



# Annual Report

[latrobe.edu.au/jrc](http://latrobe.edu.au/jrc)

2020



*"Over the past year, Mercy Connect has worked closely with La Trobe University, through the John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research. Within this new partnership, we have explored and designed a range of important research studies, aimed at improving the overall health outcomes of people living with disability. Mercy Connect is very pleased to have partnered with La Trobe University, with its professional, and highly regarded, academic staff."*

**TRENT DEAN**  
Chief Executive Officer Mercy Connect

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# Director's Foreword



## **Professor Irene Blackberry**

Chair and Director, John Richards  
Centre for Rural Ageing Research and

## **John Richards**

Founder

None of us predicted how 2020 changed our lives forever. The year began with the worst Australian bushfires ever, followed by the COVID-19 global pandemic. The university sector was hit hard financially. As a centre where our research is funded externally via competitive, government and philanthropy grants, we had to navigate the lack of relevant research funding and restrictions on conducting research. This has been undoubtedly a difficult time for everyone as we were forced to adapt to work from home and learn to be resilient. We saw first-hand the physical and psychological impacts of social distancing; these reminded us the importance of looking after ourselves and each other. This experience has been a wakeup call for everyone not to take lives for granted and just how much technology adoption can help us stay more connected than ever.

Partnership is key to the JRC. In partnership with Border Medical Oncology and Haematology, we successfully obtained \$18.6M Medical Research Future Fund, the ReViTALISE program, to expand cancer trials in regional Victoria and the Albury Wodonga Regional Cancer Trust Fund to enhance geriatric supportive care. We also continued to expand the scope of our research collaborations with China, receiving funding to develop a risk score for prediction of Diabetes Mellitus, in partnership with the Peking Union Medical College Hospital (PUMCH) and Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences (CAMS). We evaluated Mercy Connect's Virtual Reality Application which aims to enhance empathy among staff in the disability and aged care sectors. We commenced the Albury-Wodonga Health conjoint research fellow position, examining transfer of older people to small rural health services. Our research partnership with the SMART rural health service partners continued to thrive as we conducted the Consumer Participation Research Centre funded project on empowering rural older people to access aged care services, and evaluated a community collective impact project for local accessibility to rural mental health services.

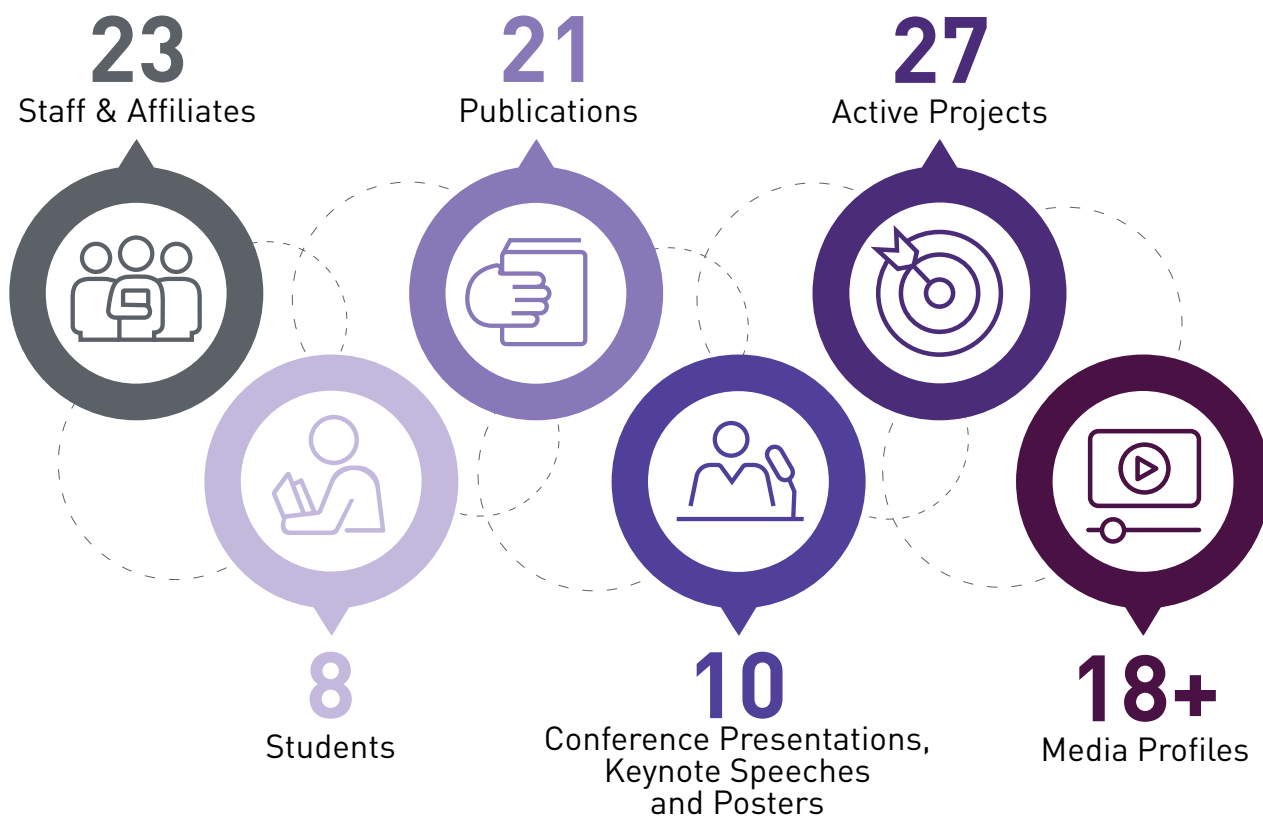
One of the highlights of 2020 was our participation in the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and the release of the Interim Report titled Neglect. I am

proud that JRC research made a significant impact as evidenced by our research being cited in the report. While the findings were unsurprising, together with the COVID-19 pandemic, it demonstrated how poor the state of the Australian aged care system is and how our research has a significant impact to the lives of rural older people. In 2020, we focused on research impact and engagement at local, national and international levels. Professor Mark Skinner, Canada Research Chair for Rural Ageing, Health and Social Care of Trent University, and Professor Kieran Walsh, Director of the Irish Centre for Social Gerontology of the National University of Ireland Galway delivered the 2020 JRC Oration on challenges and innovations in rural aged care in their countries. We launched the Rural Age-Friendly Communities Checklist, presented a webinar to mark the release of our Verily Connect project findings, and delivered the first Let's CHAT Dementia workshop with Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) to improve the detection of dementia and subsequent care for the Indigenous community. The JRC team spoke at several online conferences including the 53rd Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Conference: A Climate for Change in Ageing, The Gerontological Society of America 2020 Annual Scientific Meeting, the 34th International Conference of Alzheimer's Disease International, and the Rural Dementia Action Research (RaDAR) 13th Annual Summit.

Congratulations to our staff and students including Dr Jozette Dellemain who completed her PhD, Kim Young who completed her Masters degree and Kylie Owen, social work student who completed her research placement. I would like to acknowledge and farewell Associate Professor Suzanne Hodgkin who left La Trobe Rural Health School after 20+ years of service and Associate Professor Peter Greenberg from the JRC reference group. Finally, my heartfelt appreciation goes to John Richards OAM, Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, La Trobe University staff, students, collaborators, participants, and reference group members; your trust and ongoing support enabled the John Richards Centre to overcome the challenges we faced in 2020.

# 2020 Snapshot of The John Richards Centre

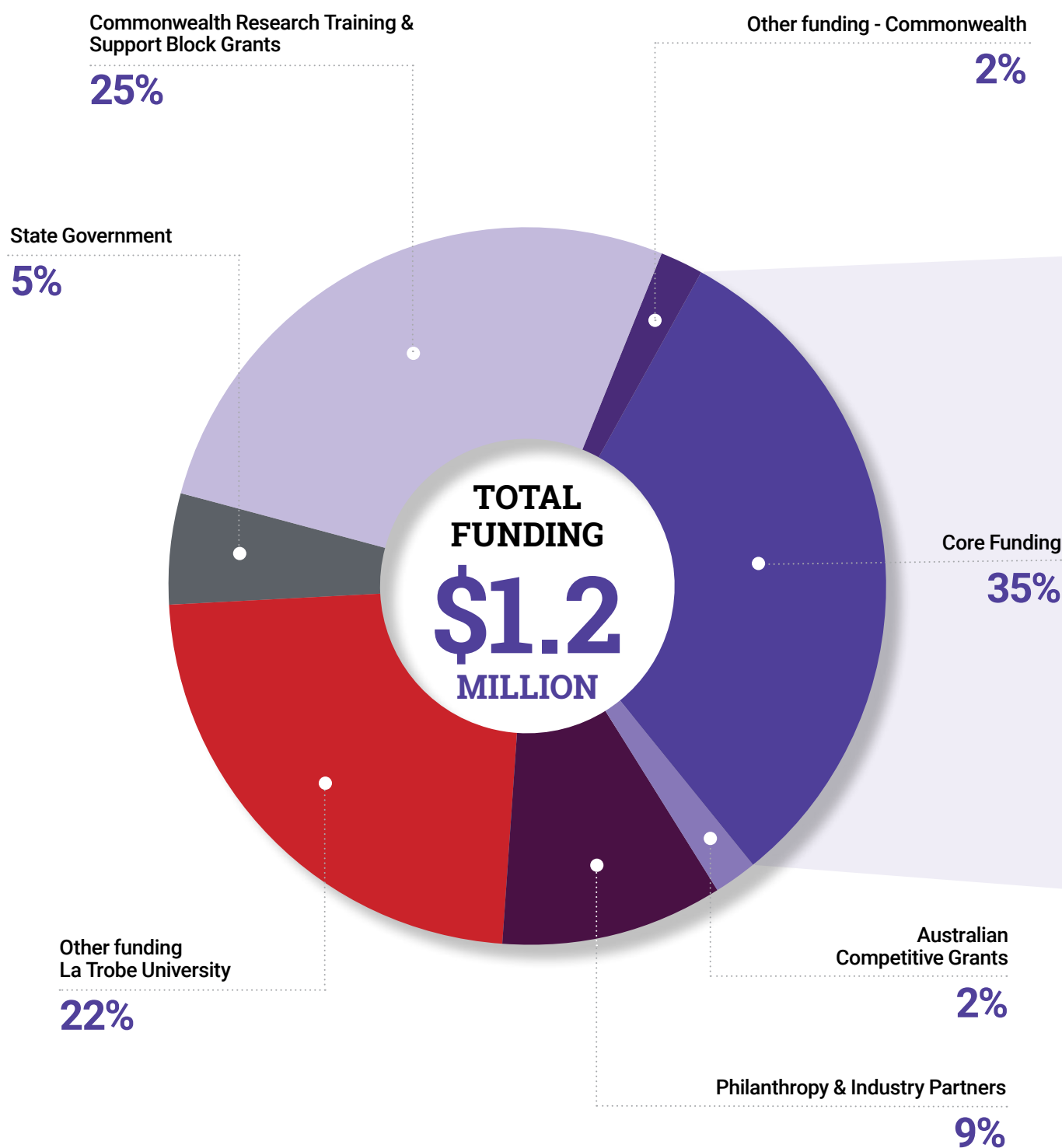
An interdisciplinary rural ageing and aged care research centre based at the Albury-Wodonga campus of La Trobe University, Australia.

