

ALLIED HEALTH  
RESEARCH NEWS

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## The Impact of COVID-19 on Allied Health research

### A Research Newsletter for Allied Health Clinicians

#### Inside this issue:

Cancellation of AH Research Forum **2**

Stepping into Research Update **2**

AH Research Report **2**

Jorja Collins travels to USA to learn about food sustainability **3**

Research trials present opportunities for remote physical activity interventions **4**

Euan's back! Read his latest musings **5**

Allied Health Research Achievements **5**

This issue marks our 50th edition of Allied Health Research News., which puts the newsletter in its 13th year of continuous publication. Over the years we have filled these pages with countless research success stories from our Eastern Health Clinicians, tips and advice and opportunities for Allied Health to get involved in research.

Unfortunately what should be a time of celebration has arrived in a time of great anxiety for health services and researchers alike. We are all having to think on our feet, adapt and try to navigate our way through this new territory.

The arrival of COVID-19 will have an impact on many of the research activities currently underway at Eastern Health. We are taking guidance from our university partners about where we need to make changes to what we do.

Key recommendations include:

- Reconsider the need to recruit participants for studies that involve at risk populations (including the elderly and medically at risk)
- For all research related activities be aware of hygiene and social distancing precautions
- Where possible, replace face to face interactions with video or telephone interactions
- Remember that changes to protocols for HREC approved projects will need to have amendments approved by the ethics committee.

If you are an Allied Health professional involved in research at Eastern Health and have any questions or need advice about the best way to manage your project in the current conditions, please don't hesitate to get in contact with either one of us.

Nick Taylor &  
Katherine Harding

# 2020 Allied Health Research Forum cancelled

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Due to the current situation with COVID-19, the 2020 Allied Health Research Forum which was to be held on May 21 has been cancelled.

We will be looking at the possibility of rescheduling this event later in the year, but will wait and see how the situation is unfolding before considering any alternative dates.

Thank you to the Allied Health researchers who entered the 3 minute project competition. We look forward to seeing your presentations at our next Allied Health Research Forum when the time is right.



## Program Update

In this issue of Allied Health Research News we were also hoping to open applications for the Stepping into Research Training Program. This training opportunity for allied health clinicians has been running continuously at Eastern Health for 12 years, and mentors a small group of clinicians with a keen interest in research through the process of writing a systematic review.

Unfortunately with the current restrictions on our activities due to COVID-19 we are unable to launch Stepping into Research 2020 at this time.

We remain highly committed to the program and hope to be able to open applications later in the year. Please watch out for further information in our June or September newsletters.

## Eastern Health Allied Health Research Report

The Eastern Health Allied Health Research Report for the 2020 calendar year will soon be available for download from Allied Health Research page of the [Eastern Health website](#). In the 2019 calendar year we had:

- 45 projects either in progress or completed
- 51 publications in peer-reviewed journals
- 54 presentations at local, national or international conferences
- 20 students enrolled in research higher degrees, with 4 completing their studies during the calendar year.

## Dietitian Dr Jorja Collins touring the USA in search of solutions in food service sustainability

Dr Jorja Collins, dietitian, received a Churchill Fellowship to travel to the US to explore strategies to improve the environmental sustainability of hospital foodservice. This prestigious fellowship gives individuals the opportunity to travel overseas to learn more about a project or issue they are passionate about, so they can return to Australia and be a champion for change. This is summed up by the motto of the Churchill Trust 'Learn Globally, Inspire Locally'.

Jorja will spend 7 weeks in the US, visiting hospitals that have received awards for environmental excellence. She has scheduled visits to 7 hospitals, with more in the pipeline. During her visits she will tour facilities, observe processes in action and talk with relevant staff to learn about environmentally friendly initiatives in foodservice including:

- menu redesign to increase plants and decrease meat, packaged and processed foods
- local food procurement
- food waste avoidance strategies (e.g. cook to order foodservice models)
- food waste management strategies (e.g. composting, recycling, reuse, donation)
- solar power and other energy efficient initiatives
- water conservation

