

2023



ANNUAL REPORT



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Director's Foreword

2023 was a year of change at the John Richards Centre (JRC). Most notably, John Richards OAM passed away in April following a lifetime of dedication and service to rural and regional Australia. John will be remembered as down to earth, fiercely independent, passionate, and a true visionary. In 2007 he founded the centre which remains Australia's only multidisciplinary research centre in rural ageing and aged care. John leaves a legacy that will endure for many years to come. We have all been enriched by our contact with John and will strive to honour his philanthropy and fulfill his vision to improve the lives and wellbeing of older rural Australians.

The other big change which occurred this year was that Professor Irene Blackberry moved from the role of JRC Director to establish the Care Economy Research Institute and Care Economy Collaborative Network at La Trobe University. Irene remains strongly involved with the JRC as she retains the position of Chair and continues her aged care research based in Albury-Wodonga. Associate Professor Sean MacDermott, who was the Deputy Director, has stepped up to become the Director, ensuring smooth transition and growth of the JRC.

The JRC has enjoyed some notable funding successes in 2023. Dr Rachel Winterton led two projects centred on rural ageing in north east Victoria which have attracted almost \$2 million in external funding. Dr Tshepo Rasekaba was successful with a large grant for improving respite care for people with dementia and their carers. As a result of this increased funding, we have taken on additional

staff: Dr Kathleen Brasher and Dr Clare Wilding will work with Rachel while Dr Shahinoor Akter will work with Tshepo. Following successful completion of her PhD Dr Carmela Leone has joined the centre working across a number of projects. We have also welcomed Michelle Buckley to the role of centre coordinator.

July saw the launch of the Dementia Care and Support Service Pathways Directory, while the Indigo 4Ms Age Friendly Health Care project was launched by Professor Ruth Stewart in October. The JRC Oration was also held in October, with this year's topic focused on Ageing on Farm. The expert panel of Dr Clare Wilding, Dr Mary Johnson and Dr Susan Brumby was skilfully moderated by Professor Lauren Rickards.

Stakeholders are key to our success, and we cannot underestimate the contribution of our communities, older adults, carers, industry partners and policymakers to ensure that our research does make an impact and a difference to older people in rural communities. The commitment of our stakeholders is demonstrated by their commitment to the recent \$110 million Care Economy Cooperative Research Centre bid to the Commonwealth led by Professor Blackberry, which engaged over 70 stakeholders. Our Reference Group has provided us with guidance throughout this period of transition, with some new additions to this group throughout the year. We have been joined by Dr Dan Douglass from Heathcote Health and Ritchie Dodds from West Wimmera Health Service as well as Jackie Thompson from the



Victorian Department of Health. Thank you to Andre Catrice for acting as the Chair and to Jane Fyfield for filling in while Andre enjoyed some long service leave. Thank you to Professors Susan Dodds, Jane Mills and Ashley Franks as well as Dr Guin Threlkeld for their ongoing support.

Sadly, this is the first annual report where we cannot thank John Richards directly, but we would like to acknowledge the ongoing commitment by the Richards family to honour John's vision.

Professor Irene Blackberry:
John Richards Chair

Associate Professor Sean MacDermott:
John Richards Director

2023 Snapshot

The John Richards Centre is an interdisciplinary rural ageing and aged care research centre based at the Albury-Wodonga campus of La Trobe University, Australia.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED SPEECHES

14



24



PUBLICATIONS

19



ACTIVE PROJECTS

41



MEDIA MENTIONS

STAFF AND AFFILIATES

29



HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH (HDR) STUDENTS

10



COLLABORATIONS



Funding





Opening balance as of 1 January 2023 was \$1,743,120.94
 Closing balance as of 31 December 2023 was \$2,476,960.86










TOTAL: \$1,524,121.88

Category 1: Australian Competitive Grants	\$324,935.62
Category 2: Other Public Sector R&D Income	\$314,361.50
Category 3: Industry and Other R&D Income	\$281,612.79
Block Grant Allocation	\$71,594.76
Core Funding	\$531,617.21
Core funding:	
– Victoria Department of Health	\$139,971.17
– La Trobe University	\$140,359.95
– John Richards' Donation	\$251,286.09
TOTAL CORE FUNDING	\$1,524,121.88

Strategic Goals

 GLOBAL LEADER	 RURAL AGEING	 RESEARCH	 PARTNERSHIPS
<h2>Vision</h2> <p>To be a global leader in rural ageing and aged care research that promotes equitable health and wellbeing outcomes for diverse older people in rural communities.</p>		<h2>Mission</h2> <p>To engage in research partnerships and knowledge exchange that is responsive and adaptive to societal, technological and environmental changes impacting on rural ageing populations.</p>	

The John Richards Centre strategic goals are aligned with the La Trobe University Strategic Plan and the La Trobe Rural Health School Statement of Strategic Intent

