

# Healthy Development Adelaide

*A Research and Innovation Cluster in South Australia*

## Newsletter

Vol 13, Issue 2 – April 2017



### Upcoming

#### Scientific Meetings

**24 - 26 April**

Maternal and Fetal Neonatal Medicine - London, UK

**6 - 9 May**

Pediatric Academic Societies - San Francisco, California, USA

**3 - 7 June**

Sleep - Boston, USA

**6 - 8 June**

Parent Engagement - Melbourne, Australia

**14 - 17 June**

International Society for Stem Cell Research - Boston, USA

**2 - 5 July**

European Society of Human Reproduction & Embryology - Geneva, Switzerland

**27 - 30 August**

Endocrine Society of Australia & Society for Reproductive Biology - Perth, Australia

**29 August - 1 September**

Early Childhood Education - Bologna, Italy

For further event info go to [www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events)

To unsubscribe from event and news notifications contact HDA.

[www.adelaide.edu.au/hda](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hda)

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## LATEST NEWS

### The state's first Children's Commissioner



Former Red Cross executive and South Australian Council of Social Service chairwoman Helen Connolly has been appointed as the state's first children's commissioner and will commence on 18 April.

Ms Connolly said children and families had been a focus of her career— which has included working with young asylum seekers, children in emergency accommodation and youth detention.

Ms Connolly will have a wide brief. She'll monitor the health and wellbeing of children aged up to 18, promote and advocate for their rights and help them make decisions that affect their lives. Ms Connolly will also be charged with investigating any issues of a systemic nature relating to children in government and private organisations.

Ms Connolly is a respected strategist and leader who advocates successfully for local action and social change. Throughout her career, she has been involved in both the development and implementation of services in areas as diverse as child protection, social enterprise, housing, environmental programs and refugee services at frontline and senior leadership levels. With over 25 years experience serving in frontline, senior leadership and governance positions, Helen is well known to many people in the community services sector in the state.

### HDA is now on Facebook & Twitter - FOLLOW US!



<https://www.facebook.com/HealthyDevelopmentAdelaide>



[https://twitter.com/HDA\\_SA](https://twitter.com/HDA_SA)

.... HDA Partners ....



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novita  
children's services



Government of  
South Australia

Department for Education and Child Development  
Women's and Children's Health Network



Healthy Mothers,  
Babies and Children

# HDA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP 2017

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Congratulations to our second year recipients of the HDA High School Student Scholarships for 2017-2018. The students will be awarded \$1,000 over a two-year period during their Year 11 and 12.



HDA Co-Convenor, Prof Claire Roberts presented Jessica Hann with her scholarship award. Jessica has commenced her Year 11 study at Playford International College.

HDA Co-Convenor, Prof Michael Sawyer presented Chloe Richards-Hart with her scholarship award. Chloe has commenced her Year 11 study at Christies Beach High School. *Pic l to r: Michael Sawyer, Chloe and school principal Graham Clark*

## HDA RECENT EVENTS

### **Real world research in childhood disability: the challenges and achievements**

On 29 March, HDA held a joint forum with Novita Children's Services on *Real world research in childhood disability: the challenges and achievements* presented by Dr Toan Nguyen (Novita) on *Determining the rater reliability of the Novita Switch Access Solutions Assessment*; Mrs Kanchana Pathirana (Novita) on *Let's play to enage, explore, and learn about the world*; Dr Annemarie Wright (Novita) on *Activity Boost Challenge trial: impact of a foot muscle stimulator on physical activity participation of kids with Cerebral Palsy*, and Dr Virginia Wright (Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Canada) on *Three-year trajectories of global perceived quality of life for youth with chronic health conditions*.

The talks and a link to the video can be found at [www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/news](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/news)



Pictured l to r: Mrs Kanchana Pathirana, Dr Toan Nguyen, Dr Annemarie Wright, Dr Virginia Wright and Chair Mr Jeremy Brown (Chief Operating Officer, Novita)



## HDA RESEARCH MEMBER PROFILE - DR CHRIS BREBNER SPEECH PATHOLOGY, FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

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Dr Chris Brebner is Head of Speech Pathology at Flinders University. Chris worked as a Speech Pathologist in Singapore, Australia and the U.K. in a range of paediatric settings.

Her PhD, completed in 2011, focused on the development and assessment of Singapore English for

preschool children bilingual in English and Mandarin. Chris started work at the Flinders University on her return to Australia.

