Our patients' success is our greatest reward.
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Welcome Co-Directors

Welcome to the Brain and Mind Centre Annual Report, which celebrates our many achievements over the past two years.

Becoming Brain and Mind Centre in 2015 marked a radical shift in direction towards developing into a truly multidisciplinary centre that encourages participation from research teams across the University of Sydney campuses at Camperdown and Mallet Street, Westmead, Nepean, Cumberland and beyond. By entering into our network, researchers have access to information on relevant funding opportunities, news, and events. They also have the opportunity to partner with other research institutes, local health districts, government, industry and the community.

Most importantly, our researchers are working as part of an academic community that is focused on finding solutions to the most challenging health problems in the world. Our unique approach combines effective clinical care with cutting-edge research, providing researchers with live data and giving clinicians access to innovative treatments and interventions as soon as they are developed. We encourage researchers to join us in our multidisciplinary approach to tackling the challenges of brain and mind disorders.

As part of this emphasis on growing our research potential, we welcome the arrival of ForeFront, led by Professors Glenda Halliday, John Hodges and Associate Professor Olivier Piguet. This team is committed to discovering early detection methods, identifying new treatments and understanding the underlying mechanisms of neurodegenerative disease. We are also proudly watching the progress of the Lambert Initiative, formed in 2015 after an unprecedented personal donation to support research into the use of medicinal cannabis.

We welcome Professor Markus Leweke to the role of Chair of Youth Depression Studies. Joining us from the Central Institute of Mental Health in Mannheim, Germany, Professor Leweke plans to work closely with the Sydney Local Health District to set up a clinical service unit at the Marie Bashir Centre. Another appointment to celebrate is Niels Buus to the St Vincent’s Chair of Mental Health Nursing, who will work to develop new family and community-based models of mental healthcare.

The vast amount of peer-reviewed papers highlighted in this publication is testament to the tireless work of our researchers who have won many grants over the past two years. Our work has been noticed nationally too – Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull committed $30 million to Project Synergy in 2016. This project is led by Professor Jane Burns, a relentless innovator in the field of digital mental health.

To help communicate our successes and to further boost our profile, as well as making our patient services more accessible, we are have redeveloped our website and social media.

We hope you enjoy this publication and look forward to our continued successes.

Professor Matthew Kiernan
Co-Director, Translation and Discovery

Professor Ian Hickie AM
Co-Director, Health and Policy
Welcome
Message from the University

The University of Sydney officially launched Brain and Mind Centre in July 2015 to address disorders of the brain and mind, expand the breadth and depth of multidisciplinary research and set new standards in brain and mind sciences, both in Australia and internationally.

Previously known as the Brain and Mind Research Institute (BMRI), the Centre was created as a flagship multidisciplinary initiative, one of the key recommendations of the Health and Medical Research Strategic Review. The aim: to leverage the University’s existing research excellence in order to deliver significant benefits to society.

The Centre’s strategic objectives are focused on creating an enduring program of research and education that responds directly to 21st century societal challenges of the brain and mind sciences.

With Co-Directors Professors Matthew Kiernan and Ian Hickie leading the way, Brain and Mind Centre is breaking new ground in research and development. We are excited to present a snapshot of this incredible research conducted throughout 2015 and 2016.

Professor Duncan Ivision
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research
University of Sydney

Professor Laurent Rivory
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Strategic Collaborations and Partnerships
University of Sydney
The University of Sydney’s Brain and Mind Centre is a global leader in research into, and treatment of, disorders of the brain and mind. Our vision is to see a world where people can reach their full potential and play an active role in society.

Our multidisciplinary research teams are at the forefront of brain and mind sciences. We work to find answers to some of the world’s most pressing health concerns, including childhood development and behaviour disorders, youth mental health and addiction, and ageing and neurodegeneration such as dementia, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson’s disease.

Brain and Mind Centre represents a virtual network of academics across University of Sydney, Westmead Hospital, Nepean Hospital, Royal North Shore Hospital, Kolling Institute, Concord Repatriation General Hospital and Sydney Adventist Hospital. The Centre is also affiliated with Sydney Health Partners and Sydney local health districts.