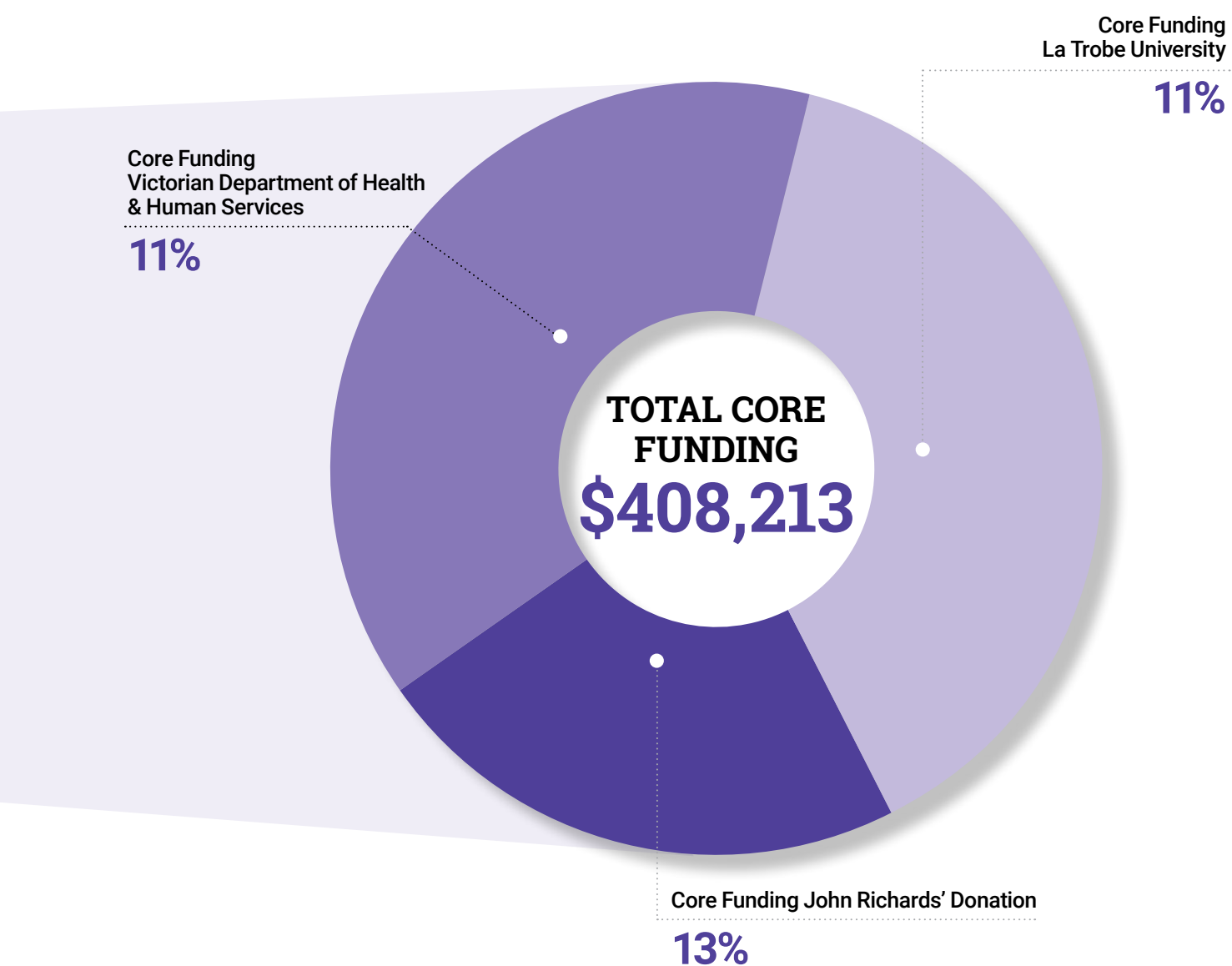


## | COLLABORATIONS |



# 2020 Funding Snapshot





Opening balance as of 1 January 2020 was \$569,334 and closing balance as of 31 December 2020 was \$581,097.

## • Strategic Goals

John Richards Centre Strategic Goals are aligned with La Trobe University Strategic Plan

### Access

#### OBJECTIVE

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.

### Culture

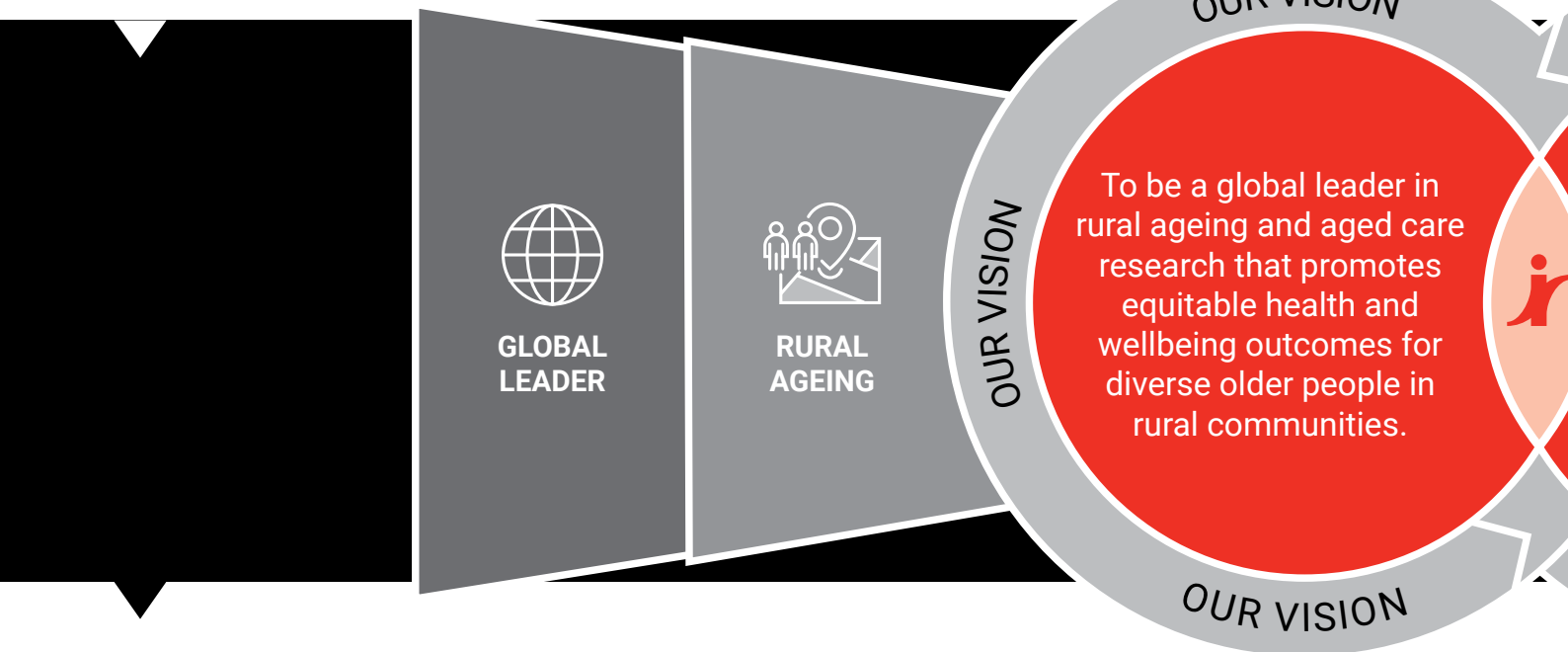
#### OBJECTIVE

To demonstrate leadership and embed the La Trobe University cultural qualities within all aspects of our research, knowledge exchange and collaboration activities.

### Equity

#### OBJECTIVE

To lead and conduct research that addresses issues of equitable health and wellbeing outcomes for diverse populations.



### Access

#### TARGET

To obtain research funding and develop funding streams to sustain and grow the John Richards Centre's operations.

### Culture

#### TARGET

To demonstrate the four cultural qualities within John Richards Centre's activities:

- Accountability
- Care
- Connectivity
- Innovation

### Equity

#### TARGET

To partner with rural people and their communities and rural communities stakeholders (government, industry partners) to develop research and address rural inequity.





# Is 2021-2025 •

## Strategic Plan and La Trobe Rural Health School Statement of Strategic Intent

### Impact

#### OBJECTIVE

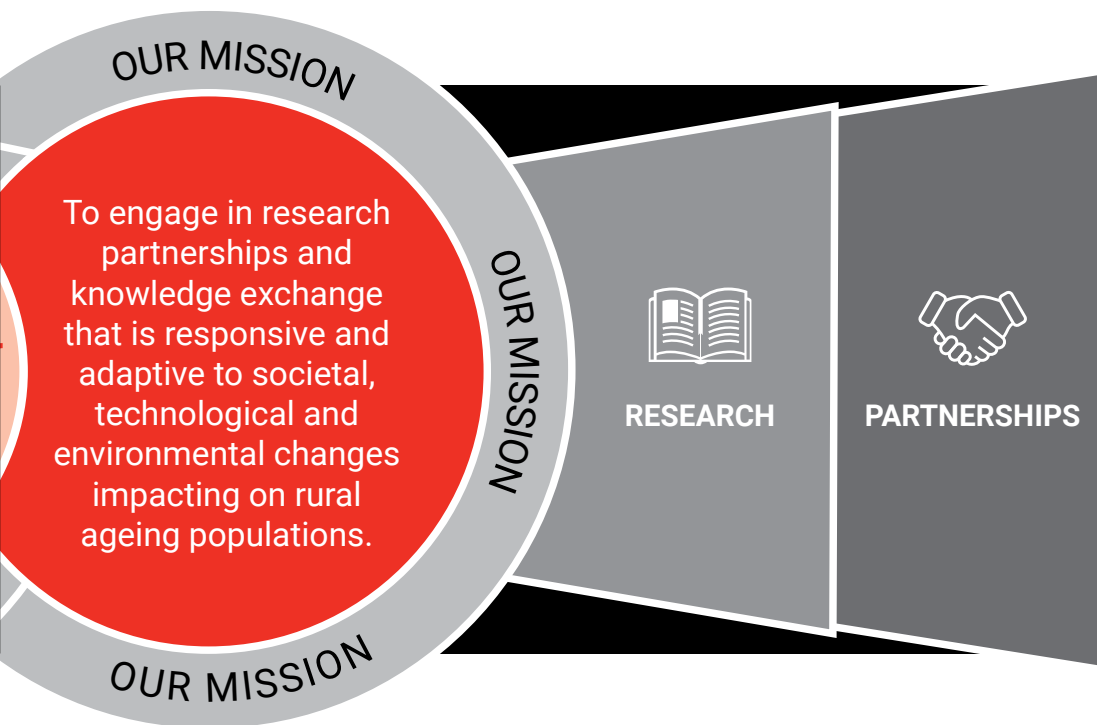
duct research  
issues relating to  
and wellbeing  
erse rural ageing

To provide rigorous research evidence to inform initiatives and innovations that address real-life problems experienced by rural ageing populations.

### Recognition

#### OBJECTIVE

To be recognised globally as the leading centre for rural ageing and aged care research.



### Impact

#### TARGET

rural older  
families,  
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overnments,  
, peak bodies) to  
that addresses

To conduct activities and produce outputs that facilitate opportunities for research uptake and knowledge translation.

### Recognition

#### TARGET

To foster an environment that facilitates world-class research, leadership in knowledge translation, and high-quality research training opportunities.

