

CRE in Frailty & Healthy Ageing Newsletter

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The 21st IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics

CRE Frailty & Healthy Ageing team attended the International Association of Gerontology & Geriatrics conference in San Francisco. Below two of the attendees share their highlights of the event.

Dr Beatriz Martins - geriatrician and higher degree student.

In July, the 2017 World Congress of the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics was held in San Francisco. This conference happens every 4 years and gathers scientists, health professionals, students and all related fields of gerontology and geriatric medicine from all over the world.

This year, there were over 6,000 attendees participating in 45 concurrent sessions each day. As a young researcher, it was an amazing opportunity to see renowned scientists in the field of Frailty & Healthy Ageing. Professor Linda Fried, a pioneer in frailty research, spoke at the opening ceremony about how healthy ageing is important to enable older citizens to fulfil new roles and opportunities, investing on their potential to be active participating individuals. Additionally, the IAGG was an opportunity to meet with other early career researchers at a variety of events.

The CRE Frailty & Healthy Ageing hosted a symposium session, to showcase some of the interdisciplinary research being done by our team. I was amazed at the diverse professionals involved in gerontology. A highlight presentation was by Dr Alexandre Kalache on the WHO initiative on 'Age-friendly Cities'. He discussed how neighborhoods and cities also age, and need to be prepared for the challenges that the environment can impose as stress factors to healthy ageing. I am looking forward to participating in the next IAGG.



Drs Kandiah Umaphysivam, Beatriz Martins & Kareeann Khaw



Drs Beatriz Martins & Kareeann Khaw at the IAGG entry



A/Prof Solomon Yu, Prof Renuka Visvanathan, Mark Thompson, Agathe Jadczyk & Dr Olga Theou



Dr Beatriz Martins helps at IAGG registration desk

Mark Thompson - Occupational therapist and higher degree student.

I was fortunate to attend the IAGG World Congress in San Francisco in July. This was my first international conference and I found it valuable as both a clinician and as a Master of Philosophy research student associated with the University of Adelaide's CRE Frailty and Healthy Ageing. There were a large number of posters and presentations on a wide range of topics including: frailty, falls and balance, advanced care directives, elder abuse, dementia, LGBTI ageing, oral health, and the social environment to name just a few. I presented findings from my research examining frailty prevalence and associated factors in the North West of Adelaide together with other University of Adelaide researchers in the CRE team. One of the highlights for me in attending this large gathering was the opportunity for meeting other researchers and clinicians in order to share ideas, and to develop my clinical knowledge and research skills. I am looking forward to the next World Congress which will be held in 4 years time in Buenos Aires. I would like to acknowledge the support of Resthaven who provided a travel grant to support my attendance at the Congress.

The Frailty & Healthy Ageing Research Showcase

Community event to showcase the research taking place in the field.

On Friday 8th of September The CRE Frailty & Healthy Ageing, TQEH Aged and Extended Care Services and the Adelaide Geriatrics Training & Research with Aged Care Centre hosted a community event to showcase the wide range of research taking place in the field of frailty and healthy ageing.

The event was held at the beautiful Adelaide Pavilion in Veale Gardens and was hosted by Jane Mussared, the chief executive of Council on the Ageing SA (COTA SA).

The keynote speaker, Prof Mary Luszcz is a Matthew Flinders Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Gerontology at the Flinders University School of Psychology and the Director of the Flinders Centre for Ageing Studies. Her vast body of research aimed to identify personal, psychological and social/environmental resources that promote ageing well. Professor Luszcz's presentation 'How I survived 40 years of research on Ageing' was a fascinating and entertaining discussion covering highlights from her broad career in research in the field of ageing.

In the morning session was a series of 8 short seminars across a diverse range of topics in ageing from oral health, environment and neighborhoods, frailty screening, lung function and muscle loss and even to frailty screening work being undertaken in neighboring Malaysia. The speakers included higher degree students as well as early and mid-career research fellows.



Left to right: Host Jane Mussared (COTA), Dr Ivanka Hendrix & Prof Renuka Visvanathan



Keynote Speaker Prof Mary Luszcz



Guests at Adelaide Pavillion



Mark Thompson



Dr Asangi Jayatilaka & Dr Joanne Dollard



Left to right: Prof Renuka Visvanathan, Guest, Dr Sally Ahip & Guest

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After lunch there was a table top session where a researcher was assigned to each table to discuss their research work in a more informal setting. This allowed guests to ask questions and have important conversations about the research and give feedback to the researchers. After 10 minutes the researchers would rotate to a new table and discuss their work. The session was great fun and both guests and speakers got thoroughly absorbed in the activities with lots of discussion and in depth questions being asked.



Dr Tim Schultz (right) with guests

One of the highlights of the event was host Jane Mussared discussing with the audience the responses each of our speakers and presenters had given to the pre event question: 'What sort of older person do you want to be?'. The answers they gave were diverse, inspiring and sometimes funny. Guests at the event shared their own answers and their experiences of ageing.

The event was made possible by generous funding from Resthaven Inc and we would like to thank them for allowing us the opportunity to share our research.



