invasively in preterm neonates using near-infrared spectroscopy (NIRS)	Women's and Children's Services Group	\$29,999
Dr Clinton Gibbs	ELEVATE Study - Phase 2	Medical Services Group	\$45,040
Mrs Amy Brown	Patient preferences for radiation therapy treatment modality: understanding and incorporating preferences into shared decision making	Medical Services Group	\$21,905
Dr Stephen Whebell	Development of a research-oriented platform for collecting high frequency mechanical ventilator waveform data	Surgical Services Group	\$2,000
Dr Omer Shareef Mohamed Ali	Efficacy of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) for improving mental health and metabolic profile among diabetes patients: A randomized clinical trial	Corporate Services - Allied Health	\$50,000

Research Capacity Building Grants

Research Capacity Building Grants support access by groups of researchers to dedicated research or technical staff employed within THHS to support the delivery of a program of research. The scheme recognises that researchers often require access to colleagues with specific skills and dedicated time to support their research and to help build research capacity within their group or department.

Investigator	Grant/Project Title	Service Group	Awarded (\$)
Dr Vinay Gangathimmaiah	Townsville University Hospital Emergency Medicine Research Program	Medical Services Group	\$140,000
Mrs Amy Brown	Health Services Research Program at Townsville Cancer Centre	Medical Services Group	\$140,000
A/Prof Bobby John	Cardiac Research at Townsville University Hospital	Surgical Services Group	\$140,000
Dr Yogavijayan Kandasamy	The role of cot side camera in promoting breastfeeding and providing family centred care for surgical neonates	Women's and Children's Services Group	\$140,000
Prof Usman Malabu	Novel Devices for Effective Treatment and Prevention of Diabetic Foot Ulcers	Medical Services Group	\$140,000

Research Fellowship Grants

Research Fellowship Grants support THHS staff who are enrolled in research higher degree studies (e.g., PhD), or are within 5 years of completing a research higher degree. The Fellowship provides protected time for the recipient to undertake research, enabling them to continue their research career progression and support them in attaining their research qualification or securing external competitive research funding.

Investigator	Grant/Project Title	Service Group	Awarded (\$)
Dr Zulfiqer Otty	Implementation and evaluation of referral pathway for people with lung cancer in Townsville Hospital and Health Service	Medical Services Group	\$107,604
Mr Nathan Engstrom	fQRS for the prediction of ventricular arrhythmias in primary prevention heart failure patients in regional, rural and remote Australia	Surgical Services Group	\$140,000
Dr Sonja Brennan	Ultrasound measurement of the renal parenchyma for the evaluation and management of antenatal hydronephrosis in children	Surgical Services Group	\$44,133
Mrs Bronwyn Oar	Feasibility of Stereotactic Ablative Radiotherapy for Spinal malignancies on the MR-Linac	Medical Services Group	\$134,245

Research Seed Fellowship Grants

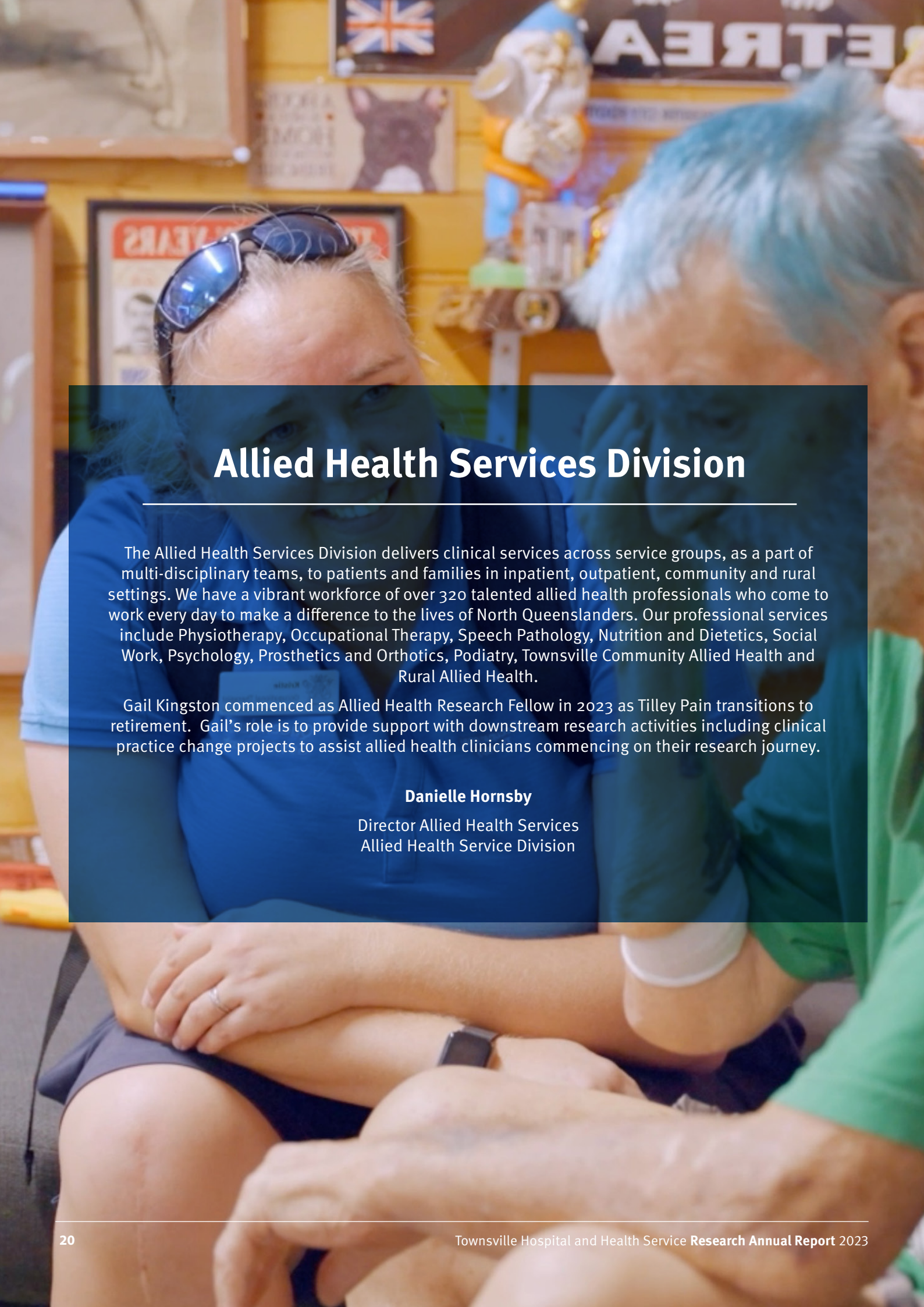
Research Seed Fellowships support early-career THHS researchers, including staff who have not yet enrolled in a research higher degree and have not held a competitive research grant as lead or chief investigator.

Investigator	Grant/Project Title	Service Group	Awarded (\$)
Miss Elizabeth Denyer	The Impact of MR Simulation in a Radiotherapy Department Using a MR Linac	Medical Services Group	\$66,434
Mr Aaron Woods	Implementation of an Opioid/Analgesic Stewardship Pharmacist to lead the development of a novel monitoring dashboard for patients in North Queensland	Corporate Services - Allied Health	\$70,000

Registrar Grants

Registrar grants are targeted specifically at medical registrars who are seeking to conduct research in order to meet specialist college training requirements.

Investigator	Grant/Project Title	Service Group	Awarded (\$)
Dr David Je	Management of Diabetic Ketoacidosis at the Townsville University Hospital: a seven-year (2015-2022) audit	Medical Services Group	\$4,500



Allied Health Services Division

The Allied Health Services Division delivers clinical services across service groups, as a part of multi-disciplinary teams, to patients and families in inpatient, outpatient, community and rural settings. We have a vibrant workforce of over 320 talented allied health professionals who come to work every day to make a difference to the lives of North Queenslanders. Our professional services include Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, Nutrition and Dietetics, Social Work, Psychology, Prosthetics and Orthotics, Podiatry, Townsville Community Allied Health and Rural Allied Health.

Gail Kingston commenced as Allied Health Research Fellow in 2023 as Tilley Pain transitions to retirement. Gail's role is to provide support with downstream research activities including clinical practice change projects to assist allied health clinicians commencing on their research journey.

Danielle Hornsby

Director Allied Health Services
Allied Health Service Division

Allied Health Services Division

Research Groups - Allied Health Service Division Allied Health / Health Practitioner Research Group

2023 saw the allied health / health practitioner research group continue to grow and deliver strongly.

Highlights included:

- Dr Amy Brown's PhD was conferred through James Cook University
- 10 research papers were published in peer reviewed journals
- 50% of allied health teams are research active
- >\$200,000 in successful grants
- 10 AH/HP staff are enrolled in PhD.

Teams of allied health professionals are conducting a variety of research projects to upskill clinical staff and grow expertise in various methods. Three such projects are listed below.

Allied health continues to evaluate their research capacity and capability at THHS. A recently completed evaluation demonstrates AHP research participation has increased over time and suggest policy makers within research active health services consider using participation to measure clinician research activity. The evaluation also demonstrated increased clinical productivity from research, a need to grow endemic research leaders in regional and rural health and upskilling in translation methods enabling health service delivery organisations to become learning health systems.

An evaluation of a communication document demonstrated small clinician-led research projects and QI activities are rapidly and sustainably implemented into practice. The impact of the translated project ranged from local practice change to international pharmaceutical industry change. The document (named Evidence Brief- EB) can act as a concise communication tool for research translation and if used systematically across the health service, with each EB representing a unit of change, could also act as a metric for research impact at the level of clinical practice change.

A scoping review was performed to identify allied health substitution models of care. The aim of the study is to provide international evidence on the mechanism allied health can employ to assist in the solution to the long wait lists for medical specialist outpatient appointments. Substitution models were found for nine allied health disciplines covering 10 medical specialties. Across the papers an average reduction in wait time was 34% suggesting a valuable role for allied health for this health service problem.

Key Researchers	PhD Candidates	Novice Research
Dr Tilley Pain, Principal Research Fellow	Nerida Firth, Pharmacist	Felicity Dick, Senior Dietitian Rachael McMahon, Senior Dietitian Luke Sherwood, Physiotherapist Mark Gooding, Physiotherapist Corey Patterson, Speech Pathologist Jessica Lester, Speech Pathologist Ben Phillips, Physiotherapist Amanda Lanarus, Physiotherapist Anneke Wake, Physiotherapist Ife Tokun, Podiatrist Rebecca Smith, Speech Pathologist Melinda Gusmeroli, Pharmacist Matthew Syrnyk, Pharmacist Luciana Theodoro de Freitas Barbara Brooks, Occ. Therapist Carolyn Brickhill, Physiotherapist
Dr Gail Kingston, Senior Research Fellow	Achamma Joseph, Senior Dietitian	
Dr Amy Brown, Oncology Research Fellow	Vidula Garde Director of Psychology	
Dr Kelvin Robertson, Director Pharmacy	Sophie Mokrzecki, Senior Pharmacist	
Dr Sonja Brennan, Sonographer	Nathan Engstrom Cardiac Scientist	
Dr Stephen Perks, Clinical Educator, Pharmacy	Alexandra Ryan, Senior Pharmacist	
Dr John Baines, Director Medical Physics	Louisa D'Arrietta THHS Librarian	
	Marcus Powers Medical Physicist	
	Bronwyn Oar, Radiation Therapist	
	Julie Goodall, Podiatrist	

Key Collaborators

- University of Technology Sydney
- Central Queensland University
- Queensland University of Technology
- James Cook University
- University of Southern Queensland
- University of Sydney
- University of Newcastle

Conference Presentations / Papers

Ife Tokun, TropiQ Townsville Research Symposium 2023: The use of non-removable knee-high offloading devices to treat plantar diabetes-related foot ulcers within a regional Australian health context

Ife Tokun, TropiQ Townsville Research Symposium 2023 – Shark Tank: Implementing Podiatrist-Led casting within THHS

Ife Tokun, Australian and New Zealand Society for Vascular Surgery (ANZSVS) 2023 Conference Poster Presenter

Ife Tokun, Diabetes Feet Australia Conference 2023: The use of non-removable knee-high offloading devices to treat plantar diabetes-related foot ulcers within a regional Australian health context.

Department of Physiotherapy Research Group

Key Researchers

- Damian Coe, Physiotherapist - Clinical Lead (Musculoskeletal)
- Anya Gordon, Physiotherapist – Child Development Services
- Bridee Neibling, Physiotherapist – Townsville University Hospital
- Ben Phillips, Physiotherapist – Townsville University Hospital
- Anneke Wake, Physiotherapist – Townsville University Hospital
- Sonja Schonfeldt, Physiotherapist – Townsville University Hospital

Collaborator	Project
Damian Coe (THHS) in collaboration with JCU, QUT, and Mustard Seed IT	Development of an ICT prototype for objective measurement of time spent by a clinical educator providing direct supervision to student physiotherapists.
Anya Gordon (THHS) supporting THHS Principal Investigator Dr Margo Bosanquet, and in collaboration with UQ and Queensland Children's Hospital and Health Service.	Early Screening and Allied Health Therapy Program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Infants at High Risk of Cerebral Palsy or Adverse Neurodevelopmental Outcomes.
Sonja Schonfeldt (THHS) in collaboration with a research team from the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.	"MOVIN in ICU" study - an observational study of Mobilisation On Vasopressors & INotropes in intensive care
Sonja Schonfeldt (THHS) in collaboration with researchers from Johns Hopkins University, Queensland Children's Hospital and Health Service and the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.	"PARK-PICU" (Prevalence of Acute Rehabilitation for Kids in the PICU) study – Multi-centre international point-prevalence study
Bridee Neibling (THHS) collaborating with researchers from the University of Melbourne, Edith Cowan University, UQ, Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, JCU, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Royal Adelaide Hospital	A phase IIa multicentre umbrella trial of integrated Upper limb and Language Impairment and Functional Training (UPLIFT)

Conference Presentations / Papers

Luke C, Mick-Ramsamy L, Benfer K, Ware R, Leishman S, Bosanquet M, Gordon A, Williams H, Taifalos C, Oakes E, Smith M, Bos A, Kentish M, McNamara L, Boyd R, (29 May-1 June 2024) Early screening tools predict neurodevelopmental outcomes at 12 months in a developmentally vulnerable First Nations infant cohort. Free paper accepted for 36th Annual Meeting of the European Academy of Childhood Disability. Bruges, Belgium.

Luke C, Benfer K, Ware R, Leishman S, Bosanquet M, Gordon A, Williams H, Taifalos C, Bos A, Boyd R, (29 May-1 June 2024) Motor optimality score-revised and hammersmith infant neurological examination predict high likelihood of autism at 12 months corrected age in a developmentally vulnerable infant cohort. Free paper accepted for 36th Annual Meeting of the European Academy of Childhood Disability. Bruges, Belgium.

Luke C, McNamara L, Gordon A, Carlton M, Finn C, Gibson S, Morris K, Shannon B, Oakes E, Thomas R, George J, Kentish M, Ware R, Boyd R, (29 May-1 June 2024) Implementation of a state-wide early detection network to predict neurodevelopmental outcomes in a developmentally vulnerable infant cohort. Free paper accepted for 36th Annual Meeting of the European Academy of Childhood Disability. Bruges, Belgium.

Luke C, McNamara L, Gordon A, Carlton M, Finn C, Gibson S, Morris K, Shannon B, Oakes E, Thomas R, George J, Kentish M, Ware R, Boyd R, (10-13 September 2023) Prediction of adverse Neurodevelopmental Outcomes in a state-wide Early Detection Network (QEDIN-CP). Free paper presented at 77th American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine conference. Chicago, Illinois.

Luke C, Mick-Ramsamy L, Bos A, Ware R, Gordon A, Taifalos C, Smith M, Williams H, Benfer K, Bosanquet M, Leishman S, Boyd R, (10-13 September 2023) Predictive accuracy of early screening in First Nations infants at risk of adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes in the LEAP-CP study. Scientific poster presented at 77th American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine conference. Chicago, Illinois.

Luke C, Bos A, Jackman M, Gordon A, Finn C, Baptist D, Ware R, Boyd R, (10-13 September 2023) Reproducibility of Prechtl's General Movements Assessment and the Motor Optimality Score – revised (MOS-R) in infants 'at risk' of adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes. Scientific poster presented at 77th American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine conference. Chicago, Illinois.

Luke C, Bos A, Ware R, Gordon A, Taifalos C, Williams H, Benfer K, Bosanquet M, Boyd RN, (24-27 May 2023) Relationship between infant motor repertoire at 3-5 months and early neurodevelopment on the hammersmith infant neurological examination in a cohort of 'at risk' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants. Free paper presented at 35th Annual Meeting of the European Academy of Childhood Disability. Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Luke C, McNamara L, Gordon A, Carlton M, Finn C, Gibson S, Morris K, Shannon B, Oakes E, Thomas R, George J, Kentish M, Ware R, Boyd RN, (24-27 May 2023) Implementation of the state-wide Queensland Early Detection Network (QEDIN-CP) – prediction of outcomes for infants at risk of adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes. Scientific poster presented at 35th Annual Meeting of the European Academy of Childhood Disability. Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Speech Pathology Department

A key achievement in 2023 was the commencement of a project funded by the Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer (OCAHO) Health Practitioner Research Scheme (HPRS titled "Evaluation of a shared care model to enable regional/rural patients with head and neck cancer to access local speech pathology care".

Speech pathology have collaborated as part of a variety of multi-site trials nation-wide, including the sustainable training pathways for paediatric videofluoscopic swallow studies with Children's Health Queensland and speech pathology services for first nations consumers following stroke or traumatic brain injury (TBI) with Griffith University.

The speech pathology department have also engaged in showcasing their research and quality improvement activity in a biennial symposium as part of Speech Pathology Week.

Key Researchers

- Corey Patterson
- Rebecca Smith
- Shannon Pizzey
- Morgan Appleby
- Jasmin Delle Baite

Collaborator	Project
Professor Elizabeth Ward With Corey Patterson	Evaluation of a shared care model to enable regional/rural patients with head and neck cancer to access local speech pathology care.
Professor Sharon Mickan With Rebecca Smith	Development and implementation of the Specialist Palliative Care in Aged Care (SPACE) Project across Queensland.
Queensland Children's Hospital With Shannon Pizzey	Investigating a sustainable training model to improve paediatric videofluoroscopic quality and safety.
Fran Cochrane, Griffith University With Morgan Appleby	Speech pathology services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults post-stroke or TBI: a qualitative case study exploration .
Katina Swan, Curtin University With Jasmin Delle Baite	Development and validation of a visuoperceptual measure for the analysis of videofluoroscopic swallow studies for adults with dysphagia.

Conference Presentations / Papers

Smith R et al. (2024) *Development and implementation of the Specialist Palliative Care in Aged Care (SPACE) Project across Queensland*. Australian Health Review doi:10.1071/AH23272



Feet First Program

Townsville HHS's nationally-recognised Feet First Program is improving patient-centred care by bringing the right care closer to home for a cohort of high-risk patients.

Advanced Podiatrist Trent Johnston and his team have been training Indigenous Health Workers and allied health assistants in regional and rural communities to enable them to carry out podiatry checks. These checks are helping to identify high-risk foot complications that could be a sign of more serious health conditions like diabetes or infection that may lead to hospital stay and potentially amputation if left undiagnosed.

This early-detection podiatry service is improving access to vital health services and is offering life-changing outcomes for First Nations Peoples. It has contributed to a significant reduction in amputations in the THHS region by more than 60 per cent since 2017.

