

ALLIED HEALTH  
RESEARCH NEWS

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## 2021 Allied Health Research Forum

Another year of pandemic mayhem saw the annual Allied Health Research Forum go virtual for a second year. This year, the event was hosted alongside Allied Health Professional's Day celebrations on October 13th.

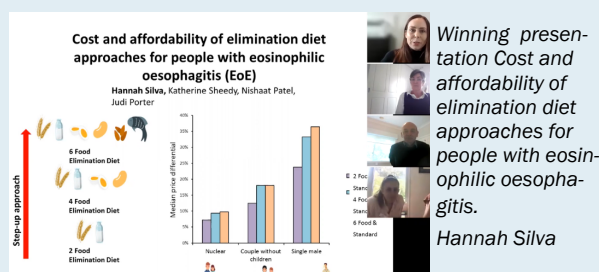
This year's event was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the fantastic achievements of our allied health clinicians over what has been a challenging 12 months. There was great representation across the allied health disciplines, with a variety of presentations on display.

As in previous years, the presentations took the form of a three minute presentation competition. Presenters rose to the challenge of delivering their work to the audience in precisely 3 minutes and a single slide.

Our judging panel, consisting of Professor Meg Morris of La Trobe University and our Eastern Health Director of Research Professor David Taylor, awarded the prize for best presentation to Dietitian, Hannah Silva. People's Choice was awarded to Physiotherapist, Andrew Rank.

If you missed out on attending the forum and would like to see one or more of the presentations, the recording of the event is available online, complete with hyperlinks to take you directly to your presentations of interest.

Our thanks to the organisers, our host Jude Boyd, our judges, presenters and audience for a wonderful celebration of Allied Health Research.



*Winning presentation Cost and affordability of elimination diet approaches for people with eosinophilic oesophagitis.*

Hannah Silva

### Presenters and their topics

**Anatole Jasonides:** Backstreets back... 30 days later! An audit assessing and analyzing the sub-acute readmissions at Peter James Centre in 2019.

**Hannah Silva:** Cost and affordability of elimination diet approaches for people with eosinophilic oesophagitis.

**Stefanie Carino:** A novel role for a 'Sustainable Food Systems dietitian' to green healthcare.

**Ali Gibbs:** It's a maze! (Accessing first-line osteoarthritis management is complex-a qualitative study).

**Jeremy Szmerling:** Opioid prescribing in the emergency department: A multi-site study.

**Andrew Rank:** Consumer experiences of physiotherapy via telehealth during COVID-19.

**Jennifer Bone:** Non Pharmacological Interventions in Delirium Management within the inpatient setting.

**Sally Rashed:** Evaluation of documentation, reporting and communication of adverse drug reactions that occur during hospital admission.

**Laura Deegan:** Day treatment programs for adolescents living with mental illness: A systematic review.

**Jessica McKenzie:** An interdisciplinary approach to facilitating independence on the rehabilitation wards.

**Judy Bottrell:** How Do I Fix The Pain In My Knee? Understanding Clinical Practice Guidelines.

**Mariana Sudbury:** Can Split Team Models Function in Social Work Hospital Environments?

**Peter Brann:** Developing an international consensus on a standard set of measures for child youth anxiety and depression.

### A Research Newsletter for Allied Health Clinicians

#### Inside this issue:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Allied Health Research Forum                    | 1 |
| La Trobe University 'Promoting Progress' HDR    | 2 |
| HSRAANZ Celebrating Health Services Research    | 2 |
| PhD Spotlight: Annie Lewis                      | 2 |
| Motivational Interviewing in CRP                | 3 |
| Allied Health Researcher of the Year: Bec Nicks | 3 |
| Research Translation                            | 4 |
| How to: infographics                            | 5 |
| Evan's Musings                                  | 6 |

## La Trobe University 'Promoting Progress' HDR Conference

La Trobe School of Allied Health conducted the Promoting Progress Student Conference on Friday, 3 December 2021. In the spirit of Promoting Progress, the speakers focused on the importance of science communication, research impact and engagement, as well as negotiating life during PhD.

The conference featured a bevy of excellent panellists, including Eastern Health's Dr Amy Dennett and Professor Nora Shields on the topic of managing supervisor-student relationships. The conference was also an opportunity for PhD students to present their research in rapid fire or podium format. Made Rimayanti, a PhD

student affiliated with the MIHip trial presented her scoping review on process evaluations of motivational interviewing. Lyndon Hawke, another AHCRO PhD student, presented his qualitative study on physical activity after knee replacement. EH physiotherapist Ali Gibbs, took out prestigious best podium presentation award for her research on improving management of osteoarthritis. Well done Ali!



