



Dr Catherine Marraffa is a developmental paediatrician with over 20 years of clinical experience in the disability field with a particular expertise in the diagnosis and management of children with autism. Six years were spent working in London as a consultant paediatrician in community child health before returning home to Melbourne.

She has cared for a large number of patients with a range of physical and intellectual disabilities who have been followed from early childhood to young adulthood. This has given her very extensive clinical experience in the developmental processes and co-morbidities at different developmental stages.

A previous grant for research into the link between autism and bowel symptoms led to a study in a community based study of children with autism. This was presented to the international autism research community at the recent IMFAR (International Meeting for Autism Research) conference held in London in 2008.

Dr Marraffa was an invited speaker at the Inaugural Autism World Congress held in Melbourne in 2002 to present a paper on the MMR vaccine and autism.

She also took part in a study investigating autism and movement disturbance using the reach-to-grasp movements of children with autism and matched controls.

She has been invited to sit on numerous Victorian state government working parties since returning to Australia from the UK 15 years ago. Recently these have included the autism state plan, early intervention services review, medical services for children in care review, paediatric orthopaedic review, and Victorian paediatric rehabilitation working party.

During her time as chairman of the State Committee, Division of Paediatrics and Child Health, Royal Australasian College of Physicians (2004-2008), she focussed on improving services for children with disabilities in Victoria.

She has been a member of Autism Victoria -Professional Committee and a member of the Early Childhood Intervention Association, Victoria.

She has a major interest in teaching and has been invited to lecture to the Faculty of Health Sciences (Occupational therapy) students at Latrobe University, Dental School at University Melbourne, numerous lectures to paediatric trainees, paediatricians, general practitioners, allied health professionals, teachers, schools and parent groups.