# Vision

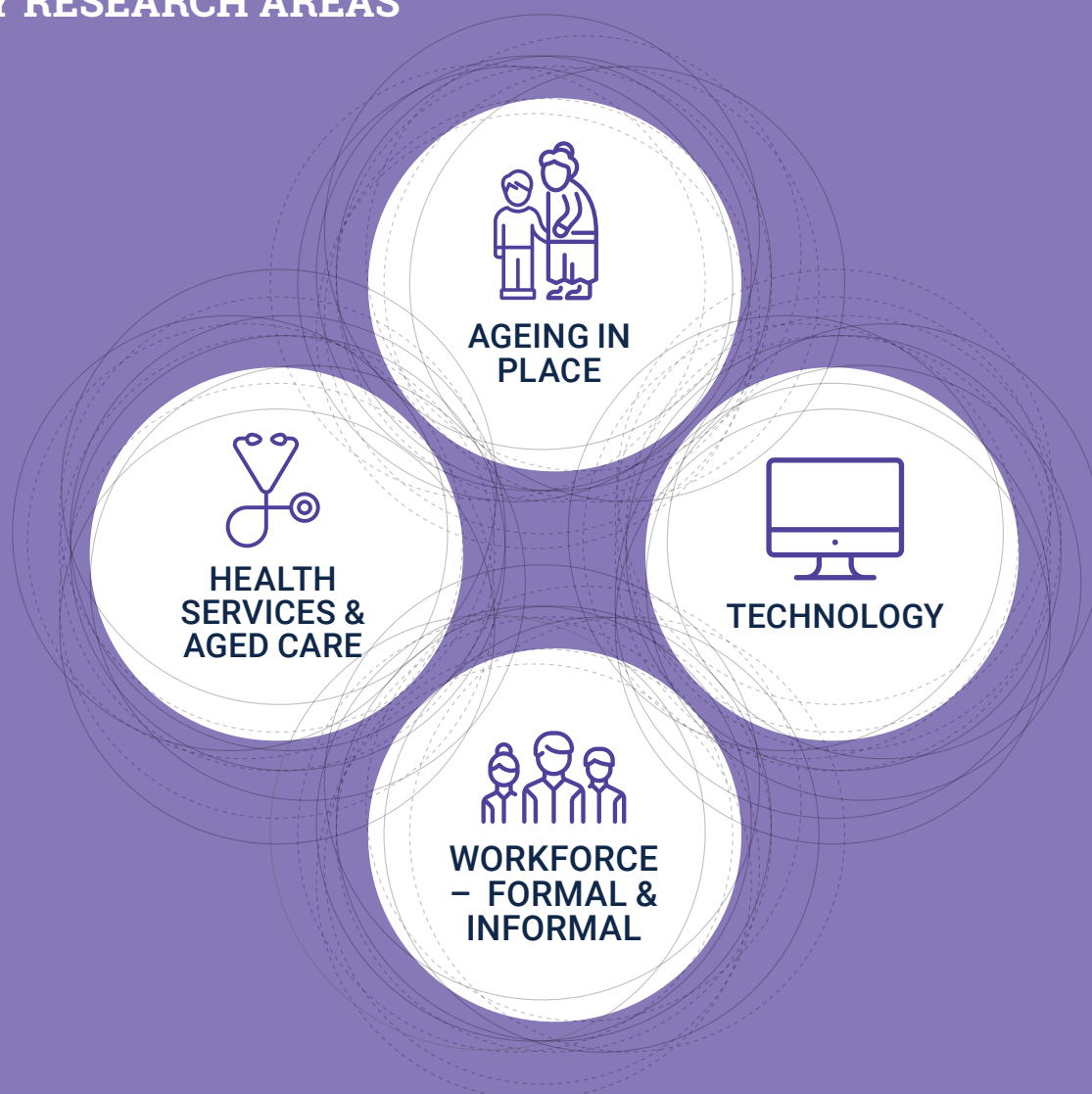
*To be a global leader in rural ageing and aged care research that makes a difference to the lives of older people living in rural communities.*



# Mission

*To undertake research and knowledge exchange that is responsive, and adaptive to rural older people's needs and changes of the environment.*

## KEY RESEARCH AREAS



# Our Reference Group

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic our Reference Group met via videoconference this year. 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;
- Disseminating information about the research undertaken by the Centre and providing a conduit in the wider community.

## | CURRENT MEMBERS |

**Mr Peter de Koeyer (Chair)**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Westmont Aged Care Services Ltd

**Mr John Richards OAM**

Founder

**Ms Nicole Doran**

Manager, Older People Policy, Department of Health and  
Human Services Victoria

**Professor Irene Blackberry**

Director and Chair, John Richards Centre,  
La Trobe University

**Professor Susan Dodds**

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

**Professor Jane Mills**

Dean of La Trobe Rural Health School,  
La Trobe University

**Mr David Kidd**

Director Community Health, Partnerships and Well Ageing,  
North East Health Wangaratta

**Mr Stephen Carroll**

Senior Advisor Population and Population Health and  
Community Wellbeing,  
Department of Health & Human Services

**Adjunct Associate Professor Janet Chapman**

Executive Director Regional Partnerships & Planning,  
Albury Wodonga Health

**Associate Professor Peter Greenberg**

Board Member,  
Wimmera Health Care Group



# Our Research Team



**Professor Irene Blackberry**  
BMed, PhD, GradCert  
HealthProgEval  
Director and Chair

Irene is the John Richards Chair of Rural Ageing and Aged Care Research and Director of the John Richards Centre at La Trobe University, Wodonga since 2016. Irene is President of the Australian

Association of Gerontology Victoria and Associate Editor for Elsevier Primary Care Diabetes journal. With a background in medicine, Irene is a health services researcher with significant expertise in designing and conducting pragmatic trials of complex multifactorial health services. Irene's major research themes are chronic diseases and ageing, which are united by a focus on implementation science of complex multi-factorial interventions across the community and primary and secondary care settings, drawing on both qualitative and quantitative research methods. She has attracted \$40M in research funding and published over 120 articles including as a first author in the British Medical Journal and Medical Journal of Australia. Irene's research focuses on improving access to care delivery for older people with complex chronic conditions. Her research interests include dementia, diabetes, chronic disease, primary care, digital health, geriatric medicine, and rural health.



**Associate Professor Suzanne Hodgkin**  
BSW, MSW, PhD  
Deputy Director

Suzanne is an international expert in the field of rural aged care provision, with a specific focus on rural aged care workforce and service capacity. She has an international reputation in mixed

methods aged care research. Suzanne is a reviewer for the Australian Research Council, New Zealand Ageing Well National Science Challenge, Health Research Board Ireland, the Education University of Hong Kong, and several international journals. She is also a co-convenor of the Australian Association of Gerontology Workforce Special Interest Group and has presented keynote addresses at international conferences. Suzanne was called as an expert witness to the 2019 Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety to highlight issues for carers of older people and cited in the recently released interim report.



**Emeritus Professor Jeni Warburton**  
BA Hons, PhD

Jeni is an internationally recognised researcher in ageing and social policy and headed the John Richards Initiative between September 2008 and December 2015. Prior to this, Jeni was a senior researcher at one of the lead research

centres on ageing at the University of Queensland. Jeni's current research focuses on promoting healthy ageing in the community, particularly in rural communities. She is one of Australia's lead researchers on volunteer issues, particularly related to ageing. Jeni was a Chief Investigator on eight ARC grants and has been invited as a keynote speaker at several national and international forums. She also consults to government and has been a member of both State and Federal advisory panels. Her research has had a significant impact and influence on ageing policy and practice in Australia.



**Dr Rachel Winterton**  
BAppSc Hons, PhD  
Senior Research Fellow

Rachel is internationally recognised for her expertise in rural ageing studies, with specific expertise in voluntary sector responses to rural population ageing and rural age-friendly communities. She is the current convenor of the Australian

Association of Gerontology Rural, Regional and Remote Special Interest Group, and was called as an expert witness to the rural hearing of the Royal Commission for Aged Care Quality and Safety in 2019. Rachel has recently co-edited an international volume on critical rural gerontology, in collaboration with Professor Mark Skinner (Trent University, Canada) and Professor Kieran Walsh (NUI Galway, Ireland). Her research has been published in leading journals such as *Health and Place*, *The Gerontologist*, *Geoforum* and the *Journal of Rural Studies*.



**Dr Clare Wilding**  
BAppSc(OT), MAppSc, PhD  
Research Fellow in Ageing and Subacute Care

Clare has a joint appointment with Albury Wodonga Health and in partnership with health staff, is completing research to improve health care experiences for older people. Recently, she has completed

research evaluating online technology that supports carers of people living with dementia, using virtual reality to foster empathy in disability support workers, and older persons' experiences of home care packages. Clare has authored 7 book chapters and over 30 academic articles. Her research interests are varied and include rural ageing, technology, occupational science, health promotion, managing chronic illness and disability, arts and health, knowledge exchange, qualitative methods, and practitioner-academic alliances.



**Dr Tshepo Rasekaba**  
BPhysio, MPH, PhD, GCALL  
Research Fellow

Tshepo's research background was in physical activity for adults with chronic respiratory diseases, which evolved into researching other chronic health conditions, particularly diabetes and the use of online technologies. He is currently

conducting evaluation and research of initiatives for improving physical activity to combat chronic disease in rural older adults, the Royal Flying Doctor Telehealth Specialist Service and Western Victoria Primary Health Network after hours primary health care programs. He has been a Research Advisory Committee member for the Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria since 2018. Tshepo was lead evidence reviewer for the Clinical guideline for the diagnosis and management of work-related mental health conditions in general practice that was launched in 2020.



**Dr Pauline Savy**  
RN, RPN, BAdmin, Grad Dip  
(Gerontology), PhD  
Research Officer

Pauline's academic interests include teaching and publishing in sociology and researching the provision of aged care in residential and community settings. Previously, Pauline taught Social

Gerontology and Sociology at La Trobe University, worked as a nurse in geriatric and psychiatric fields, and was a consultant in aged care service provision and education.





**Kim Young**  
BHumanServ/MSocWk,  
BSc(Sp&HearSc)  
Research Officer

Kim's current research focuses on improving shared-decision making for older persons with cancer, resilience in migrant women working in aged care, and evaluating the use of virtual reality to foster empathy in disability support workers. As a recent La Trobe Social Work graduate, with previous experience as a speech pathologist, Kim is passionate about older people and people with disabilities being supported to maintain their quality of life.



**Kayla Royals**  
BPsySc (Hons)  
Research Officer

Kayla's current research is focussed on facilitating better access to dementia care and support services within the City of Greater Bendigo region, and exploring the capacity of rural and regional community organisations to support people living with dementia to volunteer. During her time at the JRC, Kayla also previously worked on the Verily Connect project, trialling the use of online technology to support rural carers of people living with dementia. Working across a number of dementia-related projects, she has developed experience and interest in supporting people living with dementia and their carers through research.



**Lynne Horsfall**  
Research Officer

Lynne has previously completed research about dementia care and support in a GP practice and with Lifeline about education packages to reduce mental health problems in the workplace. With a background in nursing, Lynne has worked previously for Bendigo Health, Home and Community Care, and Dementia Australia.



**Dr Monika Winarnita**  
Bcomm, BA (Hons), PhD  
Research Officer

Monika completed research on an ARC Discovery and Linkage project "New Beats" (2017-2019). Monika has a background in academia teaching and researching in anthropology, communication and media, and Indonesian studies. She is a board member for the Asian Australian Studies Research Network. Monika's research interests include migration, employment, family, gender, cultural performance, politics of culture, diaspora, digital ethnography, multimedia, media representation, identity, and belonging.



**Dr Bonnie Martin-Giles**  
BSW (Hons), PhD  
Research Officer

Bonnie has recently been researching early detection of dementia in Indigenous populations. With a background in social work, Bonnie is currently a lecturer in the Department of Social Work at La Trobe University, Mildura. She has research interests in exploring the effects of chronic childhood maltreatment on brain development and how this may increase the risk of engaging in recidivistic offending in adulthood.



**Jennifer Pitman**  
BCom, Economics (Hons)  
Research Officer

Jennifer has research experience and interest in health economics. With a background in commerce, economics, finance, and management, she held a range of senior and management roles as an economic analyst and policy advisor before joining La Trobe University, Mildura, in 2019 as a lecturer in Economics.