## HSRAANZ Celebrating Health Services Research

On Thursday 2nd December, the Health Services Research Association of Australia and New Zealand held their annual research awards. Eastern Health was well represented with Amy Dennett taking out the inaugural Infographics competition Judge's choice (see page 5) and Highly Commended Best ECR Paper of the year for her study conducted at Box Hill Hospital, [Bridging the gap: a pre-post feasibility study of embedding exercise therapy into a co-located cancer unit](#).

Congratulations Amy!

Supportive Care in Cancer (2021) 29:6701–6711  
https://doi.org/10.1007/s00520-021-06261-2

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

**Bridging the gap: a pre-post feasibility study of embedding exercise therapy into a co-located cancer unit**

Amy M. Dennett<sup>1</sup> · Bernadette Zappa<sup>2</sup> · Rachel Wong<sup>3</sup> · Stephen B. Ting<sup>4</sup> · Kimberley Williams<sup>5</sup> · Casey L. Peiris<sup>6</sup>

## PhD Spotlight: Annie Lewis, Occupational Therapy

Annie Lewis is currently in the final stages of her PhD evaluating the STAT model in a medical outpatient clinic. She began her career as an Occupational Therapist and through her various work roles she developed an interest in health services research with a focus on how services are delivered and can be improved.

Many outpatient services operate with waitlists despite timely and equitable access to services being a feature of high quality healthcare. A promising solution to delayed care is a model of access, called STAT, Specific Timely Appointments for Triage that was developed and evaluated in allied health, ambulatory and community services. This model was found to reduce waiting by 30-40%. The STAT model balances supply and demand after first eliminating the waitlist so that all new referrals receive a prompt first appointment.

Specialist medical clinics have waiting lists that dwarf those in allied health services, with hundreds of referrals, sometimes dating back many years.

The question that Annie has sought to answer during her PhD is whether the STAT model could be applied in the setting of specialist medical clinics. She is currently in the final stages of writing her thesis.

Annie conducted two systematic reviews

that showed waiting matters. These reviews found people who receive timely outpatient care have better outcomes.

These findings led to the hypothesis that the STAT model could be applied in an epilepsy clinic to reduce the waitlist and waiting time. The model was implemented during 2019 and a time series analysis showed the waitlist dramatically reduced from 600 referrals to 12 over 8 months and with a modest budget of \$10,500. Waiting time for low priority patients reduced significantly from 99 to 80 days, but overall the wait time did not change.

To explain the results, a process evaluation was conducted. The intervention was implemented as intended and was successfully generalised from community outpatient to specialist medical settings. The clinic increased its capacity without ongoing extra staffing through efficiencies in processes and changes in behaviour. Patients considered lower priority benefitted the most from STAT as they were no longer pushed down the queue by more urgent referrals or review appointments.

Future research should now focus on trialling the model in other specialist medical clinics and scaling up implementation.

We are excited to announce Annie will be continuing her important research over the next 3 years as the newly appointed Allied Health Research and Translation Fellow. She will also support Eastern Health Medical Imaging staff in this role.

Congratulations Annie!!

*Congratulations*



## Allied Health Researcher of the Year: Bec Nicks

This Allied Health Researcher of the Year award recognises the outstanding contribution of clinician researchers to the generation and application of research evidence in practice, educational programs, workforce and policy development. This year, the award was received by Occupational Therapist Bec Nicks.

Bec has been a passionate advocate for active clinicians to embed research in practice within the health service. She has authored 11 papers and is currently leading the site coordinating NHMRC HOME trial, as well as the pandemic project examining the COVID impact on

patient care. She actively mentors staff through the stepping into research and supporting early career researchers in hand therapy. She supports workforce and leadership decisions with her ability to provide rapid reviews and responsive changes in model of care.

Bec uses her clinical knowledge and practicality to lead clinical research that delivers excellence in clinical care and supports clinicians by answering questions that make a difference. For example, in the Subproject she is exploring models

of care to reduce length of stay and unnecessary transfer.

Bec is strongly inter-disciplinary in nature, and an active member of the Allied Health Research Committee. Her research areas are broad across Occupational Therapist workforce metrics, upper limb rehabilitation and brain injury. Her broad external collaboration also brings opportunities to Eastern Health. Bec's humility and wisdom are an asset to the Eastern Health Allied Health team.