Having a trusted resource available locally across regional, rural and remote health clinics reduces the barriers that might otherwise be faced by people who

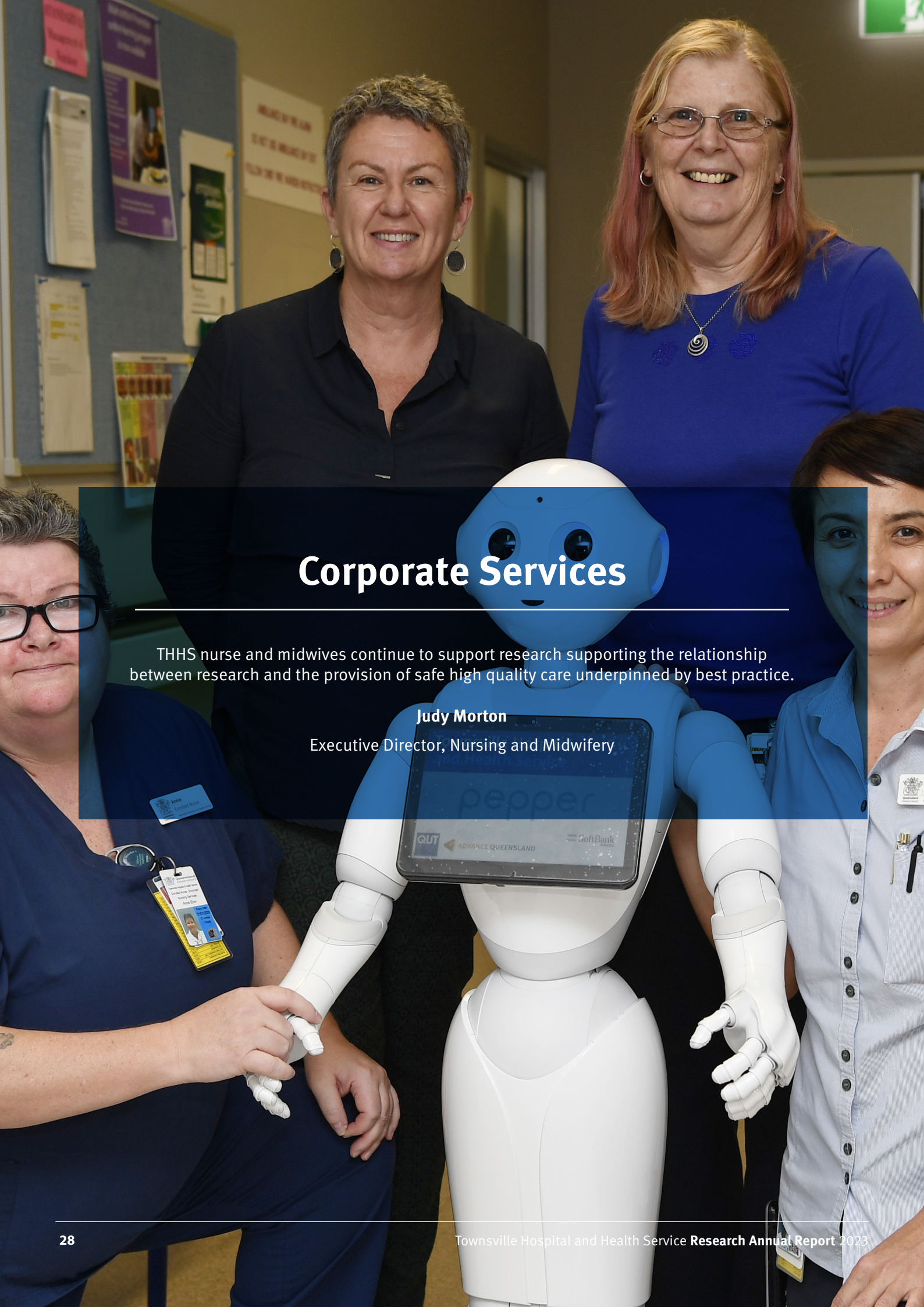
need to access podiatry services. Where the program identifies patients who require more advanced podiatry services, timely action can be taken including either referring the patient to central THHS podiatry services or increasing the level of service provided to patients within their communities through telehealth consults.

Importantly, by working with communities to build on their strengths, and through increasing the capacity of the local health workforce, this program is delivering long-term and sustainable improvements to podiatry services and ensuring that the services offered are sensitive and responsive to the communities' needs.

The Feet First Program was recognised in 2022 for its leadership in research and education, receiving the National Association of Diabetes Centres (NADC) Interdisciplinary Diabetes High Risk Foot Service (iHRFS) Centre of Excellence Accreditation.

New research projects approved in 2023 - Allied Health Service Division

Principal Investigators	Department	Study Title
Professor Usman Malabu	Diabetes & Endocrinology Vascular Neurology Podiatry	PREVENT-DFU Prevention of Recurrence of Diabetic Foot Ulcer
Dr Tilley Pain	Allied Health Research	Health Practice Evidence Brief: Development and pilot for use as a research translation metric
Dr Paul Chapman	Rehabilitation Physiotherapy Speech Pathology Occupational Therapy Neurology	A phase IIa multicentre umbrella trial of integrated UPPER limb and Language Impairment and Functional Training (UPLIFT)
Miss Aleysha Martin	Corporate - Allied Health	External acceptability, appropriateness, and feasibility of implementing the Transdisciplinary Initial Neurological Screening Assessment (TINSA)
Mr Damian Coe	Physiotherapy	Development of an ICT prototype for objective measurement of time spent by a clinical educator providing direct supervision to student physiotherapists
Mr Sebastian Kang Wen Zhi	Oncology Dietetics (Supporting)	Evaluating taste and food changes following systemic treatment-related taste side effects
Mr Sebastian Kang Wen Zhi	Speech Pathology	Investigating a sustainable training model to improve paediatric videofluoroscopic swallow study (VFSS) quality and safety
Mrs Sonya Schonfeldt-Roy	Physiotherapy Intensive Care Unit	MOVIN in ICU An observational study of Mobilisation On Vasopressors & Inotropes in intensive care



Corporate Services

THHS nurse and midwives continue to support research supporting the relationship between research and the provision of safe high quality care underpinned by best practice.

Judy Morton

Executive Director, Nursing and Midwifery

Corporate Services

Research Groups – Corporate Services

Nursing and Midwifery Research Group (NMRG)

2023 saw the completion of the "Immersive virtual reality in a northern Queensland haemodialysis unit: A cross-over randomised controlled feasibility trial", undertaken with the assistance of a Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC) Seed Funding Grant. To the best of our knowledge, this RCT was the first in the world to explore the feasibility of an immersive virtual reality (VR) experience for patients undergoing haemodialysis. The study explored the effect of immersive VR on patients' adherence to haemodialysis regimens and on their quality of life.

The participating patients overall enjoyed the opportunity to use the VR headsets to interact with three scenarios representative of North Queensland landscapes developed for the study. Some patients have expressed interest in continuing to use the headsets now that the research is completed, having liked the distraction from the clinical setting provided by the scenarios. The study findings support the use of VR for people undergoing haemodialysis treatment. It is anticipated that the study will lead to future studies with larger sample sizes, involving more facilities and for longer intervention duration times.

Undertaking such a study in busy clinical settings is an achievement. It could not have progressed without the active involvement and support from many nurses in the Renal Units, in addition to members of the study team. The multidisciplinary research team, led by Dr Wendy Smyth OAM, thanks everyone who helped us push through the challenges posed by this study.

Other highlights for the NMRG in 2023 included:

- Marina Bogiatzis was awarded the Best Oral Presentation at the 2023 TropiQ Symposium: Smyth, W., Bogiatzis, M., Irving, L., Morton, J., Holland, S., & Nagle, C. (2023, October 17). Electronic medical records - no magic bullet. 2023 TropiQ Townsville Research Symposium, Townsville University Hospital.
- Marina Bogiatzis was joint-winner of the Shark Tank Challenge as the 2023 TropiQ Townsville Research Symposium, as the lead for her pitch: Waking up with a stoma...Can virtual reality prepare patients for actual reality?
- Six publications by members of the team
- Six manuscripts under review by different journals.

Key Researchers

- Professor Cate Nagle, Professor of Nursing and Midwifery
- Dr Wendy Smyth OAM, Nurse Researcher
- Ms Mariann Hadland, Nurse/Midwife Researcher
- Mrs Marina Bogiatzis, Acting Nurse Researcher, Clinical Nurse - Research
- Mrs Karen Gerrard, Research Assistant (Nursing and Midwifery)

Key Collaborators

- Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC)
- JCU Townsville and Cairns
- Sunshine Coast HHS
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service
- Royal Melbourne Hospital
- University of Technology Sydney
- Deakin University, Melbourne

Conference Presentations / Papers

Holland, S., Lawrence, A., Smyth, W., & Nagle, C. (2023, July 29-30). Togs on or togs off? Perineal outcomes for women who birth in water compared to women who do not. [Oral presentation]. Australian Endorsed Midwives Conference, Townsville.

Marina Bogiatzis presented the paper by Smyth, W., Bogiatzis, M., Irving, L., Morton, J., Holland, S., & Nagle, C. (2023, October 17). Electronic medical records - no magic bullet. 2023 TropiQ Townsville Research Symposium, Townsville University Hospital.

Gerrard, K., Shepherd, J., Sendev, R., Gangathimmaiah, V., & Nagle, C. (2023, October 17). How can the wellness needs of emergency clinicians be met in a diverse, complex and dynamic environment? [Poster presentation] 2023 TropiQ Research Symposium, Townsville University Hospital.

Smyth, W., McArdle, J., Heinrich, G., Manickam, V., Lee, I., Holdsworth, J., Omonaiye, O., & Nagle, C. (2023, 17 October). VR in dialysis. Unravelling the possibilities: A cross-over randomised controlled feasibility trial on immersive virtual reality. [Poster presentation]. 2023 TropiQ Townsville Research Symposium, Townsville University Hospital.

Kearney, L., Craswell, A., Cole, R., Hadland, M., Smyth, W., & Nagle, C. (2023, 17 October). Woman-centred care and integrated electronic medical records within Australian maternity settings [Poster presentation]. 2023 TropiQ Townsville Research Symposium, Townsville University Hospital.





Tailored pregnancy information delivered through touch of a screen

Over the past 15 years, Professor Cate Nagle has been pioneering a pregnancy decision making tool for women and leading it through each new iteration as technology has changed.

The decision aid, named YourChoice, allows women to digest information about pregnancy and childbirth.

Initially created as a paper-based document as part of Cate's PhD project in 2008, YourChoice has been transformed into a free phone application.

Cate said turning the aid into a phone app ensured as many women as possible had access. "The best thing about having this resource available as a phone application is that we know most women, regardless of their social demographic, have access to a phone," she said.

"YourChoice allows women to filter through information in their own time and draw on the information to help them decide which tests and scans they may need."

Cate said the app allowed women to input their gestation dates and find out what tests or scans were still available to them during that point of their pregnancy. "These first pregnancy visits with the GP go very quickly, especially at appointments where the scans and tests are available and completed," she said.

"YourChoice allows women to search for information that is relevant to them during each stage of their pregnancy so they can choose what tests and scans they would like to have done.

"Ideally, we would like women thinking about having children to also take up using the app because they have the most time to consider all the decisions."

Funding for the app was secured thanks to JCU and the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

You can access the YourChoice app [here](#).

Townsville Institute of Health Research and Innovation (TIHRI)

Cindy Sealey completed a Graduate Certificate in Research Methods with JCU which included the project: "Are We Doing What We Say We Are?" People-Centred Health Care in a Regional Tertiary Hospital" exploring staff perceptions of person-centred health care.

New research projects approved in 2023 – Corporate Services

Principal Investigators	Department	Study Title
Associate Professor Clair Sullivan	Various	Digital Early Warning Tools Upgrade System Review (DEWT US)
Dr Torres Woolley	Medical Education & Workforce	Queensland Junior Doctors Project: Recruitment & Retention
Ms Kaye Hewson (ORI)	Various	Evaluation of the Australian Teletrial Program - Stage 2



Medical Service Group

2023 saw a significant increase in the number of research projects within the Medical Services Group. While the teams managed significantly increase clinical workloads, the commitment from individuals to their research has been noticed and supported by their teams. We are seeing increased success with researchers accessing grants especially for backfill to enable them to spend quarantined time on their projects.

The Medical Service Group continues to encourage clinicians to develop and participate in research projects from simple to more complex projects.

The cancer clinical trial unit has continued to grow and increase participation in sponsored trials with continued increase in revenue and growth in the trials unit. The Medical Service Group clinical trials team has previously supported the non-cancer trials with both staffing and operational support and are very pleased that they have now become their own unit who are making significant gains in their own right.

The teams continue to collaborate as needed.

Aniko Cooper

Service Group Director
Medical Service Group

Medical Service Group

Research Groups - Medical Service Group

Translational Research in Endocrinology and Diabetes (TREAD)

Key Researchers

- Prof Usman Malabu, Clinical Director of Endocrinology -Chief Investigator
- Prof Kunwarjit Sangla, Medical Director Medical Service Group -Principal Investigator
- A/Prof Yong Mong Tan, Senior Endocrine Staff Specialist -Investigator
- A/Prof Vasant Shenoy, Senior Endocrine Staff Specialist -Investigator
- Dr Parul Nigam, Senior Endocrine Staff Specialist -Investigator
- Dr Divya Srivastava, Senior Endocrine Staff Specialist -Investigator
- Dr Swetha Rangaswamaiah, Endocrine Staff Specialist -Investigator
- Dr Venkat Vangaveti, Senior Research Officer -Investigator
- Dr Erik Biros, Clinical Research Coordinator -Investigator
- Mrs Julie Goodall, Clinical Research Coordinator (Podiatry)
- Mrs Jacqueline Bulbrook, Clinical Research Coordinator (Nursing)
- Mrs Gaynor Garstone, Clinical Research Coordinator (Nursing)
- Mrs Casey Thompson, Nurse Practitioner -Associate Investigator
- Mrs Ursula Togiallua, Nurse Practitioner -Associate Investigator
- Mrs Lynn Corkill, Nurse Practitioner -Associate Investigator
- Dr Rachel Hovelroud Advanced Endocrine Registrar
- Dr Esha Kathpal Advanced Endocrine Registrar
- Dr Liyan Wang Advanced Endocrine Registrar
- Ms Angela Hubert NUM Diabetes and Endocrine Centre
- Mrs Sandra Crook NP Diabetes
- Ms Cheryl Wade Clinical Nurse - Credentialed Diabetes Educator
- Mr Trent Johnston Advanced Podiatrist Professional Lead
- Christine Hobbs Senior Podiatrist

Key Collaborators

- Prof Yogesan Kanagasingam -University of Notre Dame e-Health Research Centre
- A/Prof Haleagrahara Nagaraja -James Cook University
- Prof Jennifer Tyndall -American University of Nigeria
- Prof John D. Piette, Director Centre for Managing Chronic Disease, University of Michigan, USA
- Prof Sabe Sabesan Telehealth and Teletrials TUH
- Prof Yoga Kandasamy Senior Staff Specialist Neonatology TUH
- Prof Jonathan Golledge Queensland Research Centre for Peripheral Vascular Disease
- Prof Cate Nagle Professor of Nursing JCU
- Prof Anoop Misra Centre of Excellence for Diabetes and Endocrinology India
- Prof Teatulohi (Lohi) Matainaho Chair Science and Technology PNG
- Prof Saad Ahmed Professor of Histopathology FMC Abuja Nigeria
- Prof Zoltan Sarnyai Neuroscientist and Metabolic Disorders JCU
- Prof Ickjai (Jai) Lee Head of IT College of Engineering JCU -AI Diabetes Research
- A/Prof Robert Norton Director of Microbiology TUH
- A/Prof Carlo Longhitano Staff Specialist Psychiatry/Metabolism TUH/JCU
- A/Prof Wendy Li College of Healthcare Sciences JCU
- Dr Victoria White Staff Specialist Vascular Surgery TUH
- Dr Venkat Vangaveti -JCU Clinical Research and Statistics
- Dr Euijoon (Osmond) Ahn College of Engineering JCU -AI Diabetes Research
- Dr Harshal Deshmukh Endocrine Staff Specialist, Mackay Base Hospital
- Dr Erin Waters Director of Medical Services, TAIHS

Townsville University Hospital Emergency Medicine Research Program

The TUH-EMRP has been actively building its research activity and growing the capacity of its team. The current TUH-EMRP research profile includes

- 3 Higher Degree by Research Degree candidates (Dr Denise Blake, Dr Clinton Gibbs and Dr Vinay Gangathimmaiah);
- 7 multisite projects underway including TUH-led studies (SPEED-ED, EDPA), externally led studies (FEISTY 2 RCT, ARISE Fluids RCT, PROMPT Bolus RCT, FEBCON-ED RCT, EMODES)

Key Researchers

The TUH-EPMP included 22 research active emergency clinicians in 2023:

- Vinay Gangathimmaiah, Emergency Physician , Director of Emergency Medicine Research
- Courtney West, Emergency Medicine Research Manager/Principal Investigator
- Rebecca Hancock, Clinical Research Coordinator
- Ashleigh Munns, Clinical Research Coordinator
- Brittney Finlayson, Clinical Research Coordinator
- Elizabeth Michael, Clinical Research Coordinator
- Kate Hooper, Principal Investigator/ Emergency Physician
- Tanya Mellett, Principal Investigator/ Emergency Physician
- Emma Wawn
Principal Investigator/ Emergency Physician
- Emma Whyte
Principal Investigator/ Emergency Physician
- Olwen Gilbert
Principal Investigator/ Emergency Physician
- Lucy Dunstan
Principal Investigator/ Emergency Physician
- Madelaine Tarrant
Principal Investigator/ Emergency Physician
- Colin Banks
Principal Investigator/ Emergency Physician
- Graeme Maw
Principal Investigator/ Emergency Physician
- Clinton Gibbs
Principal Investigator/ Emergency Physician
- Heidi Shallow
Associate Investigator/ Emergency Registrar
- Melissah Caughley
Principal Investigator/Emergency Registrar
- Assoc/Prof Luke Lawton
Senior Staff Specialist
- Dr Denise Blake
Principal Investigator , Emergency Physician
- Dr Jane Dutson
Associate Investigator , Emergency Physician
- Mr Travis Cole
Nurse Educator

Key Collaborators

Queensland health facilities:

- Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital
- Princess Alexandra Hospital
- Gold Coast University Hospital
- Sunshine Coast University Hospital
- Toowoomba Hospital
- Cairns Hospital
- Mackay Hospital

Universities:

- James Cook University
- University of Queensland
- Queensland University of Technology
- Griffith University
- University of South Australia

Interstate health facilities:

- University Hospital Geelong
- Royal Children's Hospital
- Monash Health

Pre-hospital and retrieval service providers:

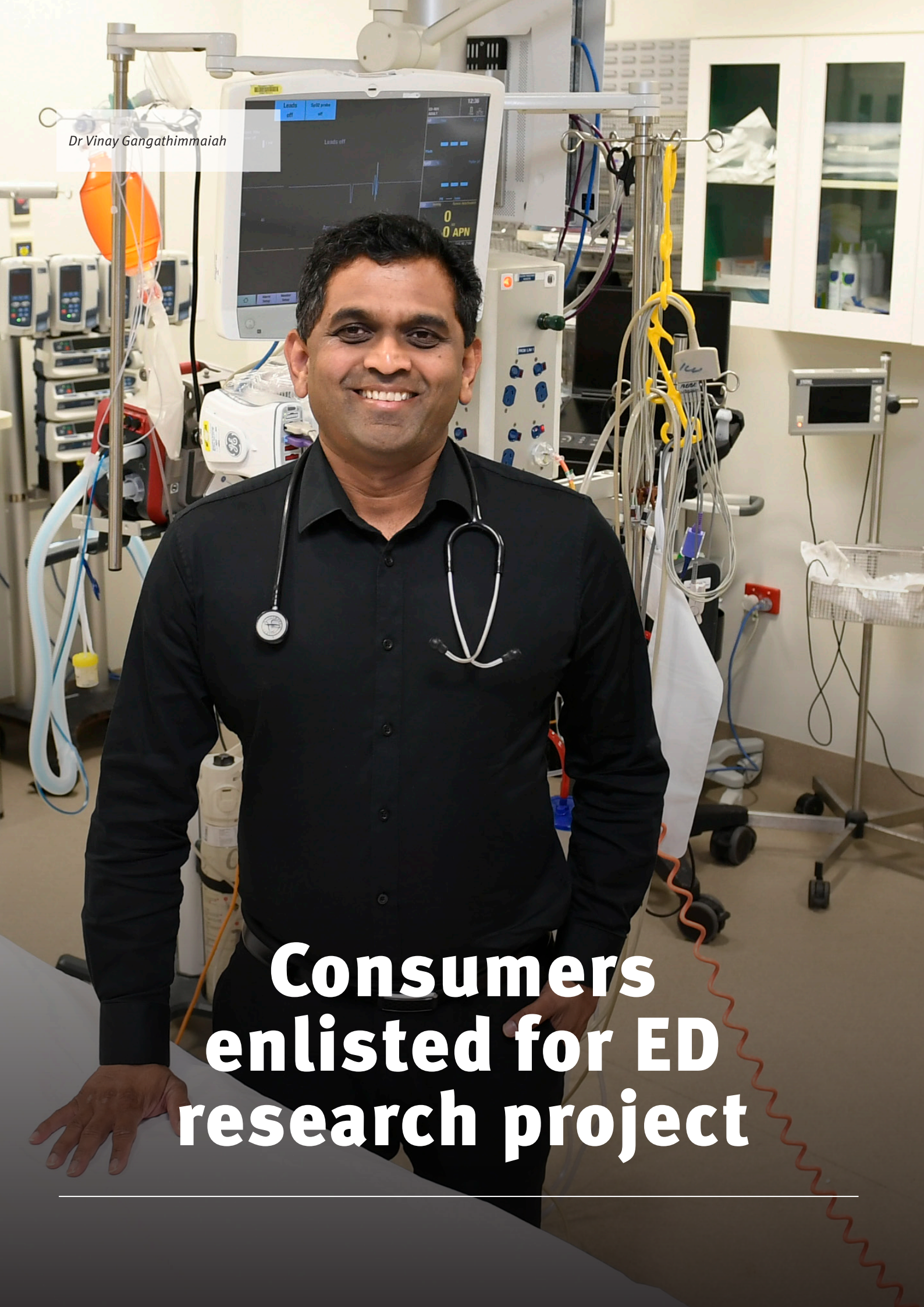
- Retrieval Services Queensland
- LifeFlight Australia
- Royal Flying Doctor Service



EMERGENCY

EMERGENCY

← EMERGENCY
Ambulance only 1st
Main Road
Health Centre
First Care
Nursing Care Centre

A photograph of Dr. Vinay Gangathimmaiah, a man with dark hair and a mustache, smiling at the camera. He is wearing a black long-sleeved button-down shirt and has a stethoscope around his neck. He is standing in a hospital room, with his right hand resting on a grey surface in the foreground. The background is filled with medical equipment, including a large monitor displaying a waveform, various IV stands with bags and tubing, and other medical devices. The room has white walls and cabinets.