**Dr Rebecca McKechnie**  
BHSc (Hons), PhD  
Research Officer

Rebecca joined the JRC in March 2020, coming from an academic position at the Queensland University of Technology. Rebecca's research interests include food security, measurement scale development, and socioeconomic inequalities in health and the role of policy in addressing these. Rebecca has experience in both quantitative and qualitative methods for research and health service evaluation.



**Linda Gordes**  
Senior Administrative Officer

Linda is responsible for finance, personnel and administration tasks for the JRC. She has an extensive background and specialist skills in supporting the business success of the centre.



**Caitlin Silvester**  
Senior Administrative Officer

Caitlin is a registered dietician. She joined the JRC early in 2020 to assist with grant submissions and provide administrative support to the Director.



# Our Research Affiliates



**Dr Sean MacDermott**  
BSc (Innovation & Change Management), BScPsych, BSocWork, M Operations Management, MSocWork, PhD  
Affiliate Researcher

Sean's research interests are in rural/regional health, end of life planning, palliative care, health workforce, telehealth, and travel for healthcare. Sean has experience in health-services design/redesign and prior to joining La Trobe University was the National Project Manager for the National Rollout and Evaluation of the Dementia Care in Hospitals Program. Sean has expertise in quantitative and qualitative methodologies in health, social science, and change management research.



**Dr William Keeton**  
BA (Political Science), MS (Management & Transportation Management), PhD  
Affiliate Researcher

William is a former United States Army Lieutenant Colonel and US Exchange Officer to the Australia Army. William previously taught logistics, leadership, and strategic military planning while working with the US Embassy's Australian diplomatic mission. He currently lectures at La Trobe University in the School of Business, Department of Management. William is Deputy Chairman on the Company Board of Directors for Westmont Aged Care Services. His research interests are in leadership, strategic planning, corporate governance, and aged care.



**Associate Professor Raelene Wilding**  
PhD  
Affiliate Researcher

Raelene uses qualitative research methods to investigate ageing, migration and new technologies. Her recent projects include an exploration of virtual reality as a tool for enhancing social connection in a rural town, and analysis of the health needs of older refugee-background migrants in a regional centre of Victoria. With a background in sociology, Raelene seeks to engage in research that identifies and addresses inequalities and to support families and communities to maintain strong social bonds of care and support.



**Dr George Mnatzaganian**  
MPub Health, MHLthSc (Epidemiology), PhD  
Affiliate Researcher

George has advanced quantitative statistical research skills and experience in analysing large linked datasets and routinely collected hospital databases. With a background in clinical epidemiology, George's research interests span chronic disease, patient outcomes research, health services research, big data analysis, statistics, evidence-based practice and health policy, international health, vulnerable communities, and gender and socio-economic inequalities in health outcomes.



**Dr Carina Chan**  
BSc (Psychology & Statistics), MSc (Health Psychology), PhD  
Affiliate Researcher

Carina's interest and expertise lies primarily in the psychosocial aspects of understanding health and health behaviours. She has experience in conducting randomized controlled trials to promote health behaviours for health promotion and diabetes management, developing and validating health motivational measures and investigating cultural and personality issues associated with eating behaviours, workplace stress, and chronic disease prevention and control. Currently she is interested in extending her research expertise in the regional/rural context and focusing on psychosocial issues associated with ageing and chronic disease prevention and management.



**Dr Ali Lakhani**  
BBA, MA, MES, PhD  
Affiliate Researcher

Ali is an interdisciplinary researcher with degrees in business, economics, environmental studies and health promotion. He is currently a Senior Lecturer in Public Health with the School of Psychology and Public Health at La Trobe University. He has a decade of experience conducting community-based research focusing on the environmental determinants of health.



**Dr Stephen Cousins**  
PhD  
Affiliate Researcher

Stephen is a lecturer in Exercise Science at La Trobe University, Bendigo, and teaches across a range of Exercise Science subjects. He also coordinates the undergraduate placement program to align with course accreditation. In this role he has helped to establish and maintain placement partnerships with the Bendigo Pioneers (AFL), Bendigo Academy of Sport, The Human Mechanics, YMCA, Bendigo South East College and Girtton Grammar School, providing strength and conditioning consultancy support.

# Postgraduate Students



**Jozette Dellemain**  
**PhD Student**  
**Rural Case Management:  
Developing a Practice Identity**

A study investigating the practice of rural case management with implications for formal theory development.

Supervised by Associate Professor Suzanne Hodgkin and Dr Heather Downey



**Fan He**  
**Masters Student**  
**One-year clinical patient outcomes following acute ischaemic and haemorrhagic stroke in Albury-Wodonga: a 10-year retrospective cohort study**

Supervised by Professor Irene Blackberry and Dr George Mnataganian



**Monica Jones**  
**PhD Student**  
**Stress and Coping Strategies in the Aged Care Workforce in Regional Australia**

Supervised by Associate Professor Suzanne Hodgkin and Dr Brad Wright



**Jennifer Boak**  
**Masters Student**  
**Improving quality of care through detection of complexity amongst older people in the community: ImPaCt study**

Supervised by Professor Irene Blackberry and Dr Tshepo Rasekaba and hopes to convert to PhD.



**Diana Nabbumba**  
**PhD Student**  
**Examining responsibility allocation within the social care system for older people in rural Uganda: An ecological systems approach**

Supervised by Dr Rachel Winterton, Dr Jacqui Theobald and Associate Professor Suzanne Hodgkin



**Soorya Rejeesh Kumar**  
**Doctor of Nursing,  
La Trobe Rural Health School**  
**Identifying Risk Factors of Occupational Stress and Burnout in Regional Victoria's Aged Care Nursing Workforce**

Supervised by Associate Professor Melanie Bish and Dr Clare Wilding



**Carmela Leone**  
**PhD Student**  
**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**

Supervised by Professor Irene Blackberry and Dr Rachel Winterton



**Craig Gilbertson**  
**Masters Student**  
**A Feasibility Study Exploring the Use of Virtual Reality to Alleviate Patient Fear of Needles During Medical Treatment**

Supervised by Dr Clare Wilding and Professor Irene Blackberry

# Our Research

## | HEALTH SERVICES AND AGED CARE |

Our Health Services and Aged Care key research area pursues inquiry that brings insights and understanding of the broad field of health care in so far as these relate to the health and wellbeing of the rural ageing population, locally and globally. Our focus includes aspects of health care delivery, 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.

### SMALL RURAL HEALTH RESEARCH TEAM PARTNERSHIP (SMART)

*Blackberry, I., Farmer, J., and Morley, C.*

The SMART partnership is a dynamic group of 10 Victorian rural and community health services who joins with academic partners to improve health outcomes for rural Victorian communities. The partnership brings rural and community health services coming together to lead on the health policy agenda through development of evidence-based research and application of that research into innovative practice. Since 2016, the partnership has attracted over \$2M of research funding in the area of dementia, mental health, volunteering, telehealth and community development. Website: <https://smarruralhealth.wordpress.com/>.

Partners and Funding Bodies: Swinburne University, Heathcote Health, Cobaw Community Health Service (Macedon Ranges), Rural Northwest Health, Robinvale District Health Services, Edenhope and District Memorial Hospital, Kooweerup Regional Health Service, The Kilmore & District Hospital, Wimmera Health Care group, West Wimmera Health Service and Mallee Track Health & Community Services.

### WEBSTER RURAL AND REGIONAL DEMENTIA CARE PROJECT

*Blackberry, I., Winterton, R., Royals, K., and Chisholm, M.*

Through conducting evidence-based research, this project aims to improve dementia care pathways within rural and regional Victoria, with a specific emphasis on developing innovative and sustainable care for residents of Bendigo and surrounding regions. Surveys (n=25) and service mapping interviews (n=10) have been completed with carers of people living with dementia, and a focus group (n=9) was held with service providers. Based on this data, a pathways resource was developed in 2020, which will be distributed for community review, and further refined, in 2021.

Funding Body: Sandhurst Trustees

### BUILDING AN INDIGO AGE-FRIENDLY HEALTH SYSTEM MODEL

*Indigo Consortium including Winterton, R., Hodgkin, S., and Clune, S.*

This project sought to undertake a systematic analysis of the IHI age-friendly health systems model to test its applicability to a Victorian rural health system, and to develop a measurable, acceptable and feasible model to be implemented in northeast Victoria as a trial network for the rest of Victoria. This project encompassed a systematic literature review of the rural geriatric care literature and consultations with local geriatric care providers to develop a new rural-specific Indigo age-friendly health system model and was completed in 2020.

Partners: Beechworth Health Service, Indigo North Health, Yackandandah Health, Indigo Shire, Upper Hume PCP, Albury Wodonga Health, North East Health, Gateway Health

Funding Body: Better Care Victoria

### DANCE EXERCISES FOR PARKINSON'S REHABILITATION: HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

*Morris, M., Blackberry, I., Slade, S., Wittwer, J. and McConvey, V.*

This project is a partnership between La Trobe University and Parkinson's Victoria. Parkinson's Victoria is developing a comprehensive community-based dancing program, called ParkinDance, which they plan to implement broadly across the Parkinson's community in Australia. ParkinDance gives people another choice about modes of exercise and uses carefully designed dance exercises as a therapeutic method of physical activity. This research has generated evidence that Parkinson's Victoria can use to inform implementation of ParkinDance therapy. We have also developed protocols and resources for adapting ParkinDance to an online telemedicine format.

Unexpectedly the COVID-19 pandemic hit Melbourne in February 2020 and we could not continue with face-to-face classes. It was then agreed that we should co-partner to develop the resources needed to deliver ParkinDANCE online. This required a great deal of planning, training, safety training, fidelity checking and ethics modifications. These processes represent the first worldwide research on online dancing for Parkinson's disease, to test the safety, feasibility and preliminary outcomes of this delivery mode.

Partner: Parkinson's Victoria

Funding Body: Research Focus Areas - Sports & Exercise and Parkinson's Victoria





*"Working with the John Richards Centre has been the most amazing experience, as both a consumer and representative for the Older Person Advocacy Network (OPAN). Contributing as a person who is passionate about access to quality services and healthcare for older people across regional, rural and remote Australia has been highly rewarding and informative."*

**MARIA BERRY** - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER  
OLDER PERSONS ADVOCACY NETWORK (OPAN)





*"Albury Wodonga Health (AWH) and La Trobe have established a research partnership which has supported AWH to increase research competency and activity across our service. We have created a conjoint research position, located at AWH, to lead research in areas of interest to both organisations and, in the process, to build the research skills of participating staff from AWH and from our rural health service partners. The current research focus – the transfer of older people from AWH to small rural health services – will help AWH to redesign its transfer processes to better meet the needs of consumer and health staff. This is a great example of how research can influence practice."*

**JANET CHAPMAN** - DEPUTY CEO ALBURY WODONGA HEALTH



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## COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE IMPACT FOR LOCAL ACCESSIBILITY TO BEST-PRACTICE COMMUNITY CO-PRODUCED RURAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Farmer, J., Davis, H., White, C., **Blackberry, I., Winterton, R. and Royals, K.**

The project facilitates Community Collective Impact Groups (CIGs) of local organisations and health initiatives to review local mental health needs, to appraise current co-produced services (involving citizens in volunteering, peer support and prevention) and to explore best-practice evidence. Knowledge and understanding of CIG participants in relation to mental health is being evaluated using a survey methodology at the beginning and end of the project. The project commenced in 2019 with data collection and analysis to be completed in early 2021.