Our large-scale research is collaborative and innovative, our laboratories are state-of-the-art and our clinics are a valuable resource for people in need. Our visionary research teams partner with the community, industry, government and diverse branches of academia to make a real difference to people’s lives.
Partnering with patients to find solutions to world health problems.
Overview
Partnerships

Our cutting-edge research is underpinned by strategic partnerships. New solutions to help people in need require new collaborations – few medical discoveries are made in isolation.

Brain and Mind Centre is uniquely positioned for translational research that makes a real difference to people’s lives. Our dedicated laboratories are co-located with clinical services. This means we can integrate cutting-edge research with safe and effective clinical care. We leverage our research capacity by joining forces with the community, healthcare providers, industry, government and researchers from across the world to provide the best possible outcomes for people affected by brain and mind disorders.

Connecting with the community
We pride ourselves on partnering with the community to inform our research. We work directly with patient communities to provide expert clinical care and partner with organisations such as MS Australia and Parkinson’s NSW to ensure our expertise is available to those who need it most.

Our Youth Mental Health team works closely with headspace, the National Youth Mental Health Foundation, providing early intervention and mental health services for 12 to 25 year olds. The Camperdown headspace clinic is located at Brain and Mind Centre, facilitating continuous improvements to mental health services for the benefit of young people across Australia.

Partnering with industry
Brain and Mind Centre works closely with a variety of progressive companies to translate new technologies and research discoveries into innovations that benefit the economy and society. By bringing together research expertise with commercial clout, cutting-edge treatments for brain and mind disorders can reach the people that need them.

Our multiple sclerosis research group has established successful partnerships with Novartis, Biogen and Sanofi Genzyme, leading to funding for research trials and patient access to new drugs.

Similarly, our Youth Mental Health team has partnered with PricewaterhouseCoopers to develop InnoWell, a new company championing digital healthcare.

We are proud to partner with Southern Radiology, one of Australia’s largest medical imaging providers. By working with their team of specialist diagnostic imaging radiologists, we can pool our resources and work together to study changes that occur in the brain.
Working alongside health services

We work closely with the Sydney Local Health District, Northern Sydney Local Health District, Western Sydney Local Health District and the Sydney Children’s Hospitals Network, all of which are part of Sydney Health Partners, a collaboration between the University of Sydney and its affiliated medical research institutes. In 2015, Sydney Health Partners was recognised as a National Health and Medical Research Council Advanced Health Research and Translation Centre – one of only four in Australia.

Collaborating with a global academic network

Our researchers partner with fellow academics, institutes and universities from across Australia and the world. By sharing knowledge, resources and facilities, we offer the best chance of finding solutions to some of society’s greatest health challenges. We are part of the Group of Eight (Go8) in Australia, a coalition of research-intensive Australian universities and their affiliates, as well as leading institutions from across the world.

We also work closely with the Woolcock Institute. In 2016, the Woolcock NeuroSleep Clinic was established and is now located at Brain and Mind Centre’s Camperdown site to advance research in translational sleep and circadian neurobiology.

Similarly, the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Research Institute employs a number of researchers across disciplines, dedicated to improving outcomes for patients. In 2015, Cerebral Palsy Alliance formed an affiliation with the University of Sydney and a branch is now located at Brain and Mind Centre’s Camperdown research site.
Child Development and Behaviour

- Enhancing children’s wellbeing to prevent problems in later life.
Child Development and Behaviour

Our team brings together internationally regarded clinical researchers in child development to reduce the impact of vulnerabilities such as social problems, autism, disruptive behaviour, emotional problems and impulsivity/hyperactivity.

Enhancing children’s wellbeing

Our clinical researchers specialise in developing innovative assessments and treatments for child mental health. At the same time, we work to identify the mechanisms that contribute to vulnerability, resilience and development in children and their families.

The team is led by child psychologists Professors Mark Dadds and Adam Guastella, and Associate Professor David Hawes.

An individualised approach to child mental health

Rather than working within rigid diagnostic categories (such as autism, conduct disorder, anxiety or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), we assess children who present with a broad range of emotional and social development concerns and design the most effective intervention based on the unique needs of each child.

