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And the winner is: the COSMOS trial team

Helen McLachlan

On March 20, the COSMOS team received La Trobe University's **Excellence in Health Research and Translation Award** at a ceremony attended by industry leaders, politicians and academics from La Trobe and other Universities (see [ARCH News article](#) which also has a video).



"The award, in its inaugural year, seeks to acknowledge the tremendous amount of skill, effort and collaboration that is required in order for new knowledge to have a beneficial impact on the health and wellbeing of people in the real world."

Six research projects were shortlisted for the award. As you can see on the [videos of each project short-listed](#) [this LTU Intranet link only works if you are logged into a LTU account], fantastic work is being achieved at La Trobe, not just for COSMOS, but also Deirdre Fetherstonhaugh's work in residential aged care, Jo Barbaro's autism detection work, the Bouverie Centre's community-based training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family therapists and other areas of health care.



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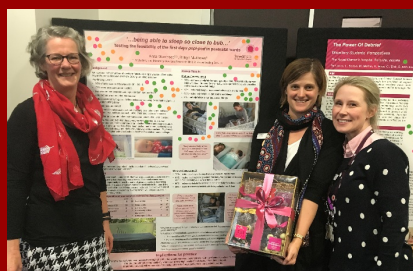
NEWS IN BRIEF

More awards

Dr Amanda Cooklin was awarded a competitive **La Trobe Tracey Banivanua Mar Research Fellowship** for three years. The Fellowship supports future research leaders who have major care giving responsibilities.



Anita Moorhead and **Robyn Matthews** won the best poster award for their poster: *"Being able to sleep so close to bub: Testing the feasibility of the first days pepi-pod in the postnatal ward"* at the International Nurses Day (8 May) at the Women's.



Congratulations Emeritus Professor Judy Atkinson, who has been awarded a **MEMBER (AM) IN THE GENERAL DIVISION** for *"significant service to the Indigenous community, to education, and to mental health"* in the Australia Day Honours List. Judy is one of the investigator team on the Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future project.

The COSMOS team are: Helen McLachlan, Della Forster, Mary-Ann Davey, Michelle Newton; in collaboration with Lisa Gold, Deakin University; Mary Anne Biro, Monash University; Tanya Farrell and Jeremy Oats, Royal Women's Hospital; Ulla Waldenström, Karolinska Institute; and Leah Albers, University of New Mexico.



This prize is the **culmination of years of research** into a continuity of midwifery care model called 'caseload midwifery' and the impact of the caseload model has on caesarean section births and other health outcomes for mothers and babies.

Caseload is a one-to-one midwifery model of care in which women receive care from a primary midwife with one or two back-up midwives. In 'caseload' midwifery, the woman builds a trusting relationship with a midwife who cares for her during pregnancy, labour, birth and following the birth of the baby.

The COSMOS trial is Australia's first, and the world's largest trial of caseload midwifery. The main aim of the COSMOS trial was to evaluate the effect of caseload midwifery on caesarean section and on a range of significant secondary outcomes.

The results of the study were first published in 2012 in the *British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*. The study found caseload midwifery (compared with standard maternity care) was associated with a relative difference in the caesarean rate of 22%. It also reduced hospital stay and fewer infants required admission to neonatal special care. Midwives also reported higher satisfaction and lower burnout.

The COSMOS trial results now underpin government policies and guidelines and the model has been, or is being, implemented at the majority of 133 Australian public maternity services surveyed in 2015.

COSMOS has also been **shortlisted for a 2019 BHERT (Business Higher Education Round Table) Award** – from 155 applications – in the category Outstanding Collaboration for National (non-economic) Benefit.

BHERT awards are prestigious annual awards which recognise outstanding achievement in collaboration between the sectors of business and higher education. Award applications are assessed by a panel of independent judges against a number of criteria. The submissions must be highly innovative and reflect a strong relationship between partners. The winning projects are also those deemed to have measurable outcomes, and high impact for Australia.