Dr Vinay Gangathimmaiah

**Consumers
enlisted for ED
research project**

Townsville University Hospital emergency medicine specialist Dr Vinay Gangathimmaiah has enlisted the help of two consumers in his mission to reduce unnecessary diagnostic tests in the emergency department, ensuring the rights tests are done at the right time.

Consumers Sharon Oakley and Karen Cupitt will work with Vinay over two years as collaborators to help design a research project which looks at ways to change patient and clinician behaviour when it comes to testing.

Vinay said his research, which is part of his PhD studies at James Cook University, would explore how to reduce the time and money spent on these tests and identify how to provide better care and improve patient outcomes.

“Research from across the globe shows significant wastage in health care resources with up to one third of all care considered ‘low-value’,” he said. “Low-value care is ineffective and inefficient care that does not benefit patients. Not every patient needs tests and not every patient who needs tests needs the same ones. “This is not about doing fewer tests; it’s about doing the right tests at the right time on the right patient.”

Vinay said the idea that more was not always better was particularly important in an ED setting where effectiveness and efficiency were critical. The Townsville University Hospital ED provides care to about 300 patients every day and this number continues to grow. “I started looking into this three years ago and found that sometimes up to 50 per cent of diagnostic tests we do in the ED were low-value,” he said. “This got me thinking about how we could replace low-value tests with high-value care which improves patient outcomes.” “A CT head scan for example can add at least three hours to a patient

journey. If the test is needed and benefits the patient, this time is not wasted. However, if the test is not needed, it exposes patients to harmful radiation and prolongs ED wait times.”

Sharon and Karen will work alongside Vinay, bringing their patient and community perspectives to the research project. Vinay said Sharon and Karen would play a pivotal role as collaborators whose names would feature alongside his on the final published research paper. “There is a growing realisation that consumer and community involvement is key to ensure research is focused on what patients want and need,” he said.

“Consumer engagement is sometimes seen as a box-ticking exercise, but genuine engagement makes research very meaningful. “It was therefore important for me to engage with the community and clinicians impacted by the research.”

Townsville Community Advisory Network (TCAN) member Sharon is a current Townsville Cancer Centre patient and is undergoing treatment for breast cancer. Sharon said she was excited to work with Vinay to drive positive change for patients. “It is important for health workers and researchers to engage with community members, like me, because we are humans not just patient identification numbers,” she said.

A middle-aged man with a grey beard and balding head, wearing dark blue V-neck scrubs, stands in a hospital emergency department. His scrubs have a logo on the left chest that reads "EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT THE TOWNSVILLE HOSPITAL EMERGENCY PHYSICIAN". He has his hands clasped in front of him. The background is a blurred hospital setting with blue curtains, patterned wall panels, and medical equipment. A blurred figure of another person is visible in the background to the right.

Dr Raj Sehdev

Consumers enlisted for ED research project

Dr Raj Sehdev surveys Townsville University Hospital's busy emergency department (ED) as he starts his shift. One patient can't breathe and is exhibiting signs of a heart attack.

In the next bed, paramedics have brought in a patient who is ghostly pale and has had a dangerous drop in blood pressure due to large gastro-intestinal bleed.

Adjacent, a doctor and nurse are speaking to a distraught relative who squeezes the hand of their loved one, the patient attached to monitoring equipment and multiple intravenous lines. A voice crackles over the overhead speaker, summoning the resuscitation team to respond urgently to the arrival of a traumatic car crash victim.

Shortly after, another alert calls for clinical staff and security personnel to attend to a patient who is severely agitated and threatening staff with violence.

Hundreds of others will be assessed and triaged over the course of 24 hours.

This chaotic scene could be any day of the year for the emergency staff who respond to the community's critical and life-threatening medical emergencies all day, every day.

In 2023, TUH's emergency department managed 99,748 presentations with an average of 273 per day.

While caring for his patients, Raj is also constantly thinking about the welfare of the people who dedicate their lives to looking after the wellbeing of others.

Raj is a Regional Wellbeing Champion for the Australasian College of Emergency Medicine, the chair of the Queensland Emergency Department Strategic Advisory Panel Workforce and Wellbeing Group, and founder of Full Tank, Townsville University Hospital's local ED wellbeing group.

Raj said emergency departments were challenging and demanding work environments which could quickly become stressful for staff.

“The impact of constantly working in a high-stress environment can have a negative effect on the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of staff working in the ED,” he said.

“If left unchecked, the stress can lead to burn-out, difficulty with recruitment and retention rates, and decreased morale and job satisfaction.

“The nature of emergency medicine is fast-paced, and high stakes – staff are caring for people who are, in many cases, having the worst day of their life. “If staff do not get the chance to step back and decompress, they can normalise these very traumatic experiences which comes at a large cost to themselves and the health system.

“It's so incredibly important we take care of our people and prioritise their wellbeing so they can continue to be there for the community.”

Raj is now leading research into staff wellbeing within regional emergency departments thanks to funding from the Emergency Medicine Foundation which supports innovative Australian research which improves the way people are cared for in a medical emergency.

The project is a collaboration between Townsville University Hospital and James Cook University and will be looking to identify effective and evidence-based strategies which promote wellness and can be implemented in the emergency department.

Raj said the project aims to qualitatively assess ED staff perceptions of workplace wellbeing activities and their views on any measures implemented to improve engagement especially in the context of chronic workplace stress.

“There has been a buzz about the terms ‘workplace wellbeing’ and ‘burnout’ recently, not just in medicine but in other professions too,” he said.

Townsville Hospital and Health Service chief medical officer Dr Niall Small said the wellbeing of staff was an important aspect of providing specialist emergency care. “One of the easiest ways we can provide the best care for our patients is by caring for our staff,” he said.

Pharmacy Department Research Group

Two TUH pharmacy department PhD candidates are progressing through candidacy well with a few publications of work. Several other larger projects are ongoing within the department. These include a surgical pre-admission clinic research piece which is being wound up, and a large, partnered prescribing project which is ongoing. The partnered prescribing project has been rolled out to 9 wards with 16 pharmacists trained for the service.

In July 2023 TUH pharmacy department also held a Regional/Rural/Remote research education day to build research culture and support and develop networks beyond our HHS. This was coordinated by Dr Stevie Perks and Cassie Lanskey from TUH. It was a big success with 20 pharmacist and assistants from 7 different health services across the state attending.

Transition of care statewide research group

THHS staff were also involved in the Transition of Care Pharmacy Project (ToCPP) which wound up the interventional phase of research in December 2023. The ToCPP was piloted between March 2021 and December 2023 in selected patient services at three hospital facilities: Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital; Princess Alexandra Hospital; and Townsville University Hospital.

The project aimed to improve communication and patient handover across healthcare settings to reduce the risks associated with the transition of care for patients who are moving between physical locations or health professionals (e.g., when a patient is discharged from a hospital facility to return to the services delivered by their primary healthcare providers).

Transitions between hospital and primary healthcare settings are associated with an increased risk to patient safety. Changes to medication during a hospital admission are common and it is estimated that over 90% of patients have at least one medication-related problem upon discharge.

Such problems include:

- Inaccurate or incomplete transfer of medicines information
- Missing therapy
- Inappropriate medicines
- Inappropriate dose
- Adverse effects

Two pilot models of care were developed including a model of care for patients discharging to home and a model of care for patients discharging to residential aged care facilities.

The project is now in the completion/write-up phase. It is hoped that the benefits demonstrated from this study will translate into service changes implemented statewide.

Colleagues involved in the project included:

Karen Bettenay, BPharm, MSc (ClinPharm), PhD. Project Officer. Pharmacy Department, RBWH

Jane Lewis, B.Pharm, MClinPharm, GCertPharmPrac, GradCertPallCare. Pilot site Pharmacist, Pharmacy Department, TUH

Julie Ball, CertIV Hospital/Health Services Pharmacy Support, Dip. Teaching, Pilot site Pharmacy Assistant, Pharmacy Department, TUH

Key Researchers

- Cassie Lanskey, Pharmacist, Townsville Hospital Clinical Support Service
- Emma Dal Alba, Senior Pharmacist – Gerontology and Rehabilitation, Sub Acute Care Unit
- Matthew Syrnyk, Pharmacist, Townsville University Hospital
- Alex Ryan, Pharmacist, Townsville University Hospital
- Sophie Mokrzecki, Senior Pharmacist, Townsville University Hospital
- Dr Stevie Perks, Pharmacist – Clinical Educator, Townsville Hospital and Health Service
- Dr Kelvin Robertson, Director Pharmacy, Townsville Hospital and Health Service
- Melinda Guzmeroli, Pharmacist, Townsville University Hospital
- Luke Calleja (JCU, Intern Pharmacist, Townsville University Hospital)
- Madeleine Lowe, Senior Pharmacist Indigenous Cardiac Outreach Services (ICOS)
- Anthony Ma, Resident Pharmacist, Townsville Hospital Pharmacy.
- Conference Presentations / Papers
- SHPA Medicines Management 2023: Five posters and 1 presentation at the national conference. Won the SHPA Resident of the year award. This research piece is currently being written up for publication.
- International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare – 2023: won best innovation award. This research piece is currently being written up for publication.

Dr Stevie Perks



Research key to care at home in tropics

Living in the north means beautiful weather and lots of sunshine, but the heat also brings with it some unique challenges when it comes to the stability of certain medications.

Townsville University Hospital clinical educator pharmacist Dr Stevie Perks has been conducting region-specific research to improve the way we deliver medicines at home through programs like Hospital in the Home (HITH) - specifically the 24-hour infusion pumps used to deliver intravenous antibiotics for patients who no longer need to be in hospital.

“We linked in with Cairns and Darwin to monitor patients wearing these pumps and checking the temperatures they got to, which regularly exceeded 34 degrees Celsius,” he said.

“From there we looked at the stability of the drugs and found that certain medications weren’t really stable at those higher temperatures.

Thanks to the results of this research, changes have been made to the way patients being cared for from home are prescribed medications to ensure the medicines perform as efficiently as possible.

Stevie said cutting edge research like this was important because health care in the north was very different from other regions.

“We need to develop research that supports our methods of caring for our patients,” he said.

“We have a catchment of about 1,500 kilometres in any direction and we need to be able to send our patients back to their home communities where they can be best supported.”

Townsville HHS community health nursing director Mary Leech, who leads the HITH program, said HITH was a safe and viable treatment pathway that supported the recovery of many patients in the comfort of their own home. “If a patient is in hospital

and is self-caring they may only require a healthcare professional to administer an IV antibiotic,” Mary said. “If this is the case, then HITH could be a suitable treatment option for them.

Mary said the program had high patient satisfaction rates as many patients preferred to recover at home. “As we look to the future of healthcare in our region, care at home will play a key role in easing pressure on our already very busy hospitals,” she said. “If you look at the capacity challenges we have in the hospital, every bed day saved, every half day saved is a bonus.

“Between July and August this year, using HITH as a hospital substitution freed up almost 15 beds per day which were then used to treat some of our sickest community members requiring urgent inpatient care. “We encourage patients to ask their care team if they need to stay in hospital for treatment or if they can be at home because if they live within a 50km radius from the hospital, are self-caring and are contactable by phone then they are probably suitable.”



Improving venous thromboembolism prophylaxis – the clot thickens

In what is believed to be an Australian-first, a team of THHS staff have created an integrated whole-of-hospital dashboard to report on inpatient venous thromboembolism prophylaxis (VTEp) prescribing in real time and have used this dashboard as a clinical ‘change of practice’ tool with outstanding results.

Venous thromboembolism (VTE) is a condition that occurs when a blood clot forms in a vein. The risk of developing VTE is highest after major surgery, injury, or during periods of infection and inflammation. If undiagnosed and without appropriate preventative treatment, VTE can restrict or block blood flow and oxygen, damaging the body’s tissue or organs. In especially serious cases these clots can be fatal.

Despite the capacity of VTEp to be recorded in the electronic medical record (ieMR), analysis found that prescribing practices at TUH were not always being followed to the same expected high standard leaving some patients at risk.

Developed and refined over a period of 1 year, the dashboard shows all VTEp prescribing, pharmacological and non-pharmacological (mechanical), and allows for data to be viewed at the whole-of-hospital level or drilled down to individual wards, clinical teams and individual patients.

Results from the dashboard have enabled medical and pharmacy leads to follow up with individual clinicians to advise on and recommend VTEp prescribing for

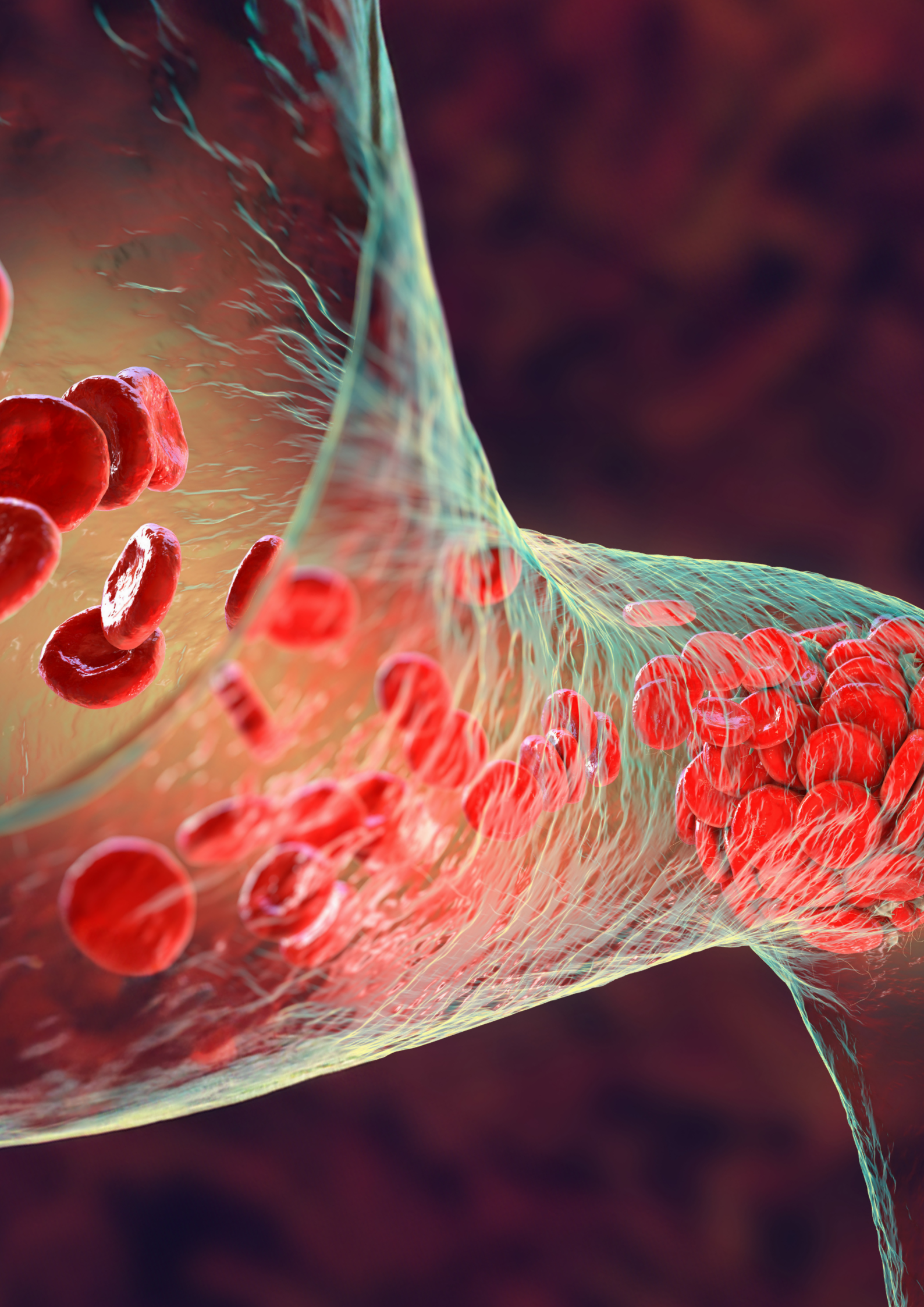
specific patients, and have triggered discussions with clinical teams, education of junior medical officers, and targeted nurse-initiated mechanical prophylaxis charting.

Since the introduction of the dashboard, the rates of documented VTEp have increased from 57% to 86% and there has been a decrease in hospital acquired VTE complications reported, with the rates falling since early 2023, evidencing improved patient safety and success of the intervention.

The project was led by Prof Kunwarjit Sangla who was supported by Clinical Pharmacy Educator Dr Stevie Perks, Pharmacy residents Hayley Rosadi and Sheridan Smith, Clinical Audit Unit Nurse Manager Margaret Naughtin, Jody Gallagher and Dave Hunter from the THHS ieMR team, and Executive Director Corporate Governance, Marina Daly.

The team presented the project at the International Forum on Safety and Quality in Healthcare in Melbourne in October 2023, winning both the best poster in the innovation category (nominated by faculty), and best oral presentation for the conference (nominated by delegates) for Prof Sangla’s presentation.

As a result of the strong interest in this project, the team has been invited to the 2024 Forum in Brisbane with a designated presentation slot allocated to allow the team to expand in more detail on the project, its implementation and its subsequent successes.



TUH Renal Department Research Group

In 2023 Prof Mallett had 24 papers accepted and the THHS renal research team has continued to develop with several new successful grant outcomes achieved. New research areas are emerging, especially participation in clinical trials.

Key Researchers

- Prof Andrew Mallett
- Dr George Kan
- Dr Vikas Srivistava
- David McIntyre

Key Collaborators

- KidGen Collaboration
- Australian Genomics, ClinGen
- KDIGO
- Princess Alexandra Hospital, Urology
- Australasian Kidney Trials Network
- Westmead Hospital Nephrology/WIMR
- Garvan Institute
- University of Newcastle (UK)
- Monash University/ASPREE Consortium

Conference Presentations / Papers

- 2023 American Society of Nephrology, Kidney Week
- 2023 Korean Society of Nephrology, Annual Scientific Meeting
- 2023 Transplant Society of Australia and New Zealand, Annual Scientific Meeting

Townsville Cancer Centre Research

Research continues to expand at Townsville Cancer Centre, with both sponsored/collaborative clinical trials and investigator-led research across Haematology, Medical Oncology, Radiation Oncology and Palliative Care. There are currently over 30 investigator-led studies, including 5 higher degree candidates amongst our clinicians. In 2023 Dr Joel Wight was awarded a Doctor of Medical Science from University of Melbourne and Dr Amy Brown was awarded a PhD from James Cook University, and John Bains from the Radiation Oncology team contributed to a chapter in the book 'MR Linac Radiotherapy' ISBN 978-0-323-91689-9.

The majority of our investigator-led studies are in the areas of Person-Centred Care (Models of Care, Integrated Pathways, Patient Experiences and Service Delivery), and Innovative Treatments and Technologies, with external collaborations focusing on Closing the Gap in Cancer Care. We have research active staff across medical, nursing and allied health.

Our Clinical Trials Unit currently has 81 active experimental drug trials led by a team of 18 Principal Investigators across our 3 specialities (Medical Oncology, Haematology and Radiation Oncology). Our current portfolio of studies range from phase 1 to 3 trials, and are sponsored by international pharmaceutical / biotech companies and / or collaborating groups such as ALLG, TROG, ANZCOG etc. We continue to be a leader in the teletrials space in Queensland with a 14 active studies run under this model.

Day to day our clinical trials team coordinates the care of over 200 patients that are participating in clinical trials, conducting approximately 900 clinical trial visits in 2023. Our Clinical Trials Unit team currently comprises 2 Clinical Trials Fellows / Registrars, 2 Clinical Trials Pharmacist, 1 Clinical Trials Manager / NUM, 9 Clinical Trial Coordinators (Senior Nursing or Radiation Therapists), 2 Administration and Business Support Officers and 2 Medical Students.

Key Researchers

Medical Oncology	Radiation Oncology	Clinical Trials
Abhishek Joshi Corinne Ryan Sabe Sabesan Shivanshan Pathmanathan Suresh Varma Zulfiquer Otty	Amber Scull Ariadne Brodmann Ashley Shackelford Bronwyn Oar Chantelle Fisher Daniel Xing Debbie Mentor Deepti Patel Dione Liefman Glen Newman Glenn De Vine James Gallo Jessie McKinnon John Baines Keeley Robinson Laura Baker Linda Marsh Madhavi Chilkuri Marchant van der Walt Marcus Hu Marcus Powers Mitchell Duncan Peter Stokes Ravi Marwah Robert Crane Savannah Brown Shannon Robards Stephen Gibson Sue Hewitt Tim Squire	Anne Hartshorn Smith Jenny Walsh Judith Page Kareela Campbell Kim Pattinson Melanie Taylor Nicole Chapman Rachel Doyle Sharon Lazzaroni Steven Capell
Haematology		
Andrew Birchley Edward Morris Hock Choong Lai Jane Royle Joel Wight John Casey		
Palliative Care		
Claus Bader Ofra Fried Richard Corkill		
Across Townsville Cancer Centre		
Amy Brown Candice Finlay Georgia Slapp		

Key Collaborators

Collaborator	Project
Prof Sabe Sabesan	Associate investigator on the Smarter Hospitals NHMRC Partnership Project
University of Wollongong, School of Physics and Centre for Medical Radiation Physics	Radiation Oncology
Australasian Lymphoma Alliance Australasian Leukaemia and Lymphoma Group	Haematology
TCC Medical Oncology and Radiation Oncology are participating in a study coordinated and sponsored through QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute.	Participating site in the “Patient Reported Outcome Measures in cancer care: a hybrid effectiveness-Implementation trial to optimize Symptom control and health service Experience” study. This study commenced, and completed patient recruitment in 2023, with follow-up ongoing
Cairns HHS and Mackay HHS	Implementation of intracranial stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS)
University of Queensland	Collaborations with Indigenous Health focus, including: - Supporting our Carers - The 4Cs Project
James Cook University	Various PhD projects, including: - Dr Zulifiquer Otty - Dr Abhishek Joshi - Ariadne Shoobridge As well as MBBS honours and research electives
Queensland University of Technology	Collaborations including Radiation Therapy Honours Research Program
University of Technology Sydney	Health economics and health preferences research projects including: Evaluation of the impact of a radiation therapist-led model of care for Magnetic Resonance Linac adaptive cancer treatments Patient preferences for prostate radiation therapy treatment: understanding and incorporating preferences into shared decision making

Conference Presentations / Papers (selected)

Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR) Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM), October 2023. Brisbane, Queensland. Tim Squire. Radiation Protection in Space.