We recognise that there is significant overlap among many mental health conditions in childhood. Our approach provides a more effective way to prevent and manage mental health concerns in children.

A neurobiological focus

We investigate key neurobiological markers (that is, biological characteristics) of emotional, behavioural and social problems in children.

This knowledge of biological markers means we can more effectively identify which children benefit from different types of treatments, as well as understand and track how these treatments improve outcomes.

A focus on positive parenting and families

Many of the best evidence-based interventions for child mental health problems work by engaging with families. Our work is centered on building resources in parents and families to help foster healthy development and overcome early-onset problems in children. Our team has developed and evaluated brief evidence-based parenting interventions that create optimal environments for positive child development.
Child Development and Behaviour
Highlights

A new team is born

2015 saw the appointment of Professor Mark Dadds to Brain and Mind Centre. As the Principal Research Fellow at the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Professor Dadds is a distinguished leader in clinical child psychology, specialising in early intervention and the prevention of mental health problems.

Professor Dadds’ research focuses on the development of novel treatments for children and young adults with behavioural and emotional problems. His appointment has strengthened Brain and Mind Centre’s existing research and clinical capacity in the area of childhood mental health.

The formation of the Child Development and Behaviour Team brings together the expertise of Professor Mark Dadds, Professor Adam Guastella, Associate Professor David Hawes and their research groups, in a collaborative program of research.

Opening the Child Behaviour Research Clinic

The Child Behaviour Research Clinic (Co-Directed by Professor Mark Dadds and Associate Professor David Hawes) is a state-of-the-art, custom-designed research clinic focused on developing, evaluating and disseminating novel treatments for young children with behavioural and emotional problems.

The Child Behaviour Research Clinic was officially opened in 2016 by former federal minister for health and aged care, Sussan Ley. The Clinic represents Brain and Mind Centre’s commitment to shaping the next generation of mental healthcare for young people.

New therapies for autism

In a world-first, Professor Adam Guastella, NHMRC Career Development Fellow, has used a randomised controlled trial to show the potential benefit of a medication to improve social responsiveness in young children with autism. Currently, autism affects one in 88 Australians.

In this groundbreaking study, oxytocin was administered intra-nasally and found to be well tolerated in young children with autism. Parents reported their children to be more socially responsive at home. Blind independent clinician ratings also supported improved social responsiveness in the clinic.

The trial has been expanded to include larger trials of longer acting oxytocin therapies. This research could represent a major advance in the development of medical treatments for the social deficits that characterise autism.
Successful research grants

In 2016, Professors Dadds, Guastella and Associate Professor Hawes successfully led four NHMRC Project Grant applications, attracting a total of $4,035,340 in research funding. These were:

- oxytocin enhancement of social learning in the treatment of toddlers with autism
- mapping the specific pathways to early-onset mental health disorder
- an integrated model of environmental, neurodevelopmental and epigenetic resistance and responsiveness to early intervention in childhood psychopathology
- a randomised controlled trial of oxytocin nasal spray for alcohol dependence.

This team was also successful in obtaining additional research grants. These include:

Like Father Like Son: a national approach to violence, antisocial behaviour and the mental health of men and boys
Led by: Dadds, M. and Hawes, D.
Granting body: Movember Foundation Award
Years: 2015–17
Amount: $2,634,400

Transgenerational cycles of violence model in Timor-Leste
Led by: Silove, D., Rees, S., Steel, Z., Tol, W., Eapen, V. and Dadds, M.
Granting body: NHMRC Project Grant
Years: 2015–19
Amount: $843,495

The role of oxytocin in attachment patterns and socio-emotional development
Granting body: ARC Linkage Grant
Years: 2016–19
Amount: $192,000

Award-winning researchers

In 2015, Professor Dadds was awarded the Distinguished Career Award from the Australian Association of Cognitive and Behaviour Therapy.

In 2016, Professor Dadds was also made an Inaugural Honorary Fellow of the Australian Association of Cognitive and Behaviour Therapy, and received the inaugural Media Award for Public Engagement with Psychological Science from the Australian Psychological Society.