### Motivational Interviewing in CRP: Developing arguments for change

Motivational Interviewing is a form of health coaching that enables change conversations with our clients in a way that encourages clients to generate their own motivation and ideas for change.

This style of communication can be extremely useful for Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) clients who are often ambivalent about making long term commitment to health related changes. These clients have often been 'told' or 'educated' about the changes they need to make, yet have resisted or failed to make long lasting changes. MI is an evidence-based approach that allows for a more client centred and collaborative conversation about change which we know is more effective and long lasting than traditional approaches

Last month the community rehabilitation program (CRP) hosted Dr Paul O'Halloran, from La Trobe University, to provide an Introduction to Motivational Interviewing session for all clinicians across our CRP programs.

The introductory session was incredibly inspiring and generated a lot of interest from the clinicians

for further knowledge and skill development. Subsequently, 33 clinicians from CRP attended an intensive MI workshop held over two weekends facilitated by Dr Paul O'Halloran and Dr Brendan Murley. This workshop focused on developing a more complete understanding of MI, refining some core communication skills that facilitate behaviour change and developing the foundation skills for working with people in a way that is consistent with MI principles to facilitate behaviour change.

This training opportunity came from our active collaboration as a recruitment site for the NHMRC funded ComeBACK trial (led by Prof Cathie Sherrington, University of Sydney). The CRP has four research champions who coordinate recruitment to the trial from Eastern Health (Claire Longden, Andrew Rank, Sinead McCarthy and April Simpson). They raise awareness of this trial about improving mobility in the community, keep a steady stream of referrals into the research and enable CRP clients to access this exciting and innovative trial. To acknowledge this role in

recruitment, the CRP receives a contribution from the trial funds, which we were able to use to fund the MI training.

So what's next? We are all feeling inspired about how MI can facilitate a more client centred and collaborative communication and partnership with our clients. The CRP is also planning a research project to evaluate the feasibility of implementing MI into goal setting.

This training has been inspiring for the clinicians and patients are responding well to this approach. It has been made possible through active involvement in research, and provides a wonderful example of how embedding research into practice can improve client centred care and clinician satisfaction.





## Research Translation: Getting the message across

**So, you have finished your project and published your results. All done right?**

Research does not end with a journal publication. It is important to tell the world about what you have done and why its important. After all, how many people actually read those long, boring articles you slaved all year for?

Thankfully, increasing access to technology and social media means we can reach a wider and more meaningful audience to tell our research story. Blogs, infographics, websites, podcasts, workshops are all ways you can get your message across.

Here we share a few innovative ways that researchers from the Allied Health Clinical Research Office have been sharing research in 2021

### The STAT Model: Reducing waiting time for community outpatient services through training workshops

In 2017, the successful 'STAT project' which was completed across 8 Eastern Health sites. It saw reductions in waiting times for ambulatory services by up to 34%. The next step was to ensure clinicians and managers had access to the tools so they could implement this approach in other health services.

Since 2018, the AHCRO have been running workshops in-person and online to increase skills of staff managing waiting lists. These workshops have seen almost 500 participants across Australia. In these workshops, participants learn about the principles of STAT and how it works including:

- ✓ Evidence of effectiveness
- ✓ The steps required to implement STAT
- ✓ How STAT can make a difference to your patients and the opportunities and challenges for services

For more information about the STAT model and our workshops, please click [here](#).



### Allied Health Research in Lego

The Allied Health Clinical Research Office has grown tremendously over the last 15 years. There are currently at least 50 active projects running in allied health. A bit of extra time in lockdown presented a perfect opportunity to showcase some of our key allied health projects.

Stop motion animation was used to create a brief video of AHCRO projects which was promoted at our recent Research Forum and on Social Media. It has received > 1400 views. To view the video, click [here](#).



### The Cancer Exercise Toolkit: A website for exercise professionals

A rapid growth in cancer rehabilitation research has occurred over the past 10 years. We identified few resources exist to support exercise professionals to deliver evidence-based cancer rehabilitation.