Her teaching expertise is in child language development and impairment and she teaches students in the Bachelor and Master of Speech Pathology programs. Her teaching and research interests encompass paediatric communication development and impairment, with a focus on what speech pathologists need for practice.

Chris is currently actively researching in the areas of children's early communication development, bilingual language development and development of allied health workforce capacity. She is leading a project funded by the SA Department of State Development that will develop and evaluate strategies and resources to support development of an allied health workforce equipped to work in an NDIS funding context.

She continues to research in Singapore, with a revision of the Singapore English Action Picture Test that she published in 2002 scheduled for release later in the year.

She is an accreditor of university programs for Speech Pathology Australia, and editorial board member for the American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology and Journal of Clinical Practice in Speech-Language Pathology.

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## NEW HDA RESEARCH MEMBERS

**Mrs Janet Grant**, PhD student

School of Public Health, University of Adelaide

*Focus - child health and development (child protection)*

**Ms Kate Riggall**, PhD student

School of Psychology, Social Work and Social Policy, UniSA

*Focus - cognitive neuroscience and development*

**Dr Alison Care**, NHMRC CJ Martin Fellow

Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide

*Focus - vascular physiology & reproductive immunology*

**Ms Tara Crawford**, PhD student

Discipline of Paediatrics, University of Adelaide

*Focus - preterm birth and immunology*

**Dr Mary Salveron**, Research Fellow

Australian Centre for Child Protection, UniSA

*Focus - child protection practice frameworks/models*

**Mr Jack Darby**, PhD student

Early Origins of Adult Health Research Group, UniSA

*Focus - fetal growth and development*

## HDA TRAVEL GRANTS 2017-ROUND 2 NOW OPEN!

**HDA Travel Grants 2017 : Round 2: July – December Conference Travel**

**Now open to HDA Research Members**

Travel Grants of \$1,000 each will be awarded to up to six successful applicants

### Goals

To enable final year PhD students and Early Career Researchers (up to 5 years post PhD):

- (i) to present their research at an international conference
- (ii) to seek advice about their research from other senior international researchers
- (iii) to seek international career opportunities

### Eligibility

- PhD students must be currently enrolled in a South Australian university and to have been a member of HDA for at least 6 months at the time of their application
- Early Career Researchers must be current HDA research members: applicants must be members of HDA for at least 1 year at the time of application
- Applicants must be presenting either a research poster or an oral research presentation at the conference
- Previous recipients of travel grants will not be excluded from consideration, but preference may be given to first-time applicants

**Applications will close at 5.00pm Tuesday 30 May 2017. Late applications will not be considered.**

**For full criteria and eligibility and application process go to <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/support/>**



**Ankur Singh, PhD Candidate, Australian Research Centre for Population Oral Health, University of Adelaide**

With the help of the Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA) travel grant, I was able to attend and present my PhD research at the International Association for Dental Research (IADR) General Session and Exhibition, San Francisco in March 2017. I had the opportunity to present two oral presentations 'Associations between area income inequality and oral health within Australia' and 'The Conundrum of Analytical Unit When Testing the Income Inequality Hypothesis' at the Conference. Both the presentations were very well received by both established and early career researchers in oral epidemiology and social epidemiology.

The counterintuitive findings on the association between income inequality and oral health within Australia led to a good discussion post presentation. I was able to clarify the contextual differences in small area characteristics between Australia and other countries to the international audience. The more conceptual and methodological content of the presentation entitled 'The Conundrum of Analytical Unit When Testing the Income Inequality Hypothesis' was given at the Epi-forum, a satellite symposium of the Conference held at University of California San Francisco (UCSF). I was fortunate to discuss the underlying theoretical differences between conceptualizing health at the population and individual levels and its operationalization in multi-level studies. The presentation led to a discussion with globally renowned methodological expert in social epidemiology, and provided insights for my future research interests and plans.

The opportunity to present at a large Conference of this scale also allowed me to network extensively with researchers worldwide and discuss some short and long term collaborative research activities. With my interest in theoretical and methodological aspects of research on oral health inequalities, the Conference also presented me with an overview of the current status of oral health research and advancements on both fronts.

Some of the key discussions in the sessions I attended were around increasing oral health inequalities, compartmentalization of oral health from general health, strategies for reducing high sugar consumption, and linking oral health promotion to the Non Communicable Diseases control and Sustainable Development Goals agenda. These issues are of direct relevance to the healthy development of Australian children and adults and sustaining good oral health through their life-course.