Partners: Swinburne University, Cobaw Community Health Service, Murray Primary Health Network, Heathcote Health, The Kilmore and District Hospital

Funding Body: Helen McPherson Smith Trust Fund

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## GERIATRIC ONCOLOGY IN THE INSTAGRAM ERA: ADOPTING PHOTOVOICE TO ENABLE EMPOWERMENT, PATIENT-CENTRED CARE AND SHARED DECISION MAKING

Steer, C., **Blackberry, I., Rasekaba, T., Webb, N., Young, K. and Soo, K.**

Age is one of the greatest risk factors for developing cancer, making the ageing process an important component of cancer progression and care. Hence multidimensional assessment of older adults with cancer is crucial for more holistic care, and results in better communication about age-related concerns and facilitates personalised and patient-centred supportive care. This study aims to investigate the feasibility and acceptability of integrating patient-derived photographs (PhotoVoice) into geriatric oncology assessments and enhanced supportive care to facilitate empowerment, patient-centred care and shared decision-making in cancer care.

Partners and Funding Body: Albury Wodonga Regional Cancer Centre Trust Fund

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## TRANSFERS OF OLDER PERSONS (TOP)

**Wilding, C., Blackberry, I., Squire, S., Chapman, J., Allenby, A., Hudec, L., Ashcroft, M., Stewart, S., Edmondson, S., Gunnett, K., Berry, M., Lang, L. and Hanson, A.**

A Fellowship in Ageing and Subacute Care was established in 2020 and is jointly funded by Albury Wodonga Health (AWH) and the John Richards Centre (JRC). The Transfers of Older Persons (TOP) project is the key project that has arisen from this fellowship and responds to a need identified by AWH to improve the care of and patient flow for older patients. The TOP project involves a partnership between AWH, JRC, Beechworth Health Service, Corryong Health, Tallangatta Health Service, and Culcairn Health. It aims to improve experiences for patients who are transferred from one health service to another. The first stage of the TOP project is a realist evaluation of staff' and patients' experiences of inter-health service transfers using mixed methods. In 2021, the project will move to using data from the realist evaluation to plan and evaluate service improvements.

Funding Body: Albury Wodonga Health and John Richards Centre

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## BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS TO IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE OF COGNITIVE SCREENING OF PATIENTS AGED OVER 65 IN RURAL AND REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

**MacDermott, S., Blackberry, I., McKechnie, R., Royals, K., Hodgkin, S., Logiudice, D. and Morgan D.**

From January 2019, health services begun being assessed against revised National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) standards which identify patients aged over 65 as an at-risk population requiring cognitive screening. This research aims to determine how regional health services are implementing and maintaining cognitive screening. The project included a review of the screening measures currently employed in Australia and internationally. We also conducted a review of the actual and perceived value of cognitive screening in terms of improved patient outcomes.

Focus groups and interviews were held to determine what barriers and facilitators to screen currently exist and whether any of these are unique, or more pertinent to, non-metropolitan health services.

Partners: Sunraysia Community Health Services and Mildura Private Hospital

Funding Body: La Trobe University Research Focus Area – Building Healthy Communities

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## WESTERN VICTORIA PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK AFTER HOURS CO-DESIGN PROJECT

**Rasekaba, T., and Blackberry, I.**

This project is a collaboration between Western Victoria Primary Health Network (WVPHN) and the JRC. WVPHN has procured a range of services under the After Hours Primary Health Care Program for implementation of a diverse range of after-hours health care models during 2021-2022. The aims of the program are to increase service access for patients and improve program efficiency and effectiveness. The JRC is undertaking independent research and evaluation of the program at individual funded projects or project group level and at a PHN level. The evaluation findings will be used to determine the overall impact of the After Hours Co-design Projects on providers, patients and the broader after-hours primary health care system including the outcomes achieved, the key learnings, the replicability of the projects to other regions and the sustainability of the projects beyond the funding period.

Partners and Funding Body: Western Victoria Primary Health Network

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## IN-HOSPITAL, 30-DAY AND 1-YEAR MORTALITY FOLLOWING STROKE IN SOUTHWEST CHINA: A FIVE-YEAR RETROSPECTIVE COHORT STUDY

**Mnatzaganian, G., Xie, H., Yao, L., He, F., and Blackberry, I.**

Stroke is the leading cause of death in China. The mortality-to-incidence ratio of stroke in Southwest China is higher than other areas of China. This project aims to investigate risk factors that might explain higher stroke mortality rates in Yunnan province, Southwest China. This is a collaborative research project between La Trobe University and the Second Affiliated Hospital of Kunming Medical University (SHKMU). The systematic review and meta-analysis on stroke incidence and case fatality in China will be the first study to report the regional disparities in pooled estimates of incidence and case fatality of first-ever stroke in China. This project will inform practice and contribute to better management of stroke patients in Yunnan province.

Partners: Second Affiliated Hospital of Kunming Medical University (SHKMU), Peking Union Medical College Hospital (PUMCH)

Funding Body: LTU China Studies Seed-funding Research Grant Scheme

## | AGEING IN PLACE, VOLUNTEERING AND AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES |

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.

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### EMPOWERING OLDER PEOPLE IN ACCESSING AGED CARE SERVICES IN A CONSUMER MARKET

**Blackberry, I., Wilding, C., Chisholm, M., Horsfall, L., Fraser, M., Wishart, D., Keeton, W., Chan, C. and Smart Rural Health Partnership**

This research was undertaken to identify the barriers and facilitators that older rural people experience when accessing, assessing, and acting on information and making choices about services provided through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) and Home Care Packages (HCP). The study included in-depth interviews with rural older people and use of a modified Delphi method to identify priorities for better supporting older persons' decision-making. The project was completed in 2020 and the project report was submitted as evidence to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Funding Body: Consumer Policy Research Centre

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### BUILDING RURAL COMMUNITY CAPACITY TO ENABLE VOLUNTARY AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

**Winterton, R., Chisholm, M., Araten-Bergman, T., Bigby, C., Royals, K., and Blackberry, I.**

This study identifies facilitators and barriers associated with enabling community-dwelling people living with dementia to undertake voluntary and civic engagement within rural and regional community organisations. Interviews were completed with 15 volunteer coordinators and managers across rural and regional Victoria. Data analysis is ongoing, and publications are currently being prepared.

Funding Body: La Trobe University Research Focus Area – Transforming Human Societies

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### LODDON MALLEE REGION (LMR) MOVE IT

**Rasekaba, T., Blackberry, I., and McKechnie, R.**

The broad aims of this project are to increase opportunity for, and encourage participation in, physical activity by inactive older people aged 65 years and over, as a way of combating chronic disease. Physical activity guidelines suggest that older adults should participate in regular physical activity of at least 30 minutes on most days of the week but only 25% of older adult Australian achieve this physical activity target. The LMR Move It initiative aims to encourage older adults to become more physically active and improve physical and mental wellbeing, as well as social connections. JRC researchers are undertaking an evaluation of the LMR Move It programs using a mixed methods approach following the RE-AIM framework. The project is scheduled for completion in 2021.

Partners: 10 local government areas in central and northern Victoria, led by Macedon Ranges Shire Council

Funding Body: SportAus

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### INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG OLDER ADULTS LIVING IN REGIONAL AND RURAL AUSTRALIA: A REALIST REVIEW

**Cousins, S., Blackberry, I., Rasekaba, T., and Chan, C.**

Literature is replete with the evidence on the efficacy of Increasing physical activity interventions in combating chronic disease and improve health and wellbeing. However, uptake and diffusion remain a great challenge and especially more so among the older adults; for instance just over 25% of Australians over 65-years of age meet current recommended physical activity guidelines. This project is a realist systematic review aimed at answering the question 'What are the underpinning mechanisms which, in the right contexts, lead to success of physical activity interventions among community-dwelling older adults in regional and rural areas?'

Funding Body: Rural Ageing Research Strategic Start-up Support Initiative





## | 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.



### VIRTUAL DEMENTIA FRIENDLY RURAL COMMUNITIES (VERILY CONNECT)

**Blackberry, I., Wilding, C., Perkins, D., Greenhill, J., Farmer, J., Bauer, M., Winbolt, M., Morgan, D., O'Connell, M., and Morley, C.**

Research Officers: **Royals, K., Zaplin, E., Rasekaba, T., Robinson, A., Gottschall, K., Hamiduzzaman, K., Davis, H.**

The Verily Connect project was a stepped wedge cluster trial of innovative online technologies to support carers of people living with memory loss or dementia in 12 rural communities across Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia. In each community, three key initiatives were implemented: 1) an integrated website and mobile application (app) that assists carers to identify and engage with local services and to connect to other carers; 2) online videoconference carer peer support groups; and, 3) volunteer-led support and mentoring hubs that assist carers to use online technologies. We recruited a total of 216 participants, including carers of people living with dementia, volunteers, and service providers. Verily Connect strategies were progressively implemented. The project was evaluated using statistical analysis of carers' perceptions of social support, a process analysis using the Consolidated Framework of Implementation Research, a thematic analysis of carers' experiences, and an economic costing.

Partners: Swinburne University, University of Newcastle, Flinders University, University of Saskatchewan (Canada), Kooweerup Regional Health Service, Cobaw Community Health, Heathcote Health, Wimmera Health Care Group, Rural Northwest Health, Edenhope and District Memorial Hospital, Robinvale District Health Services, Mansfield District Hospital, Country Health SA, Nyngan Multipurpose Service, Molong Health One General Practice

Funding Body: Australian Government Department of Health, Dementia and Aged Care Services Fund

### LONG TERM EVALUATION OF THE ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR TELEHEALTH SERVICE

**Blackberry, I., Rasekaba, T., and McKechnie R.**

This research project is evaluating whether the Flying Doctors Telehealth Specialist Service (FDT-SS) improves access to endocrinology, cardiology, respiratory and psychiatry specialist services for small rural communities in Victoria, using a mixed methods approach. The evaluation includes data on access to services and outcomes, including analysis of linkage Medicare data, Victorian hospital emergency presentations and admissions datasets that reflect use of health services prior to and during involvement with the service. Additionally, qualitative measures will be used to assess the experiences of health service providers with the service. A health economic evaluation will also be undertaken to map health services utilisation costs pre-, during and post- FDT-SS for a cohort of patients recruited for the evaluation and research exercise.

Partner: Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria Telehealth Specialist Service

Funding Body: Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria

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## MOVE2GETHER WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**Rasekaba, T., Blackberry, I., and McKechnie, R.**

This research evaluates an online program for older Australians aged 65 years and over, living in rural and metropolitan Western Australia. Using a digital health strategy, the Move2gether WA aims to encourage older adults to undertake regular physical activity to improve levels of physical activity, mental wellbeing, and social connectedness. The digital health program is implemented and delivered through the football community in Western Australia and uses gamification techniques and incentives provided. The initiative is led by the Perth Glory Foundation and Perth Glory Football.

Partners: My Health Services Pty Ltd

Funding Body: SportAus

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## EXPLORING DIGITAL AND HEALTH LITERACY AMONG OLDER PEOPLE IN RURAL INDIA (DAHLIA)

**Rasekaba, T., Pereira, P., Wilding, C. and Blackberry, I.**

The aim of the DAHLIA study was to increase understanding of levels of digital and health literacy among older people living in rural India. Older people in rural India face challenges in accessing healthcare services; therefore, delivering health services using digital technologies is purported as a possible solution. However, for this solution to be feasible, there needs to be suitable infrastructure and the older people need sufficient digital and health literacy to avail themselves of digitally delivered health care. The DAHLIA study aims to determine if there is a supporting framework and adequate digital literacy for a digital health care solution to be viable.