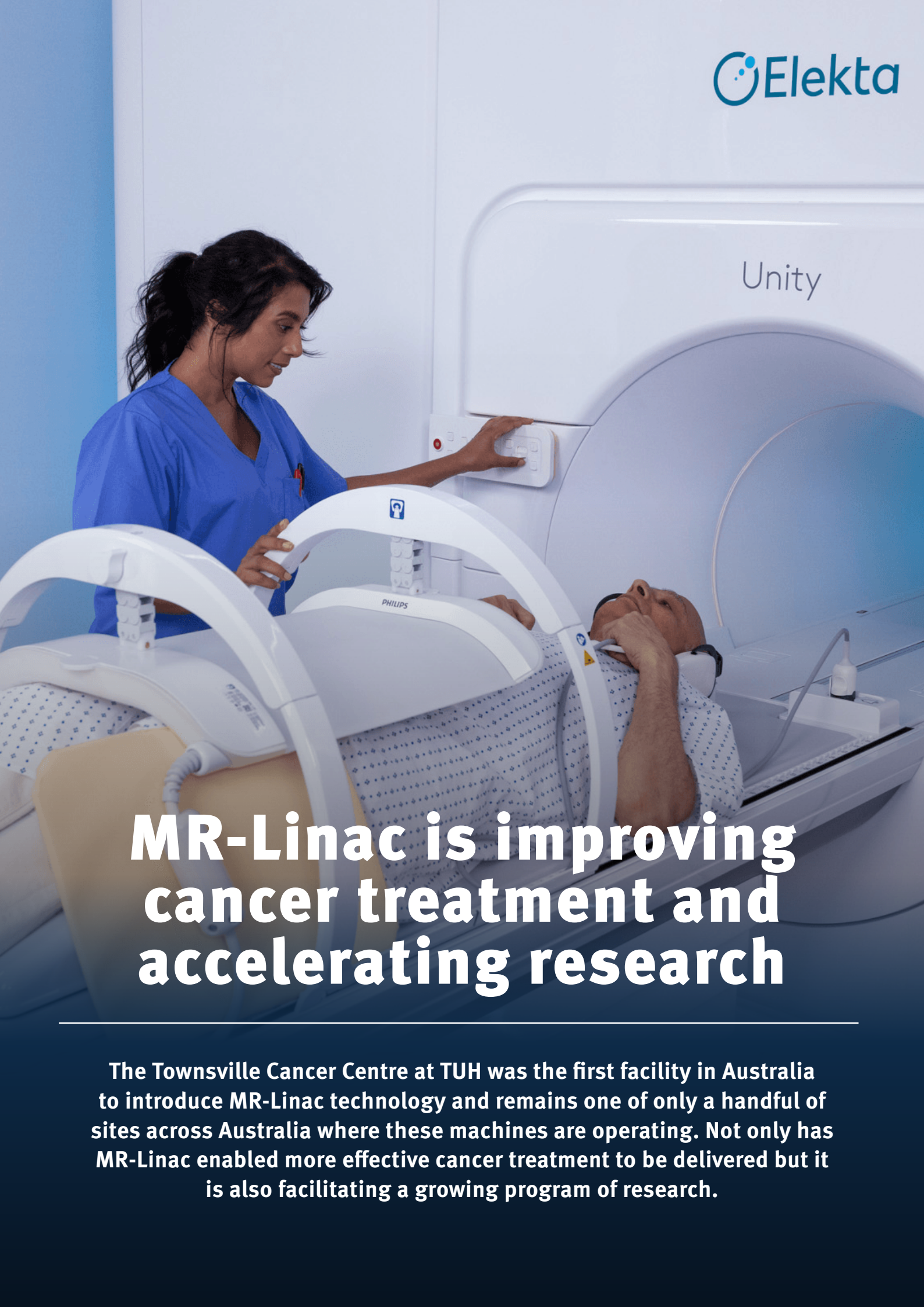
Asia Pacific Prostate Cancer Conference (APCC), August 2023. Cairns, Queensland. Tim Squire. MRI linac and future directions.

Australasian Society of Aerospace Medicine, Humans in Space Course, September 2023. Hobart, Tasmania. Tim Squire. Radiation Protection in Space

ANZ Elekta Users Group Meeting February 2023. Sydney, NSW. Glen Newman. "Adaptive Radiation Therapy Practices: An Australian Perspective"

Australian Scientific Meeting of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Annual Meeting. Sydney, NSW May 2023. Jessica Smith. "An Evaluation of the Utilisation of a 6 Degree of Freedom Couch in Radiation Therapy."

Unity

A woman in blue scrubs is operating an MR-Linac machine. A patient is lying inside the machine's gantry. The machine is white and has the word "Unity" on it. The patient is wearing a hospital gown and a headrest. The woman is adjusting a control panel on the side of the machine. The machine has a Philips logo on it.

MR-Linac is improving cancer treatment and accelerating research

The Townsville Cancer Centre at TUH was the first facility in Australia to introduce MR-Linac technology and remains one of only a handful of sites across Australia where these machines are operating. Not only has MR-Linac enabled more effective cancer treatment to be delivered but it is also facilitating a growing program of research.

MR-Linacs are medical devices that combine two technologies: magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and a medical linear accelerator (LINAC). Weighing in at 8,000 kilograms and costing ~\$10 million, the MR-Linac is one of the most sophisticated cancer treatment machines currently available worldwide.

Through combining MRI technology with a linear accelerator, clinicians are able to use high-resolution magnetic resonance imaging to guide radiation therapy more accurately, enabling them to better target cancers and better calculate the patients' optimal radiation dose, delivering major advances over conventional radiation treatments.

Identifying precisely where to focus radiation to treat cancers is a complex process, made more difficult by the fact that tumours are typically surrounded by healthy tissue and organs, and both tumours and organs can move slightly within the body due to the patient's breathing or other normal anatomic variations such as the degree of bowel or bladder filling. With its real-time MRI delivering very high definition soft-tissue imaging, the MR-Linac enables clinicians to clearly see the target tumours and more confidently and accurately administer radiation to them while protecting the surrounding healthy tissue. MR imaging also helps clinicians to identify when adjustments to the radiation dose may be beneficial, in real time without the patient having to leave the table.

The research opportunities created since MR-Linac technology was introduced in Townsville in 2019 are growing strongly. Already the introduction of MR-Linac in Townsville has supported Dr Marcus Powers to complete a PhD in medical physics, with higher degree research projects for a number of other medical physics and radiation therapy staff underway or in the pipeline. It has led to 5 SERTA grants valued at over \$350K being awarded, and programs of research are developing in areas of medical physics, radiation therapy and radiation oncology.

In an effort to ensure that those in the northern Queensland community who could benefit from this technology get the opportunity to benefit, research is exploring opportunities for MR-Linac to be deployed to treat more conditions across an expanded patient base. In 2021-2023 a pilot Phase 1 investigator-led clinical trial was conducted in the use of MR-Linac to re-treat patients with recurring prostate cancers. Through this trial, patients whose cancers are recurring and who would otherwise undergo other treatments such as hormone therapy that produce unwanted side-effects, are being re-treated with radiation. Initial results suggest that patients tolerated the radiation treatment well with few side effects, and delayed

hormone treatment for 6-12 months. As this trial progresses, clinicians hope to see MR-Linac being used to safely and successfully treat recurring cancers, giving patients extra years and quality of life.

Patients' experience has also been investigated through a study that found evidence that patients are generally very willing to undergo treatment on new technologies like MR-Linac if they have a good level of understanding of the treatment process and the expected risks and benefits. The high-level of understanding and health literacy by patients of the Townsville MR-Linac is thought to be in large part due to the very specialised clinical MRL team that delivers this therapy at THHS and the high degree of effort that they go to when explaining the treatment to prospective patients.

The medical physics team has also been active in a number of quality assurance studies in an effort to support the safe and effective use of the machine in Townsville, and to help to inform others throughout Australia and world-wide who are seeking to introduce MR-Linac technology into their services. This includes the PhD program of Ariadne Brodmann which is focussing on optimising the software that is utilised to verify each treatment before radiation delivery.

A QH Health Professionals Research Scheme and SERTA-funded project, led by radiation therapist Glen Newman, has been investigating new models of care in treatment on the MRL, as the treatment sessions are much longer than traditional treatments, ensuring that the service will be sustainable from a staffing perspective. Additionally, a SERTA seed fellowship has enabled radiation therapist Bronwyn Oar to begin a project investigating the feasibility of treating spinal tumours with the MRL in 2023, and she has now enrolled in a Master of Philosophy to complete this project.

A separate SERTA-funded project is commencing to investigate the extent to which MR-Linac images can be used in places of specific radiation treatment planning MRI images in Medical Imaging, potentially helping to reduce wait times and demand on diagnostic services.

The introduction of MR-Linac technology to Townsville in 2019 delivered a step-change in the HHS's ability to administer radiation therapy to cancer patients. With the technology now in place and usage high, focus is shifting to how it might be deployed to support treatment and improve quality of care for more patients and different conditions. Research will be critical in guiding this next phase.



**Clinical trials give hope
to Townsville grandfather**

Townsville grandfather Hugh Boon was 'shellshocked' when he was diagnosed with Stage 4 lung cancer late in 2022.

With chemotherapy not a viable option, Hugh was given the chance to take part in clinical trials for several medications.

Despite his diagnosis, Hugh said he considered himself lucky to be given this opportunity. "When I was first diagnosed, I was so shocked that I was in denial but now I'm thankful that I have the chance to take part in these clinical trials," Hugh said.

Hugh feared his diagnosis would take away his active lifestyle, which included walking up Castle Hill several times a week. But Hugh said the 11 tablets he takes every day as part of the clinical trials have had very few side effects.

"With the medications, my weight seems to have stabilised, and my muscles are not wasting away, in fact I still walk around the river most days and mow the yard every week.

"I'm also very thankful to Professor Sabe Sabesan for advocating for me to have my treatment done here in Townsville, which would avoid the need for me to travel to Brisbane."

Clinical director of the Regional Clinical Trial Coordinating Centre (RCCC) Professor Sabe Sabesan said all Queenslanders should have the opportunity to be involved in clinical trials, no matter where they live. "It's so important that rural Australia is included in clinical trials so people like Hugh can have the chance to try new treatment options for their conditions," Sabe said.

Earlier this month, staff from the RCCC gathered for a celebration in honour of International Clinical Trials Day. "This day was the perfect opportunity to celebrate everyone involved in clinical trials and raise awareness about the vital role they play in healthcare," Sabe said.



Gastroenterology

The Gastroenterology Department was active in 2023 on a number of audit projects including:

- Guideline for Periprocedural Management of adult outpatients with Diabetes Mellitus having day endoscopic procedures –ongoing.
- Food Bolus Impaction presentations retrospective audit
- Audit of endoscopy referrals for iron deficiency anaemia
- Hepatitis B cascade of care –published
- HCC clinical audit – data collection underway.

Key Researchers

- Rozemary Karamatic

Key Collaborators

Collaborator	Project
James Cook University	Establishing the North Queensland Liver Tumour Library: improving hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) detection and treatment. The creation of this biobank with JCU is continuing to support the expansion of liver cancer research activity within the health service.
Cairns Base Hospital	Hepatitis HCC Audit

Conference Presentations / Papers:

1. Han C, Karamatic R, Hansen J. Chronic Hepatitis B care in regional Australia: implications for clinical practice and public health policy. Internal Medicine Journal (2024) 1–9.
2. Kirk F, Page S, Egan A, Ang N, Jones L, Stone L, Burke L, Karamatic R, Welch C, Yadav S, Jones R, Saxena P, Senthuran S. Liver Stiffness by Fibroscan and Cardiac Surgery Outcomes: A Pilot Study, Coronary Disease, Original Article. Interactive CardioVascular and Thoracic Surgery – submitted for publication.
3. Gillman R, Field MA, Schmitz U, Karamatic R, Hebbard L. Identifying cancer driver genes in individual tumours. Computational and Structural Biotechnology Journal. 2023(21):5028-5038.
4. Shepherd C, Karamatic R, Mahy G. Retrospective Observational Analysis of consecutive Food Bolus Impaction presentations in Townsville (Northern Queensland) from 2005 to 2020. Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology. 2023, 38:S2.

New research projects approved in 2023 – Medical Service Group

Principal Investigators	Department	Study Title
Dr Julian Wong	Emergency Paediatrics	Sustaining improvements in the management of infants with bronchiolitis – a PREDICT study Short title: Bronchiolitis KT Sustainability Study)
Professor Usman Malabu	Diabetes & Endocrinology Vascular Neurology Podiatry	PREVENT-DFU Prevention of Recurrence of Diabetic Foot Ulcer
Dr Joel Wight	Haematology and Bone Marrow Transplantation	Arsenic neurotoxicity in patients with Acute Promyelocytic Leukemia
Dr Dione Liefman	Radiation Oncology	Analysis of seminal vesicle motion in patients treated on the MR-linear accelerator
Dr Paul Chapman	Rehabilitation Physiotherapy Speech Pathology Occupational Therapy Neurology	A phase IIa multicentre umbrella trial of integrated Upper limb and Language Impairment and Functional Training (UPLIFT)
Associate Professor Gillian Mahy	Gastroenterology	Clinical outcomes and prognostic factors of Acute Severe Ulcerative Colitis (ASUC) in Asia-Pacific
Dr Jason Yates	Paediatrics & Endocrinology	Diabetes in Queensland Children and Adolescents (DIABQ-Paeds) Registry
Dr Vinay Gangathimmaiah	Emergency	Can Implementation science enable de- implementation of low value care at an emergency department in regional Australia? Short Title: DE-implementation of Low-value Emergency care (DELVE)
Dr Vikas Srivastava	Renal	Investigation of Metformin therapy to Ease Decline of kidney function in Polycystic Kidney Disease PKD (IMPEDE-PKD) A Randomised Placebo-Controlled Trial
Dr Joel Wight	Haematology	A Multi-Country, Real-World Study to Explore Treatment Patterns, Effectiveness and Healthcare Resource Utilization for Patients Diagnosed with Myelofibrosis through Chart Review Short Title: METER

Dr Carly Hughes	Infectious Diseases	Retrospective study of patients with COVID-19 within multiple Queensland Health sites
Professor Andrew Mallett	Renal	The KidGen National Kidney Genomics Program - improving genomic outcomes for Australian families with genetic kidney disease Short Title: KidGen Genomics
Mr Sebastian Kang Wen Zhi	Oncology Dietetics (Supporting)	Evaluating taste and food changes following systemic treatment-related taste side effects
Mrs Amy Brown	Radiation Therapy	Hypofractionation utilisation in radiation therapy: a regional department evaluation
Dr Emma Whyte	Emergency Paediatric Intensive Care Unit	Balanced Fluid Resuscitation to Decrease Kidney Injury in Children with Septic Shock Short Title: PROMPT Bolus
Mr Trung Tran	Neurology	Dose Reduction of Ocrelizumab in Multiple Sclerosis: Observational Study
Dr Hock Choong Lai	Haematology	A Phase 3, open label study to evaluate safety and efficacy of epcoritamab in combination with rituximab and lenalidomide R2 compared to R2 in Subjects with relapsed or refractory follicular lymphoma Short Title: EPCORE FL-1
Associate Professor Robert Miller	Dermatology	Evaluation of the implementation of personalised melanoma risk assessment and tailored patient education and skin surveillance in dermatology clinics Short Title: Tailored Surveillance Project Acronym: TSP
Miss Cassie Lanskey	Pharmacy	Surgical Pre-admission Pharmacists Updating and Planning Home Medications Within a Newly Rolled-Out Electronic Prescribing Platform
Professor Sabe Sabesan	Medical Oncology	Ipilimumab and nivolumab combination therapy in patients with selected immunotherapy sensitive advanced rare cancers. ONJ2021-002/CA209-6D6 Acronym: MoST CIRCUIT
Dr Abhishek Joshi	Medical Oncology	A Phase 3 Trial of Fianlimab (REGN3767, Anti-Lag-3) + Cemiplimab Versus Pembrolizumab In Patients With Previously Untreated Unresectable Locally Advanced Or Metastatic Melanoma Short Title: REGN3767 Acronym: R3767-ONC-2011

Miss Jaigi (Kay) Hou	Emergency Department	An Analysis of the Practice Pattern of C-Reactive Protein Utilisation in Townsville University Hospital Emergency Department
Dr John Casey	Haematology Emergency	Composition, Quality and Delivery of Major Haemorrhage Protocols (MHP) and critical bleeding clinical practice guidelines in hospitals across Queensland Health
Mrs Alexandra Ryan	Pharmacy	Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Processes Used for the Safe Storage, Selection and Administration of Anaesthetic Medications in a Regional Tertiary Referral Hospital
Dr Joel Wight	Haematology	A Multicenter, Open Label, Phase Ib/II Study of Lenalidomide, Venetoclax and Obinutuzumab In Patients With Treatment- Naïve Follicular Lymphoma Short title: LEVERAGE
Miss Nandini Kulasegaran	Diabetes & Endocrinology	Examining the local microbiological profile of Diabetic foot infections: Retrospective analysis in Queensland, Australia over 5 years
Dr Vinay Gangathimmaiah	Emergency	Emergency department data to assess the impact of COVID-19 restrictions
Ms Deepti Patel	Radiation Therapy Radiation Oncology	Evaluation of SBRT Lung IGRT credentialling program
Dr Hock Choong Lai	Haematology	A Phase 3 Randomized, Open-Label, Multicenter Study of Zanubrutinib (BGB 3111) Plus Anti-CD20 Antibodies Versus Lenalidomide Plus Rituximab in Patients With Relapsed/Refractory Follicular or Marginal Zone Lymphoma
Dr Abhishek Joshi	Medical Oncology	EMBER-4: A Randomized, Open-Label, Phase 3 Study of Adjuvant Imlunestrant vs Standard Adjuvant Endocrine Therapy in Patients who have Previously Received 2 to 5 years of Adjuvant Endocrine Therapy for ER+, HER2- Early Breast Cancer with an Increased Risk of Recurrence J2J-MC-JZLH
Dr Joel Wight	Haematology	A Phase 3, Two-Stage, Randomized, Multicenter, Open-Label Study Comparing Iberdomide, Daratumumab and Dexamethasone (IberDd) versus Daratumumab, Bortezomib, and Dexamethasone (DVD) in Subjects with Relapsed or Refractory Multiple Myeloma (RRMM) Short title: EXCALIBER

Miss Liane Barnes	Respiratory & Sleep Cardiology	Heart or Lungs? Can Quality spirometry in Townsville University Hospital acute care cardiac patients
Dr Abhishek Joshi	Radiation Oncology Medical Oncology	Adjuvant tislelizumab plus chemotherapy after post-operative pelvic chemoradiation in high risk endometrial cancer (ADELE): a randomised phase 2 trial ADELE
Dr Joel Wight	Haematology	An ALLG Phase II study of Pembrolizumab checkpoint blockade following chemoimmunotherapy for primary central nervous system lymphoma
Associate Professor Clair Sullivan	Emergency	Patient Flow in Queensland's public hospitals: A qualitative study
Associate Professor Clair Sullivan	Emergency	Patient Flow in Queensland's public hospitals: A qualitative study
Dr Cecelia O'Brien	Obstetrics & Gynaecology Cardiology	A retrospective analysis of cardiac deterioration in women with Rheumatic Heart Disease during childbearing years. Short Title: Rheumatic Heart Disease and Pregnancy
Dr Hock Choong Lai	Haematology	(HM-FLTI-101) A Phase 1/2, Open-label, Multicenter, Dose Escalation and Expansion Study of the Safety, Tolerability, Pharmacokinetics, and Pharmacodynamics of HM43239 in Patients with R/R AML
Dr John Casey	Haematology	A Phase 1b, Open-Label Study to Assess the Safety, Efficacy, Pharmacokinetics, and Pharmacodynamics of Povetacicept in Subjects with Autoimmune Cytopenias (RUBY-4) Short Title: AIS-DO4
Dr Nathan Bain	Medical Oncology	The Cancer Molecular Screening and Therapeutics (MoST) Program and ASPIRATION subprogram substudies 27 - 30: Single arm, open label, phase II trial of the activity of vemurafenib and cobimetinib in patients with advanced tumours harbouring BRAF V600 mutations detected by comprehensive genomic profiling. Short Title: MOST-12
Dr Abhishek Joshi	Medical Oncology	A Phase 2 Study Evaluating INCB099280 in Participants With Advanced Cutaneous Squamous Cell Carcinoma