Attending this Conference was very rewarding for me both professionally and personally. I was able to present my current work to my teachers from London who inspired me to develop a career in Dental Public Health. This was the first time I attended an international Conference in dental research as I have mostly participated in Conferences in public health and health promotion. This experience of attending a Conference with a focus on oral health was interesting as I was able to understand the differences in presenting work to audience from different academic backgrounds. I am grateful to HDA for helping me attend this Conference, and I feel this initiative is of great value to PhD students and early career researchers. I believe this experience will help me grow as a researcher.

## INTERNATIONAL CEREBRAL PALSY GENOMICS CONSORTIUM

The *Australian Collaborative Cerebral Palsy Research Group*, based at the Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide under the leadership of E/Prof Alastair MacLennan and Prof Jozef Gecz, recently established the *International Cerebral Palsy Genomics Consortium* (ICPGC), which held its first meeting last month in Adelaide with members from China, Canada, USA, Sweden, Turkey, Spain and many Australian Universities.

The group has developed a large DNA biobank from cerebral palsy families linked to de-identified pregnancy details and phenotype. Such a 'register' is a must, given that cerebral palsy is emerging to be highly genetically heterogeneous, similar in nature to autisms or intellectual disabilities. The Adelaide Group is funded by the NHMRC, The Cerebral Palsy Alliance, Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation and The Tenix Foundation. The Robinson Research Institute and The Cerebral Palsy Alliance in Sydney helped facilitate the formation of the ICPGC.

## B PART OF IT - MENINGOCOCCAL B STUDY IN SA



Sixty thousand eligible teenagers and young adults from across South Australia who are enrolled in Years 10, 11 and 12 in 2017 will be offered free of charge vaccinations against Meningococcal B as part of a state wide study into the impact of immunising large community groups against the disease.

The study – **B Part of It** – is being led by the University of Adelaide in partnership with SA Health and has been approved by the Women's and Children's Health Network Human Research Ethics Committee. Vaccinations will be available to students in participating schools across South Australia during 2017 and 2018.

To ensure your school participates in **B Part of It**, visit [www.bpartofit.com.au](http://www.bpartofit.com.au), contact your school immunisation provider, or contact the study team on (08) 8161 8117.

# Girls in state care at greater risk of criminal convictions

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Media Release - 7 March, University of Adelaide



The chances of a criminal conviction for South Australian girls who have experienced mistreatment at home and were subsequently placed in state-based out-of-home care is twice that of boys, according to new research from the University of Adelaide. To better understand the patterns of criminal behaviour and convictions among at-risk young people, researchers in the University's School of Psychology studied data of more than 17,000 mistreated young people born between 1982 and 1997. Almost 4700 of those were placed at least once in out-of-home protective care after they were found to be mistreated.

Mistreatment includes acts that harm or have the potential to cause harm to young people, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect. Psychology PhD student and research associate Catia Malvaso explored how factors such as gender and Indigenous or non-Indigenous background influenced the relationship between mistreatment and criminal convictions.

Ms Malvaso says: "Those experiencing mistreatment or out-of-home care are not destined to later engage in criminal behaviour. In fact, the vast majority (92%) of mistreated young people placed in state-based care did not have any criminal convictions, which is positive news.

"However, it's important for us to understand the circumstances of those hundreds of young people who are experiencing both the child protection and the youth justice systems, if we hope to make positive changes. "While we know that for some young people out-of-home care is associated with a higher risk of offending in the community, when we looked at the role of gender and Indigenous or non-Indigenous background, some interesting results emerged.

"Young females with a history of placement in out-of-home care were 10 times more likely to be convicted of a crime compared to those not placed in care, while young males in out-of-home care were five times more likely to

be convicted," she says. "A further key finding is that the likelihood of a violent criminal conviction is greatly increased among non-Indigenous compared with Indigenous young people – Aboriginal young people placed in residential care were three times more likely to have convictions, whereas non-Aboriginal young people were almost eight times more likely to be convicted of violent crimes."

Among those convicted of a crime, the most common offences were, in order: property crime, breach of legal orders, violence, and drug offences. "Although placement in out-of-home care provides a safe and nurturing environment for the vast majority of young people, there are some who continue to be at risk and who experience problems with impulse control, emotional regulation and behavioural problems. This may be due to the harm they have experienced in their early home environment," Ms Malvaso says. "In certain cases, this behaviour is exacerbated during their stay in some forms of care, including exposure to other young people who might have history of criminal offences."