Staff news

We said farewell to

Emma Sayers, Research Administration Officer for the Harmony project, who has left for a new job at the Department of Public Health at La Trobe

We welcomed

Professor Christine East, who was appointed Professor of Nursing and Midwifery at the School of Nursing and Midwifery / the Mercy Hospital for Women

Jess Ison, who is Coordinator of the La Trobe Violence Against Women Network and joined a new research project led by Professor Angela Taft

Tessa Stogian, a midwife, who joined the DAISY study team where she will be focussing on the mothers who are receiving peer support

Felicity Young, who joined the Harmony project as its Research Administration Officer

Research Leadership Award for A/Prof Catherine Chamberlain



Cath Chamberlain with PhD student Christina Heris

Associate Professor Catherine Chamberlain was awarded the prestigious [Lowitja Research Leadership Award](#) for leadership in an academic field and outstanding contribution to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The award is made in partnership with the Cranlana Centre for Ethical Leadership and was announced at [Lowitja's International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference](#) in Darwin.

This award includes a fully funded position in the Cranlana Programme's Executive Colloquium, which is an intensive six-day course designed to allow senior leaders to develop complex decision-making and leadership capabilities. (see also [La Trobe media release](#) 20 June 2019)

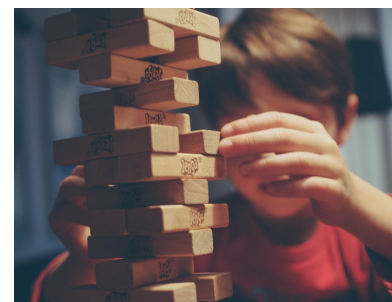
Cath is leading the the *Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future* project to co-design perinatal awareness, recognition, assessment and support strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents who have experienced complex childhood trauma.

The project has a new video on their website titled [Healing the past by nurturing the future: Understanding the impact of complex trauma for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander parents in the perinatal period](#). It aims to 'speak to Aboriginal people' about the potential impacts of complex and intergenerational trauma during the perinatal period and the unique opportunities for healing.

Video-coding for EHLS at School

Shannon Bennetts

Between 2010 and 2012, around 1,000 toddlers (12-36 months) and their parents took part in the **Early Home Learning Study** (EHLS). This research was commissioned by the Victorian Government Department of Early Education and Childhood Development (DEECD) and conducted by the Parenting Research Centre. The EHLS was a randomised controlled trial, designed to evaluate an early childhood parenting program called **smalltalk**. The *smalltalk* program aimed to promote parent-child interactions known to be beneficial for children's language and literacy development (e.g. following the child's lead, tuning in). During EHLS, we conducted home visits where we filmed parents and children playing together. After coding a sub-sample of video data, we found improved parenting



Student news

The following students submitted their PhD theses in the first half of this year:

Rhian Cramer: *SILC – Supporting infant feeding in local communities: Evaluation of SILC processes.* Supervised by Helen McLachlan, Della Forster and Touran Shafiei

Heather Wallace: *Reproductive health decision-making in Municipio Viqueque, Baucau, Dili and Ermera, Timor-Leste.* Supervised by Angela Taft, Susan McDonald and Suzanne Belton (Charles Darwin University)

New Higher Degree students:

Bijaya Pokharel (PhD): *Cultural competency in the primary care context of domestic violence: Clinicians' experiences and expectations of women of immigrant and refugee background*

Carol Reid (PhD): *Service Concept Mapping of trauma-informed perinatal care for Aboriginal Parents: a place-based approach for rural and regional settings*

Emma Toone (PhD): *Improving mental health responses for very young children after family violence*

Renee Kam (Master of Applied Science): *Is a maternal perception of insufficient milk supply indicative of an actual insufficient milk supply in breastfeeding mothers of term infants?*

Ruth Lungu Ngoma (ProfDoc): *The impact of traumatic birth on fathers during and after birth up to one year postnatally*

behaviours for parents who received the *smalltalk* program, compared to those who had not received the *smalltalk* program.

Five years after these families were recruited, we commenced the ***EHLS at School*** study, to determine if there were any longer-term benefits of the *smalltalk* program once children started school.

Between 2016 and 2018, our team of trained researchers travelled around Victoria, observing and video-recording children and parents playing together. Six hundred and one families were involved where children reached 7.5 years of age. Families were provided with three toy sets to choose from: Lego, Jenga, and Animal 'Snap' Cards. The next (equally daunting) task was to rate the observed parent-child interactions using an adapted framework "*Coding of Attachment-Related Parenting*".

The measure rated 11 specific behaviours across two domains:

- Sensitive Responding (the extent to which the parent notices and responds appropriately to the child's needs) and
- Positive Mutuality (the extent to which the parent and child are in-sync and responsive towards one another).