	 ACCESS	 CULTURE	 EQUITY	 IMPACT	 RECOGNITION
 OBJECTIVE	<p>To leverage funding from John Richards, Victorian Department of Health and Human Services and La Trobe University to enhance access to research opportunities, knowledge exchange and collaboration.</p>	<p>To demonstrate leadership and embed the La Trobe University cultural qualities within all aspects of our research, knowledge exchange and collaboration activities.</p>	<p>To lead and conduct research that addresses issues relating to equitable health and wellbeing outcomes for diverse rural ageing populations.</p>	<p>To provide rigorous research evidence to inform initiatives and innovations that address real-life problems experienced by rural ageing populations.</p>	<p>To be recognised globally as the leading centre for rural ageing and aged care research.</p>
 TARGET	<p>To obtain research funding and develop funding streams to sustain and grow the John Richards Centre's operations.</p>	<p>To demonstrate the four cultural qualities within John Richards Centre's activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability • Care • Connectivity • Innovation 	<p>To partner with rural older people and their families, rural communities and key stakeholders, governments, industry partners, peak bodies to develop research that addresses rural inequity.</p>	<p>To conduct activities and produce outputs that facilitate opportunities for research uptake and knowledge translation.</p>	<p>To foster an environment that facilitates world-class research, leadership in knowledge translation, and high-quality research training opportunities.</p>

Our Reference Group

The objective of the Reference Group is to facilitate links between the John Richards Centre and key stakeholders to provide strategic direction to the Centre. The terms of reference include:

- Contributing to the development of the research agenda;
- Informing the Centre about workforce development issues, including those relating to research, education, and training; and
- Disseminating information about the research undertaken by the Centre and providing a conduit to the wider community.

Mr Andre Catrice (Chair)

Senior Policy Officer, Chronic Care and Older People, Department of Health

Professor Susan Dodds (and Professor Ashley Franks in Professor Dodds' absence)

Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice President (Research and Industry Engagement), La Trobe University

Professor Jane Mills

Pro Vice Chancellor Health Innovation (Regional) and Dean, La Trobe Rural Health School

Professor Irene Blackberry

Chair, John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research, and Director, Care Economy Research Institute, La Trobe University

Associate Professor Sean MacDermott

Director, John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research, La Trobe University

Ms Maria Berry

Community Development Network Officer, Elder Rights Advocacy

Dr Jane Fyfield

Aged Care Sector Advisor

Professor Ngaire Kerse

Chair in Ageing Well, University of Auckland, New Zealand

Mr David Noonan

Chief Executive Officer, Albury-Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service

Mr John Richards OAM (dec.)

Founder, John Richards Centre, La Trobe University

Mr Bill Appleby

Chief Executive Officer, Albury Wodonga Health

Ritchie Dodds

Chief Executive Officer, West Wimmera Health Service

Dan Douglass

Chief Executive Officer, Heathcote Health



Our Research Team



Professor Irene Blackberry

BMed, PhD, GradCert HealthProgEval
JRC CHAIR (current)
DIRECTOR (to June 2023)



Dr Shahinoor Akter

PhD PH & BS
RESEARCH FELLOW



Associate Professor Sean MacDermott

BSc Hons (Innovation & Change Management),
BSc Hons Psych, BSocWork, MSc Operations
Management, MSocWork, PhD
JRC DIRECTOR (From June 2023)
JRC DEPUTY DIRECTOR (to June 2023).



Dr Naomi Paine

BA, MPH, MHScPHP, PhD
RESEARCH OFFICER



Dr Rachel Winterton

BAppSc Hons, PhD
SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW



Dr Carmela Leone

BAppSoSc, GradDip Integrated Human
Studies, MCPD, PhD
RESEARCH OFFICER



Dr Tshepo Rasekaba

MPH, PhD, GCALL
SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW



Dr Hannah Barbour

BSocSci, BA (Hons), PhD
RESEARCH OFFICER



Dr Clare Wilding

BAppSc (OT), MApSc, PhD
RESEARCH FELLOW



Kayla Royals

BPsySc (Hons)
RESEARCH OFFICER



Dr Stacey Rich

BPsySc (Hons), PhD
RESEARCH FELLOW



Fan He

MSc, PhD Candidate
RESEARCH OFFICER



Dr Kathleen Brasher

BAppSci (Nursing), GradDipA, PhD
RESEARCH FELLOW



Michelle Buckley

BA
ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

Our Research Affiliates



Dr Mark Ashcroft

RN, RM, GradDipN, GradDipBM, MCM,
MM, PhD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
BEECHWORTH HEALTH SERVICE



Professor Tonya Stebbins

PhD
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY



Associate Professor Carina Chan

BSc (Psychology & Statistics), MSc
(Health Psychology), PhD
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY



Adjunct Professor Christopher Steer

MBBS, FRACP
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY,
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR UNSW
SCHOOL OF CLINICAL MEDICINE,
MEDICAL ONCOLOGIST,
BORDER MEDICAL ONCOLOGY



Dr Stephen Cousins

BSc (Hons) Sport & Exercise Science,
PG Cert. Teaching in Higher Education,
MSc (Strength & Conditioning), PhD
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY



Associate Professor Joseph Tucci

BPharm, PhD
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY



Dr Wasek Faisal

VISITING SENIOR RESEARCH
FELLOW, LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL ONCOLOGIST, BALLARAT



Adjunct Professor Craig Underhill

MBBS, FRACP
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY,
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
(CONJOINT) UNSW SCHOOL OF
CLINICAL MEDICINE,
ALBURY-WODONGA REGIONAL
CANCER CENTRE, HUME REGIONAL
INTEGRATED CANCER SERVICES,
VICTORIAN COMPREHENSIVE
CANCER CENTRE



Dr Ali Lakhani

BBA, MA, MES, PhD
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY



Ms Nicole Webb

BappSC (Nursing), GradDipEd, MC-CNCSC
(Master of Cancer Science)
ALBURY WODONGA HEALTH



Dr George Mnatzaganian

MPub Health, MHLthSc (Epidemiology),
PhD
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY



Associate Professor Raelene Wilding

BA (Hons) Sociology and Anthropology, PhD
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY



Adjunct Professor Nicholas Morris

MA, MPhil (Oxon), PhD (UNSW)
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY



Associate Professor Kerryn Pike

BA, BSc (Hons), DPsych (Clin Neuro),
MAPS
GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY



Dr Monika Winarnita

Bcomm, BA (Hons), PhD
DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

Higher Degree by Research Students



Ms Jennifer Boak RN, Grad Cert Emerg, Grad Cert Gerontology
PHD STUDENT

Improving Quality of Care Through Detection of Complexity Amongst Older People in the Community: ImPaCt study

Supervisors: Professor Irene Blackberry and Dr Tshepo Rasekaba



Mr Craig Gilbertson RN, GradDipN (Perioperative)
MASTERS STUDENT

A Feasibility Study Exploring the Use of Virtual Reality to Alleviate Patient Fear of Needles During Medical Treatment

Supervisors: Professor Irene Blackberry and Dr Tshepo Rasekaba



Ms Rosa Goncalves BBiomedSc
PHD STUDENT

Reducing disparity in cancer outcomes through Health Literacy in culturally diverse and socially disadvantaged cancer patients: Challenges and opportunities in the age of social media.

Supervisors: Professor Irene Blackberry, Professor Tonya Stebbins, and Dr Wasek Faisal



Mr Fan He MSc
PHD STUDENT

One-Year Clinical Patient Outcomes Following Acute Ischaemic and Haemorrhagic Stroke in Albury-Wodonga: A 10-Year Retrospective Cohort Study

Supervisors: Professor Irene Blackberry and Dr George Mnatzaganian



Mr Chris Harvey BPsych, MSW
PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE STUDENT

Understanding the impact and experience of person-centred comprehensive suicide aftercare in a rural community

Supervisors: Associate Professor Sean MacDermott and Associate Professor Carina Chan.



Mr Lucas Lloyd RN MN
PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE STUDENT

An analysis of older people with palliative care needs presenting to a rural emergency department and their care journey

Supervisors: Professor Irene Blackberry and Associate Professor Sean MacDermott



Mr Darren Midgley RN, BN, Dip. Mgt, Grad. Dip. Bus. Admin, MBA, GAICD
PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE STUDENT

The Evaluation of the Impact of Intergenerational Programs on Children in Long Day-Care and Older Adults Living in Residential Aged Care

Supervisors: Professor Irene Blackberry and Associate Professor Sean MacDermott



Dr Krishna Rachakonda MBBS, MD, FRACP, FRCP (Edin).
 PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE STUDENT
Prevalence of polypharmacy among older adults with cancer in Mildura Base Public Hospital
 Supervisors: Professor Irene Blackberry, Associate Professor Sean MacDermott and Associate Professor Joseph Tucci



Mr David Brereton
 PHD STUDENT
Regional Cancer Care for Older Persons: Exercise in geriatric oncology
 Supervisor: Dr Tshepo Rasekaba



Dr Mmakgomo Mimi Raesima MD, MPH/MHM
 PHD STUDENT
Regional cancer care for older persons - geriatric assessment and enhanced supportive care
 Supervisor: Dr Tshepo Rasekaba

Higher Degree by Research Students - Completion



Dr Carmela Leone
 BAppSoSc, GradDip Integrated Human Studies, MCPD
Discourses relating to 'the right to the city' for people living with dementia and their carers in a regional Australian setting; implications for a rights-based dementia-friendly community
 Supervisors: Professor Irene Blackberry and Dr Rachel Winterton

Carmela's PhD explored discourses about people living with dementia, carers, and their socio-spatial rights, to understand how certain discourses contribute to socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion. Her research considered the implications for a dementia-friendly community which is grounded in a rights-based framework. Carmela submitted her PhD thesis in February, and her doctorate was awarded in July 2023.

Awards

3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition

JRC student Craig Gilbertson was awarded first place in the 2023 La Trobe Rural Health School 3MT competition, which was held in Bendigo in July. Craig's presentation was titled ***"Effect of using virtual reality to manage needle phobia in adults undergoing medical procedures: A rapid review"***.