Miss Tara Watters	Renal	Design, implementation, and evaluation of an intervention for a new kidney transplant service in northern Queensland (Phase 2)
Dr Joel Wight	Haematology	A phase III, multi-centre, randomised, open-label study comparing the efficacy and safety of Glofitamab (RO7082859) in combination with Polatuzumab Vedotin plus Rituximab, Cyclophosphamide, Doxorubicin and Prednisone (POLA-R-CHP) versus POLA-R-CHP in previously untreated patients with Large B-Cell Lymphoma. Acronym: SKYGLO GO44145
Dr Hock Choong Lai	Haematology	A phase Ib/II study of Venetoclax, Iberdomide and Dexamethasone for patients in first or second relapse of Multiple Myeloma with t(11;14) Short Title: Viber-M ALLG Study Number: MM25
Ms Kaye Hewson	Various	Evaluation of the Australian Teletrial Program Stage 2
Dr Nathan Bain	Medical Oncology	SHERLOCK: Phase 2 trial of sotorasib in combination with carboplatin- pemetrexed and bevacizumab-biosimilar as first line treatment for advanced non-squamous non-small cell lung cancer with KRAS G12C mutation.
Dr Joel Wight	Haematology	A Phase 3b, Randomized, Open-Label, Double Crossover Study Comparing Treatment Preference Between Oral Decitabine/Cedazuridine and Azacitidine in Adult Patients with IPSS-R intermediate Myelodysplastic Syndrome, Low-Blast Acute Myeloid Leukemia, IPSS Intermediate-2 or High-Risk Myelodysplastic Syndrome or Chronic Myelomonocytic Leukemia Short Title: OTSUKA (393-419-00041) A Study Comparing Treatment Preference Between Oral Decitabine/Cedazuridine and Azacitidine in Myelodysplastic Syndrome, Low-Blast Acute Myeloid Leukemia

Dr Abhishek Joshi	Medical Oncology	XLo92-304: A Randomized Open-Label Phase 3 Study of XLo92 Nivolumab vs Sunitinib in Subjects with Advanced or Metastatic Non-Clear Cell Renal Cell Carcinoma Acronym: Exelixis / STELLAR 304
Dr Hock Lai	Haematology	Aplastic Anaemia and Other Bone Marrow Failure Syndromes Registry (AAR)
Dr Joel Wight	Haematology	A Phase 3 Randomized Clinical Study of MK-4280A (coformulated favezelimab [MK-4280] plus pembrolizumab [MK-3475]) Versus Physician's Choice Chemotherapy in PD (L)1-refractory, Relapsed or Refractory Classical Hodgkin Lymphoma Short Title: Clinical trial of MK-4280A versus chemotherapy for relapsed or refractory classical Hodgkin lymphoma (R/R cHL)
Dr Jane Royle	Haematology	A randomised phase III trial with a PET response adapted design comparing ABVD +/- ISRT with A2VD +/- ISRT in patients with previously untreated stage IA/IIA Hodgkin lymphoma-RADAR ALLG HD13





Mental Health Service Group

The Mental Health Service group has continued to grow research capabilities with several staff being supported in postgraduate Masters and Doctor of Philosophy studies. Supporting staff in research activity and higher education to develop research skills helps to develop capability and increase collaborative research. We have several developing research projects within medicine, allied health and nursing in collaboration with other partners such as JCU (James Cook University). We have also seen an increase in publications and research outcomes.

Regular research meetings and a research café have commenced. This is slowly seeing increased staff engagement in research, or quality improvement projects that aim to translate research into practice. The team continues to support staff in developing research protocols, and ethics applications and conducting literature reviews and endnote training. This research support has led to some of our emerging research projects in community mental health competency, restrictive practice, rehabilitation, and acute mental health areas.

We have received ethics approval for the evaluation of wise choices groups – a collaboration between Queensland Health and a non-government organisation. The service has seen one clinician receive a SERTA grant to increase research capacity within the child mental health early years research area. This grant has enabled us to appoint a clinical research coordinator to support the child and youth mental health service in their research activity over the next two years. We are very proud of our staff research activity this year.

Meaghan Trovato
A/Service Group Director
Mental Health Service Group

Mental Health Service Group

Research Groups – Mental Health Service Group

Developing research capability has been high on the agenda for the Mental Health Service Group in 2023. Corianne Richardson hosts the MHSG Research Cafe on Mondays at Cambridge St, providing clinical staff interested in, or conducting research with a platform to connect. She also offers dedicated 1:1 meetings to assist staff in developing research questions, proposals, and research ethics and governance documents. Numerous staff members have utilized these services, resulting in support for their academic studies and clinical projects. As a result of the 1:1 support, two projects are in development for 2024 in the adult community and adult in-patient areas, fostering clinical staff's experience in planning and conducting research. These initiatives also involve collaboration with the School of Nursing and Midwifery (JCU) Centre for Nursing and Midwifery Research.

The Child and Youth Mental Health Services (CYMHS) secured SERTA funding for a temporary research coordinator role to enhance research capacity. Becky Stripp, the Clinical Research Coordinator/Senior Psychologist, is actively creating a resource hub and pathway to facilitate CYMHS clinicians in participating and developing clinical research. This work includes a foundational project aimed at creating a training manual and enhancing research capabilities within CYMHS teams. Several projects are in the planning phase, with one focusing on conducting an audit of patients accessing CYMHS services in relation to eating disorders over the past five years.

This year we have seen an increase in our publications and progress of staff who are enrolled in higher degrees by research.

Corianne's doctoral investigation titled 'Exploring Coaching for Nurses in Mental Health Settings: A Case Study' has advanced into the recruitment stage, with several clinical nurses enthusiastically enrolling to partake in the training as workplace coaches commencing in 2024. The intervention phase will delve into the experiences of nurses in both coaching and being coached, over a 6-month period. The study aims to assess the effects of coaching on various aspects, including intention to stay, the development of professional identity, adoption of high involvement work practices, and the enhancement of resilience. Notably, Corianne's presentation at the annual HDR Research Symposium (JCU) earned her the third prize.

Key Researchers

- Corianne Richardson (CNC/Senior Research Officer) Townsville Mental Health Service
- Dr Carlo Longhitano (Associate Prof of Psychiatry/Psychiatrist Court Liaison Service)
- Dr Mark Mayall (Associate Prof Child & Adolescent Psychiatry/ Psychiatrist CYMHS)
- Becky Stripp (CYMHS Research Coordinator (SERTA Project)/ Senior Psychologist CYMHS)
- Nerida Firth (ATODS Pharmacist)
- Dr Hiranya Wijesundara (Consultant Psychiatrist)

Key Collaborators

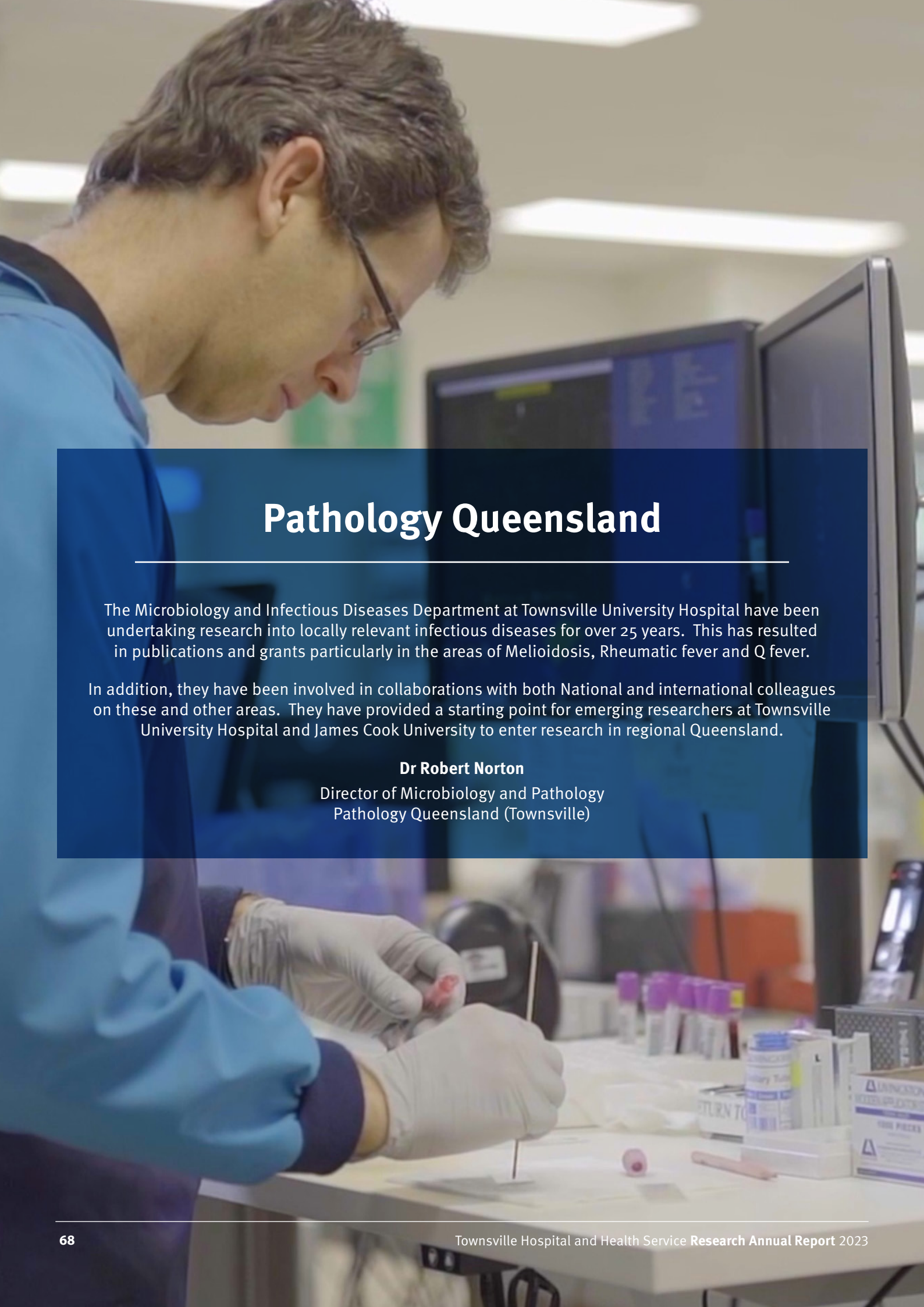
Collaborator	Project
Corianne Richardson (MHSG) & Dr Tanya Langtree (JCU)	Collaboration focused on developing a community mental health nursing competency framework
A/Prof Mark Mayall (MHSG) is working with the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW	Opportunities for clinical trial research within our Alcohol and Other Drug Services
JCU School of Nursing	‘Assessing Competency and its Impact on Job Stress and Resilience in Community Mental Health Nurses: A Participatory Mixed Methods Study.’
Nerida Firth (MHSG) is working with Sydney School of Public Health, University of Sydney (Alison Pearce); Menzies School of Health Research (Oyelola Adegboye); Departments of Physiotherapy and Medicine, University of Melbourne; Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, University of Melbourne; NHMRC Centre for Research Excellence in Stroke Rehabilitation and Brain Recovery, Melbourne (Kate S Hayward and Julie Bernhardt); College of Medicine and Dentistry, James Cook University (Robin Ray); and The Cairns Institute, James Cook University (Ruth Barker)	Stroke survivors’ preferences for recovery-promoting drugs: a pilot discrete choice experiment study manuscript

Conference Presentations / Papers

A/Prof Mark Mayall: Multiaxial classification: A Framework for complex cases and transition planning, 26/08/2023, NQ Physicians Conference

New research projects approved in 2023 – Mental Health Service Group

Collaborator	Project	Study Title
Associate Professor Wendy Li	Specialist Services Program	A pilot study into the effectiveness of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) for improving veteran mental health in North Queensland
Mrs Corianne Richardson	Adult Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit and Secure Mental Health In-patient Unit	Coaching of Clinical Nurses in a Mental Health Setting: An Exploratory Case Study
Dr Zoe Rutherford	Adolescent Inpatient Unit and Day Service (AIUDS)	A Review of the Implementation and Functioning of Adolescent Day Programs in Queensland Short Title: Adolescent Day Program Review
Dr Zoe Rutherford	Community Mental Health	Queensland Health Crisis Support Space Evaluation Acronnyn: QHCSSE
Associate Professor Calogero Longhitano	Community Forensic Mental Health	The effects of diet on metabolic and mental health outcome measures in bipolar disorder and schizophrenia: a randomized controlled clinical trial Short Title: Nutritional intervention in bipolar disorder and schizophrenia
Dr Hiranya Wijesundara	ATODS	Digital Survey on Mental Well-being and Psychological Resilience among Health Care Workers of Alcohol and Other Drugs Services (AODS) in Queensland, Australia during COVID-19 (2020-2022)



Pathology Queensland

The Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Department at Townsville University Hospital have been undertaking research into locally relevant infectious diseases for over 25 years. This has resulted in publications and grants particularly in the areas of Melioidosis, Rheumatic fever and Q fever.

In addition, they have been involved in collaborations with both National and international colleagues on these and other areas. They have provided a starting point for emerging researchers at Townsville University Hospital and James Cook University to enter research in regional Queensland.

Dr Robert Norton

Director of Microbiology and Pathology
Pathology Queensland (Townsville)

Pathology Queensland

Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Research Group

The THHS team's research focus in 2023 has included:

- Melioidosis – Diagnostics, Relationship to climate events, Epidemiology in this region
- Q fever – immune responses
- Rheumatic fever – neurobehavioural effects

The Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Research Group, led by Dr Rob Norton, had an active year in 2023, delivering:

- Peer reviewed Publications – 5;
- Collaborations with the University of New England, and James Cook University leading to a successful NHMRC Ideas Grant, led by Associate Professor Jeff Warner (JCU) for \$1,505,250 to support the project Melioidosis on the move: Informing the public health response.

Key Researchers

- Robert Norton
- Christopher Heather
- Alana Finch

*Alana Finch, Medical Scientist with Haematology,
Pathology Queensland, Townsville University Hospital*



Lymphoma research first of its kind in Australia

It's a daunting task to take on research in a field left previously untouched, but Townsville Hospital and Health Service medical scientist and James Cook University student Alana Finch hasn't shied away from the challenge.

Alana is conducting the first Australian study of its kind on Waldenstrom's macroglobulinemia. Waldenstrom's macroglobulinemia is a rare type of lymphoma (cancer) where a person's bone marrow produces too many abnormal white blood cells which crowd out the healthy ones.

Alana's master's thesis will analyse the incidence and prevalence of the disease in Australia, building on research mostly coming from the United States. "My research is looking at those people with a diagnosis of Waldenstrom's within Australia and completing a data review using data sourced from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare cancer and AUSLAB databases," Alana said. "This will allow me to do a statistical analysis of the patients within Australia and assess the incidence and prevalence of the disease. "By understanding the prevalence of the disease, we can look at how we're treating patients, if they have any common factors, and what more we can be doing for people living with this illness."

Alana received a \$2,500 research grant from the Australian Institute of Medical and Clinical Scientists to assist with the collection of the data she needs.

Another component of the research is looking more specifically at patients with Waldenstrom's within Queensland and the pathology testing they received. American research has shown patients with a mutation of their IgM immunoglobulin with an unknown cause – known as an IgM MGUS – are at higher risk of developing Waldenstrom's later in life. Alana said in Australia, the clinical diagnosis pathway for patients with Waldenstrom's was a diagnosis of exclusion. "I'd like to study the clinical utility of the mutation linked to Waldenstrom's to see how genetic testing improves patient management," Alana said. "Patients in Australia have only been routinely tested for this mutation since 2015, and they will only be tested for it if they aren't responding to therapies."

"My goal, and what I would like to achieve at the end of this research, is to have the test utilised more in the clinical pathway so it is one of the first things done for a patient with suspected Waldenstrom's."

"Research has shown the potential for the identification of the mutation to have wide-spread clinical applications, and I think it's my duty to translate this into real-world practice to improve the patient journey."

At the heart of Alana's work is wanting to improve accessibility to the test, which means applying to have the test covered by Medicare by submitting the results of the research to the Medicare Benefits Schedule. "My wishful thinking is that by showing the validity of conducting the test early in the clinical pathway, we can submit the research and have the test covered by Medicare for these patients," she said. "At the end of this research, what I want is to help these patients the best I can."



HUGHENDEN HO

Rural Hospitals Service Group

Despite considerable workforce challenges across medical, nursing and allied health disciplines, the Rural Hospitals Service Group were pleased to support a number of research projects, most notably two projects examining paediatric presentations at rural sites relating to earlier recognition of sepsis and improving capacity at sites to manage young consumers with bronchiolitis. Our aspirational goals to contribute further to THHS research will come to fruition in time as we progress our THHS Rural Medical Workforce Strategy and develop similar strategies to improve our nursing and allied health workforce.

Ann Marie Mallett

Service Group Director
Rural Hospitals Service Group

Rural Hospitals Service Group

New research projects approved in 2023 – Rural Hospitals Service Group

Collaborator	Project	Study Title
Professor Sarah Larkins	Hughenden Multipurpose Health Service	Integrating Health Care Planning for Health and Prosperity in North Queensland Phase 2a and Phase 2b Acronym: IHCP-NQ
Dr Sainath Rama	Ayr Health Service Charters Towers Health Service Ingham Health Service Joyce Palmer Health Service	Point-of-care C-reactive protein in patients suspected of sepsis: addressing variation in care and unmet need through the Queensland Paediatric Sepsis Program - Townsville HHS
Mrs Kirsty Gray	Charters Towers Eventide Kirwan Health Campus Parklands residential	Evaluating the impact of changes in nursing skill mix following the implementation of nurse-to-patient ratio legislation in Queensland Health's 16 public Residential Aged Care Facilities
Dr Andrew White	Paediatric intensive Care Unit Rural Facilities: Ayr, Ingham, Charters Towers, Joyce Palmer	A Paediatric Acute Respiratory Study (PARIS), PARIS on Country - A Multicentre Science Implementation Study Short Title: PARIS on Country
Dr Clare Arndell	Rural Facilities	General Practitioner Perspectives on Voluntary Assisted Dying in a Regional and rural setting: A Survey after the legalisation of VAD in Queensland



Surgical Service Group

2023 was another good year for the Surgical Services Group the hard work has once again resulted in several research projects and papers submitted for publication. The Service Group recognises the important role research plays in improving patient care and the translation of findings to clinical practice. We will continue to build our reputation as research leaders where research has a significant impact in care, particularly in regional and rural healthcare.

Anthony Williams

Service Group Director
Surgical Service Group

Surgical Service Group

Research Groups – Surgical Service Group

Queensland Research Centre for Peripheral Vascular Disease

The QRCPVD has continued its active program of research, trials and publication.

Highlights in 2023 included:

- Publication of the brief behavioural counselling approach by allied health professionals to promote physical activity in people with peripheral arterial disease trial in the high impact journal JAMA Cardiology (JAMA Cardiol 2023; 8(4): 394-9) identifying a counselling approach that improves quality of life of people with blocked leg arteries;
- Substantial progress of the OPTIMAL clinical trial designed to test a telehealth secondary prevention program for peripheral artery disease with recruitment of approximately 30% of the required sample size;
- Continuation of the Metformin Aneurysm Trial with 15 sites now active across Australia and New Zealand and negotiation underway to commence in the UK early next year;
- 70 publications during 2022-3;
- Successful MRFF grant applications for pre-clinical research testing novel aortic aneurysm drugs and to trial exercise programs for peripheral artery disease and secondary prevention of diabetes-related foot disease;
- Unique studies on the burden and nature of peripheral artery disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Eur J Vasc Endovasc Surg 2023; 66(2): 237-44);
- Completion and award of a Cum Laude PhD on the burden of diabetes-related foot disease by Chanika Alahakoon under the primary supervision of Prof Golledge;
- Multiple national and international presentations including an invited Keynote presentation at the leading worldwide diabetes-related foot disease conference in The Hague (8th International Symposium on the Diabetic Foot (ISDF)).

Key Researchers

- Professor Jonathan Golledge Chief Principal Investigator/Director
- Associate Professor Joseph Moxon Statistician/Associate Dean, Research (JCU)
- Ms Alkira Deren Clinical Research Officer
- Dr Rene Jaggi Global Project Manager
- Ms Ashleigh Gunn Research Exercise Physiologist
- Dr Shiv Thanigaimani Post Doctoral Research Scientist
- Mrs Sandra Burrows Research Administration Project Officer
- Dr Annabelle Kavanagh Senior Clinical Research Worker
- Ms Ratnesh Gilhotra Clinical Trial Coordinator
- Mr Cedric Hensman Systems Database Officer
- Mrs Glenys Standley Clinical Research Worker
- Dr Kristen Barratt Post Doctoral Research Scientist
- Ms Kate West Research Exercise Physiologist
- 5 current PhD students

Key Collaborators

- College of Medicine & Dentistry, James Cook University
- AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK) project:
 - St Vincent's Research Institute (Jonathan Oakhill and Sandra Garlic)

Metformin Aneurysm Trial (MAT) project:

- University of Otago (Greg Jones)
- University of Leicester (Matt Bown)
- The George Institute for Global Health (Bruce Neal)

Diabetes-related foot disease:

- La Trobe University (Byron Perrin)
- QUT (Pete Lazzarini)
- University of Newcastle (Viv Chuter)
- Baylor College of Medicine (Bijan Najafi)
- University of Southern California (David Armstrong)
- Amsterdam UMC (Jaap Van Netten)
- University of the Sunshine Coast (Chris Askew)
- University of Queensland (Sonia Shah)
- University of New South Wales (Belinda Parmenter)

Conference Presentations / Papers

Best methods to achieve smoking cessation: Challenging but worthwhile. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. Translating Guidelines into Practice: Global Vascular Guideline on the Management of Patients with CLTI 2022.