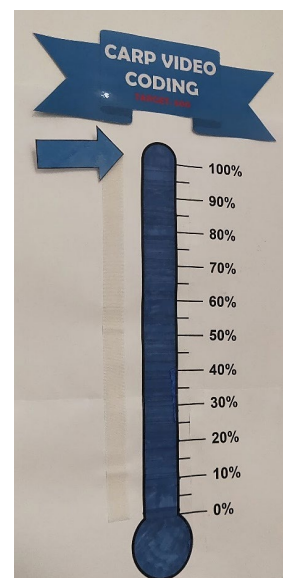
Examples of the specific behaviours include facilitation/guidance (parent) and interaction/turn-taking (parent and child).

Due to the sheer numbers of videos to code we advertised for Summer Vacation Scholarships in late 2018. These scholarships aimed to give high-achieving students the opportunity to develop research skills over the summer break.

Over a 10-week period, the team of five (two master raters, three students) rated an eye-watering 656 videos. This equates to 3,280 minutes of video footage (the equivalent of watching Titanic nearly 17 times!). Perhaps unsurprisingly, the most popular toy choice was Lego (51%) followed by Jenga (39%) and Cards (10%). The home-based videos provided our video raters with some interesting and often entertaining viewing, such as dogs or cats knocking over the toys or siblings wanting to get involved in play.

Inter-rater reliability was monitored throughout the scoring period, to ensure that the team was applying the framework consistently. Every 10th video was rated twice. The average inter-rater agreement on the 11 behaviours was 87.6%. We are delighted with the high-quality, reliable and meaningful data that has been generated through this process. These data will now be used to answer a number of research questions, including whether initial gains in parenting behaviours have been sustained to school age.

We wish to extend warm thanks to everyone involved, particularly our students **Rabia Khan, Melina Piakis, Melanie Tassos**, our Research Assistant **Jasmine Love**, and our Chief Investigators, with special thanks to **Professor Jan Nicholson** and



Conference presentations

Touran Shafiei, Flood M. *Perinatal mental health needs of immigrant and refugee women: care providers' perspective*; 8th World Congress on Women's Mental Health, Paris, March 2019

Touran Shafiei, Forster D, McLachlan H, Biggs L, Couch S, Wadley G, Smith T, Wyett C. *Developing a moderated online peer support intervention to prevent perinatal depression and anxiety*; 8th World Congress on Women's Mental Health, Paris, March 2019

Nawal Abdulghani, **Ranmali Rodrigo** and **Maggie Flood** presented posters at the Perinatal Society of Australia & New Zealand (PSANZ) Conference held on the Gold Coast in March 2019.

Robyn Matthews was an invited speaker at the International Nurses Day (8 May) the Women's presenting on the EXPert study findings (her PhD).

Pam McCalman presented at the University of Melbourne MD Student Conference, held at the Melbourne Convention Centre. Medical students across each year level attended. She participated in a panel discussion called: *Overcoming a legacy of violence and racism in obstetrics and gynaecology*, where she discussed the Baggarrook Yurrongi project and explained how the project is working towards closing the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their newborns.



Dr Penny Levickis. We encourage other researchers to consider the potential role of Summer Vacation Scholarships in their studies. Student Scholarships can be an excellent opportunity for both research teams and students, providing additional support for time-intensive tasks and building research capacity within our University.

EHLs at School is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council, in partnership with the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services and is led by Professor Jan Nicholson (La Trobe University). Our other investigators are Dr Elizabeth Westrupp (Deakin University), Professor Sheena Reilly (Griffith University), Dr Naomi Hackworth (Parenting Research Centre), Professor Donna Berthelsen (Queensland University of Technology), Dr Fiona Mensah (Murdoch Children's Research Institute), Associate Professor Lisa Gold (Deakin University), Dr Shannon Bennetts (La Trobe University) and Dr Penny Levickis (The University of Melbourne).

Preventing postnatal depression in new mothers using telephone peer support

Touran Shafiei

In Australia, 17% of new mothers experience postnatal depression, with serious health consequences for the woman, her infant and family members. However, one in three Victorian new mothers experiencing postnatal depression do not seek help. DAISY (Depression and Anxiety peer Support study) is a multi-site, two arm randomised controlled trial matching peer volunteer mothers with a lived experience of postnatal depression and/or anxiety (from which they have recovered) with new mothers at increased risk of postnatal depression or anxiety.