The ParentWorks program

In 2016, our team launched the ParentWorks program, Australia’s first online, nationally available, evidence-based, father-friendly parenting program. Professor Mark Dadds is leading a team of chief investigators to increase participation of fathers in parenting programs. These programs are known to be most effective when both parents are involved. ParentWorks is part of the ‘Like Father Like Son’ national initiative.

The program incorporates videos and homework, and features such as an interactive child behaviour tracker that has been developed to improve parenting skills, confidence and child behaviour. The online platform also incorporates a list of resources available for families who require face-to-face support during or after the program.

To find out more, go to: www.parentworks.org.au

Partnering with Cerebral Palsy Alliance

The Cerebral Palsy Alliance research program aims to prevent and cure cerebral palsy as well as find innovative new treatments and interventions. Their researchers work across disciplines to conduct cutting edge research and translate research findings into practice. In 2015, this research institute formed an affiliation with the University of Sydney’s Brain and Mind Centre.
Child Development and Behaviour
Key projects and clinical trials

Key research projects

Understanding influence of nasal oxytocin agonists on the human brain

About: This study uses brain imaging technology to track exactly where oxytocin is delivered to the human brain via nasal spray.


Funding: ARC Linkage

A longer acting oxytocin agonist targeting melanocortin pathways to improve social cognition in autism

About: This is the first study in the world to apply a new melanocortin drug which acts as a potent oxytocin agonist to treat social impairments in autism.

Collaborators: Simons Foundation (New York) and Palatin Technology.

Funding: Simons Foundation (New York)

Immune markers of social development in autism

About: This program of research is gradually demonstrating key immune profile links with autism symptoms in the hope of developing an understanding of potential causes and treatments for autism in early development.

Collaborators: Westmead Children’s Hospital and Telethon Kids Institute.

Funding: Internal

Clinical trials

E-health behavioural family interaction program for treatment of conduct problems in children

Australian Clinical trials registry number: ACTRN12612000191897

Collaborators: NHMRC and Royal Far West

Contact: Professor Mark Dadds

The efficacy of emotional engagement treatment in reducing disruptive behaviour in children with oppositional defiant disorder or conduct disorder with callous-unemotional traits

Australian Clinical trials registry number: ACTRN12612000155897

Collaborators: Nil

Contact: Professor Mark Dadds
We strive to become a major centre for innovation in child mental health. To this end, we plan to bring together our expertise in autism and child behaviour under one roof, to create a transdiagnostic clinical service and research hub. This new child facility will provide a research platform that is both neurobiologically and clinically informed. In turn, this will help us develop personalised approaches to assess and treat children in need.

Over the next 18 months we also plan to develop a number of innovative clinical trials that target mental ill-health in young children. Collaborating with University of Sydney, Westmead Children’s Hospital, Royal Far West and local health districts is central to making this happen and we look forward to establishing these strategic partnerships.

Developing a national program to disseminate our treatment strategies is also central to our goals. As is contributing these learnings to influence government policy.
Child Development and Behaviour

Key publications


Hayden was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder when he was two years old. For much of his life, he has been trapped in his own world and unable to communicate. His mum Christine spent years trying behavioural and speech therapy, special diets and an array of medications. However nothing made a difference. Christine began to accept that little could be done to help her son participate in everyday life.

“Hayden thought he was an island. He didn’t want to be in a group or participate, he wouldn’t even sit down in a circle. Everyone thought he was either strange or naughty,” explains Christine.

Therapy was slow and painful. Christine felt like it was getting nowhere. “Even a small transition or change in activity would result in a tantrum. He didn’t trust me or anyone trying to help him.”

Christine took it upon herself to research autism and find information on the latest treatments. After contacting multiple paediatricians, she was directed to the Brain and Mind Centre. It was there she was told about a new trial for autistic children. It seemed manageable for Christine and was tailored to her son’s individual needs. This Brain and Mind Centre trial was a turning point in Hayden’s life. Oxytocin was the focus of the study and he responded very well to it.

“It was the first time Hayden was really able to engage and became aware that he was not the only person in the room,” explains Christine. “Now when he knocks things over he says, ‘oops,’ and fixes it, whereas before he had tunnel vision and wouldn’t have even noticed.”