Risk of major amputation in patients with intermittent claudication undergoing early revascularisation. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. Charing Cross Symposium 2022.

Effect of telmisartan on AAA rupture risk assessed through peak wall stress in a randomised trial. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. 70TH ESCVS CONGRESS & 7TH IMAD MEETING 2022.

Athero-occlusive disease and AAA progression- what is the relationship? Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. 70TH ESCVS CONGRESS & 7TH IMAD MEETING 2022.

Unrealised potential of intensive low density lipoprotein- cholesterol reduction in patients with small AAA. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. 70TH ESCVS CONGRESS & 7TH IMAD MEETING 2022.

Metformin aneurysm trial. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. 2022 Sino-Australia Global Health and Tropical Medicine Symposium.

The potential for secondary prevention of diabetes-related foot disease. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. Wounds Australia 2022 Conference.

Latest Vascular Research. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. Royal Australasian Congress 2022.

Ongoing clinical trials aimed to improve outcome of vascular disease. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. Queensland Vascular Audit 2022.

Queensland Cardiovascular Research Network (QCVRN) - CQU/JCU Research Showcase. Golledge J. Conference Convenor. 2022.

Assessment of technical safety and PICO. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. PASC sub-committee of the Medical Services Advisory Committee 2022.

Trials to develop drugs for abdominal aortic aneurysm. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. Vascular Clinical Trials 2023.

Metformin aneurysm trial. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. Singapore Vascular Conference 2023.

Burden and prevention of diabetes-related foot disease in North Queensland. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. DFA 2023 Conference.

Recent developments in peripheral vascular diseases. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences Conference 2023.

OPTIMAL management of PAD: Time for a holistic approach in Australia. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. ANZSVS 2023 Conference.

Update on research to develop new medical therapies for ischemia driven diabetes-related foot disease. Golledge J. Invited Speaker. 9th International Symposium on Diabetic Foot 2023.

Secondary prevention for people at risk of diabetes-related foot disease (DFD). Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. 9th International Symposium on Diabetic Foot 2023.

Bony adventures in abdominal aortic aneurysm. Golledge J. Keynote Speaker. 2023 Heart-To-Vessel Research Showcase.

Orthopaedic Research Institute of Queensland (ORIQL)

In 2023, ORIQL continued to focus its research efforts on producing outcomes directly relating to clinical care and enhancing patient outcomes in the regional community. The research output was centred around the completion of various prospective projects leveraging assistive technologies to support surgery in the field of robotic surgery, with again, specific emphasis on improving patient outcomes. Additionally, ORIQL utilized the extensive Databank for conducting retrospective trials to support evidence-based research.

The findings from ORIQL's research publications highlighted the pivotal role of evidence-based research in shaping clinical practice and guiding decision-making processes to ensure the optimal delivery and enhancement of the quality of care provided to patients. By translating research findings into actionable insights, ORIQL aimed to drive positive impacts on patient outcomes.

Members successfully showcased their research findings at various prestigious international and national Orthopaedic meetings, including Isakos, Royal North Shore Shoulder Symposium and the AOA ASM, further disseminating the knowledge gained from our regional outpost. Associate Prof Hazratwala contributed to online tutorials and info sessions via digital media, topics included: Greater Trochanteric Bursa Injection; Navigated Total Knee Replacement with Individual Compartment Tensioners (Full Surgical Technique).

Key Researchers

- Dr Peter McEwen (Director)
- Assoc Prof. Kaushik Hazratwala (Director)
- Dr Matthew Wilkinson (Director)
- Dr Levi Morse (Director)
- Dr Michael Boland (Associate Member)
- Dr Andrew Stillwell (Associate Member)
- Dr Ben Parkinson (Associate Member)
- Dr William O'Callaghan (Associate Member)
- Dr Pamela Boekel (Associate Member)
- Dr Brent Matthews (Associate Member)
- Dr Finlea Cusack (Associate Member)
- Dr Scott LeRossignol (Associate Member)
- Dr Isaac Ong (Associate Member)
- Dr Kenji Doma (Associate Member)
- Andrea Grant (Research and Fellowships Coordinator)
- Dr Alexander Mitrichev
- Dr Constantin Dlaska,

Key Collaborators

- Dr Kenji Doma collaborated with James Cook University Heart Trauma Sepsis Laboratory (Prof Geoffrey Dobson, Dr Hayley Letson, Dr Jodie Morris)
- Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine, James Cook University
- Associate Professor Sergio Barroso-Rosa, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria; Dr Petros Ismailidis Basel University

Conference Presentations / Papers

Dr Alexander Mitrichev, Australian Orthopaedic Association Queensland Branch –Annual Scientific Meeting June 2023. Randomised controlled trial of tourniquet associated pain generated in lower limb after exsanguination by Esmarch bandage versus leg elevation.

Dr Peter McEwen Short stay total knee arthroplasty. Zimmer-biomet Optimised Recovery Roadshow, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane February 2023

Dr Peter McEwen The PCL and Medially Constrained Bearings: Zimmer-Biomet Knee Excellence webinar, April 2023; Bearing Options: Zimmer-Biomet Knee Excellence webinar, April 2023

Dr Peter McEwen The Zimmer-Biomet Digital Ecosystem. Society of Robotic Surgery Annual Meeting, Melbourne, May 2023

Dr Peter McEwen Preoperative Planning for Robotic-assisted TKA. Zimmer-Biomet ROSA Knee Instructional Course, Sydney, June 2023

Dr Peter McEwen Incorporating ROSA, My Mobility and Ortho-intel into my Practice. Zimmer-Biomet ROSA Knee Instructional Course, Sydney, June 2023

Dr Peter McEwen The Benefits of joint registry. ISAKOS World Congress, Boston, June 2023

Dr Peter McEwen How to Deal With the Extensor Mechanism to Improve Range of Motion. ISAKOS World Congress Boston, June 2023

Dr Peter McEwen Battle of the Robots (ROSA). ISAKOS World Congress, Boston, June 2023

Dr Peter McEwen A Medial Pivot Negative TTG Offset at Ninety Degrees of Knee Flexion. ISAKOS World Congress, Boston June 2023

Dr Peter McEwen Staying out of Trouble with Kinematic Alignment RCOST meeting, Pattaya Thailand, Sep 2023

Dr Peter McEwen Posterior Tibial Slope Correction and Revision ACL Reconstruction. RCOST Meeting, Pattaya Thailand, Sep 2023

Dr Peter McEwen Invited lecture. Tibial Tuberosity Osteotomy. AOA ASM Melbourne, Oct 2023

Dr Peter McEwen Functional Kinematic TKA Using the Subtraction Principle and the Effect of Alignment and Laxity Restriction Boundaries on CPAK Morphotype. AOA ASM, Melbourne Oct 2023

Dr Peter McEwen Surgically Modifiable Skeletal and Soft Tissue Variables and the Medial Pivot of the Knee AOA ASM, Oct 2023

Dr Peter McEwen Adenosine, Lidocaine and Magnesium (ALM) therapy modulates early sex-specific inflammatory and immune responses following experimental anterior cruciate ligament rupture and reconstruction. AKS ASM Cape Schanck, Nov 2023

Dr Peter McEwen Surgically Modifiable Skeletal and Soft Tissue Variables and the Medial Pivot of the Knee AKS ASM, Cape Schanck, Nov 2023

Dr Levi Morse Shoulder arthroscopic cadaveric lab workshop Arthrex Brisbane

Dr Levi Morse Rotator Cuff Advance Healing Solutions: Faculty Expert Forum, Singapore; Arthrex Innovations in Shoulder Arthroscopy Course, Adelaide Faculty Member;

Charles Hayward (supervised by Dr Matthew Wilkinson) presented ORIQL study Lateral knee incision paper (this paper won VOF (Victorian Orthopaedic Foundation award), AOA VIC ASM Feb 2023

Charles Hayward (supervised by Dr Matthew Wilkinson) presented ORIQL study Lateral knee incision paper, AOA Tas ASM Feb 2023

Dr Hugh McKay Combined PRP/HA intra-articular injections for hip and knee OA, early experience

Dr Matthew Wilkinson What does the registry tell us about hip dislocation in Total Hip Joint Replacement (THJR)?

Dr Matthew Wilkinson - Spinopelvic analysis in a consecutive series of 100 patients.

Connor Greatbatch - Case series of hip dislocations in THJR. Analysis of surgical and patient factors

Critical Care Research Group

The Critical Care Research Group was involved in the following studies in 2023:

Multi-centre International Projects:

1. ANZ PARK-PICU study, Prevalence of Acute Rehab for Kids in the PICU
2. KIDS THRIVE project
3. RAPIDS project
4. FEISTY Junior
5. PROMPT BOLUS (via PREDICT network)
6. Clip II study
7. PREDICT TBI Study
8. NOTACS study

Key Researchers

- Siva Senthuran
- Arjun Chavan
- Sananta Dash
- April Win
- Stephen Whebell
- Lachlan Quick
- Jonna Longley
- Sutrisno Gunawan
- Soon Teoh

Collaborator	Research projects in Intensive Care Unit (Adult) at TUH Ongoing Multicentre Trials
Jamieson Trauma Institute and UQ RBWH CSIRO	PREDICT TBI A multi centre MRFF funded study being run from the Jamieson Trauma Institute and UQ (with Dr Siva Senthuran as the PI). The study aims to develop a prognostic model for traumatic brain injury patients using novel biomarkers and MRI imaging at various time points after the injury. The study funds a 0.5FTE research co-ordinator position which enables us screen and recruit patients.
ANZICS Research Centre RBWH	CLIP 2 This study being run from the ANZICS Research Centre in Melbourne (with Dr April Win as PI) aims to compare the suitability of frozen platelets against conventional liquid platelets in the treatment of bleeding after cardiac surgery. If the study shows equivalence, patients in remote locations who are bleeding can be treated with thawed frozen platelets which would normally not be available there. Dr Win and her team have been recognised nationally as the second highest recruiting centre for the study at the ANZICS CTG meeting in Noosa in March 2023. They have also been invited to Melbourne to share their experiences in running the study.

Fiona Stanley Hospital Perth The George Institute Sydney	The NOTACS study (Dr Sananta Dash as PI) seeks to explore the impact of nasal high flow oxygen in preventing pulmonary complications after cardiac surgery. A substudy is upskilling an Indigenous research assistant and aims to explore the themes of 'consent' and 'home' amongst Indigenous patients undergoing cardiac surgery. This study is about to commence having received approvals. This study is also funded through the MRFF.
Fiona Stanley Hospital Perth The George Institute Sydney	The CONSENT Study: A substudy is upskilling an Indigenous research assistant and aims to explore the themes of 'consent' and 'home' amongst Indigenous patients undergoing cardiac surgery. This study is also funded through the MRFF.
John Hunter Hospital	REACT Shock RCT: This is a MRCT that looks at the effect of individualised blood pressure targets versus standard care among critically ill patients with shock. This is a MRFF funded trial. The CI for this trial is A/Prof Rakshit Panwar (John Hunter Hospital) and the PI is Dr Sananta Dash
ANZICS (The Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society)	ANZICS-PROEMs: The Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society - Patient Reported Outcome and Experience Measures (ANZICS-PROEMs) Pilot Feasibility Study- This is multicentre pilot study conducted by the ANZICS looking at feasibility of measuring outcomes and experiences of patients admitted to ICU. The CI for the study is Prof David Pilcher and the PI is Dr Joanna Longley
ANZICS (The Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society)	ARISE Fluids: This is an ANZICS CTG multicentre study (Chief Investigator Prof Sandra Peake, QE2 hospital, Adelaide and PI is Dr Emma Wawn in Emergency Dept & AI is Dr Siva Senthuran in ICU) that aims to compare the effect of a strategy of restricted fluids and early introduction of vasopressors to a strategy which involves a larger initial volume of intravenous fluid and later vasopressor administration if required, for haemodynamic resuscitation of patients with early septic shock.
Associate Professor Neal W Pollock, Department of Kinesiology, Faculty of Medicine Université Laval, Québec, QC, Canada	DCIEM dive computer algorithm field monitoring project: Drs Sutrisno Gunawan (Principal investigator-TUH ICU), Denise Blake (TUH ED/Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine) and Associate Professor Neal W Pollock conducted a field investigation of the risk of venous gas embolism and decompression sickness of the novel DCIEM algorithm installed in a dive computer

Upcoming Studies

Collaborator	Research projects in Intensive Care Unit (Adult) at TUH Ongoing Multicentre Trials
ANZICS	SODA-BIC Study: SODium BICarbonate for Metabolic Acidosis in the Intensive Care Unit (SODa-BIC): A multicentre, randomised, double-blind clinical trial
The George Institute	FLASH Study: A prospective, blinded, randomised clinical trial of fludrocortisone compared with placebo in critically ill patients presenting with aneurysmal subarachnoid haemorrhage
Multiple Centres including Monash health, Austin health	The PORTHOS study: A Prospective angiotensin vs. noradrenaline Trial for Hypotension management to reduce length Of hospital stay in Cardiac Surgery
The University of Sydney, NHMRC	DECIDE Trial : Dexmedetomidine in Cardiac surgical Intraoperative Drug Evaluation (DECIDE)
Nepean Hospital Sydney	Remi-Fent1 study: This is a multicentre pilot study assessing (Chief Investigator Dr Arvind Rajamani Nepean Hospital Sydney, PI is Dr Lachlan Quick in ICU) if Remifentanyl sedation when compared to Fentanyl is associated with decreased ICU length of stay and delirium.

Conference Presentations / Papers

Dr Sutrisno Gunawan: *The use of echocardiography for hemodynamic compromise – learning points.*
14th Annual Meeting of the Indonesian Society of Intensive Care Medicine. Pekanbaru, Riau – Indonesia.
September 2023



TUH leads Australia in recruitment to a frozen platelet trial

Townsville University Hospital (TUH) is one of 12 Australian hospitals participating in a trial investigating whether cryopreserved (frozen) blood platelets are as effective as conventional liquid-stored platelets for transfusions.

Cryopreservation was developed by the US Navy and has been used in conflict zones, including Afghanistan, to treat Australian soldiers.

The CLIP-II trial aims to determine whether the storage of platelets can be revolutionised worldwide.

Townsville-based principal investigator and TUH intensive care specialist Dr April Win said the trial had huge implications for regional health services such as Townsville and those in north and western Queensland for the treatment of bleeding patients.

“Fresh platelets only last less than a week which is a challenge for rural and remote areas where there is no platelet blood bank storing fresh platelets for use in transfusions,” April said. “Freezing platelets with a cryoprotectant extends the shelf life for up to two years. “Initial trials have shown freezing the platelets for use has been effective, but more rigorous testing in a hospital environment needs to be completed before it can be embedded in normal practice. “This is what CLIP-II is looking to achieve and as a health service which understands the implications this may have for our rural and regional patients, we’re proud to be participating.”

Clinical nurse Tiki Baker-Pearson has been working with April to recruit eligible patients. Early in 2023, TUH managed to reach a milestone with 50 patients recruited to participate in the trial and became the top recruiter in Australia. “The trial requires a specific number of patients to ensure there is enough evidence and data collected. “We’ve really been punching above our weight in Townsville and we’re really proud of this.”

CLIP-II is a blinded randomised controlled trial and April and Tiki work closely with the transfusion team in pathology to ensure the randomisation, logistics and processes of the trial are followed. A team of laboratory scientists which includes transfusion supervisor Carly Brown and medical scientist Tennille Rice are responsible for reconstituting and supplying the platelets used in the trial. “Importantly, only patients with a genuine need for a transfusion during their surgery can participate and receive the platelets during their surgery,” Carly said. “If the patient requires them urgently, they receive liquid platelets, and the person is then not included in the final trial results.”

The CLIP-II trial is funded by the Australian Government, supported by the Australian Defence Force and is being conducted by the Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Research Centre at Monash University in collaboration with the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood, and participating hospitals such as TUH.

Persistent Pain

Key Researchers

Shereen Gilmore – Principal Investigator / Senior Psychologist

Key Collaborators

Blake F Dear and Nickolai Titov - eCentreClinic, School of Psychological Sciences, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia.

Conference Presentations / Papers

Manuscript has been submitted to Journal of Pain (Manuscript Number: JPAIN-D-24-00178 – response received with review comments with recommendations currently being addressed and due 9/6/24.

Internet-delivered psychological pain management: Examining routine care delivery by a specialist regional multidisciplinary pain service.

New research projects approved in 2023 – Surgical Service Group

Principal Investigators	Department	Study Title
Dr Manuel Yuhico	Urology	Prostate Cancer Outcomes Registry - QLD: Statement of Compliance (PCOR - QLD)
Professor Usman Malabu	Diabetes & Endocrinology Vascular Neurology Podiatry	PREVENT-DFU Prevention of Recurrence of Diabetic Foot Ulcer
Dr Bobby John	Cardiology	MICRA ACUTE PERFORMANCE - Product Surveillance Registry (PSR)
Professor Jonathan Golledge (JCU/THHS)	Vascular Surgery	The TELe-Artery trial: TEAL
Professor Jonathan Golledge	Vascular Surgery	The Supervised Home-based exercise progrAm for Peripheral artery disease trial: SHAPE
Dr Margot Bosanquet	Neonatology Medical Imaging	Pilot testing the clinical audit and implementation of neonatal brain MRI for North-Queensland infants at high-risk for adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes
Dr Emma Whyte	Emergency Paediatric Intensive Care Unit	Balanced Fluid Resuscitation to Decrease Kidney Injury in Children with Septic Shock : PROMPT Bolus
Miss Cassie Lanskey	Pharmacy	Surgical Pre-admission Pharmacists Updating and Planning Home Medications Within a Newly Rolled-Out Electronic Prescribing Platform
Miss Liane Barnes	Respiratory & Sleep Cardiology	Heart or Lungs? Can Quality spirometry in Townsville University Hospital acute care cardiac patients
Dr Matan Ben David	General Surgery Radiology	SCANPatient: Synoptic reporting of CT scans assessing cancer of the pancreas. A stepped-wedge randomised controlled trial

Dr Manuel Yuhico	Urology	Detection of Urothelial Carcinoma and the Monitoring for Recurrence of Urothelial Carcinoma Using the “Cxbladder” Test: An Observational Study
Mrs Sonya Schonfeldt-Roy	Physiotherapy Intensive Care Unit	MOVIN in ICU An observational study of Mobilisation On Vasopressors & INotropes in intensive care
Mr Thomas Faulder	Medical Imaging Cardiology	Utility of CT Coronary Angiography (CTCA) and Coronary Artery Calcium (CAC) scoring as non-invasive tests for predicting major adverse cardiac events



Women's and Children's Service Group

Women's and Children's Service Group

Research Groups – Women's and Children's Service Group

Perinatal Research Group

Perinatal research teams actively participated in a variety of research projects, quality activities, and national collaboratives during 2023. Impressively, the neonatal team completed their NMHRC-funded KIDMAN study in October with a recruitment total of 345 women/babies and successfully secured funding/ research coordinators for two more studies. Maternity services teams implemented plans to reduce preterm/ early-term births and unnecessary planned births. Dr Mary Ghazawy progressed a study to predict outcomes in infants receiving contemporary treatment for hypoxic Ischaemic encephalopathy.

Key Researchers

- Dr Yogavijayan Kandasamy, Principal investigator
- Dr Kendall George, Principal investigator
- Dr David Watson, Principal investigator
- Dr Cecelia O'Brien, Principal investigator/ Co-investigator
- Dr Susan Ireland, Principal investigator/ Co-investigator
- Dr Mary Ghazawy, Co-investigator
- Ms Annemarie Lawrence, Clinical Research Coordinator / Midwife Researcher
- Ms Helena McInnes, Clinical Research Coordinator
- Mrs Nicole Clapham, Clinical Research Coordinator
- Ms Chloe Sobieralski, Clinical Research Coordinator
- Mrs Simone Scully, Clinical Research Coordinator

Key Collaborators

- Dr Sonja Brennan, THHS
- Dr Andrew White, THHS
- Ms Cherie Boniface, THHS
- Ms Audra Davis, THHS
- Ms Corrine Dickinson, THHS
- Ms Katie Mandell, THHS
- Ms Sheree Menon, THHS
- Prof Yvonne Cadet-James, JCU
- Dr Meegan Kilcullen, JCU
- A Prof. Donna Rudd, JCU
- Dr Stephanie Baker, JCU

Collaborating Institutions

- Australian Preterm Prevention Alliance
- College of Healthcare Sciences, James Cook University, Townsville, Australia
- College of Medicine and Dentistry, James Cook University, Townsville, Australia
- Hunter Medical Research Institute, University of Newcastle
- Indigenous Health, Mater Research Institute
- Liggins Institute, University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand
- Maternal Fetal Medicine Research, The University of Melbourne, Australia
- NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Stillbirth, Mater Research Institute and University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
- School of Medicine, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia
- School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine, University of the Sunshine Coast, Sippy Downs, Australia.
- The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
- Women's Healthcare Australasia (WHA)

Active recruitment/implementation

- C*STEROID Trial: Corticosteroids before planned caesarean section from 35+0 to 39+6 weeks of pregnancy.
- Every Week Counts National Preterm Birth Prevention Collaborative
- Induction of labour working party
- KIDMAN study: The Relationship between Maternal Health and Infant Renal Development and Function
- Stronger Families Study: Health Research Priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families of Queensland
- TOB study: Stillbirth risk assessment and shared decision making around timing of birth: pilot evaluation. A sub-study of the Safer Baby Bundle Initiative.