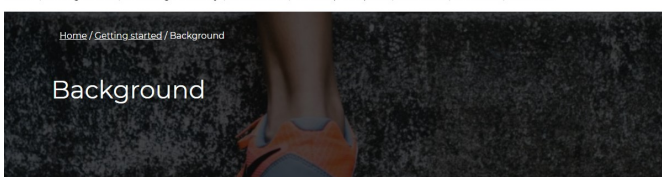
In 2020, a website was developed to help address this gap. The Cancer Exercise Toolkit was created in collaboration with leading physiotherapy researchers, clinical experts and generalist clinicians across Australia. It features six sections, with information about getting started setting up a cancer rehabilitation program, patient screening, safety and assessment, exercise prescription, education, location map and useful resources.

The website has attained over 5,500 views by clinicians in over 26 different countries. Initial evaluation of the website saw improvements in clinician knowledge, confidence and skills related to delivering cancer rehabilitation according to guidelines.

Click [here](#) to access the freely available toolkit.



Home | Getting started | Screening and Safety | Assessment | Exercise prescription | Education | Locations | Resources



#### Why run oncology rehabilitation?

Oncology rehabilitation programs are an important aspect of clinical care for people diagnosed with cancer. People diagnosed with cancer may also be referred to as 'cancer survivors'.



Remember to follow us on Twitter  
@EH\_Research

## How to: Infographics

Infographics have emerged as a new way for researchers to present their research findings and communicate their research impact.

### What is an infographic?

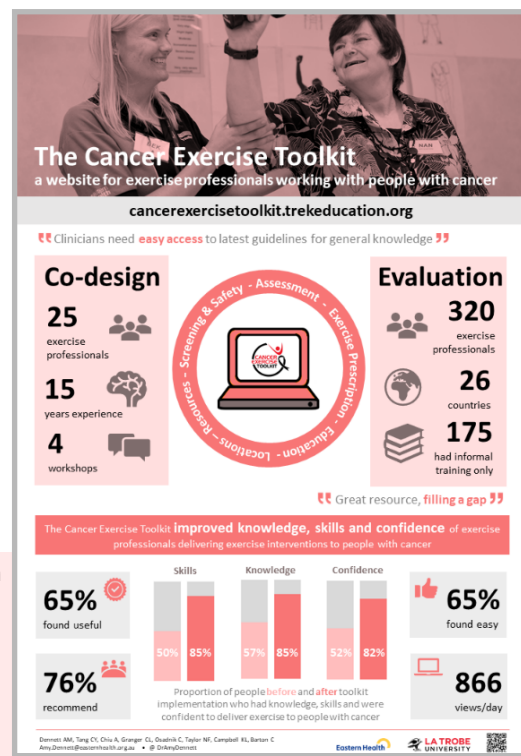
An infographic is a visual way to display data or information that makes it easy to understand at a glance. It can take the form of a chart, diagram, or illustration, and usually involves minimal text.

### Where do I start?

You don't need to be a graphic designer or have fancy software to make an infographic. Microsoft Powerpoint or the online platform 'Canva' are great programs with all the tools you need. Before you start drafting your infographic, it is important you are clear about what your concept or idea is and who your

infographic is for. Next, collate the information to be used in the infographic. Draw on your take home messages from your recent research project as starting point. Once you have organised your information into a hierarchy, you can start designing your graphic. Add visual attributes such as images, icons and graphs to help convey your message. Powerpoint or Canva have some of these resources built in, or for professional photographs, try free websites such as Unsplash and Pixabay.

Congratulations to **Amy Dennett**, who won the 2021 Health Services Research Association of Australia and New Zealand (HSRAANZ) Infographics Competition. This great infographic has been developed to share information on the Cancer Exercise Toolkit.



### Top 5 tips for a eye-capturing infographic:

1. **Less is more!** Ensure plenty of white space and minimal text
2. Pick your **colour scheme** wisely. Avoid having more than 3-4 colours to a palette.
3. Have a **logical flow** and order. Align everything left.
4. Stick to **simple fonts** and be **consistent**
5. Present **simple, accurate graphs** without cluttered axes

### Useful resources

- <https://www.bmj.com/infographics>
- <https://www.researchretold.com/presenting-research-in-infographics/>
- <https://venngage.com/blog/good-infographic/>



## Euan's Musings

Euan Donley works with the Psychiatric and Emergency Response Team and is a regular columnist for Allied Health Research News. He is not a poet.