Ms Malvaso's findings have implications for both child protection and the youth justice systems in South Australia and elsewhere. "This work is important, not only because it validates international research findings using a large sample of South Australian young people, it extends that research by examining the relationships between gender, Indigenous and non-Indigenous background, and out-of-home placements on different types of crimes," she says. "By exploring how these factors are different among males and females, and across different backgrounds, it's given us a greater insight into the relationship between mistreatment of young people in our community, their protection, and offending behaviour.

"We hope the findings of this research will be useful in the design and implementation of services aimed at both preventing the crossover of youth from child protection to the criminal justice system, and helping to protect and support vulnerable, at-risk young people who have suffered mistreatment," Ms Malvaso says.

The findings of this study were published in the journal *Children and Youth Services Review*.

## Carer Survey

For PRIMARY CARERS of young adults 15-29 years who have a learning disability

CARERS are invited to complete an ONLINE SURVEY at [carersurvey.com](http://carersurvey.com)

- ⇒ Your experiences and insights can be used to help others
- ⇒ The results of this research will be used to influence practice and policy decisions concerning the support of young people with disabilities and their families
- ⇒ Learning disabilities include: developmental & intellectual disability; ASD; ADHD
- ⇒ A primary carer is a family member or guardian, living with the young adult and responsible for the majority of their care
- ⇒ This study has been approved by the School of Psychology Human Research Ethics Subcommittee at the University of Adelaide Approval Number: 17/13
- ⇒ For further information please contact Nita at [nita.welch@student.adelaide.edu.au](mailto:nita.welch@student.adelaide.edu.au)
- ⇒ The survey takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. All responses are anonymous



# End 'unjust' fertility treatment ban for obese women:

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Media Release - 17 March, Flinders University



A new paper published today in the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* has called for an end to 'unjust' guidelines restricting

obese Australian women's access to assisted fertility treatment such as IVF.

Its lead author, Flinders University's Professor Kelton Tremellen, said the guidelines were overly restrictive given that IVF success rates in obese women were only marginally reduced compared to their lean counterparts, and far superior than success rates in women older than 40 years of age, where access to treatment is allowed. He also said the guidelines unfairly penalise obese women's male partners from becoming parents and made little biological sense when IVF is the only treatment likely to produce pregnancy, as is the case with blocked fallopian tubes or poor sperm quality.

"These prohibitions by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Gynaecology fly in the face of statistics showing that success rates for obese women are much higher than those observed for many older women who are allowed access to IVF," said Professor Tremellen.

"Furthermore, as obesity is significantly more common in women of low socioeconomic status, a group that struggles to get access to high quality food and supervised exercise programs, this policy could even be considered as discriminatory."

Professor Tremellen said pregnancy for obese women does pose increased risk but that the absolute magnitude of risks to mother or child is relatively small.

"The role of the doctor should be to educate women about these risks and how they can be reduced by weight loss, but allow women to make the final decision regarding whether they access IVF," he said. "As such, we believe the RANZCOG ban on severely obese women's access to assisted reproductive treatment is unwarranted and should be revised. "We would suggest that the RANZCOG statement make reference to the overall health of obese women, not merely their BMI, when deciding on delaying access to ART."

Up to a third of women with a BMI exceeding 35 are "metabolically healthy" and for this group there is minimal evidence that pregnancy poses significant risks to either themselves or their child. The new paper also argued that prohibiting access to fertility treatment on the basis of obesity made no more sense than prohibiting adults from engaging in dangerous sports.

## Fast facts:

- Guidelines of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) suggest that a body mass index exceeding  $35 \text{ kg/m}^2$  should be an absolute contraindication to assisted fertility treatment such as in vitro fertilisation IVF
- Even in the most extreme cases ( $\text{BMI} > 50 \text{ kg/m}^2$ ) the live birth rate is still 21.2% – just one third less than lean individuals
- The New Zealand government has adopted a policy limiting access to public funding for in vitro fertilisation (IVF) to women with a BMI under  $32 \text{ kg/m}^2$

# Regional communities given a say on family inheritance

Media Release - 3 April, University of Adelaide



Mount Gambier and Berri will be the focal points of free community meetings this week and next to discuss a key issue of law reform for the state: family inheritance laws.

Members of the South-East and Riverland communities are encouraged to attend the events and have their say, as part of a major review aimed at bringing the state's family inheritance laws into the 21st century. The review is being conducted by the independent South Australian Law Reform Institute, based at the University of Adelaide.