The new mothers will be recruited up to 11 weeks postpartum and include women at higher risk of postnatal depression as measured on the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (score ≥ 9 and ≤ 20), which is conducted as standard practice by Maternal and Child Health Nurses within Hume and Wyndham local government areas.

Mothers allocated to peer support receive proactive telephone-based support from a peer volunteer until six months postpartum, and both groups receive all the usual care and supports available as part of routine care. Peer volunteers will provide empathetic and emotional support by telephone, thus targeting key risk factors for depression and anxiety, such as social isolation and a lack of support. Peer volunteers will also encourage help-seeking by providing information about existing clinical and support services as appropriate.

The aim of DAISY is to test whether proactive peer support by telephone decreases the risk of



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Lisa Amir, Stephanie Amir. *Identifying design solutions to increase women's comfort with breastfeeding in public.* Public Health Prevention Conference, Melbourne, June 2019



Other presentations

Amanda Cooklin was invited to present at the launch of the *Advancing Parental Leave Equality Network*, hosted by Deloitte Australia and Parents at Work, Sydney, in February 2019. She spoke about gender equity and access to workplace supports for parents and effects on parent, child and family wellbeing.

postnatal depression at six months postpartum. A range of other health outcomes will also be measured, along with exploring the cost-effectiveness of such a service. Starting in May 2019, we are recruiting 1,060 women to the study. Training of peer volunteer mothers to provide the telephone support has also started (aiming for about 200).

Research team: Prof Della Forster, Prof Helen McLachlan, Dr Touran Shafiei, Prof Jan Nicholson, Jessica Bee, Tessa Stogian, Molly Allan, Heather Grimes, Catina Adams (Judith Lumley Centre) along with Prof Alan Shiell (School of Psychology and Public Health, LTU), Prof Cindy-Lee Dennis (University of Toronto), Dr Tram Nguyen (The Royal Women's Hospital), Dr Cattram Nguyen (Murdoch Children's Research Institute), Prof Jane Fisher (Monash University), in collaboration with Hume and Wyndham local government areas and PANDA (Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Australia).

The project is funded by an NHMRC Project Grant.

Working Out Work at La Trobe

Amanda Cooklin

The Executive Director of La Trobe Human Resources commissioned this research project investigating staff engagement and uptake of La Trobe's Flexible Work Policy.

In April-May 2018, the *Working Out Work at La Trobe Survey* was conducted. The purpose of the online survey was to:

- gather reporting data for the Workplace Gender Equality Agency
- support the University's commitments under the Athena Swan Charter and
- inform La Trobe policy and strategy in the future.



The study aimed to report on the use of, barriers to and supports for flexible work at La Trobe and to describe staff experiences on returning from parental leave for those who had taken leave in the past 12 months.

A total of 1,693 staff participated in the survey. Overall, about two-thirds of continuing and fixed-term staff had used at least one flexible working arrangement in the past 12 months, with most staff using between one and three concurrent arrangements. The most common arrangements were working flexible hours and/or at a flexible location (e.g., working from home) either regularly, or on an occasional basis.

A series of evidence-based recommendations arose from the survey findings. This evidence has directly informed specific La Trobe initiatives, including the development of new policies and processes for staff and managers around flexible work and paid parental leave. Together these support the ultimate goal of promoting a safe, inclusive and equitable culture where staff have comprehensive access to their entitlements. A copy of the [summary report](#) is available for La Trobe staff via the intranet. [LTU Intranet links only work if you are logged into an LTU account.]

Research team: Dr Amanda Cooklin, Dr Stacey Hokke and Simon Mason

In the media

Dr **Sharinne Crawford** and her research on ethical issues in engaging research participants online featured in the international media publication, *Times Higher Education*: [Online recruitment of research subjects 'an ethical minefield'](#).

Professor **Della Forster** was interviewed on *ABC Radio Melbourne Afternoons* in February 2019 with a call for Victorian women to take part in a study aimed at supporting new mums at risk of postnatal depression and anxiety.

Professor **Angela Taft**'s new research into abortion and partner violence was covered by Buzzfeed, 3AW, ABC Radio, 2CC, Curtin FM and Triple J Hack.

