

# CRE in Frailty & Healthy Ageing Special Edition

Issue 5– June 2019



## Adelaide Geriatrics Teaching and Research With Aged Care (GTRAC) Centre Research Special Edition

*This newsletter edition will focus on the Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology research being undertaken within the CRE in Frailty & Healthy Ageing .*

This research is led by Renuka Visvanathan, Professor of Geriatric Medicine at the University of Adelaide and Clinical Director of the Aged & Extended Care Services (Geriatric Medicine) at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Central Adelaide Local Health Network.

In 2018/2019 the team have progressed many of their stated aims for research as part of the CRE in Frailty & Healthy Ageing. A number of PhD candidates have completed their studies, with one continuing as research fellow and a new PhD candidate has joined the group. Capacity building in this area of research has been a major focus of the centre and this edition showcases the activities and achievements of the team.



Prof Renuka Visvanathan

## CRE Frailty at the TQEH Research Expo

*The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Research Expo 2018 was held on Thursday 18 and Friday 19 October.*

Each October the Basil Hetzel Institute for Translational Health Research and TQEH hold a Research Expo which provides higher degree students with the opportunity to gain valuable experience in delivering an oral or poster presentation before a broad audience.

This year two of the CRE Frailty & Healthy Ageing higher degree student-clinicians took part in the Research Expo. Dr Kareeann Khaw, consultant geriatrician, senior lecturer and PhD candidate gave a fascinating presentation on *'Perioperative haemoglobin level and clinical outcomes in older people after hip fracture surgery'*.

Dr Anupam Gupta, senior rehabilitation consultant, senior clinical lecturer and PhD candidate gave a presentation on *'Spatiotemporal gait analysis and lower limb functioning in foot dystonia treated with botulinum toxin'*. Dr Gupta received the award and prize for the 'Best Oral Presentation for a Clinical Higher Degree Student'. Dr Gupta has recently been promoted to a level D titleholder at the Adelaide Medical School, University of Adelaide.



*Award winners from L-R: Clementine Labrosciano, Rachel Goggin, Anna Nolan (CFO, THRF), Ashley Twigger, Dr Anupam Gupta, Prof Guy Maddern (Director of research, TQEH), Lisa Cherian & Namfon Pantarat*



*Ageing research team L-R: Dr Danielle Taylor, Dr Anupam Gupta, Prof Renuka Visvanathan, Dr Solomon Yu & Dr Kareeann Khaw*

The event was well attended with by TQEH researchers, clinicians, staff and students from affiliate universities and by members of the public.

The 2018 TQEH Research Expo was sponsored by The University of Adelaide - Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, The Hospital Research Foundation, The University of South Australia - School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences, Southern Cross Science, ThermoFisher Scientific, Lonza, Beckmann Coulter, Eppendorf, the Australian Genome Research Facility, Abacus dx and Coherent Scientific.

## Dr Agathe Daria Jadczyk Awarded the AAG Robert Penhall Research Award

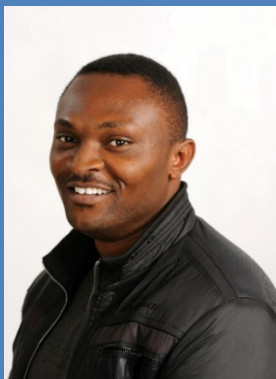
Dr Agathe Daria Jadczyk received the 2018 Robert Penhall Early Career Research Award. The award is given by the South Australian Division of the Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) and recognises Dr Jadczyk's research leadership and innovative work. Dr Jadczyk received her award from Prof Robert Penhall at the 2019 AAG SA Gerontology conference held on Fri 21st June 2019 and then presented her work to the conference attendees.

Dr Jadczyk started a postdoctoral position within the CRE in Frailty and Healthy Ageing research group in early 2018 lead by Prof Renuka Visvanathan after completing her PhD with the Adelaide G-TRAC Centre, Adelaide Medical School, University of Adelaide.



Dr Agathe Daria Jadczyk

## New PhD Student Joins the CRE Team



Mr Unyime Jasper

*Introducing Mr Unyime Jasper, a physiotherapist and PhD candidate from Nigeria.*

I am interested in health promotion and rehabilitation interventions to improve quality of life and wellbeing of older people. This includes encouraging older people to be physically active and less sedentary. Research has shown that older people admitted in acute care for various reasons spend over 93-99% of their time lying in bed, sedentary; this means, patients spend only approximately 1-6% of their time during an acute hospital admission standing or stepping. My research will attempt to change this, by reducing sedentary time and increase physical activity in older people who have undergone hip surgery.

I am also interested in the determinants of healthy ageing over the life course. I have a Master of Science in Gerontology from the University of Southampton (UK) and for this PhD research project I am supervised by Professor Renuka Visvanathan, A/Prof Solomon Yu and Dr. Agathe Daria Jadczyk.

## Congratulations to Nina Wiltshire

*G-TRAC Administration Support Officer moves to a new role.*



Nina Wiltshire (right) with Leonie Baker

Nina Wiltshire has been the Administration Support Officer at the Adelaide Geriatrics Training and Research with Aged Care (G-TRAC) Centre. She joined the centre in 2015 coming from a background in recruitment, quality assurance, administration and executive assistance. In September 2018 Nina took up the position of Precinct Connect Officer with the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences with the University of Adelaide.