L to R: Professor Leigh Kinsman and Craig Gilbertson



Key Research Areas



**AGED CARE
AND DEMENTIA**



**HEALTH SERVICE
AND WORKFORCE**



AGEING IN PLACE



TECHNOLOGY



AGED CARE AND DEMENTIA



The Aged Care and Dementia research stream is focused on developing translational research projects designed to improve the lives of older people in aged care, as well as those of people living with dementia and their carers. Projects also cover related areas such as cognitive decline and the safe use of medications.



GreenConnect dementia respite project: improving respite care for people with dementia and their carers
Chappell, C., Rasekaba, T., Blackberry, I., MacDermott, S., Douglass, D., Midgely, D., & Slatter, S.

Funder: Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care

Early-stage evaluation of Treehouse4Two: helping to grow the understanding of dementia and keep people at home longer.
MacDermott, S., Akter, S., & Rasekaba, T.

Funders: Care Economy Research Institute (Industry Partner Development Funding) and Central Highlands Rural Health.





HEALTH SERVICE AND WORKFORCE

Our Health Service and Workforce key research area pursues inquiry that provides insights and understanding of the broad field of health care, in so far as these relate to the health and wellbeing of the ageing population, locally and globally. Our focus includes aspects of health care delivery, workforce, organisation, resource allocation, economics, program evaluation and health outcomes. These are all intended to improve the health of individuals and communities vis-à-vis implications for clinical practice, health service management and policy.



Development of health and wellbeing profiles for West Wimmera Health Service communities

MacDermott, S., Royals, K., McLaren D., & Storey, A.

Funder: West Wimmera Health Service

One-year clinical patient outcomes following acute ischaemic and haemorrhagic stroke in Albury-Wodonga a 10-year retrospective cohort study

He, F., Blackberry, I., Mnatzaganian, G., Rutherford, D., & Njovu, M.

Partners: Albury Wodonga Health

Health workforce program: expansion of the rural health multidisciplinary training programme in aged care services (evaluation component)

MacDermott, S.

Funder: Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care (via Monash University Department of Rural Health)

3-in-1 towards a healthy town

MacDermott, S., & Paine, N.

Funders: Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research, West Wimmera Health Service (WWHS).

Café health

MacDermott, S., & Paine, N.

Funder: West Wimmera Health Service (WWHS)

Designing an age-friendly, rural, multidisciplinary primary care model: the 4Ms approach

Ashcroft, M., Winterton, R., & Brasher, K., on behalf of the Indigo Consortium.

Funder: Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care – Primary Care Rural Innovative Multidisciplinary Models Program.

A stitch in time: the Indigo 4Ms trial to enhance health for older people

Ashcroft, M., Winterton, R., & Brasher, K., on behalf of the Indigo Consortium.

Funder: Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care – Innovative Models of Care Program.



PICTURED L to R: Ritchie Dodds CEO West Wimmera Health Service, Alana Storey, Cr Brett Ireland, Dorothy McLaren, Kayla Royals, Dr Sean MacDermott





AGEING IN PLACE

The Ageing in Place key research area engages in strategic research that builds the capacity of rural places to enable older adults to age in their homes and communities. Research in this area identifies barriers and enablers to accessing health, social, and community services within rural communities, and identifies strategies to increase community participation among diverse older adults.