### T'was the night before Christmas

When all through the office  
Not a researcher was stirring  
And the paper was flawless

We authors had chosen  
Our words with great care  
In the hopes an acceptance  
Email would be there

The peer reviewers  
Were snug in their beds  
While visions of high metrics  
Ran through their heads

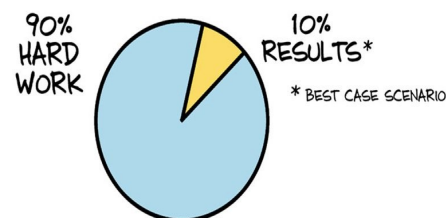
When into my inbox  
There were giant clatters  
But alas! Rejected,  
My paper in tatters!

From Microsoft windows  
I flew like a flash  
To re-submit now,  
Well that would be rash

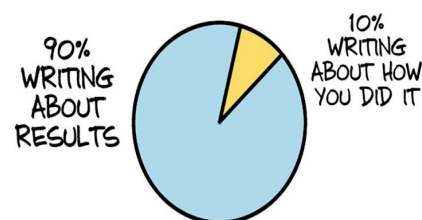
Now Lancet, now Nature,  
Now Science you hear  
I'll take some more time  
And submit in a year

And with that musings  
I wish you good cheer  
And many publications  
In Journal of Reindeer!

### DOING RESEARCH:



### WRITING ABOUT RESEARCH:



## Allied Health Research Achievements

### Publications

**Dennett AM.** JCR's webinar on the role of exercise in cancer rehabilitation. Moving evidence to practice: Impact of exercise and cancer recommendations on Australian clinical practice [commentary]. J Cancer Rehab, 2021; 4: 114-115

**Dennett AM,** Harding KE, Reimert J, Morris R, Parente P, Taylor NF. Telerehabilitation was safe, feasible and increased exercise uptake in cancer survivors: A process evaluation. JMIR Cancer, 2021 (In Press)

Shipton D, **Dennett AM,** Sayner A, Tang C. Benchmarking physiotherapy services for patients with cancer in Australia: a national survey. Asia Pac J Clin Oncol, 2021. (In press)

**Elliott A,** Lang S, Truby H, Brennan L, Gibson S. Tackling the challenge of treating obesity using design research methods: A scoping review. Obes Rev, 2021 (In press)

Kendrick M, Kendrick K, **Taylor NF,** Leggat SG. (in press). A qualitative study of hospital clinical staff perceptions of their interactions with healthcare middle managers. Journal of Health Organization and Management, 2021 (In Press)

Brusco NK, Kugler H, Dufler F, Lee A, Walpole B, Morris ME, Hill KD, Ekegren C, Whittaker SL, **Taylor NF.** Including exercise self-management as part of inpatient rehabilitation is feasible and safe for patients with a cognitive impairment. Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine -Clinical Communications, 2021 (In Press)

Snowdon DA, Vincent P, Callisaya ML, Collyer T, Wang YT, **Taylor NF.** Feasibility of allied health assistant management of people with acute hip fracture: protocol for a feasibility randomised controlled trial. BMJ Open, 2021 (In Press)



### Allied Health Research Committee

Nick Taylor  
Katherine Harding  
Amy Dennett  
Anne Thompson  
Danielle Griffiths (Pod)  
Andrea Elliot/Lina Breik (Dietetics)  
Rebecca Nicks (OT)  
Emma Beer (SP)  
Glenda Kerridge (SW)  
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## Training opportunity: Ethical Review Manager

The Eastern Health HREC will be conducting training sessions on the Ethical Review Manager in December and January. All ethical approvals and post-approvals and reports are now submitted via this system. The sessions will be conducted online via Microsoft Teams.

To register, choose a suitable date from the training schedule and register before the registration date closes by emailing [parmeet.kaur@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:parmeet.kaur@ecodev.vic.gov.au).

Registration is required - state the session date, the training session and include your email address.

It is encouraged for new and potential users to familiarise with ERM and also the facilities you have available for assistance during use prior to training.

Information and assistance, with ERM, can also be located here:

<https://www.clinicaltrialsandresearch.vic.gov.au/ethical-review-manager>

| Training date<br>Time 2-4pm | Registration<br>date | ERM training                                 |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Tuesday 14<br>December      | 10 December          | Introduction to<br>ERM                       |
| Wednesday<br>15 December    | 10 December          | SSA application                              |
| Tuesday<br>11 January       | 07 January           | Post approval<br>and post authori-<br>sation |
| Thursday<br>13 January      | 07 January           | Post approval<br>and post authori-<br>sation |

Merry Christmas from  
AHCRO