Partners: JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research and JSS Hospital, Mysore, India

Funding Body: La Trobe Asia Research Program]

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## USING VIRTUAL REALITY TO FOSTER EMPATHY IN HEALTH WORKERS: A FEASIBILITY PILOT STUDY

**Blackberry, I., Wilding, C., Young, K., Lakhani, A., Cummins, C., Dean, T., Bowler, C., Henden, C., Gill, E., Cronin, K.**

If health workers have empathy for the lived experience of their clients, they are more likely to provide sensitive, high-quality, and person-centred care. Virtual reality is a technological innovation that has created a new opportunity for an immersive digital experience that enables a user to obtain a first-person perspective of someone else's world view. This project is testing the feasibility of using a virtual reality experience to help disability care workers develop greater empathy for people living with intellectual disability. A pre and post pilot study using mixed methods was completed. There is potential that virtual reality experiences could be useful for people to develop greater awareness of the experience of others, including of older people, which is otherwise beyond their daily experience.

Partners: Mercy Connect Thurgoona, NSW and Valley General Health, QLD

Funding Body: Mercy Connect Thurgoona

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## DIGITAL OPTIMISATION AND PERSONALISATION OF SELF-MANAGEMENT OF TYPE 2 DIABETES (DIGITAL OPTIMISM-T2D)

**Jayatilleke, S. and Rasekaba, T.**

Infusing artificial intelligence to optimise and personalise diabetes self-management is potential next frontier in diabetes centred app development. Digital OPTMISM-T2D is a two-phase small collaborative proof of concept project. The first phase involved the development of an integrated mobile app with artificial intelligence capability. The second phase is a pilot of the app in a convenience sample of patients with type 2 diabetes in a rural setting. We aim to uncover what improvements to the app would be required, how patients respond to the app, and assess T2D outcomes. We will leverage on the findings for funding for further app development with addition of more features and definitive trials.

Partners: Digital Disruption Stream, La Trobe Business School

Funding Body: College of Arts, Social Sciences and Commerce, New Staff Start-up Grant

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*"We are very fortunate to have a strong working relationship with the La Trobe research team. Their work is making a real difference in our quest to provide enduring health and wellbeing outcomes for the communities we serve."*

### RITCHIE DODDS

Chief Executive Officer  
West Wimmera Health Service





*"Getting involved with this research project has afforded me the opportunity to expand my knowledge in the research and medical fields of practice. I am very grateful for the connections I have made through this research project and have gained an appreciation for the hard work that goes in behind research."*

**KYLIE OWEN** - THIRD-YEAR SOCIAL WORK STUDENT,  
WHO UNDERTOOK A PLACEMENT WITH THE JRC

## | WORKFORCE: FORMAL AND INFORMAL |

Our Workforce key research area encompasses contemporary, high-quality research that provides insight into how the rural health and aged care workforce can better support older adults. Key foci within this research area include rural aged care workforce training and support needs, rural aged care workforce capacity, rural aged care workforce recruitment and retention issues, and the role of the volunteer workforce in providing rural aged care.

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### OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR ASIAN FEMALE CAREGIVERS IN AUSTRALIA'S AGED CARE INDUSTRY

*Winarnita, M., Blackberry, I., Klassen, T., Chisholm, M., and Higo, M.*

This study examined opportunities and constraints for female aged care workers of Asian descent in Australia's aged care industry. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the opportunities and constraints that exist for these female aged care workers and how they might bring valuable and diverse skills to the aged care sector. Data are currently being analysed for a publication.

Partners: York University, Canada, Kyushu University Japan and SMART partners

Funding Body: La Trobe Asia seed funding

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### RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF MULTICULTURAL FEMALE CAREGIVERS IN AUSTRALIA'S AGED CARE WORKFORCE INDUSTRY: EXPLORATION OF SOCIAL RESILIENCE.

*Blackberry, I., Winarnita, M., Klassen, T., Chisholm, M., and Higo, M.*

Female workers from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds play a critical role in caring for older people receiving aged care services. This project explored the recruitment and retention of the female CALD

aged care workforce. Participants completed an online survey about their employment experiences and social resilience, and were interviewed. Through understanding the experiences of CALD female aged care workers, this project aims to inform the development of a culturally responsive aged care workforce and create a sustainable caregiving industry. Data are currently being analysed for a publication.

Partners: York University, Canada, Kyushu University Japan and SMART partners

Funding Body: La Trobe University Research Focus Area – Transforming Human Societies

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### DEFINING SCOPE OF VOLUNTEER PRACTICE WITHIN HEALTH AND AGED CARE SERVICES

*Winterton, R., Hodgkin, S., and Mitchell, K.*

This project identifies the key competencies required to manage volunteers in health service settings. Surveys (n=60) and interviews (n=25) were completed with volunteer managers, and surveys (n=270) were completed with volunteers within health services. Two reports were completed, and a competency framework for health volunteer management was developed using study findings. These reports, and the competency framework, and will be launched in June 2021.

Funding body: Victorian Department of Health and Human Services

## | EXTERNAL PROJECTS |

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### IMPROVING PALLIATIVE CARE EDUCATION AND TRAINING USING SIMULATION IN DEMENTIA (IMPETUS-D)

Lim, K., Hutchinson, A., Caplan, G., Hayes, B., Currow, D., **Blackberry, I.** and Tropea, J.

Partners: Melbourne Health, University of Melbourne Monash University, Northern Health

Funding Body: Commonwealth Dementia and Aged Care Services Fund

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### LET'S CHAT (COMMUNITY HEALTH APPROACHES TO) - DEMENTIA IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Logiudice, D., Flicker, L., Bessarab, D., Atkinson, D., Wenitong, M., Thompson, S., Stivens, E., Redford, K. and Smith, K. (**Blackberry, I.** as Associate Investigator).

Funding Body: NHMRC

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### IMPROVING DETECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF DEMENTIA IN OLDER ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS ATTENDING PRIMARY CARE (IDEA-PC)

Logiudice, D., Flicker, L., Bessarab, D., Atkinson, D., Wenitong, M., Thompson, S., Strivens, E., Redford, K., and Smith, K., and **Blackberry, I.** as Associate Investigator.

Partners: University of Melbourne, University of Western Australia

Funding Body: NHMRC Boosting Dementia Research Grants

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### PRIMARY HEALTH CARE RESEARCH IN MULTIMORBIDITY AND MENTAL HEALTH IN A MULTI-ETHNIC POPULATION (PRIME)

Lee, E. S., Subramaniam, M., Wong, S., Wong, M. Y., Dong, L. J., Stewart, M., Zwarenstein, M., and **Blackberry, I.** as Key Opinion Leader.

Partners: National Healthcare Group Polyclinics Singapore, Western University Canada

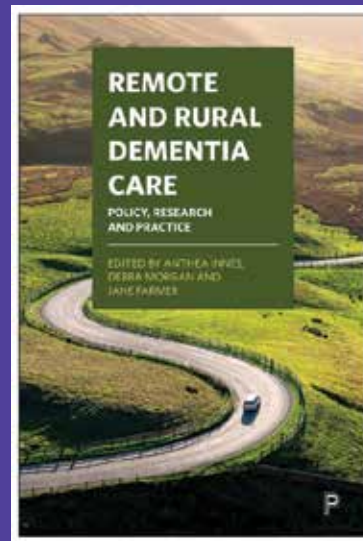
Funding Body: Singapore Ministry of Health

# Engagement and Impact

## BOOK LAUNCH: REMOTE AND RURAL DEMENTIA CARE – POLICY, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

16 June 2020.

A book by Professor Anthea Innes, University of Salford (UK), Professor Debra Morgan, University of Saskatchewan (US) and Professor Jane Farmer, Swinburne University of Technology (AUST), detailing research and practice evidence on dementia care in rural and remote settings around the world, includes a chapter written by Professor Irene Blackberry and Dr Clare Wilding.



## PHD STUDENT, CARMELA LEONE'S RESEARCH-IN-A-MINUTE VIDEO: 'HOW CAN WE CREATE DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES?'

21 September 2020.

In recognition of World Alzheimer's Day on 21 September 2020, PhD student, Carmela Leone, produced a 'research-in-a-minute video' summarising her research examining how attitudes about people living with dementia, and their carers, influence their access to public space. The video was shared on La Trobe University's College of Science, Health and Engineering YouTube channel and social media pages.



Carmela Leone (Webster Research Fellowship PhD student)

## PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE JOHN RICHARDS CENTRE AND BORDER MEDICAL ONCOLOGY, UNDER THE REVITALISE PROGRAM, TO EXPAND GERIATRIC CANCER TRIALS IN REGIONAL VICTORIA

7 October 2020.

An \$18.6M Clinical Trials Enabling Infrastructure Grant (under the Medical Research Future Fund) was awarded to the Regional Victoria Trials Alliance: Linkages, Innovation, Special populations, Equity (ReVITALISE) program, led by Border Medical Oncology and Regional Trials Network – Victoria. The trials will run through a partnership between the John Richards Centre and Border Medical Oncology, with Professor Irene Blackberry co-leading the geriatric oncology initiative with Dr Christopher Steer. The purpose of the initiative is to enable older Victorians to access cancer-clinical trials. The trials will initially start in Albury-Wodonga, with plans to expand to other regional health services in Victoria over the next five years. The program involves multiple universities and health services across Victoria.





## JRC AND MERCY CONNECT LAUNCH OF MOU AND RESEARCH PROJECT

13 October 2020.

### CONNECTING, CARING & COLLABORATION: A VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE

This virtual event launched the collaborative Virtual Reality Application project in partnership with Valley General Hospital. The John Richards Centre received funding from Mercy Connect to evaluate this application. Mercy Connect and the John Richards Centre also signed a Memorandum of Understanding to identify priority areas in the disability and aged care sectors and to further research, design and develop collaborative activities that will support these people to live a fulfilled life.



## JOHN RICHARDS CENTRE ORATION

29 October 2020.

### EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR RURAL AGEING POPULATIONS

The 2020 John Richards Oration explored the notion of equitable access for older people living in rural areas, which has been a key feature of the recent Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Dr Rachel Winterton interviewed Professor Mark Skinner (Canada Research Chair for Rural Ageing, Health and Social Care, Trent University) and Professor Kieran Walsh (Director of the Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, National University of Ireland Galway) about some of the challenges and innovations relating to rural aged care that they are seeing in their own countries. Over 300 people from Australia, New Zealand, North America, Europe and Asia registered to attend, with attendees drawn from academia, policy, industry and practice, as well as rural communities.

## Mercy connect is building empathy in a virtual world with the use of emerging technologies

With one in five Australians living with disability and some requiring specialised care and support, Mercy Connect has adopted leading-edge, emerging Virtual Reality (VR) technologies and developed an innovative experience, branded "IMERCYVE".

This innovative solution helps staff and stakeholders to better understand and empathise with people living with an intellectual disability.

The VR application is designed for disability support staff, who work directly with people with a range of disabilities including intellectual disability and autism and aims to increase empathy and understanding by transporting the user into a first-person, immersive viewpoint.

The aim of IMERCYVE is to place the user in a range of situations that may trigger a level of frustration, confusion, possibly fear and/or discomfort, including being exposed to amplified sensory stimuli associated with sensory processing difficulties, which provide staff with an understanding and level of appreciation of some of the issues faced by people with a disability on a daily, or even hourly, basis.

More than 250 Mercy Connect staff will have immediate access to this training, with the expected outcomes of improved service delivery to over 140 participants.

This innovative project is in collaboration with Valley General Hospital and John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research (La Trobe University), who are evaluating the feasibility and acceptability of this innovative VR application.

Implementation of the VR will begin to increase accessibility for flexible training for health workforce in rural, regional and remote areas.

Mercy Connect supports people in need to life fulfilled lives.

They provide a range of services to support adults, children and older people with a disability to live independently and get actively involved in their community.

Sponsored by the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy, they are a not-for-profit Catholic organisation, delivering programs registered under the NDIS. Their programs support people with disability to build skills and capability to ensure they can participate in leading a meaningful life.