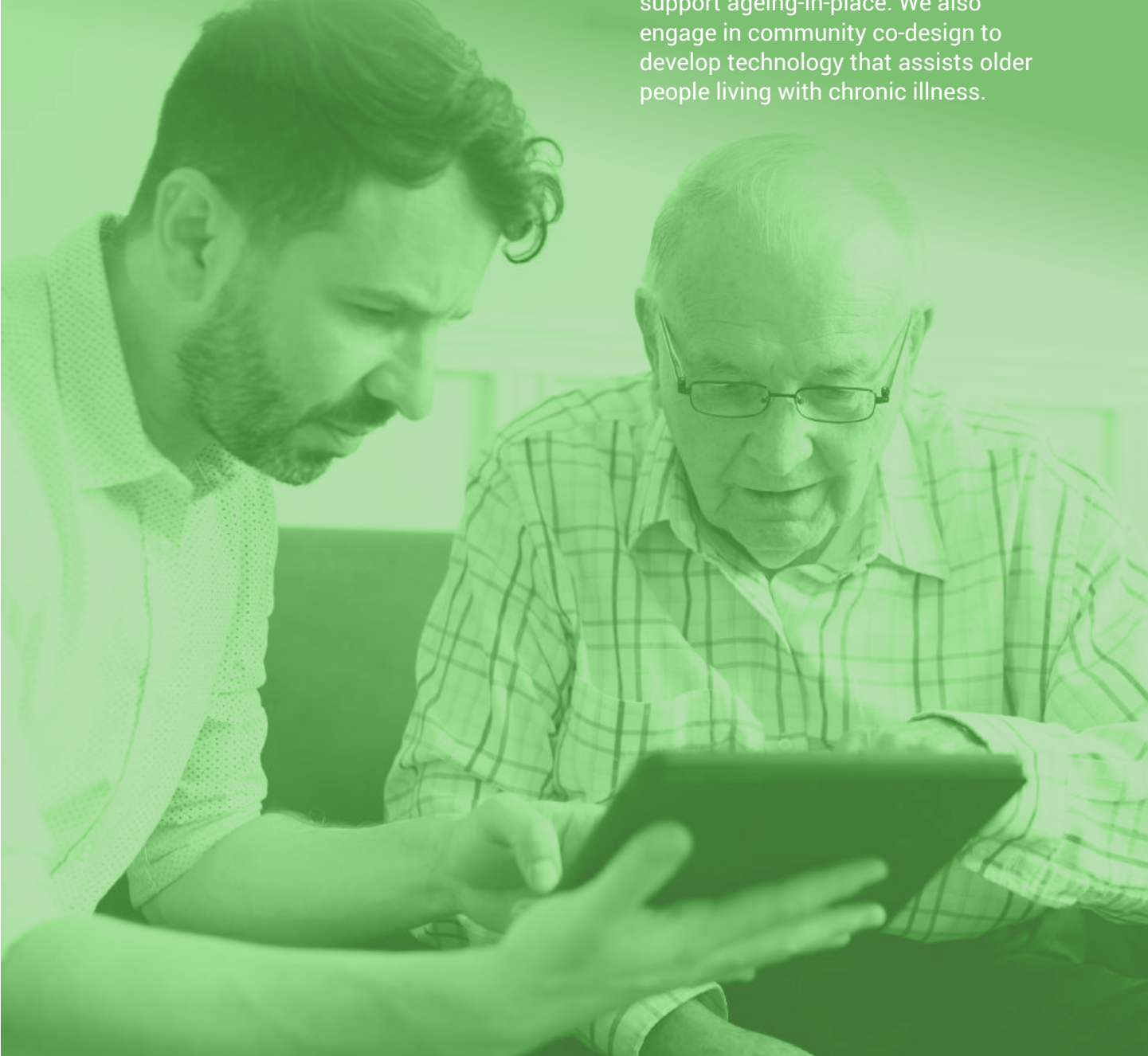


<p>Regional Victoria trials alliance: linkages, innovation, special populations, equity (ReViTALISE) Underhill, C., Wright, T., Torres, J., Harris, S., Rachakonda, K., Brown, S., Collins, I., Campbell, D., Klein, O., Phillip, J., Eastman, P., Blackberry, I., Steer, C.B., Krishnaswamy, M., & Gibbs., P.</p>	<p>Funder: MRFF Rural, Regional and Remote Clinical Trial Infrastructure Fund.</p>
<p>Developing a taxonomy of volunteer engagement in the age friendly health care economy Winterton, R., Brasher, K., & Leone, C.</p>	<p>Funders: Care Economy Research Institute (Industry Partner Development Funding) with in-kind support from Volunteering Australia.</p>
<p>Ageing on farm Blackberry, I., MacDermott, S., & Wilding, C.</p>	<p>Partners: Samuel Marwood and Tam Marwood of Cultivate Farms Funding body: Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research.</p>
<p>Evaluation of healthy age hub-Clunes MacDermott, S., & Paine, N.</p>	<p>Funders: Care Economy Research Institute (Industry Partner Development Funding) and Central Highlands Rural Health.</p>
<p>Future-proofing social support for older people living in rural and regional Victoria, Australia MacDermott, S., & Leone, C.</p>	<p>Funder: Care Economy Research Institute (Industry Partner Development Funding).</p>
<p>Building skills for rural positive ageing Winterton, R., Brasher, K., Blackberry, I., & MacDermott, S.</p>	<p>Funder: State Trustees Australia Foundation.</p>
<p>Understanding convoys of rural age-friendly health care Winterton, R.</p>	<p>Funder: Care Economy Research Institute (Industry Partner Development Funding).</p>



TECHNOLOGY

The focus of this key research area is exploring and trialling the use of technology to improve health and well-being as people age, and to support ageing-in-place. We also engage in community co-design to develop technology that assists older people living with chronic illness.



Scoping development and feasibility of a virtual diabetes clinic model

Rasekaba, T., Boyd, J., & Blackberry, I.

Funder: Care Economy Research Institute (Industry Partner Development Funding).

Implementation of FallsRiskCheck: a novel pharmacy-led digital health tool for ongoing falls risk identification and assessment in residential aged care facilities

Khalil, H., Rasekaba, T., & Blackberry, I.

Funder: Care Economy Research Institute (Industry Partner Development Funding).

Engagement and Impact

“Impact is often measured by the number of citations and publications, but when you’re working in communities, impact is really about what difference you’re making to people’s lives.”

Associate Professor Sean MacDermott, Director, John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research.