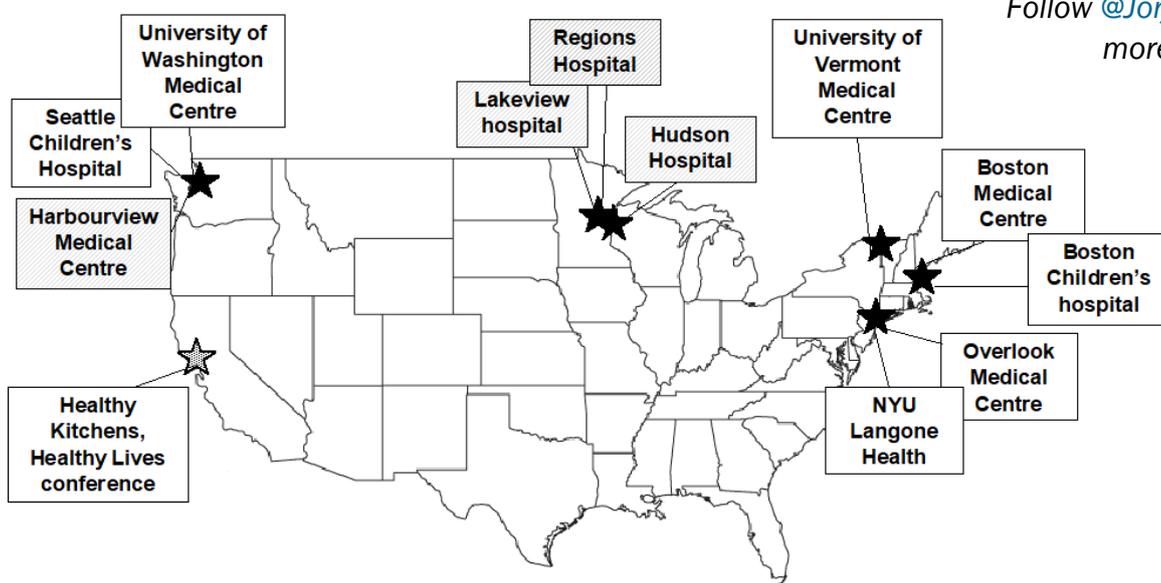
She will also explore the secrets to success - what are the common features of healthcare organisations that are leaders in sustainable healthcare?



Jorja intends to use the findings of her fellowship to advocate and create change locally at Eastern Health, and more broadly across the healthcare setting in Australia.

*Unfortunately Jorja's travels came to an abrupt end due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, but she was able to complete most of her itinerary and is sure to have many great things to share when she returns to Eastern Health.*

Follow [@Jorja Collins](#) to hear more about her work.



## Existing research trials may offer options for isolated clients needing interventions to improve physical activity

During disruptions to usual services, two allied health research trials offer opportunity for community clients with mobility limitations to be able to receive innovative telephone based interventions



**Come**BACK

Coaching and Exercise for  
Better Walking

ComeBack is a multi state, NHMRC funded RCT testing physical activity coaching for adults with mobility limitations. Participants are randomised to home based health coaching, single session phone advice and text messaging or a control group.

Given the current high level of disruption to usual healthcare programs, this is a great opportunity for a free service for people with mobility limitations to participate in an intervention provided remotely that aims to improve mobility.

Key eligibility criteria:

- Attending CRP
- Have difficulty walking 800m
- Able to participate in phone based coaching delivered in English

The trial is currently continuing with modifications to the protocol to remove the requirement for face to face assessments. This may change but we will keep the CRPs informed of any updates.

**Claire Longden has recently taken over the role of ComeBack coordinator at Eastern Health. Brochures available at the CRPs. Please forward referrals to [Claire.longden@easternhealth.org.au](mailto:Claire.longden@easternhealth.org.au).**



**MIHip**  
*move with confidence*

MIHip is a randomised controlled trial evaluating the effectiveness of telephone based motivational interviewing to improve walking in people recovering from hip fracture. So far we have 30 participants enrolled in the trial.

MIHip is continuing for the time being with some modifications. Our priority is to the safety and health of our participants and staff.

Firstly, we are continuing to provide the interventions and collect data from people already enrolled in the trial, but adaptations are being introduced to avoid face to face assessments. All data collection will be done over the phone in the short term. Participants will have activity monitors delivered that they can apply themselves or with the help of a family member to track their activity.

For now we will also continue to recruit new patients as appropriate but will continue to review this as the situation changes. We are mindful that some people may

prefer not to participate given other things they are currently dealing with and people are, as always, free to make a fully informed choice about whether to participate in the trial.

However, we are also aware that maintaining some level of physical activity during a period of home isolation is more important than ever for these people. MIHip is offering an intervention that may be a practical way to help people achieve this, particular when access to usual services may be reduced.