Successful research grants

- The Role of cot side camera in promoting breastfeeding and Providing family-centred Care for surgical neonates (\$140,000)
- Monitoring renal perfusion non-invasively in preterm neonates using near infrared spectroscopy (NIRS) (\$29,999)

Conference Presentations

- Dr Mary Ghazawy presented at the Mater Newborn Research Symposium: 1st June 2023 Presentation title: *Predicting Outcomes in Infants Receiving Contemporary Treatment for Hypoxic Ischaemic Encephalopathy*
- Dr Sonja Brennan presented at the TropIQ Townsville Research Symposium 2023. Presentation title: *The Relationship between Maternal Health and Infant Kidney Development and Function in an Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Population*





My name is: Avio
Parents: Jaqueline & Adam Sex: Male
Date of birth: 11/04/2024 Time: 2027
Weight (kg): 3.25 Length (cm): 51
Head circumference (cm): 36.5
Midwife/Doctor: _____
Congratulations from the
Australian College of Midwives

**AngelEye brings parents
of tiny bubs peace of mind**

Following the successful trial of a cot-based webcam that allowed parents to live stream their babies 24/7 from Townsville University Hospital's neonatal unit, the hospital has now secured funding to establish the innovation permanently.

In 2018-19, in partnership with CSIRO, Optus and James Cook University (JCU), neonatologist Professor Yoga Kandasamy led a pilot study to trial cot-based webcam technology enabling parents to remotely access live video of their babies in the Townsville University Hospital's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). Known as Babycam, the Australian-first project enabled parents of babies receiving neonatal care to view their babies 24/7 using a smartphone App, relieving some of the anxiety caused by physical separation and helping to reduce financial cost that parents living remotely from the hospital would otherwise incur in having to travel long distances to see their babies.

In most cases babies admitted to NICUs are with the units for a long time, sometimes many months. NICUs routinely care for babies whose families come from regional, rural and remote areas, often significant distances from the hospital in which the NICU is based. While parents of sick babies find it very hard to leave their babies for any period of time, it is often not possible for them to be present all day every day particularly if they have other children, jobs, competing responsibilities at home, if they live a long distance from the hospital, or if they develop infections that their babies need to be protected from. This is very wearing on families.

Specialist neonatologist Professor Yoga Kandasamy was behind the original pilot and research project.

'Our babies are often with us for a long time and that is very wearing on families, emotionally and physically,' he said.

'The Babycams are removing the physical barriers that separate families from their pre-term and unwell babies, reducing parental anxiety and giving families peace of mind.'

Neonatal clinical nurse Simone Scully said the cameras had delivered more than 1,000 hours of live streaming to around 200 families.

'We have families that are here for months at a time,' she said.

'One mum said that they log in and they read a bedtime story with their other children while watching baby on the camera.



New research projects approved in 2023

Women's and Children's Service Group

Principal Investigators	Department	Study Title
Dr Julian Wong	Emergency Paediatrics	Sustaining improvements in the management of infants with bronchiolitis – a PREDICT study Short title: Bronchiolitis KT Sustainability Study)
Ms Gemma Bates	Child Development Services	A Qualitative Exploration of Child Development Clinical Practice: Conceptualising and integrating social perspectives within assessments of developmental and behavioural functioning in children.
Dr Inge Putri	Obstetrics & Gynaecology	pRophylactic utErosacral suspension AT Total lAparoscopiC Hysterectomy and the risk of prolapse occurrence – a randomised controlled trial (REATTACH)
Professor Cate Nagle	Women's Services Community Services	Harnessing technology in labour and birth for women with an increased BMI
Dr Margot Bosanquet	Neonatology Medical Imaging	Pilot testing the clinical audit and implementation of neonatal brain MRI for North-Queensland infants at high-risk for adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes
Dr Tara Paul	Oral Health	Queensland Child Oral Health Study 2021 - 2024 Short Title: Contemporary evidence for water fluoridation program - a before and after population based study. Acronym: QCOHS
Ms Carly Hislop	Child Development Service	A tiered approach to the diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in remote Indigenous primary care settings Title as listed on SSA: A tiered approach to neurodevelopmental assessment in health care settings Acronym: DATAforFASD
Dr Cecelia O'Brien	Obstetrics & Gynaecology Maternal Fetal Medicine	The C*STEROID Trial. Antenatal corticosteroids prior to planned caesarean section delivery from 35+0 to 39+6 weeks gestation; a randomised controlled trial assessing the effects on neonatal respiratory morbidity and glycaemic control. Short Title: The C*STEROID Study: Corticosteroids before planned caesarean section from 35+0 to 39+6 weeks of pregnancy. Acronym: The C*STEROID Trial
Associate Professor Robert Justo	Paediatrics	Evaluating outcomes from the current implementation of the CHD LIFE model of care versus traditional centralised models of care in Queensland Short Title: CHD LIFE+ Project Protocol 2

Ms Nicole Clapham	Neonatal Unit	Cultural Competency Training for Neonatal Nurses
Dr Kendall George	Women's Services	Stillbirth risk assessment and shared decision making around timing of birth: pilot evaluation. A sub-study of the Safer Baby Bundle Initiative.
Mr John Morey	Townsville Prisoner Health Services	National Prisons Hepatitis Education Project (HepPEd): Research Evaluation
Dr Andrew White	Paediatric intensive Care Unit Rural Facilities: Ayr, Ingham, Charters Towers, Joyce Palmer	A Paediatric Acute Respiratory Study (PARIS), PARIS on Country - A Multicentre Science Implementation Study Short Title: PARIS on Country
Dr Cecelia O'Brien	Obstetrics & Gynaecology Cardiology	A retrospective analysis of cardiac deterioration in women with Rheumatic Heart Disease during childbearing years. Short Title: Rheumatic Heart Disease and Pregnancy
Dr Kurinji Kannan	Obstetrics & Gynaecology	Australasian Pelvic Floor Procedure Registry Acronym: APFPR

Human Research Ethics Committee

THHS HREC pivoted into new territory mid-year, when July saw an announcement by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) that Psychedelic Assisted Therapy (PAT) would be available for sufferers of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Treatment Resistant Depression (TRD) under the Authorised Prescribers Scheme (APS). With an unexpected stipulation from the TGA that the prescribing psychiatrist be endorsed by an accredited HREC prior to applying to the APS.

The TGA acknowledged that “as a developing field, there is no clarity on protocols with regard to optimum dose, duration of treatment, or accompanying psychotherapy”. They provided no guidance for HREC application review, and so HRECs were left with the task of developing review guidelines/protocols/procedures.

Our committee, mindful of Townsville’s unique standing as Australia’s garrison city and the impact PTSD and TRD has on our veteran community, was keen to prioritise development of a pathway to aid this endorsement process. Whilst acknowledging that PAT is in its infancy in Australia, and currently only lends itself to the resources offered in private treatment centres, THHS HREC was aware that it is only likely to be implemented as standard of care and subsidised by Medicare in the future if the effectiveness of its use in private practice is well documented and published.

To this end, the THHS HREC made the decision to require all applicants to submit not only for permission to treat, but also as Phase IV Clinical Research. This gives us several advantages:

Since this is a new and emerging, dynamic health care activity, it is important to capture new evidence of what works and what doesn’t. Also, we are a Research Ethics Committee, not a Clinical Ethics Committee, so this fits better in our framework and provides indemnity provisions for the HREC and THHS.

We identified international centres carrying out psychedelic prescriptions, and sought their advice and collaboration, to good effect. These included The Psychedelic Research & Therapy Development Department, Psychiatric University Hospital Zurich, which has been engaged in psychedelic treatment since 1985, and the Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard University Center for the Neuroscience of Psychedelics, which, while only engaged in psychedelic treatment in a research framework, not as health care practice, has emerged as a leader in this field. I made site visits to both centres in September, and gained a valuable trove of tips, tricks, and knowledge.

A working group of THHS HREC members with expertise in medication safety, pharmacy, and mental health treatment provided advice on internal processes.

We have established an expert review panel in-house to review and comment on applications before they come to the full HREC.

At the culmination of this process, our Coordinator, Kelly Parker, developed a guidance document; Psychedelic Assisted Therapy (PAT) Authorised Prescriber Application Pathways, for our HREC reviews, and this is being used to advise applicants and to evaluate applications.

While not currently available locally, If PAT continues to show effectiveness, and if it reaches a state where it is covered under Medicare or other coverage schemes, it could provide great benefit to some local patient populations in the future.

Toward the end of 2023 THHS HREC Coordinator collaborated with the Executive Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services and the Indigenous Health Coordinator to improve the pathway for THHS researchers to engage with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leadership Advisory Council (ATSIHLAC). The new Pre-ASTIHLAC Submission Form is distributed by the HREC Coordinator to THHS Researchers wishing to focus on research involving First Nations People as participants. The HREC coordinator now absorbs the administrative process of preparing applications to submit to ASTIHLAC, tracking the applications and serving as a direct point of contact for both ATSIHLAC and the researchers. Implementing this pathway in the past 6 months has resulted in better quality applications being presented to ATSIHLAC and a faster turnaround without overly adding to the existing competing priorities of the ATSIHLAC members and their administrative support officers.

Hudson Birden

Chair, Townsville Hospital and Health Service Human Research Ethics Committee

Human Research Ethics Committee

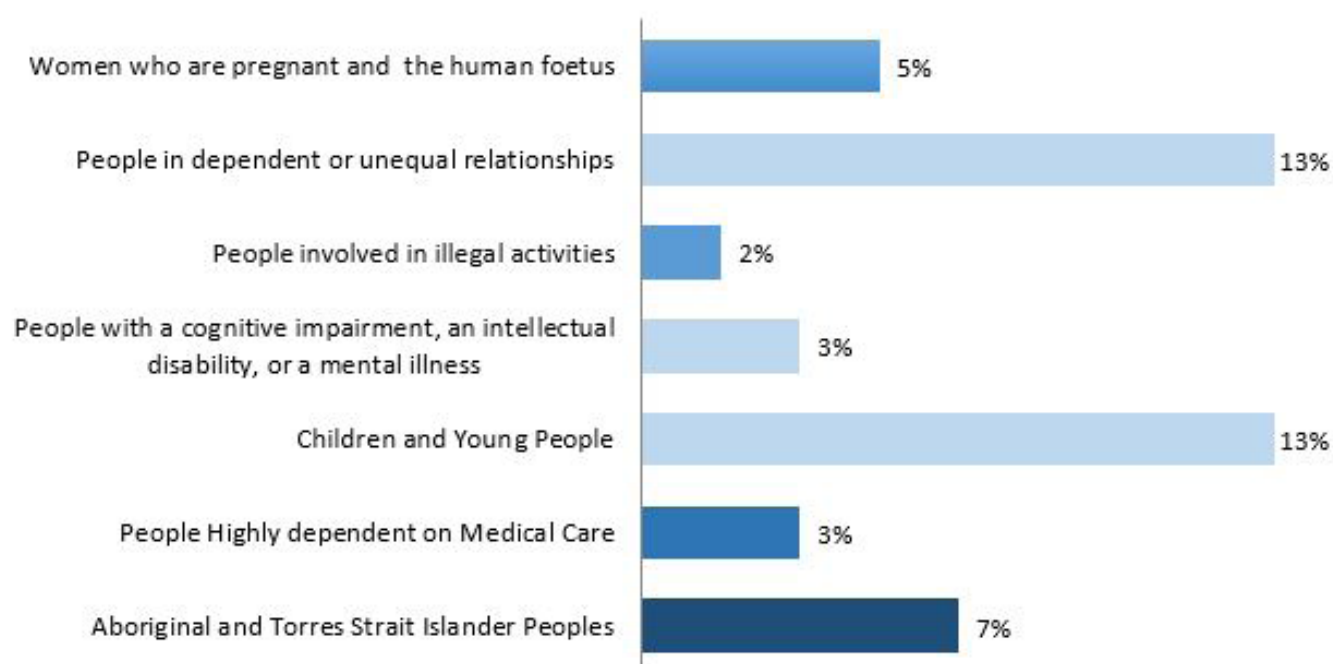
HREC Report

HREC Activity	2023 Results
Research applications received:	83 (66% low or negligible risk studies)
Research applications approved:	55
Research applications not approved:	3
Research applications withdrawn or transferred:	6
Research applications awaiting information or review:	2
Non-research endorsement requests received:	43 (14% not eligible for exemption)
Non-research endorsements granted:	35
Average response time for High-Risk applications	32 clock days (target = 60 clock days)
Average response time for Low-Risk applications	22 clock days (target = 60 clock days)

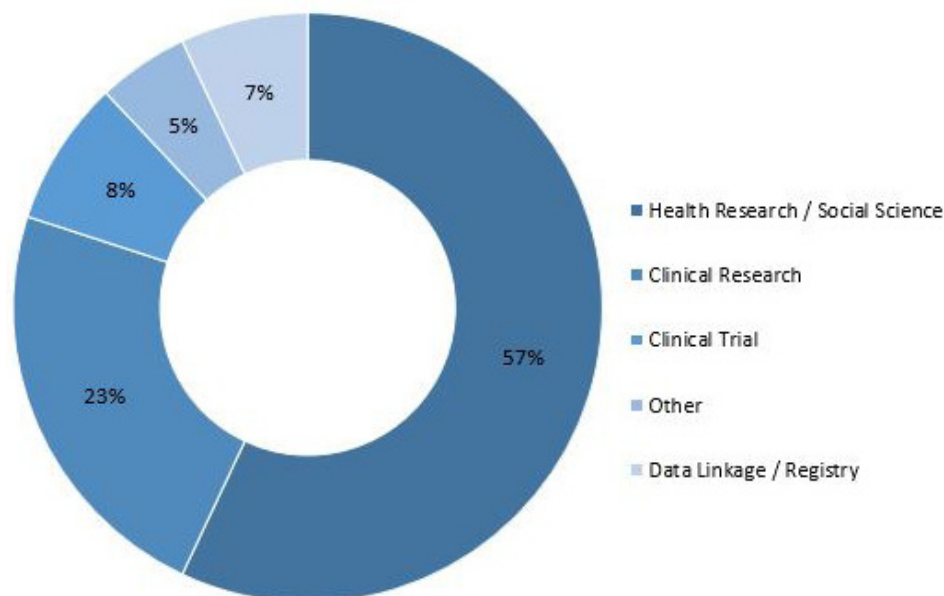
Categories of research:

Reported to the National Health and Medical Research Council

Research with sensitive population groups



Types of Research



Research Governance and Support

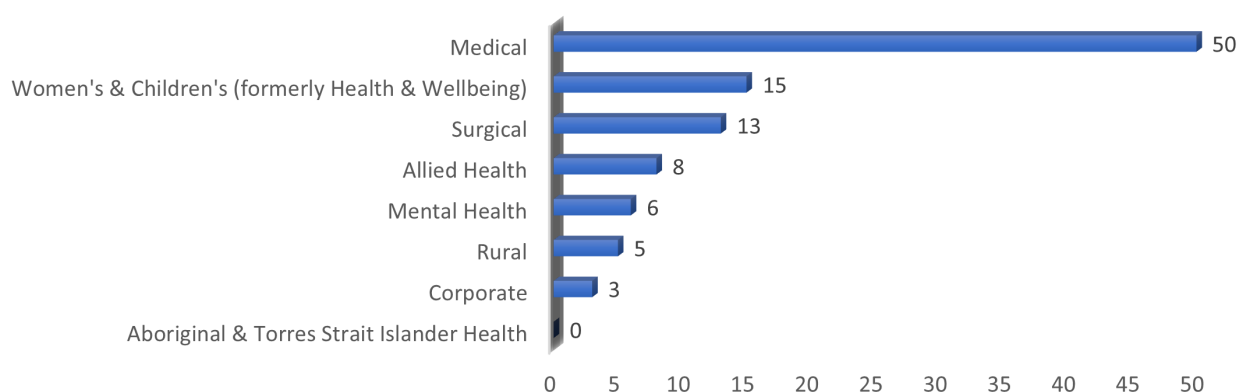
Research Governance

As at 31/12/2023 there were 673 active research studies within THHS, including 78 clinical trials.

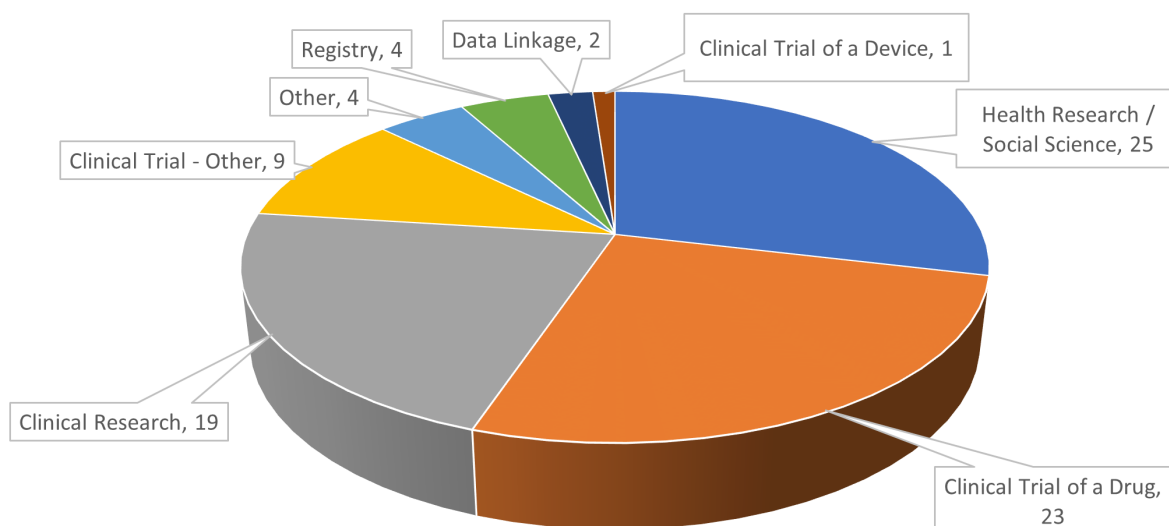
Governance Activity	2023 Results	
Research governance (SSA applications) received:	86	↓ from 105 in 2022
New research projects authorised:	87	↑ from 72 in 2022 (includes 33 clinical trials)
New Post Authorisation Notifications received	492	↑ from 387 in 2022 (target = 25 clock days)
Average response time to reach a decision on applications (clock days)	15	↓ from 26 in 2022

Studies Authorised by Service Group

(note - studies involving multiple service groups are counted against each group involved)



Studies Authorised in 2023 by Category



Major THHS research collaborators in new projects approved in 2023

- AbbVie Pty Ltd
- Alpine Immune Sciences Australia Pty Ltd
- AusAsian Mental Health Research Group (James Cook University)
- Austin Health
- Australasian Leukaemia & Lymphoma Group
- BeiGene AUS Pty Ltd
- Celgene Pty Ltd
- Central Queensland University
- Childrens Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service
- Children's Hospital Queensland
- Clinical Excellence Queensland, Office of the Chief Nurse & Midwifery Officer
- Eli Lilly Australia Pty Ltd
- Flinders University
- Fortrea Australia Pty Ltd
- Gold Coast University Hospital
- Griffith University
- ICON Clinical Research Pty Ltd
- IQVIA RDS Pty. Limited
- James Cook University
- Mackay HHS
- Mater Misericordiae Ltd
- Medtronic Australasia Pty Ltd
- Merck, Sharp & Dohme (Australia) Pty Ltd
- Monash Health
- Monash University
- Monash University - School of Public Health and Preventative Medicine
- Movember Foundation
- Murdoch Children's Research Institute
- Murdoch Children's Research Institute
- (Paediatric Research In Emergency Departments International Collaborative)
- Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute
- Peter McCallum Cancer Centre
- Phoenix Podiatry Centre
- Queensland Health, Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs (MHAODS) Branch
- Queensland Health, Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs - Strategy and Planning Branch (MHAOD-SPB)
- Queensland Health, Office of Research and Innovation (ORI)
- Queensland Health, Clinical Excellence Queensland –
- Queensland Patient Safety & Quality Improvement Service (QPSQIS)
- Queensland University of Technology
- Radiation Oncology Princess Alexandra Hospital Raymond Terrace (ROPART)
- Roche Products Pty Limited
- Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital
- Sunshine Coast University Hospital and Health Service
- The Melanoma Institute Australia, The University of Sydney
- The University of Melbourne
- The University of Queensland
- The University of Queensland acting through the Australasian Kidney Trials Network
- The University of Sydney
- The University of New South as represented by The Kirby Institute for Infection and Immunity in Society
- University of Technology Sydney
- West Morton HHS

Research Data Laboratory (RDL)

RDL Activity	2023 Results
Data service requests completed:	290
Research projects initiated:	10
Own-source revenue generated	\$450,000
Average response time to complete service requests (days)	8

The RDL was launched in late 2022 comprising staff with specialist data management skills and infrastructure, with the intent of supporting researchers in obtaining, managing and securing data required for their research.

The importance of maintaining patient privacy and confidentiality has been a key focus for the RDL over its first year of operation, and significant effort has gone into developing standards to guide governance, data acquisition, and data release pathways that ensure confidentiality is protected.