Walk in my shoes: Mercy Connect has adopted virtual reality technology to assist staff to better understand people living with disability. Photo: Supplied



Dr Rachel Winterton with Professor Kieran Walsh (top-right) and Professor Mark Skinner (bottom).

## ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SUZANNE HODGKIN'S RESEARCH CITED IN THE INTERIM REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO AGED CARE QUALITY AND SAFETY

31 October, 2019.

**Associate Professor Suzanne Hodgkin's** research and expert testimony was cited in the Interim Report, Neglect, prepared by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. As part of her testimony, Sue gave evidence about several projects she has worked on that highlight the needs of rural community-dwelling older people and their carers. In particular, she highlighted the work of the Ageing Services and Supports in Rural Environments (ASPIRE) project, in which JRC researchers completed a social network analysis of older people and the types of care they receive from family, friends and neighbours. The work highlighted that although friends and neighbours provide important emotional and transport support to older people living in rural communities, instrumental care (e.g. cleaning, meal preparation, shopping) is predominantly provided by family members.

## FUNDING FOR PATIENT COMPLEXITY INSTRUMENT FACILITATOR TRAINING AND TOOLKIT

November 2020.

Masters student, **Jennifer Boak**, received \$5,000 from the Australian College of Nursing to complete facilitator training and develop a resource toolkit to complement the Patient Complexity Instrument that she is developing as part of her research. Through the use of this instrument, Jenny aims to improve the quality of care for older people in the community.

## LAUNCH OF RURAL AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES CHECKLIST

4 December 2020.

**Dr Rachel Winterton** co-developed the 'Understanding your community: An age-friendly checklist', in collaboration with Dr Kathleen Brasher from the Upper Hume Primary Care Partnership (Principal Strategic Advisor – Age-Friendly Communities). Based on extensive local research and consultation, this checklist was launched by Dr Alana Hulme from the Department of Health and Human Services, Ovens Murray, and will be a resource for rural local governments and communities to assess and address the age-friendliness of diverse rural places. The checklist can be accessed at <http://upperhumepcp.com.au/age-friendly-communities-and-initiatives/>.



*"It is a pleasure to work collaboratively with Professor Irene Blackberry and her team. They are genuinely interested in the welfare of the community and their research efforts reflect a desire to make a difference by providing research data that supports positive interventions for people living with dementia and their carers."*

**SANDRA SLATTER** - PRESIDENT, HEATHCOTE DEMENTIA ALLIANCE INC.  
SECRETARY, ADVANCE HEATHCOTE INC.  
MEMBER, DEMENTIA VILLAGE WORKING GROUP



## | INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT |

Postgraduate students, **Carmela Leone**, **Jenny Boak** and **Diana Nabbumba**, took part in the La Trobe Rural Health School 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition heats on 23 July 2020. Carmela was voted as the winner and progressed to the College finals.

**Dr Rachel Winterton** presented Defining the Relationship between Active Citizenship and Rural Healthy Ageing: A Critical Approach at the La Trobe Rural Health School Research Seminar Series on 14 September 2020.

On 22 September 2020, the JRC hosted an information session for La Trobe Rural Health School researchers, in which they shared information about the JRC and its research, and discussed potential partnerships or collaborations.

JRC staff and students delivered the following presentations at the A Shared Journey - 2020 La Trobe Rural Health School Annual Research Conference on 1 October 2020:

**Blackberry I, Wilding C, Chisholm M**, Wishart D, **Keeton W, Chan C**, Fraser M, **Boak J**, Knight K, Horsfall L. Barriers to making decisions about aged care home support packages.

**Boak J, Blackberry I, Rasekaba T**. Detecting complexity amongst community-dwelling older people: ImPaCt trial.

Hocking C, Vogels W, **Giles B**, Modderman C. Evaluating an integrated area-based health system model for children and young people in out-of-home care in rural Victoria.

**Rasekaba T, McKechnie R**, Syme J, Moore C, Trivett M, **Blackberry I**. Healthcare provider perspectives on the Royal Flying Doctor Telehealth Specialist Service for rural Victoria.

**Winterton R, Hodgkin S**, Mitchell K. Developing a competency framework for volunteer managers within Victorian health services.

Student placement with the JRC - In December 2020, third-year social work student, Kylie Owen, undertook a student placement with the JRC. During her placement, Kylie contributed to the ReViTALISE program which aims to expand geriatric cancer-clinical trials in regional Victoria, and is running through a partnership between the JRC and Border Medical Oncology. Kylie valued the opportunity to gain experience conducting evidence-based research and contribute to research that will benefit older people in the Albury-Wodonga region who are battling cancer. Kylie aims to pursue a career in aged care or palliative care.



JRC placement student, Kylie Owen

## | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT |

### 7 FEBRUARY 2020

#### Let's CHAT Dementia workshop

On Friday 7th February the Let's CHAT (Community Health Approaches To) Dementia team ran their first intervention workshop with Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) health workers and GPs. Professor Irene Blackberry, Dr Dina LoGiudice and Jo Hughson attended the workshops, with everyone very engaged and passionate about improving the detection of dementia and subsequent care for the Indigenous community.



From left: Alex McWilliam, Celia Fox, Paul Roberts, Dr Dina LoGiudice (Melbourne University), Dr Bonnie Giles, Professor Irene Blackberry, Jo Hughson (Melbourne University), Di Crawford and Rebecca Wilson

### MAY 2020

PhD student, **Monica Jones**, conducted a focus group with care workers employed in rural residential aged care facilities. During the focus group, the workers discussed their work demands, job resources, personal resources, and the rewards of working with older people.

### 24 SEPTEMBER 2020

#### Dementia Action Week webinar: Supporting Carers in a Virtual Dementia Friendly Community

To mark the release of the Verily Connect project findings, the JRC hosted a free webinar in support of Dementia Action Week, 21-27 September. The panel included academics, a health service partner, a carer of a person living with dementia and a volunteer.



### 18-20 NOVEMBER 2020

At the 53rd Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Conference: A Climate for Change in Ageing, **Dr Rachel Winterton** participated as a Star in the 'Lunch With The Stars' early career workshop, where she provided mentoring to Early Career Researchers.



## | PROFESSIONAL PARTICIPATION |

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### PROFESSOR IRENE BLACKBERRY

#### INTERNAL

Member, Academic Board  
Member, Research Strategy Committee  
Member, Research Centre Renewal Committee  
Member, Academic Coordination Group Albury-Wodonga

#### EXTERNAL

President, Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Victoria  
Founding Member, AAG rural VIC chapter  
Member, AAG national Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Special Interest Group (CALD SIG)  
Associate Editor, Elsevier Primary Care Diabetes Journal  
Review Editor, Frontiers Medicine Journal  
Convenor, NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research Rural Special Interest Group  
Member, Age-friendly Alliance Steering Committee  
Member, Primary Care and Population Health Committee, Albury-Wodonga Health  
Member, American Geriatrics Society  
Member, Hume Regional Diabetes Collaborative Network  
Member, Heathcote Dementia Village Inc.

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### ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SUZANNE HODGKIN

#### INTERNAL

Acting Head of Campus  
Member, Senior Leadership Group  
Member, Academic Board  
Member, Regional Committee  
Member, Building Healthy Communities, Research Focus Areas

#### EXTERNAL

Chair Border Regional Ageing Group  
Co-Convenor, Workforce and Workforce Training, AAG Special interest group

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### DR RACHEL WINTERTON

#### INTERNAL

Member, La Trobe Rural Health School Research Committee  
Graduate Research Coordinator, John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research

#### EXTERNAL

Convenor, Rural, Regional and Remote AAG Special Interest group  
Member, Australian Association of Gerontology  
Member, Age-Friendly North East Victoria

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### DR CLARE WILDING

#### EXTERNAL

Member, Occupational Therapy Australia  
Member, Australasian Society of Occupational Scientists (ASOS)  
Member, International Society of Occupational Scientists (ISOS)  
Member, Psychiatric Disability Services of Victoria (VICSERV)  
Member, Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG)  
Reviewer, Australian Occupational Therapy Journal  
Reviewer, British Journal of Occupational Therapy  
Reviewer, Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy  
Reviewer, Disability and Rehabilitation  
Reviewer, Journal of Occupational Science  
Reviewer, OTJR: Occupation, Participation, and Health  
Reviewer, Australasian Journal on Ageing

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### DR TSHEPO RASEBAKA

#### INTERNAL

Member, Latrobe Rural Health School (LRHS) Research Committee  
Member, Latrobe Rural Health School (LRHS) Graduate Research Team  
Co-ordinator, John Richards Centre Research for Early Career Researchers and higher Degree Researchers

#### EXTERNAL

Member, Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria Research Committee

## | INVITED PRESENTATIONS |

### 21 MAY 2020

UPPER HUME PRIMARY CARE PARTNERSHIP (UHPCP)  
- A CONVERSATION HOUR VIA ZOOM

**Dr Rachel Winterton** was a featured speaker within the Upper Hume Primary Care Partnership Conversation Hour on Thursday May 21. Rachel joined Dr Kathleen Brasher and Dr Geoff Woolcock to lead a discussion on 'Community Wellbeing in a Post-Covid World', which was attended by over 40 stakeholders from local government, health and aged care services, and the Department of Health and Human Services

### 27 OCTOBER 2020

**Dr Rachel Winterton** delivered an invited online webinar as part of the New Connections series run by the Salvation Army and Uniting NSW on ageing, social networks and loneliness. The webinar was attended by policymakers and age care practitioners from all over Australia.

### 9-10 NOVEMBER 2020

**Professor Irene Blackberry** was invited to be a keynote speaker at the Rural Dementia Action Research (RaDAR) 13th Annual Summit, which was held online on 9-10 November. Her talk was titled 'Supporting Carers in a Virtual Dementia Friendly Community.'

## | CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS |

**Blackberry I** (2020) Empowering older people in accessing aged care services in a consumer market. 53rd Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Conference: A Climate for Change in Ageing, 18-20 November 2020, online.

**Blackberry I** (2020) Resilience among female migrant aged care workforce in regional Victoria. 53rd Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Conference: A Climate for Change in Ageing, 18-20 November 2020, online.

**Boak J** (2020) Detecting complexity amongst community-dwelling older people: ImPaCt trial. 53rd Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Conference: A Climate for Change in Ageing, 18-20 November 2020, online.

**Blackberry I, Wilding C**, on behalf of the Verily Connect Team (2020) IT is not for me: Why age matters in technological innovation. The Gerontological Society of America 2020 Annual Scientific Meeting, 4-7 November 2020, online.

**Blackberry I, Wilding C**, Greenhill J, Perkins D, Morgan D, O'Connell M, Davis H, Winbolt M, Bauer M, Morley C, Farmer J, **Royals K, Rasekaba T**, Gottschall K, Hamiduzzaman M, **Robinson A** (2020) Lessons from a pragmatic trial of virtual dementia friendly rural communities in Australia. 34th International Conference of Alzheimer's Disease International, 10-12 December 2020, online.

**Winterton R** (2020) Trends associated with geographical location of health service access for older people in rural Australia. 53rd Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Conference: A Climate for Change in Ageing, 18-20 November 2020, online.

**Winterton R**, on behalf of Rebecca McKechnie (2020) Factors affecting food insecurity among rural-dwelling older adults: A socio-ecological perspective. 53rd Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Conference: A Climate for Change in Ageing, 18-20 November 2020, online.



## 13 MAY

Twitter

PhD student, Carmela Leone's research

**Carmela Leone**

## 19 MAY

Twitter

Dr Rachel Winterton involved in a webinar

**Rachel Winterton**

## 18 AUGUST

Opinion piece

Border Mail (syndicated across more than 103 regional newspapers across Australia)

**Let's make rural aged care more accessible**

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6882137/lets-make-rural-aged-care-more-accessible/?cspt=1597710465je8cbfb9273e4896554cb6c1f68da2194>

**Irene Blackberry  
Clare Wilding**

## 27 AUGUST

Television

WIN News (with national syndication)

**La Trobe University has submitted a research report to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety**

<http://www.mediaportal.com/mp/playnow>.