"Members of the community may not be aware that their so-called 'final' will and testament is not actually final – at least, not in the eyes of the current laws," says Sarah Moulds, researcher with the SA Law Reform Institute and PhD student at the University of Adelaide's Law School.

"Our review will help to address some issues with these

laws, which have left the window open to opportunistic claims by certain family members who hope to claim a bigger slice of a deceased person's inheritance. Such a claim could be contrary to the deceased person's express wishes," she says. "It's important that our state's laws balance the 'deserving' in our community from the 'greedy'. To do this, we need to hear from people in the community with an interest or experience to share."

In Mount Gambier, a free community meeting will be held at the Group Training Employment Function Room, 173 Commercial Street West, 2.30-3.30pm on Friday 7 April. In Berri, a free community meeting will be held at the Berri Hotel, Riverview Drive, 2.30-3.30pm on Monday 10 April.

The University of Adelaide researchers will also meet with members of the local legal communities, to discuss how they're affected by these issues.

Further information about this law reform project - including an online survey, fact sheets and videos – can be found at: <https://yoursay.sa.gov.au>

## Tuning in to Kids *Professional training for facilitators*

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### TUNING IN TO KIDS®

4 to 5 May, Adelaide

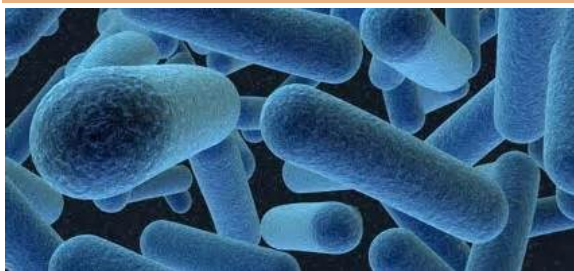
Tuning in to Kids® is an evidence based parenting program developed by Dr. Sophie Havighurst and Ann Harley in Melbourne, Australia with research trials conducted through The University of Melbourne. The program focuses on building stronger relationships between children and their parents/carers and teaches skills in emotion coaching and emotional connection. It teaches parents to use children's emotional experiences as an opportunity for closeness and teaching, to understand and use emotions effectively to self soothe and to use these skills to assist in problem solving and limit setting. The research conducted has shown that Tuning in to Kids leads to very positive outcomes including improving parenting, parent-child relationships and children's emotional competence and behaviour. For children with behaviour or anxiety problems the program was particularly effective.

The Tuning in to Kids® training for facilitators blends lecture-style and experiential learning modules. The training is suitable for all experienced and qualified workers in the caring sector and will provide them with certification to facilitate the Tuning in to Kids 6-week parenting program to parents and carers. Ongoing supervision from the Tuning in to Kids team is also available.

You can register online at: <http://tuningintokids.org.au/professionals/training>

For further information contact [aeaharley@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:aeaharley@unimelb.edu.au) or 03 9371 0210

## Defeating Superbugs *Research Tuesdays*



### Research Tuesdays: DEFEATING SUPERBUGS

Tuesday 11 April, 5:30 – 7:00pm

The Braggs Lecture Theatre, The University of Adelaide, North Terrace

Seventy years after the advent of life-saving antibiotics, bacterial infectious diseases are dangerously close to regaining the upper hand. So-called 'superbugs'—pathogenic bacteria causing common infections that are highly resistant to multiple classes of antibiotics—are taking a terrible toll all over the world.

Naturally, University of Adelaide researchers are working to reverse the trend; and in this important presentation you'll hear their latest findings regarding:

- current antibiotic use and resistance in humans in Australia, and subsequent research priorities
- antibiotic use and resistance in Australia's livestock, companion animals and wildlife, and how comparatively low rates of resistance here can advantage our primary producers
- the mechanisms with which superbugs cause disease, and how this knowledge can guide novel vaccines and therapeutic strategies.

Don't miss this opportunity to inform yourself on one of the most critical global health issues of our time.

The presenters

**Adjunct Professor John Turnidge** is an infectious diseases physician and clinical microbiologist in the University of Adelaide's Schools of Biological Sciences and Health Sciences.

**Professor Darren Trott** is a professor of veterinary microbiology and director of the University of Adelaide's Australian Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Ecology.

**Professor James Paton** directs the University of Adelaide's Research Centre for Infectious Diseases.

Register online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/research-tuesdays-defeating-superbugs-tickets-31440039003>