Jayne Lucke and **Angela Taft** published an article in *The Conversation*: [One in six Australian women in their 30s have had an abortion – and we're starting to understand why](#) (February 7, 2019).

In March 2019, the **RUBY study** had a media release on the [La Trobe website](#), an [interview on ABC Radio](#) with Della Forster and one of the volunteer mums (2hrs 7minutes in) and an article in *The Age* (March 6, 2019) which syndicated nationally and was also picked up internationally.

Lisa Amir co-authored an article in *The Conversation*: [Here's how to make our cities breastfeeding-friendly](#) (June 20, 2019)

Amanda Cooklin was mentioned in an article in *The Age* (June 16, 2019): [Work-family conflict on the rise for fathers](#)

The *Guardian Australia* covered Associate Professor **Catherine Chamberlain**'s work on the impact of PTSD on Indigenous parents and children: [Indigenous baby health project aims to stop generational trauma](#) (22 June 2019)

The ethics of engaging research participants online

Sharinne Crawford

The ability to effectively recruit, retain and trace families from diverse backgrounds is one of the greatest challenges to parenting and intervention

research, and successful project completion. While the internet and social media are increasingly popular and potentially useful recruitment and retention tools, current ethical guidelines in Australia provide little guidance around their use.



From 2015 to 2018, a team of researchers across La Trobe University (led by JLC) worked on identifying the key ethical issues in engaging research participants online, and to build the scientific evidence base to inform ethical decision-making.

The research was conducted across three phases:

1. review of academic and grey literature
2. interviews with public health researchers and members of Australian Human Research Ethics Committees (HREC)
3. online survey of Australian researchers and HREC members.

Findings from the three phases showed that researchers use a range of online platforms to engage research participants, and that there are benefits to these approaches compared to conventional offline methods. However, online research raises a number of ethical concerns and 'grey areas', particularly around what is considered private versus public data, and what is possible versus ethical. Engaging research participants online introduces complex ethical issues, requiring researchers and HREC members to be familiar with this technology and aware of its risks and limitations. Both researchers and HREC members were keen for guidance on the ethical use of the internet and social media when engaging participants in research, demonstrating a need for greater awareness of available resources and further training and support.

The research is now completed, and the findings have been disseminated widely: three peer-reviewed journal publications, a [research summary](#), presentation at the *Australasian Ethics Network* conference, invited presentations to speak to ethics committees and an invited panel presentation at the upcoming *Victorian Ethics Network training day* in August 2019. A resource for researchers and ethics committee members is also in preparation.

The research team included Drs Naomi Hackworth, Sharinne Crawford, Stacey Hokke, Shannon Bennetts and Professor Jan Nicholson (Judith Lumley Centre); Professors Jayne Lucke (Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society), Patrick Keyzer (La Trobe Law School); and Lawrie Zion (Department of Communications and Media, La Trobe University).

Funding: Transforming Human Societies Research Focus Area, the College of Science, Health and Engineering and Research Services at La Trobe.

New on our website

Parenting in the age of social media Opportunities or disruptions? Exploring the impact and influence of social media on Australian parents' experiences of early parenting

Little is known about the influence of social media on new parents' social and emotional wellbeing, parenting self-efficacy, their attitudes, decision-making and behaviours in Australia. This innovative research will explore how social media is shaping parenting and identify the impacts of this technological transformation for Australian parents.

Supporting health system responses to violence against women and children in Timor-Leste

The aim of the project is to support a sustainable health system response to violence against women and children in Timor-Leste through collaborative partnerships and rigorous research. The website, in English and Tetum, is going to contain a set of training material and learning resources based on the WHO in-service curriculum on responding to violence against women, as well as formative research in Timor-Leste with women survivors of violence, midwives and community leaders. The curriculum is being finalized. The pilots are showing significant changes to student knowledge, attitudes and self efficacy around responding to violence against women and children. Other health-related universities are interested to integrate it into their nursing, midwifery and public health degrees across Timor-Leste.

Proactive peer (mother-to-mother) telephone support increases breastfeeding at six months

Della Forster

We recently completed and published the results of a large randomised controlled trial – **Ringin Up about Breastfeeding early (RUBY)**. The study was conducted as a partnership between the Judith Lumley Centre, three hospitals that provide maternity care and the Australian Breastfeeding Association.