Six projects led by La Trobe Rural Health School staff were assessed for impact and recognised in La Trobe University's Research Impact for Sustainable Development Report 2022, aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Two of these six projects were led by JRC staff:



Dr Tshepo Rasekaba, Professor Irene Blackberry, and Associate Professor Sean MacDermott from the John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research have partnered with Heathcote Dementia Alliance, Princess Court, Rural Care Australia, and Heathcote Health on an innovative dementia initiative, the GreenConnect Dementia Respite Project.

Funded by a three-year \$1.7 million grant from the Australian Government, the GreenConnect Dementia Respite Project aims to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of people living with dementia and their carers, and alleviate the stresses of caring across the Loddon-Mallee region by harnessing the therapeutic power of outdoor green environments.

Assisted by Dr. Shahinoor Akter, the JRC team leads the evaluation and research activities for the project, aimed to generate the evidence of the project's impact on dementia care in rural and regional communities in Victoria. Although the project is in its early stages, it has already attracted significant media interest leading up to and following its official launch in April 2024. Its potential impact is notable, particularly in addressing disparities and inequities in dementia respite services for rural and regional populations.



Associate Professor Sean MacDermott partnered with Chris Harvey to develop and lead a suicide prevention model at Mildura Base Hospital. This has led to a reduction in suicide re-presentations and been adopted as a model in other regional hospitals.

Mildura has the highest rate of suicide of any regional Victorian LGA. A report produced collaboratively by La Trobe and Monash Universities showed that between 2008 and 2018, 4,326 people presented to the Mildura Base Public Hospital Emergency Department for suicidality, 1,999 of which were re-presentations. Following this report, MBPH were successful in receiving Commonwealth and State funding for a dedicated Suicide Prevention Program. The aim of the program is to prevent suicides and suicide attempts by providing assertive, holistic, client-centred aftercare in the community for a period of 12 weeks. Staffed by social workers, nurses, psychiatric and psychosocial support and peer support workers, the Mildura Suicide Prevention Program provided aftercare to 138 recipients during its first full year in 2021. The program has shown its success in self-reports of optimal recovery, reduction in re-presentations for suicide attempts, and instances of individuals reaching out to services for support before escalating into crisis.

ABOVE: L to R: Associate Professor Sean MacDermott and Mr Chris Harvey

JRC Annual Oration

25 October 2023, La Trobe University Albury-Wodonga Campus

The topic of this year's oration was 'Ageing on farm', which is a complex process, requiring farmers to adapt and negotiate a host of changes as they transition to new realities. This is complicated by wider societal, economic, political, and climatic changes. The event was co-badged with the Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) and the Active Aging Consortium in Asia Pacific (ACAP).

Our expert panel consisted of:

- Dr Clare Wilding, Research Fellow, John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research, La Trobe University.
- Dr Mary Johnson, fourth generation farmer and Research Fellow, RMIT.
- Dr Susan Brumby, Deputy Chair of the Western Victoria Primary Health Network and Founding Director of the National Centre for Farmer Health.

The panel discussion was moderated by Professor Lauren Rickards, Chair of Climate Change Adaptation and Director of the Climate Change Adaptation Lab, La Trobe University.



You can watch a recording of the John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research Oration using the link below:

<https://youtu.be/QqqI7Eqp5bY>



ABOVE: L to R:
JRC Team,
Associate
Professor Sean
MacDermott, Dr
Rachel Winterton,
Dr Clare Wilding,
Professor Irene
Blackberry, Mrs
Michelle Buckley,
Dr Stacey Rich, Dr
Naomi Paine, Dr
Carmela Leone, Dr
Tshepo Rasekaba

LEFT: L to R:
JRC Annual
Oration – Panel
Members and JRC
Director A/Prof
Sean Macdermott

Webster Rural and Regional Dementia Care Pathways Directory Launch

The Care Pathways Directory was launched by Ruth Hosking OAM on 18 July 2023. Funded by a bequest from Gordon Webster (Equity Trustees), this directory was created as part of the Webster Dementia Care Project Bendigo. It was developed by the JRC team, using data gathered through interviews and surveys with carers of people living with dementia, and design activities with carers, local health and aged care stakeholders. It outlines the dementia care and support services that are available at different stages of the dementia care journey, and can be accessed at <https://tinyurl.com/pathwaysdirectory>



L to R: Dr Marita Chisholm, Professor Irene Blackberry, Associate Professor Marc Budge, Ruth Hosking OAM, Libby Wade, Dr Rachel Winterton, Dr Carmela Leone



GO ReViTALISE Initiative (Geriatric Oncology Regional Victorian Trials Alliance, Linkages, Special Populations, Equity program)

The GO ReViTALISE Initiative is a stream under the ReViTALISE Program aimed to bridge the metro - regional trials gap by 2025, with Adjunct Professor Craig Underhill as the chief investigator.