During her time at GTRAC Nina has been essential to running the community seminar program, assisting the geriatric trainees and students at the GTRAC campus and curating website, social media accounts and events. We would like to thank Nina for all her hard work and wish her all the best in her new role.

## Malaysia Pictorial Frailty Screening Tool

*Dr Sally Ahip is carrying out frailty research in Borneo, Malaysia.*

I am a Family Medicine Specialist practicing in a public primary healthcare facility in Borneo, Malaysia. I treat toddlers, teens, and young adults. I also treat many middle-aged adults and follow them through to retirement and well into their 80s and 90s.

Presently, more than half of my clients are aged 60 years and older. As I manage care at most points of their lives, I observe the decline in their overall health status with age, most were gradual and steady, but some had evidently steeper decline. Often, they will tell me, "I feel weaker and slower now". Some of my clients who used to waltz into my surgery, had suddenly required assistance and wheeling-in by a caregiver just a couple of months later, following a zoster infection and even an allergic reaction to antibiotics!



*Dr Sally Ahip (centre front) and The Primary Care Geriatrics Management Team, Kota Sentosa Health Clinic.*



*3 F- Fifteen-Minutes Fitness Friday*

*An event held weekly at the clinic's waiting area before Friday consults to create awareness among the older persons on exercises that can be done at home.*

Quantifying vulnerability levels for my patients is important in my daily clinical practice. By understanding their vulnerability we can put in place evidence-based management strategies in a timely manner that will reverse early frailty stages and preserve patients independence and quality of life.

We have therefore begun using a pictorial frailty screening tool, which was developed at the Geriatric Medicine Research group at Dalhousie University in Halifax with CRE Frailty and Healthy Ageing researchers Professor Ken Rockwood and Dr Olga Theou.

The Pictorial Fit-Frail Scale was developed by the Dalhousie University team in 2017 and it has been specifically modified for use in the Malaysian clinical setting. This scale uses simple visual images to assess a person's fitness-frailty in a variety of health care settings. It consists of 14 domains, with 3 to 6 pictures each. It can be completed by the patient, the caregiver, or the healthcare provider.

Pictorial tools are suitable for the multilingual and multicultural Malaysian community and the tool transcends education levels among the Malaysian elderly and the varying-skilled healthcare professionals in the health facilities.

I look forward to reporting on the exciting discoveries at the end of this project.

## Dr John Beard visits the CRE Frailty and Healthy Ageing

*Former director of the WHO Department of Ageing and Life Course visited during April*

On Monday 1st April the CRE in Frailty & Healthy Ageing researchers and clinicians spent time with Dr John Beard. Dr Beard has been Director of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Department of Ageing and Life Course since January 2009. Ageing has been identified by the World Health Assembly as a priority area of work for WHO and Dr Beard leads a “whole of Organization” response that has drawn on the extensive capacity of the Organization’s many Departments, Regions and Country Offices. He was a lead writer and editor of the first World report on ageing and health (2015), and oversaw the development of the Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health, adopted by WHO Member States in May 2016. In 2010, he launched the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

Dr Beard gave a presentation to Professor Renuka Visvanathan and her research and clinical teams on “Current WHO Strategy for Ageing Moving Forward”. He then took a tour of The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Geriatric Evaluation and Management unit with A/Prof Solomon Yu. In the afternoon he spent time discussing the various research projects under way in a round table research discussion session with the students and early career researchers of the CRE in Frailty & Healthy Ageing. He then met with our collaborating partners, the Registry of Older South Australians led by Dr Maria Inacio. Dr Beard’s insights and understanding about the current picture of ageing and the future of ageing worldwide were invaluable for the clinicians and researchers of the CRE in Frailty and Healthy Ageing.



Dr John Beard presenting to clinicians at TQEH

## Minister for Health & Wellbeing visits the Centre

The Hon Stephen Wade MLC visited the team at TQEH in March 2019 to discuss the fascinating research taking place within our team. The Minister met with lead investigators of the centre Prof Renuka Visvanathan, Prof Justin Beilby and Emeritus Professor Derek Frewin OA as well as Mr Matthew McInnes, the Executive Director Allied Health and Intermediate Care.

The Minister heard research presentations from across the CRE research team. The Minister was also treated to a demonstration of the Ambient Intelligent Geriatric Management system (AmbIGeM) by Nurse Unit Manager Stephen Hoskins at TQEH geriatric evaluation and management unit. This trial is testing a novel technology to detect unassisted movement in older patients who nurses assess as needing supervision when moving. The trial is coordinated by Dr Joanne Dollard with chief investigators Prof Visvanathan and A/Prof Damith Ranasinghe (University of Adelaide).



Prof Justin Beilby, Hon Minister Wade MLC, Prof Derek Frewin OA, Prof Renuka Visvanathan, Mr Matthew McInnes, the Executive Director Allied Health & Intermediate Care & A/Prof Solomon Yu

### Contact Us

For further information on the CRE in Frailty & Healthy Ageing connect with us online at:  
web: [health.adelaide.edu.au/cre-frailty/](http://health.adelaide.edu.au/cre-frailty/)