We recruited 1152 first time mothers who were intending to breastfeed from three hospitals in Victoria (Royal Women's, Monash Health, Western Health Sunshine), between February 2013 and December 2015.

The new mothers were recruited after birth, before being discharged home from hospital and were randomly assigned to receive usual care or usual care plus telephone-based breastfeeding support from a trained peer volunteer mother for up to six months postpartum. The peer volunteers received four hours of training, provided in conjunction with the Australian Breastfeeding Association. Peer support involved providing scheduled, regular phone calls to allocated new mothers. The 230 volunteers supported two mothers on average during the RUBY study, but some supported up to ten. The feedback from the volunteer mothers was overwhelmingly positive, and most would volunteer again.

We found that 75% of the mothers who received telephone support were giving their babies some breast milk at six months of age, compared with 69% of those in the usual care group. Having someone to talk to, who had themselves breastfed for at least six months and was trained to listen and be empathetic meant, those who faced difficulties were more likely to persevere than give up breastfeeding. The study results were published in the *Lancet* journal, *EClinical Medicine*, in March 2019.

Given the ease with which we recruited, trained and retained telephone support peers, we believe such a model could easily be introduced at the population level with little cost and extra resources needed. Rather than replacing existing models, we think it could complement the work being done by health professionals and other agencies in promoting and supporting breastfeeding.

Research team: Della Forster, Lisa Amir, Helen McLachlan, Touran Shafiei, Rhonda Small, Fiona McLardie-Hore, Heather Grimes (La Trobe University), in collaboration with Anita Moorhead (Royal Women's Hospital), Mary-Ann Davey (Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Monash University), Christine East (Monash Nursing and Midwifery, Monash University – now School of Nursing and Midwifery, La Trobe University), Cindy-Lee Dennis (Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto), Lisa Gold (School of Health and Social Development, Deakin University), Kate Mortensen and Susan Tawia (Australian Breastfeeding Association)

The RUBY study was funded by the The Felton Bequest, Australia, with a contribution to a PhD student from La Trobe University grant.

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JLC Health & Wellbeing Group

Lunchtime walks

every second Thursday 12:30 – 1:15 pm
(meet in the tea room)


Running group

12pm one day per week, days vary week to week. Contact Jess for further information and if you would like these dates in your calendar

Seminar

Tim Jones: *Researcher vulnerability to vicarious trauma*

Wednesday 30 October 2019
12:30 – 1:30 pm, room GS 335

New Professor: Christine East

Professor Christine East was recently appointed Professor of Nursing and Midwifery at the School of Nursing and Midwifery / the Mercy Hospital for Women. Chris is a nurse and a midwife with extensive clinical and research experience. She has conducted many kinds of audits and research, ranging from review of clinical outcomes (because she is always asking questions), studies of new interventions and conducting randomised trials. Chris is linked in with many local, national and international leaders in their respective fields, who help inform the best way to approach real-life clinical practices. From sourcing the original information about an issue through to clinical practice guidelines, Chris is interested in improving the experience and outcomes for patients as early as before they are born. When all doesn't go as well as can be hoped, she wants to know why, how, what can help and when things can and should be improved. She is excited to take on the new challenges of being the Professor of Nursing and Midwifery at Mercy Health and La Trobe University.



WHO can keep up with the evidence?

Christine East



One of the numerous functions of the World Health Organization (WHO) is to develop evidence-based guidelines with recommendations for clinical practice across maternal and perinatal health. WHO aims for a "living guideline" approach to the creation and updating of these recommendations. (Explore these on the [WHO website](#).)

I recently had the privilege of attending the WHO Executive Guideline Steering Group meeting in Geneva to prioritise updates of the recommendations for which new evidence was available. This is an ambitious exercise, given the volume of new publications released every week, meaning that many existing recommendations can be out of date very quickly.

Lunchtime seminars

We hold lunchtime seminars on the **first Wednesday of every month** from February to December, from 12.30 - 1.30 pm.

These seminars showcase the work of our colleagues as well as national and international academics and researchers visiting the Centre and are open to all.

Please refer to our website at www.latrobe.edu.au/jlc/news-events/seminars-and-clubs

The 45 or so attendees included 14 international stakeholders (I was the Australian) and were selected to represent a range of disciplines, diverse perspectives, gender balance, geographical representation, technical expertise and programmatic skills (see [participants list](#)).