The Go ReViTALISE Initiative is co-led by Professor Irene Blackberry and Adjunct Professor Christopher Steer, and its focus is on older adults diagnosed with cancer. In September and October 2023, the JRC's GO ReViTALISE team (Irene Blackberry, Christopher Steer, Tshepo Rasekaba, Stacey Rich, and Nicole Webb) embarked on a hybrid roadshow to cancer centres across the Victorian regional cancer centres and trials network, starting with Bendigo, Ballarat, and Geelong. This ongoing roadshow, extending into 2024, is designed to actively connect with regional cancer centres across Victoria.

The primary objectives include fostering research partnerships, promoting the initiatives of GO ReViTALISE, sharing valuable insights, and cultivating collaborative research ventures. The GO ReViTALISE Initiative places particular emphasis on advancing the implementation and adoption of geriatric assessment, cancer enhanced supportive care and clinical trials infrastructure for regional older adults diagnosed with cancer.



Andrew Love Cancer Centre, Barwon Health (Geelong)



Bendigo Health Cancer Centre, Bendigo Health (Bendigo)

Forum: Aged care workforce leaders: Building a sustainable workforce to improve aged care outcomes (Melbourne, November 2023).

Building a strong and sustainable aged care workforce is one of the most substantial, complex, and important objectives given the ageing population of Australia. On the topic of “Navigating the plethora of training opportunities to develop your staff” speakers included:

- Associate Professor Sean MacDermott, Director – John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research, La Trobe University
- Professor James Vickers, Director, Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre, University of Tasmania
- Robert Peoples, Teaching Education Manager – Health & Community Services, South West TAFE

Launch of the Indigo 4Ms Tools

The Indigo 4Ms Tools were officially launched by the National Rural Health Commissioner, Adjunct Professor Ruth Stewart at Beechworth in October 2023. The Indigo 4Ms Tools were created through a two-year project aimed at developing a new model of integrated, multidisciplinary primary care for rural older people, led by Beechworth Health Service with the JRC as a project and evaluation partner. Through an extensive co-design process with older people, health, education and aged care professionals, the project developed two tools: one for older people to use as a conversational guide with healthcare providers, and a second for healthcare professionals to guide conversations with older people. These tools are currently being implemented within primary care settings and communities across north-east Victoria.



L-R: Dr Mark Ashcroft, Glenda Chapman, Wendy Kelly, Dr Kathleen Brasher, Dr Rachel Winterton



The Indigo 4Ms Tool for Older People

Internal Engagement

Staff team-building events

JRC staff are situated across several campuses, so it is important that we make the most of opportunities to get together face-to-face. Staff were involved in various events and strategy development days in 2023.

In March, staff attended a staff retreat at the RACV Club Creswick. In addition to development of a strategic plan, staff also engaged in team-building exercises and activities.

With most JRC staff and some students attending/presenting at the La Trobe Rural Health School research conference in July, we made the most of the opportunity to get together.

JRC staff gathered in Albury-Wodonga for the JRC Oration in October. This presented an opportunity to get together to work on professional development and further team meeting suggestions for the future.

RACV Club Creswick staff retreat



RACV Club Creswick staff retreat



RACV Club Creswick staff retreat block building challenge

La Trobe Rural Health School Conference, Bendigo Campus, July 2023

L to R:
Dr Kathleen Brasher,
A/Professor Sean MacDermott, Professor Irene Blackberry,
Dr Tshepo Rasekaba,
Dr Naomi Paine,
Dr Hannah Barbour,
Kayla Royals, Craig Gilbertson, Dr Clare Wilding, Hannah Barbour,
Dr Rachel Winterton



Selected Media



CIRCLE OF LIFE

A new scheme is introducing older farmers to younger people who want to follow in their footsteps

NEWS PAGE 3

New tool to assist care for elderly

A new tool designed to assist care for elderly people in rural areas, ensuring personalised health care for a large and diverse population.

The Indigo 4Ms project aims to create a health care model specifically tailored to older Australians by focusing on what matters to the patient, their social network, their physical and mental health.

National Rural Health Commissioner Paul Skerrett said the project is a significant step towards ensuring that rural and remote Australians have the same quality of care as those in major cities.

La Trobe University's Health Innovation Centre is leading the project, with support from the Victorian Government and the Commonwealth Health Research Council.

The project has designed tools to allow conversations about what care people actually want.

"This tool will allow us to have more informed discussions about health care and the connection between health and the community they live in," Dr Winterton said.

"It will also ensure health care is guided by the same language, where hospital care will lead to more timely care for older people and support them in their own homes."

Dr Rachel Winterton, senior research fellow at the Health Innovation Centre, said the project is a significant step towards ensuring that rural and remote Australians have the same quality of care as those in major cities.

National Victoria Oamaru

This was published 1 year ago

Great passion for rural health

Irene Blackberry and Sean MacDermott

May 26, 2021 - 2:08pm

(FREDERICK) JOHN RICHARDS OAM November 1, 1935-April 28, 2023

Rural Australia lost one of its finest champions following the death of...



Care villa vision about to become a reality

April 21, 2023 BY Barbara Simnaitis

Time to celebrate. Heathcote Dementia Alliance board members and project supporters gathered to mark the imminent arrival of its prototype care villa, Costerfield House, in Heathcote. Photos: SUPPLIED

COUNTLESS hours of work by the Heathcote Dementia Alliance are set to be rewarded when a prototype care villa, Costerfield House, is delivered at the end of this month.