**Clare Wilding**

## 30 AUGUST

News story

ABC News

**La Trobe University research highlights shortfalls in rural and regional aged care**

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-30/regional-rural-aged-care-shortfalls-revealed-in-new-research/12609456>

**Irene Blackberry  
Clare Wilding**

## 2 SEPTEMBER

Radio

ABC Goulburn Murray, ABC Central Victoria and 2ser 107.3

**Research shows rural aged care shortfall**

<https://2ser.com/research-shows-rural-aged-care-shortfall/>

**Clare Wilding**

## 4 SEPTEMBER

Newspaper article

Bendigo Advertiser

**Bendigo in-home aged care services face problems common to Victoria's rural, regional areas**

<https://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/story/6910559/bendigos-ageing-face-common-challenges-accessing-in-home-support/>

**Irene Blackberry**

## 7 SEPTEMBER

Twitter

Facebook

Study recruitment flyer

**Rachel Winterton**

## 8 SEPTEMBER

Article

The Senior

**Rural seniors face major issues accessing aged care at home**

<https://www.thesenior.com.au/story/6907402/few-options-elderly-in-rural-areas-endure-poor-home-care/>

**Irene Blackberry**

## 19 SEPTEMBER

Newspaper article

Bendigo Advertiser

**Research for a dementia-friendly community**

**Rachel Winterton**

## 21 SEPTEMBER

Radio

ABC Central Radio

**Dr Rachel Winterton discusses her research into volunteering and how to remove barriers which prevent people with various conditions, such as dementia or intellectual disability, from engaging in volunteer programs.**

<http://www.mediaportal.com/mp/playnow>.

**Rachel Winterton**

## 22 SEPTEMBER

News story

Mirage.News

**Verily Connect trial a success**

<https://www.miragenews.com/verily-connect-trial-a-success/>

**Irene Blackberry**



## 23 SEPTEMBER

Radio

ABC Riverina

**Dr Clare Wilding talks about the Verily Connect program, which connects people who are acting as carers for people with dementia in rural and regional areas with a variety of resources.**

<http://www.mediaportal.com/mp/playnow>.

**Clare Wilding**

## 24 SEPTEMBER

Television

WIN News

**A new smartphone app is providing a helping hand for dementia carers and patients which is boosting connections and providing information and resources.**

<http://www.mediaportal.com/mp/playnow>.

**Irene Blackberry**

## 1 OCTOBER

Radio

ABC South East SA

**Technology is delivering much-needed emotional and social support to people in rural areas caring for someone living with dementia.**

<http://www.mediaportal.com/mp/playnow>.

**Irene Blackberry**

## 13 OCTOBER

Facebook

**Launch invitation: Virtual Reality Application project**

<https://www.facebook.com/372360820304/posts/10164168387330305/>

**Irene Blackberry**

## 13 OCTOBER

Newspaper article

Facebook

Border Mail

**Mercy Connect and John Richards Centre collaborate on VR project**

<https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/6966550/virtual-reality-training-of-carers-to-be-evaluated-by-researchers/?cs=12>

<https://www.facebook.com/95810110493/posts/10164513668980494/>

**Irene Blackberry**

## 14 OCTOBER

Facebook

**Virtual Reality Application project**

<https://www.facebook.com/372360820304/posts/10164172068125305/>

**Irene Blackberry**

## 16 OCTOBER

Newspaper article

Border Mail

**Regional Trials Network to be expanded with federal government grant**

<https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/6972061/18-million-sees-regional-cancer-network-rise-up-to-metro-centres/>

**Irene Blackberry**

## SEPTEMBER 21 – OCTOBER 20

YouTube

LinkedIn

Instagram

PhD student, Carmela Leone's research-in-a-minute video

**How can we create dementia-friendly communities?**

College of Science, Health and Engineering (SHE), La Trobe University YouTube channel:

[https://youtu.be/bt\\_ly8RncBI](https://youtu.be/bt_ly8RncBI)

College of Science, Health and Engineering (SHE), La Trobe University social media pages:

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6713643456721485824/>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CFYgT3qAp1a/?igshid=1nccyl4g9ln40>

**Carmela Leone**

## 30 OCTOBER

Article

The Conversation

**Aged care isn't working, but we can create neighbourhoods to support healthy ageing in place**

<https://theconversation.com/aged-care-isnt-working-but-we-can-create-neighbourhoods-to-support-healthy-ageing-in-place-148635>

**Rachel Winterton**

# Publications

## | PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES |

- Baldassar, L., & **Wilding, R.** (2020). Migration, aging and digital kinning: The role of distant care support networks in experiences of aging well. *The Gerontologist*, 60(2), 313-321. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnz156>
- Bradley, K., Smith, R., Hughson, J., Atkinson, D., Bessarab, D., Flicker, L., Radford, K., Smith, K., Strivens, E., Thompson, S., **Blackberry, I.**, & Logiudice, D. (2020). Let's CHAT (community health approaches to) dementia in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities: Protocol for a stepped wedge cluster randomised controlled trial. *BMC Health Services Research*, 20(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-020-4985-1>
- Chouinard, P.A., **Royals, K.A.**, & Landry, O. (2020). The strength of the Shepard Illusion in children coincides with age and cognitive skills but not perceptual abilities. *Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics*, 82(3), 1378-1390. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13414-019-01904-3>
- Davern, M., **Winterton, R.**, Brasher, K., & Woolcock, G. (2020). How can the lived environment support healthy ageing? A spatial indicators framework for the assessment of age-friendly communities. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(20), 7685.
- Dellemain, J., Hodgkin, S.**, & Downey, H. (2020). A theory of rural case management: A delphi study. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 0, 1-20. doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcaa029
- Furler, J., O'Neal, D., Speight, J., **Blackberry, I.**, Manski-Nankervis, J. A., Thuraingam, S., ... & Best, J. (2020). Use of professional-mode flash glucose monitoring, at 3-month intervals, in adults with type 2 diabetes in general practice (GP-OSMOTIC): A pragmatic, open-label, 12-month, randomised controlled trial. *Lancet Diabetes Endocrinology*, 8(1), 17-26. doi:10.1016/s2213-8587(19)30385-7
- Gomaa, Y. S., Slade, S. C., Tamplin, J., Wittwer, J. E., Gray, R., **Blackberry, I.**, & Morris, M. E. (2020). Therapeutic dancing for frail older people in residential aged care: A thematic analysis of barriers and facilitators to implementation. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 90(4), 403-422. doi:10.1177/0091415019854775
- Hodgkin, S., Savy, P.**, Clune, S., & Mahoney, A. M. (2020). Navigating the marketisation of community aged care services in rural Australia. *International Journal of Care and Caring*, 4(3), 377-393. doi: 10.1332/239788220X15875789936065
- Jongenelis, M. I., Dana, L., **Warburton, J.**, Jackson, B., Newton, R. U., Talati, Z., & Pettigrew, S. (2020). Factors associated with formal volunteering among retirees. *European Journal of Ageing*, 17(2), 229-239. doi: 10.1007/s10433-019-00539-5
- Jongenelis, M. I., Jackson, B., **Warburton, J.**, Newton, R. U., & Pettigrew, S. (2020). Improving attitudes to volunteering among older adults: A randomized trial approach. *Research on Aging*, 42(2), 51-61. doi:10.1177/0164027519877476
- Moran, A., Chapman, G., Picard, R., Chapman, J., Squire, S., Threlkeld, G., & **Blackberry, I.** (2020). Consumer experiences of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease in regional Australia: A mixed methods study and logic model to identify consumer-experience mechanisms to avoid hospital and enhance outcomes. *Patient Experience Journal*, 7(3), 98-108. doi: 10.35680/2372-0247.1421
- Moran, S., Peterson, C., **Blackberry, I.**, Cook, M., Walker, C., Furler, J., ... & Piccenna, L. (2020). Antiepileptic drugs, polypharmacy and quality of life in people living with epilepsy managed in general practice. *International Journal of Epilepsy*, 6(1), 24-29. doi: 10.1055/s-0040-1712074
- Winterton, R., Hodgkin, S.**, Clune, S. J., & Brasher, K. (2020). Age-friendly care for older adults within rural Australian health systems: An integrative review. *Australasian Journal on Ageing, early view* (doi: 10.1111/ajag.12834)

## | BOOK CHAPTERS |

- Baldassar, L., **Wilding, R.**, and Worrell, S. (2020). Elderly Migrants, Digital Kinning and Digital Home Making Across Time and Distance. In Pasveer B., Synnes O., Moser I. (Eds.), *Ways of Home Making in Care for Later Life* (pp. 41-63). Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore.
- Blackberry, I., Wilding, C.**, Bauer, M., Winbolt, M., and Davis, H. (2020). Addressing dementia needs in Australia. In Innes A, Morgan D, Famer J (Eds), *Remote and Rural Dementia Care: Policy, Research and Practice* (pp. 37-56). Policy Press, Bristol, UK.
- Skinner, M., **Winterton, R.**, & Walsh, K. (2020). Introducing rural gerontology. In M. Skinner, **R. Winterton**, & K. Walsh (Eds.), *Rural Gerontology: Towards Critical Perspectives on Rural Ageing*. New York: Routledge.
- Winterton, R.**, & Warburton, J. (2020). Defining the relationship between active citizenship and rural healthy ageing: a critical approach. In M. Skinner, **R. Winterton**, & K. Walsh (Eds.), *Rural Gerontology: Towards Critical Perspectives on Rural Ageing*. New York: Routledge.

## | REPORTS |

**Blackberry, I., Wilding, C.,** Chisholm, M., Wishart, D., **Keeton, W., Chan, C.,** Fraser, M., **Boak, J.,** Knight, K., & **Horsfall, L.** (2020). Empowering older people in accessing aged care services in a consumer market Project final report. John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research, La Trobe University, Wodonga. [https://www.latrobe.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1148068/John-Richards-Centre-Empowering-Older-People.pdf](https://www.latrobe.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1148068/John-Richards-Centre-Empowering-Older-People.pdf)

**Blackberry, I., Wilding, C.,** Morgan, D., Winbolt, M., Greenhill, J., Perkins, D., O'Connell, M., Bauer, M., Morley, C., Farmer, J., **Royals, K., Rasekaba, T.,** Hamiduzzaman, M., Gottschall, K., **Robinson, A., Zaplin, E., Pitman, J.,** & Davis, H. (2020). Virtual Dementia Friendly Rural Communities (Verily) Project Final Report. John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research, La Trobe University, Wodonga. <https://verilyconnect.org.au/wp-content/uploads/verilyconnect-publication-report-2020.pdf>

**Blackberry, I., Wilding, C.,** Morgan, D., Winbolt, M., Greenhill, J., Perkins, D., O'Connell, M., Bauer, M., Morley, C., Farmer, J., **Royals, K., Rasekaba, T.,** Hamiduzzaman, M., Gottschall, K., Robinson, A., Zaplin, E., & Davis H. (2020). Verily Connect Toolkit: how to develop a Virtual Dementia-Friendly Community. John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research, La Trobe University. <https://verilyconnect.org.au/wp-content/uploads/verilyconnect-toolkit.pdf>

**Rasekaba, T.M., McKechnie, R. & Blackberry, I.** (2020). Evaluation of the Flying Doctor Telehealth Specialist Service (FDTSS) Interim Report June 2020. John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research, La Trobe University. DOI: 10.26181/5ef42a7fe9268





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for Rural Ageing Research

## BE INVOLVED IN OUR RESEARCH

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