Key staff from the Cochrane Pregnancy and Childbirth Group attended and were integral to not only the discussions but also to planning for executing the updates, through prioritising the related systematic reviews for publication and/or update. As I'm also an Editor with this group, it was terrific to see the workings of the WHO processes that influence the Cochrane editorial priorities.

We often talk about heterogeneity in clinical trials. Well, the same was embodied in the meeting room, with some extraordinary minds and universal commitment to the best possible outcomes for all mothers and babies. So, how does such a committee reach consensus on the top 40 recommendations for updating? Well, going through a large excel spreadsheet row-by-row (all 300 of them, with some repeated in a number of categories) was the starting point. Over the course of the two days, we gradually identified priority topics and reached consensus for the top 40. Now the 'real' work begins . . .

The experience has given me many networking connections and a new appreciation for global health issues. It is all very much an ongoing question about "WHO can keep up with the evidence"?

Australian Fatherhood Research Symposium

Jan Nicholson

In May 2019, I attended the Australian Fatherhood Research Symposium. Conducted under the auspices of Deakin University and the University of Newcastle, the symposium showcases the work of the [Australian Fatherhood Research Consortium](#) (AFRC) which seeks to advance the science of fatherhood, inform practice and policy, and promote the healthy inclusion of fathers in family life.

This year the symposium provided an overview of the AFRC's achievements and work in progress as well as featuring provocative work from national and international fatherhood experts.

There I led a **workshop on father inclusive practice**. Drawing on theoretical frameworks of engagement and implementation science, small groups of



practitioners and researchers from similar sectors worked through activities that sought to articulate their key learnings about how fathers can be most effectively reached, engaged and retained in services and research.

Findings will be summarised and disseminated via the Consortium later in 2019.

Hackworth NJ, Matthews J, Westrupp EM, Nguyen C, Phan T, Scicluna A, Cann W, Bethelsen D, Bennetts SK, Nicholson JM. What influences parental engagement in early intervention? Parent, program and community predictors of enrolment, retention and involvement. *Prev Sci* 2018; 19(7):880–93

Australian First Nations Perspectives for Childrearing

Stefanie Zugna



Mishel McMahon presenting at the JLC Lunchtime Seminar

On the 3rd of April 2019, as part of the Centre's monthly Lunchtime Seminars, Dr **Mishel McMahon** presented a seminar on *Australian First Nations Perspectives for Childrearing*.

A proud Yorta Yorta woman, Mishel is the Indigenous Academic Enrichment Advisor at Jimbeyer Boondjhil at La Trobe, Bendigo and Ngarrapna at La Trobe, Shepparton. Mishel also works as Social Work lecturer at La Trobe, Shepparton.

Mishel completed her PhD at La Trobe in 2018, undertaking research that revealed principles of First Nations childrearing. For this study, Mishel developed a First Nations methodology informed by a relational worldview, with the intent to strengthen and legitimise Indigenous Australian childrearing knowledge about childhood.

Mishel won the inaugural **Aboriginal Researcher award** at the prestigious *Victorian Premier's Awards for Health and Medical Research*, in recognition of her exceptional work on the principles of First Nations childrearing which provides the healthcare profession with a greater understanding of Aboriginal parenting.

Mishel's presentation at the Lunchtime Seminar provoked much thought into how

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research with our First Nations people is conducted. Those who attended left with a new perspective on First Nations childrearing and research methodology.

For a [list of the 2019 JLC Lunchtime Seminars](#) see our website.

JLC: onwards and upwards

On the 27th of March 2019, JLC staff and students gathered at the Nurses Memorial Centre in St Kilda Road for the Centre's annual retreat and planning day.

The goals for the day were to:

- develop content for the first draft of a strategic plan for JLC
- articulate a shared vision of the JLC culture and how we work and
- share ideas about how to build a research career.

It was a great opportunity for our students and junior staff to learn from the extensive experience in the room, and also a great opportunity to show off some interpretive dance moves!

The day gave everyone a fresh perspective on the work we do at the Centre and paved the way for some exciting new initiatives moving forward, including the establishment of a Health and Wellbeing program within the Centre.

A Strategy Planning Meeting followed in May, where staff and students worked together on developing JLC mission, vision and values statements.

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