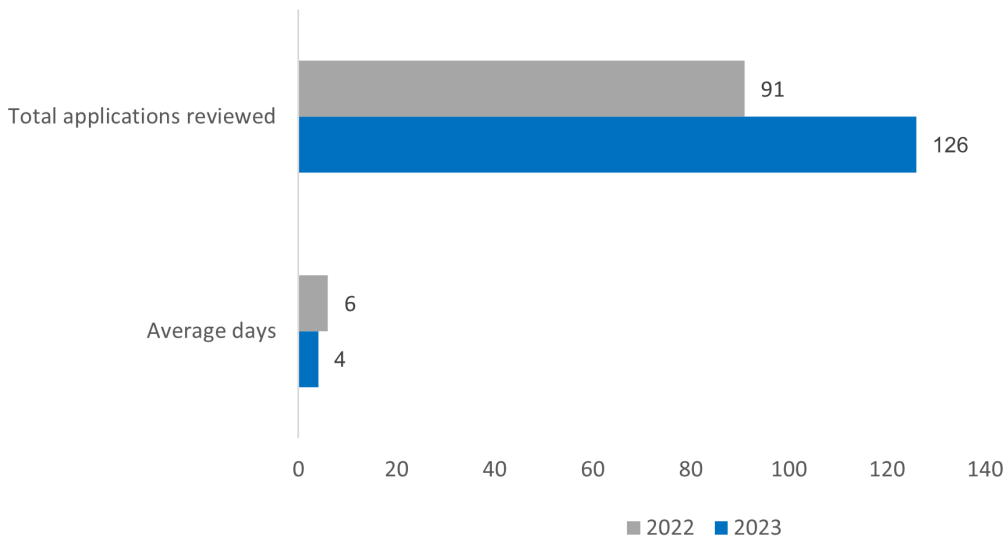
In 2023 the RDL acquired dedicated data infrastructure which was deployed within Townsville University Hospital. This infrastructure has allowed the Laboratory to provide researchers with the opportunity to access their data through a highly-secure system which is managed by the RDL team with appropriate governance oversight.

Currently the RDL has authorization to access data from systems including integrated electronic medical records (i.e., iEMR), pathology databases, patient admission systems (PAS), and intensive-care unit (ICU) clinical information systems. Investigation of access to additional systems is being explored.

Audit, Quality and Innovation Review (AQUIRE)

The THHS Healthcare Standards Unit in collaboration with the Townsville Institute of Health Research and Innovation (TIHRI) have proven their commitment to supporting safe and high-quality healthcare through the ongoing delivery of the Audit, Quality and Innovation Review (AQUIRE) process. AQUIRE provides a robust and efficient review service for quality assurance project proposals submitted by staff who intend to disseminate the findings of their project beyond Queensland Health.

The AQUIRE panel's exceptional performance and dedication to improving the quality of healthcare services has fast-tracked the approval of non-research quality improvement applications, enabling the quick commencement of important quality improvement activities, and promoting widespread dissemination and translation of project findings.

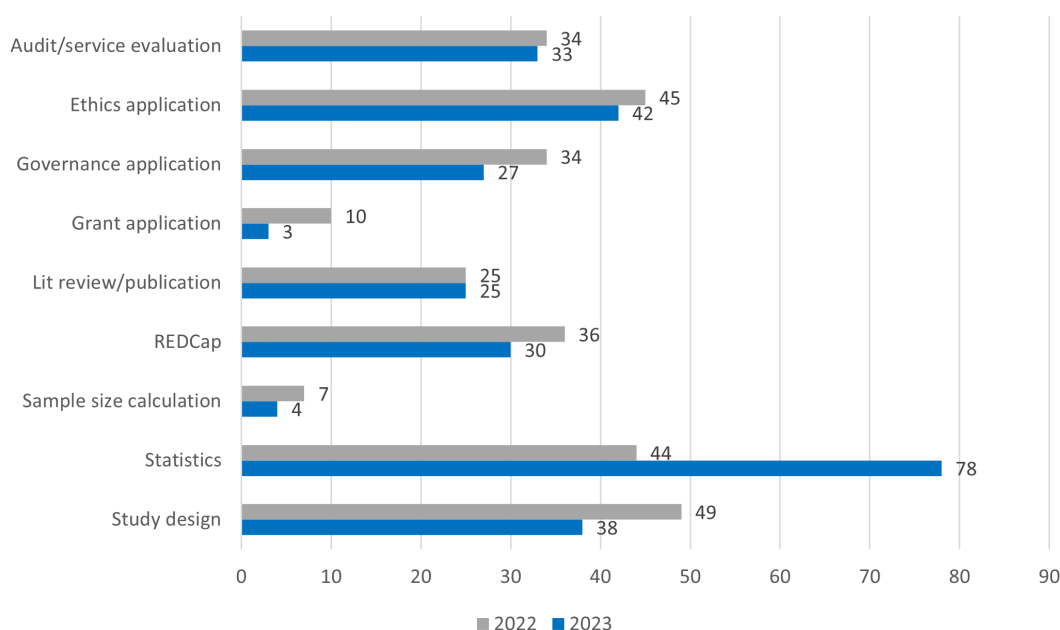


Research Support Services

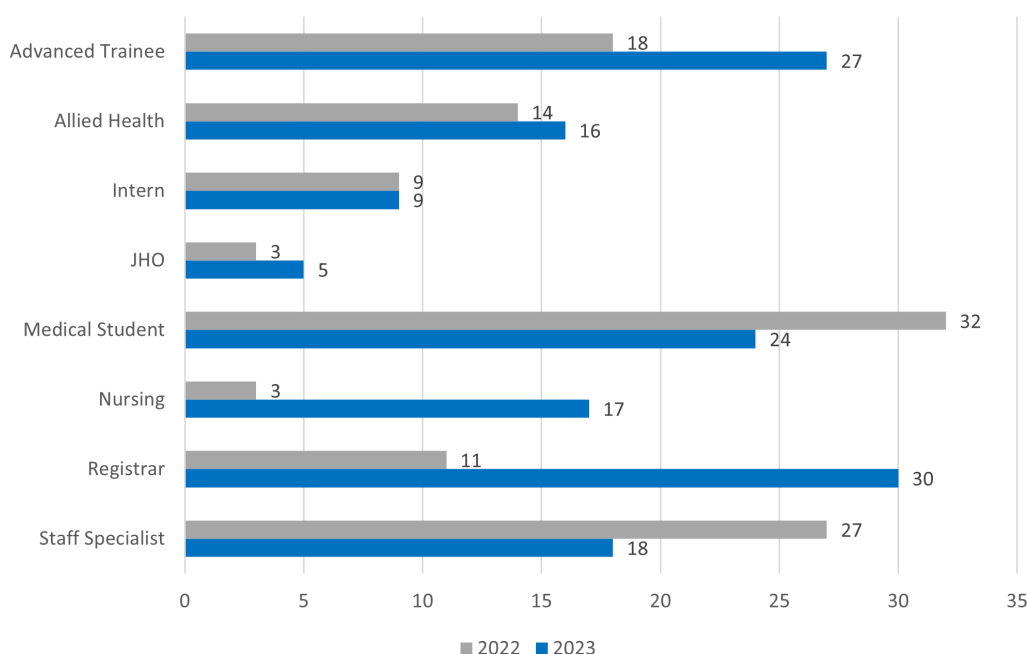
280 occasions of support were delivered to researchers in 2023. Services covered a broad range of subject areas including statistical analysis, research design, navigating the ethics and governance processes, use of survey/database tools, and assistance with grant applications, literature reviews and service evaluations.

The team provided assistance to a wider range of researchers in 2023 than in the previous year including medical students, staff specialists, allied health professionals, nurses, advanced trainees, junior house officers, interns, and registrars. Total instances of research support delivered increased 25% from 117 in 2022 to 146 in 2023.

Type of research support provided



Instances of research support provided



In partnership with our colleagues from the Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC) a series of workshops and educational activities were delivered throughout 2023 (see calendar below). The focus of workshops delivered were informed by a staff survey that was administered in early 2023 and this survey is also guiding priorities for future educational activities, ensuring that activities being offered meet the topics most widely-requested by our staff.

JAN	JCU Honours – Ethics & Gov
FEB	Orientation – PHO/REG SERTA Grant Q&A Session 1 JCU MBBS Year 3 Elective session-Basic Statistics
MAR	2-day Research Skills Course SERTA Grant Q&A Session 2 SERTA Grant Q&A Session 3 JCU MBBS Year 3 Elective session- Literature Review and Meta-analysis
APR	Survey Writing Workshop
MAY	REDCap Workshop
JUN	Effective Literature Searching and EndNote Abstract writing, Conference Presentation Skills & Poster Design Workshop
JUL	Co-Design with Consumers Workshop
AUG	1 Day Research Skills Course Effective Scientific Presentations
SEPT	Co-Design with Consumers Workshop
OCT	TropiQ Townsville Research Symposium
NOV	-
DEC	-

A photograph of the Townsville Health Library interior. The room features large windows on the left side, providing a view of greenery outside. In the foreground, there is a long wooden table surrounded by several chairs with dark blue upholstered seats and light-colored wooden frames. To the left of the table, there is a bookshelf with various books and a sign that says "NEW BOOKS". In the background, there is a desk with a computer monitor and a glass display cabinet filled with various items. The ceiling has a grid pattern with recessed lighting.

Townsville Health Library

Our Library is an integral part of the Townsville Institute of Health and Innovation, delivering a range of essential services to our research active staff including document delivery, literature searching, training and support.

Townsville Health Library

Publication Metrics

Publication Metrics*	2023 Results	
Peer reviewed publications by THHS staff	236	↓ from 274 in 2022
Field Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) – citation of THHS publications at global average or above.	1.26	↑ from 1.22 in 2022

¹Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) is the ratio of total citations (references made to a published source in subsequent publications), and the total citations that would be expected based on the global average for the subject field. By basing impact on the subject field, FWCI takes account of the differences in research activity across disciplines.

A FWCI of >1 means that the output is more cited than the global average.

For Townsville Hospital and Health Service in 2023, an FWCI of 1.26 means that publications from THHS researchers were cited 26% more than would be expected based on the global average.

% of publications in the top 10% Journal Percentile (most cited)	14.3%	↑ from 13.4% in 2022
% of publications in the top 1% Journal Percentile (most cited)	1.7%	↑ from 0.5% in 2022
% of publications that involve international collaborations	29.7%	↑ from 25.9% in 2022

* Publication metrics are sourced from SCOPUS and SciVal as at March 2023. Note, 2023 results provided are expected to increase once final 2023 data is available to report from. Final data for 2023 will not be available until June 2024.

Publications by Subject Area	Number of Publications*
Medicine	194
Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology	25
Nursing	19
Health Professions	17
Immunology and Microbiology	6
Chemical Engineering	5
Computer Science	5
Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmaceutics	5
Social Sciences	5

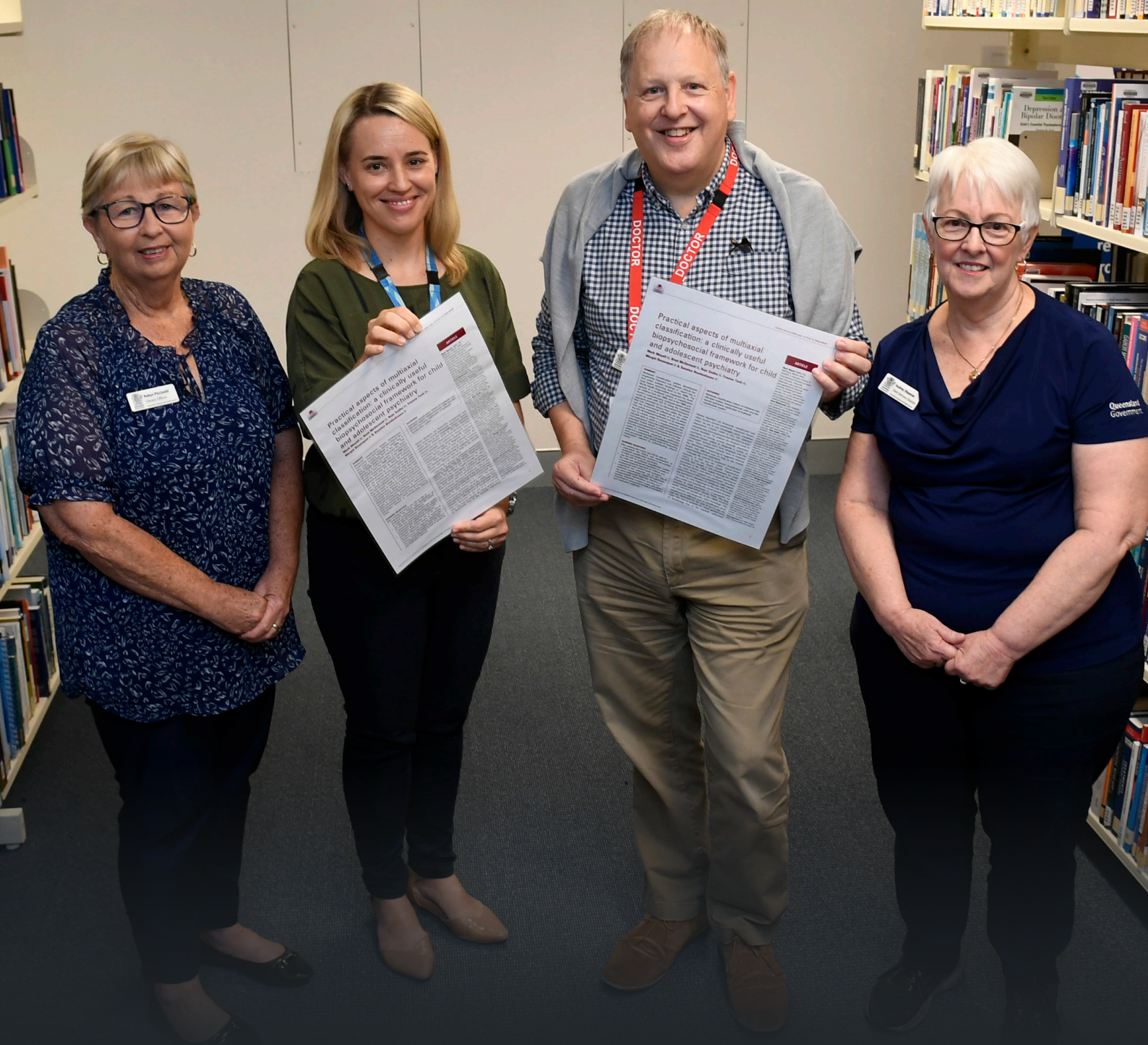
Chemistry	4
Engineering	4
Environmental Science	4
Neuroscience	4
Multidisciplinary	3
Physics and Astronomy	2
Psychology	2
Arts and Humanities	1
Dentistry	1
Materials Science	1

* Some publications cover multiple subject areas. Where this occurs, the publication is counted separately against each relevant subject area.

Library Services Delivered

Library Activity	2023 Results
Librarian mediated literature searches performed	85
Articles acquired for staff	901
Instances of one-on-one client instruction provided	2,437
Formal information literacy class attendees	428
Information requests	3,951
Active registered library clients	1,445

Robyn Piccinelli, Clinical Research Coordinator Becky Stripp, Associate Professor Mark Mayall, and Audrey Shamier



Library staff help clinicians avoid rabbit holes of research

Scanning through hundreds of research databases and abstracts sounds like a daunting task, but for the team at the Townsville University Hospital library this is an everyday job.

Audrey Shamier and Robyn Piccinelli sit tucked away in an unassuming office and from there they travel the world sourcing journal articles for staff who are conducting their research.

In 2023, the duo assisted psychiatrist Associate Professor Mark Mayall with his article on the multi-axial system, initially designed by the World Health Organization, which provides a useful biopsychosocial framework for child mental health.

Mark said he was incredibly grateful for the support of the library team while undertaking his research.

“In the first stage of writing this paper, I needed copies of all the papers published on the topic and there have been quite a number of these over the decades,” he said.

“Some of these articles were quite difficult to find, but the team in the library has been able to track down almost all of them which was an amazing help for me.

“This means that when it comes to me sitting down to write, I’ve read most of the papers and I know what information already exists and then the article takes on a life of its own from there.

“At times I needed to go back to Audrey and Robyn and ask for additional support as a paper progresses and they were always quite happy to assist.

“The team here offers a wonderful service to the staff of the health service, and I think it’s important people know they can come to them for help.

“I’d also like to take this opportunity to thank them, and the research team for providing SERTA funding for this research; I’m very appreciative of the support.”

Audrey said the challenge with projects such as Mark’s was not being an expert in the different fields the researchers were working in.

“To provide support on a project like Mark’s, we start with a literature review and we work closely with the researcher to understand the topic and figure out which search terms we can use to get the results we need,” she said.

“In this case, once we had done our search, we provided Mark with hundreds of abstracts for papers relating to his topic that may be relevant for his research and he then has the job of going through the abstracts and telling us which ones we need to source for him.”

Robyn may need to use one of the many databases she has access to, go directly to universities across the world, or reach out directly to the author to find copies of the papers, and said she loved tracking down research papers that weren’t easily found.

“I do love the challenge of tracking down papers that are difficult to find; I have a process that I follow and digging to find a paper, even if I only have a few words to go from is really satisfying,” she said.

“Sometimes I may have to even reach out to the author of the paper themselves which is always gratifying because the author is happy that their paper is still in demand.”

Audrey and Robyn said they wanted staff to know they were there to help with anything that they needed.

“We want to help people get on their road to research,” Audrey said.

“Staff can save a lot of time for themselves if they come straight to the professionals because it’s easy to get distracted by Google and fall down a rabbit hole, whereas we can teach them how to use the databases and how to refine their sources.

“You’re already on the right pathway if you’re talking to us from the start.”

THHS Research Publications 2023

Where possible, full text has been provided via Open Access

Articles not available through Open Access can be obtained via CKN

Access to CKN (Clinical Knowledge Centre) is available to Queensland Health employees only

Queensland Health employees must register with CKN to access full text articles or to request full text articles

CKN access is via an Open Athens log-in using: cknusername and password

For more information go to CKN (Clinician's Knowledge Network)

Contact Library staff for assistance: TSV-Library@health.qld.gov.au

To obtain full text articles not available on CKN please 'request this item from your local HHS Library'

Link in title provides access information

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[Request this item from a UQ Library \(RBWH staff\)](#)

Select "Request this item from your local HHS Library" > select Townsville

1. Aithal, N, Y Kandasamy and D Rudd (2023). "[Association between umbilical cord clamping time, hemoglobin and total serum bilirubin in term neonates admitted for phototherapy.](#)" *Journal of Neonatal Nursing*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 183-187.
QH employees select link in title to access full text via CKN

2. Al Maraee, G, V Vangaveti and A Mallett (2023). "[Characterising patients and clinician experiences in comprehensive conservative care for kidney failure in Northern Queensland.](#)" *Internal Medicine Journal*, vol. 53, no. 10, pp. 1819-1825.
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3. Alahakoon, C, M Fernando, C Galappaththy, P Lazzarini, J V Moxon, R Jones and J Golledge (2023). "[Repeatability, Completion Time, and Predictive Ability of Four Diabetes-Related Foot Ulcer Classification Systems.](#)" *Journal of Diabetes Science and Technology*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 35-41.
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4. Alahakoon, C, T P Singh, C Galappaththy, J Charles, M Fernando, P Lazzarini, J V Moxon and J Golledge (2023). "[Risk Factors for Hospital Re-admission for Diabetes Related Foot Disease: A Prospective Cohort Study.](#)" *European Journal of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery*, vol. 66, no. 2, pp. 221-228.
QH employees select link in title to access full text via CKN

5. Alahakoon, C, T P Singh, D Morris, J Charles, M Fernando, P Lazzarini, J V Moxon and J Golledge (2023). "[Cohort Study Examining the Presentation, Distribution, and Outcomes of Peripheral Artery Disease in Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and Non-Indigenous Australians.](#)" *European Journal of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery*, vol. 66, no. 2, pp. 237-244.
QH employees select link in title to access full text via CKN

6. Alahakoon, C, S Thanigaimani, L Seng, M Fernando, P Lazzarini and J Golledge (2023). "[Editor's Choice – A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the Incidence and Risk Factors for Re-admission to Hospital in People with Diabetes Related Foot Disease.](#)" *European Journal of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery*, vol. 66, no. 2, pp. 195-202.
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7. Almeida, O P, G J Hankey, et al. (2023). "[Is incident cancer in later life associated with lower incidence of dementia?](#)" *International Psychogeriatrics*, January 2023, 1-5.
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9. Anderson, M A, R Bennett, X Badoux, G Best, N Chia, T Cochrane, G Cull, K Crassini, R Harrup, S Jackson, B Kuss, M Lasica, T E Lew, P Marlton, S Opat, E Palfreyman, M N Polizzotto, S Ratnasingam, J F Seymour, A Soosapilla, D Talaulikar, C S Tam, R Weinkove, J Wight and S P Mulligan (2023). "[Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia Australasian consensus practice statement.](#)" *Internal Medicine Journal*, vol. 53, no. 9, pp. 1678-1691.
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15. Athan, S, D Athan, M Wong, N Hussain, V Vangaveti, V Gangathimmaiah and R Norton (2023). "[Pathology stewardship in emergency departments: a single-site, retrospective, cohort study of the value of C-reactive protein in patients with suspected sepsis.](#)" *Pathology*, vol. 55, no. 5, pp. 673-679.
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