Ahead of the building's arrival, a ceremonial ground breaking held last week was a chance for the project's supporters to gather and celebrate the milestone for dementia care in the region.

Mandaly Resources representative Ross Lairy, former HDA board member and dementia carer Bill Weiss, and Heathcote Health CEO Dan Douglass all took a turn with a spade.

HDA president Sandra Slatter said it had been an incredible journey.

Dementia Alliance outlines future goals

February 27, 2023 • By Barbara Simnaitis

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Healthy thinking

Indigo 4Ms healthcare approach to promote age-friendly local conversations

A NEW resource to deliver integrated age-friendly healthcare for older people launched by a prominent national senior health care professional on Tuesday is set to be the first of its kind to Australia.

The project has been a seven-year collaboration led by senior health service with six other...

Professor Ruth Winterton said the project had been carefully developed and designed.

"This model can now be shared where others can learn from it," she said.

The Indigo 4Ms project is a new model of healthcare sensitive to the needs of older people and stimulation the sector on long-term policy responses to support age-friendly environments.

Dr Rachel Winterton, senior research fellow at La Trobe University's Health Innovation Centre, led the modelling and evaluation of the project.

She said collaboration made sure age-friendly care is a rural context can be delivered.

"We're really excited to what we as a collective have achieved for the project."

"We're confident it will contribute to better health outcomes in the region and support older people to access more integrated, holistic care."

Continued page 3

Dr Rachel Winterton, unpacks government data which suggests a loneliness epidemic

1 item

ABC Central Victoria Bendigo

Breakfast with Fiona Parker 5 times a week, 8:30am to 9:00am

12 September 2023, 8:41 am AEST

Nine 30, If you missed that, just give us a bell and we can pass that number on, In the meantime, let's dig a bit deeper into what some are calling the loneliness epidemic, Dr Rachel Winterton is a senior Research fellow at the John Richards Centre for...

Ageing Research at La Trobe, Uni, Rachel, good morning, Thanks for joining us, Morning, Fiona, Lovely to speak to you again, Looking at some

Healthy thinking

Indigo 4Ms healthcare approach to promote age-friendly local conversations

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Continued page 3

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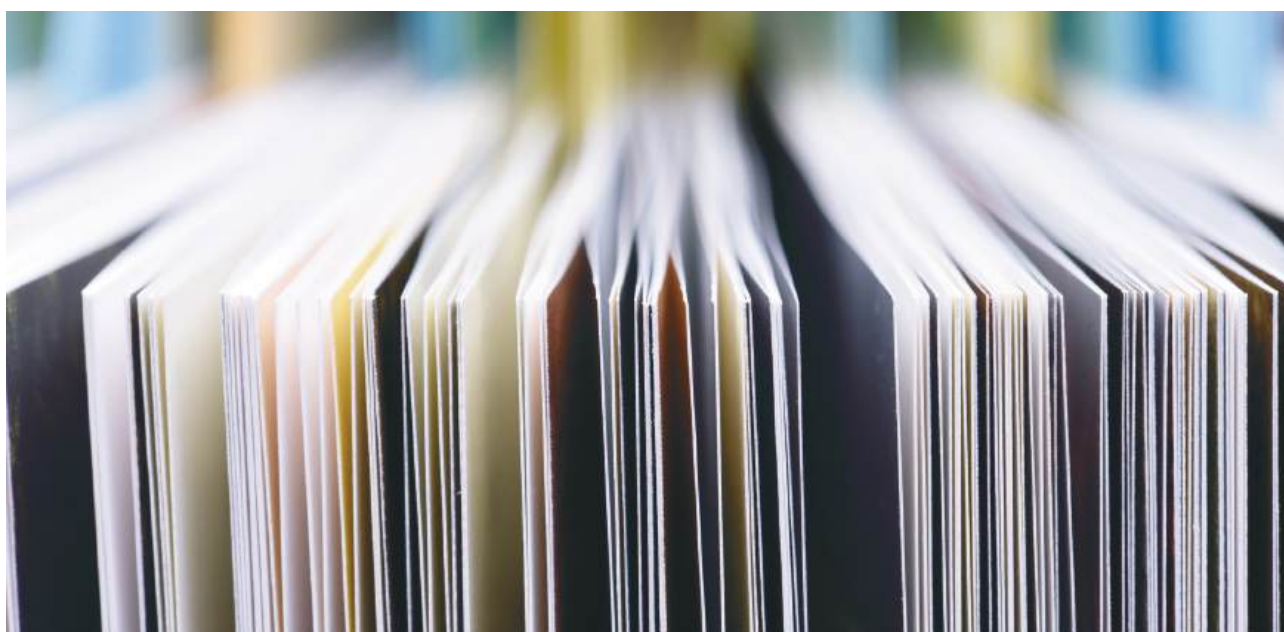
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