**For any questions about the MIHip Trial, please contact our trial coordinator Beccy Morris at [beccy.morris@easternhealth.org.au](mailto:beccy.morris@easternhealth.org.au).**

## Allied Health Research Achievements

### Publications

#### Shay Corino (Dietetics)

Carino S, Porter J, Malekpour S, and Collins J. A systematic review of environmental sustainability of hospital foodservices across the food supply chain. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. [Epub ahead of print]

#### Kylee Lockwood (Occupational Therapy)

Lockwood K, Harding K, Boyd J, and Taylor N. Home visits by occupational therapists improve adherence to recommendations: Process evaluation of a randomised controlled trial. *Aust Occ Ther J*. [Epub ahead of print]

#### Tania Moritz (Physiotherapy)

Moritz TA, Snowdon DA, and Peiris CL. Combining aquatic physiotherapy with usual care physiotherapy for people with neurological conditions: A systematic review. *Physiother Res Int*. 2020. 25: e1813.

#### Ella Ottrey (Dietetics)

Ottrey E, Palermo C, Huggins CE, and Porter J. A longitudinal ethnographic study of hospital staff attitudes and experiences of change in nutrition care. *J Hum Nut Diet* [Epub ahead of print]

#### Dina Pogrebnoy (Physiotherapy)

Pogrebnoy D and Dennett A. Exercise Programs Delivered According to Guidelines Improve Mobility in People With Stroke: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *Arch Phys Med Rehab*. 2020. 101:154-165

#### Judi Porter (Dietetics/Allied Health Clinical Research Office)

Porter J. Editorial: A time to change. *Nutrition & Dietetics*. 2020. 77.

#### Rebecca Nicks (Occupational Therapy)

Gledhill K, Hanna L, Nicks R, and Lannin NA. Defining discharge-readiness from subacute care from all stakeholders' perspectives: a systematic review. *Disabil Rehabil*. 2020: 1-8

Cole T, Nicks R, Ferris S, Paul E, O'Brien L, and Pritchard E. Outcomes after occupational therapy intervention for traumatic brachial plexus injury: A prospective longitudinal cohort study. *J Hand Ther*. 2020 (Epub ahead of print).

#### Nick Taylor (Allied Health Research Office)

Wenzel L-A, White J, Sarkies MN, Morris ME, Carey L, Williams C, Taylor N, Martin J, Bardoel A, Haines TP. How do health professionals prioritise clinical areas for implementation of research into practice? A cross-sectional qualitative study. *Int J Evid Based Health Care* (in press)

Snowdon DA, Sounthakith V, Kolic J, Brooks S, Scanlon S, Taylor NF. (in press). Many inpatients may not be physically prepared for community ambulation on discharge from a publicly-funded rehabilitation centre: a cross-sectional cohort study. *Disabil Rehabil* (in press)

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### Allied Health research Committee

Nick Taylor	Judi Porter (Dietetics)
Katherine Harding	Rebecca Nicks (OT)
Anne Thompson	Lauren Lynch (SP)
Jason Wallis (PT)	Glenda Kerridge (SW)
Alison Wilby (Psych)	Judy Bottrell (PT)
Sarah Dallimore (Pod)	Peter Brann (Mental Health)



## Euan's Musings

### Finding your passion

So I have been away a year. You noticed right? Where have the musings been? Where is the completion in your life? No? Anyone?

Well since you asked I have been off at a big city hospital being a researcher. I worked with wonderful people, was well resourced, I had my lunch breaks, an office with a view, a computer that took less than ten minutes to start up. I never once missed walking into the ED at 07:30 after a late /early with my bag over my shoulder, my headphones on, wearing sunglasses, and colleagues still of the belief I am signalling that I would love to receive four referrals all at once. The hot chocolates in the city are much better too. I never once craved a Zouki Hot chocolate. Controversial to say I know. But I went there (Zouki staff please do not spit in my hot chocolates, we can be secret friends OK?).

After about 6 months these novelties appeared to wane (not the hot chocolates, just to be clear). I have a passion for research, but I learned that what I am researching is really what I love most. But then I would walk down and get a Koko Black Hot chocolate and my perspective would return. But 3 kilos later even this novelty began to diminish.

I mostly do mental health and emergency department research. I have been semi-successful because I am in tune with it. Working in an area I love gives me inspiration to pick topics that are really relevant to staff and consumers. It is amore than a job, it is a passion (Ugh, I just wrote that?).

I have been banging on for years about doing further study, and how it is useful to do something of interest to sustain you. But life is not always that clear.

So where is my point? Well, as always in these musings it is likely blatantly obvious to all but me. But I think sometimes it is great to try something else, learn some new skills, and rediscover your passion.

Sometimes that is more important than the nice hot chocolates.

*Dr Euan works with the mental health learning and teaching directorate, and the mental health access team. Despite his rant, he really does love a Zouki hot chocolate about 19:30 to get through the rest of an evening ED shift.*