Dr Thanuja De Silva (centre) with guests



Dr Kareeann Khoo (left) & Nina Wiltshire



From Left: Mark Thompson, Dr Beatriz Martins & Dr Danielle Taylor



Dr Nigel Qadros & Dr Kandiah Umaphathsivam

Introducing Dr Asangi Jayatilaka

Dr Asangi Jayatilaka joins the CRE Frailty & Healthy Ageing under A/Prof Mellick Chehade and Prof Renuka Visvanathan.

Dr Jayatilaka received her PhD in Computer Science from the University of Adelaide in 2017. Her PhD used qualitative descriptive designs to explore the need for technology for promoting nutritional health in older people living with dementia in their homes. Her work looked at understanding perceptions of care workers recruited from the aged care industry as stakeholder views are crucial for technologies to be effective and accepted by users. She obtained reliable insights for designing such technologies and identified eleven considerations for developing effective technologies for older people and care workers. Her thesis presents two technology development demonstrations as a stepping stone for future technology development.

Asangi is excited about research related to human factors in computing, especially in the direction of health-related technology development. She is also interested in qualitative and quantitative data analysis, data mining and machine learning. Apart from her research, she has also experience in teaching at Australian and overseas universities and has experience working as a business analyst in an international software engineering company.



We are looking forward to seeing what interesting insights Dr Jayatilaka will bring to frailty and healthy ageing research in the future.

Professor Alison Kitson is on the Move

Professor Alison Kitson has been appointed Vice President and Executive Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Flinders University.

During her time at the University of Adelaide as the Dean and Head of the School of Nursing it has evolved from a discipline within the School of Population Health and Clinical Practice to what is now the Adelaide Nursing School. Under her leadership the school almost doubled its student enrolments and it has developed an international research profile particularly in knowledge translation.

This role at Flinders is testimony to Prof Kitson's leadership ability, passion and commitment towards Nursing education and research.

Prof Kitson will continue to carry out research and collaboration within the CRE in Frailty and Healthy Ageing as the chief investigator of the knowledge translation arm of research.



Prof Alison Kitson

Dr Tim Schultz Promoted



Dr Tim Schultz

Congratulations to Dr Tim Schultz for his recent promotion to the level of Senior Lecturer with the Adelaide Nursing School at the University of Adelaide.

Dr Schultz is an Associate investigator with the CRE in Frailty and Healthy Ageing. He is an experienced systematic reviewer and researcher in health services and patient safety and co-leads the coordination of the mentorship activities of the centre in collaboration with A/Prof Solomon Yu.

PhD Passed

Michael Lawless received confirmation that his PhD thesis has been passed.

Michael joined the Centre as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the School of Nursing under the supervision of Prof Alison Kitson and Dr Mandy Archibald.

Michael's PhD was titled "Mind your Mind: Representations of Dementia Risk-prevention in News and Digital Media" and was submitted with the School of Psychology at the University of Adelaide in near-record time. Michael has a research interests in the areas of dementia risk-prevention, cognitive ageing, critical and qualitative approaches to health and psychological research, and



Michael Lawless

Success for Dr Sally Ahip

Dr Ahip has been awarded a Ministry of Health Malaysia grant

Dr Ahip is a family physician from Sarawak, Malaysia who began her PhD studies with Prof Renuka Visvanathan and Dr Olga Theou of the CRE in Frailty & Healthy Ageing. Her project entitled "The Malaysian Pictorial Fit-Frail Scale: Development and Testing of Feasibility, Validity and Reliability in Malaysia" has been funded for 2 years by the Ministry of Health Malaysia.

Rachel Ambagtsheer is Travelling

Rachel Ambagtsheer is a PhD student and researcher with the CRE Frailty and Healthy Ageing under the supervision of Prof Justin Beilby.

Rachel has been awarded the 2017 Research Conference Funding from Torrens University. These funds will enable her to travel to the 50th Australian Association of Gerontology National Conference (Perth, WA) and the 16th National Conference of Emerging Researchers in Ageing (Bentley, WA).

THRF Mid Career Fellow Dr Danielle Taylor

CRE Frailty Associate Investigator Dr Taylor is the proud recipient of The Hospital Research Foundation's Mid-Career Fellowship for 2017.

Dr Taylor is a geographer and researcher who recently joined Professor Renuka Visvanathan's research group at the Basil Hetzel Institute where she will be starting a three year project to produce a national frailty risk index, which can highlight areas where populations are most at risk of becoming frailty. By identifying areas in this way, interventions can be targeted to prevent at risk populations from progressing into frailty.

Dr Joanne Dollard joins the Centre

Research Fellow Gerontology and Technology

Dr Joanne Dollard will be working with Professor Renuka Visvanathan and the CRE Frailty and Healthy Ageing and she is investigating the sitting time or upright time in hospitalised older people.

Dr Dollard is a research Fellow in the School of Medicine with a background in psychology. She has previously coordinated a trial using technology to prevent falls in hospitalised older people.

Contact Us

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