Hayden’s engagement and communication with his family and peers continues to improve. And Christine is learning more about her son every day. “I had no idea that Hayden was aware of his surroundings until he started saying things like, ‘Oh, I like that car,’” says Christine. “When he said, ‘I hate you,’ for the first time I popped champagne because it was the first time he was able to express his emotions in context.”

This Brain and Mind Centre treatment has enabled Hayden to make friends, sit quietly and learn new things at school. He reaches new milestones all the time and often surprises the people around him. Recently he was even able to go on camp by himself for three nights.

“The changes I saw from the trial completely changed the way that Hayden engaged. He wanted to be a part of a group, he didn’t fight and his language and social skills improved,” says Christine.

“The changes I saw from the trial completely changed the way that Hayden engaged.”

Christine
Mother of Brain and Mind Centre patient Hayden.
Research spotlight

Dr Laura Ospinas, psychiatrist, youth mental health

Dr Laura Ospinas, a youth mental health psychiatrist from Colombia, is undertaking her PhD with researchers at Brain and Mind Centre. She was awarded the scholarship for PhD studies abroad from the Colombian Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (COLCIENCIAS), the most competitive scholarship for higher degree students in Colombia.

“Being awarded this scholarship is a real source of pride. It is not only an honour, but also a great responsibility, coming from a country with only a few female doctorates,” says Laura.

Laura’s research aims to understand how technology can improve young people’s health and wellbeing, both in Australia and internationally. “A big component of my research is developing, translating and culturally adapting these technological solutions into Spanish, the world’s second most spoken language,” she says. “I strongly believe that technology can help reduce the barriers to accessing mental healthcare in migrant populations as well as in the developing world.”

As a psychiatrist working in youth mental health, Laura says it’s rewarding to see how her team’s efforts can have a real impact on patient outcomes in terms of functionally and social engagement.

“Being here, in this wonderful country, in one of the best universities in the world, and working with my team at the Centre, has opened my mind. I came as a psychiatrist interested in research; now I understand how research can have a real impact in society and on policy, not just locally but internationally and I want to be part of it.”

Dr Laura Ospinas.
Youth Mental Health

Transforming the mental health care of young people.
Youth Mental Health
Our core business

The Youth Mental Health team puts young people at the centre of their own care. We partner with health services to develop innovative treatments for young people aged 12 to 30 years with emerging mental health disorders.

A new way forward
We aim to transform how clinical care is delivered to young people with mental health issues. Rather than rely on broad diagnostic generalisations, we want to see clinicians diagnose and treat young people in a way that caters to the individual needs of each person.

We focus on three main streams of research:
- neurobiological: ongoing longitudinal patient studies that allow us to develop and trial new interventions for complex mental health issues
- technology: optimising online environments to deliver services, track progress and provide feedback to young people and their clinicians
- clinical: continuously improving health services for young people by systematically evaluating services.

Novel interventions
We commenced the Brain and Mind Youth Cohort Study in 2008. Nearly 10 years later, we have assessed 8000 individuals with early phases of anxiety, mood or psychotic disorders. From this cohort we have been able to carry out specific clinical trials of new behavioural, social and pharmacological interventions for these disorders.

Current studies include the youth depression alleviation trial of fish oil (YoDA-F) and oxytocin nasal spray for alcohol dependence.

Collaboration for better outcomes
headspace is the national youth mental health foundation providing early intervention and mental health services to people aged 12 to 25 years. Our research program is heavily integrated with headspace Camperdown.

The integration of cutting-edge research with safe and effective clinical care enables us to quickly and effectively translate our research findings into clinical services, facilitating continuous improvements to mental health services for the benefit of young people in Australia.
International networks

Brain and Mind Centre’s Youth Mental Health team is one of only three Australian groups to be actively involved in the Motor Activity Research Consortium for Health (MARCH), an international research collaboration to investigate associations between motor activity, mood and related disorders. There are research sites in the USA, Australia, Netherlands, Switzerland, China, Costa Rica, Norway and the UK, all of which are coordinated by the Genetic Epidemiology Research Branch at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in the United States.

Similarly, we are part of the Enhancing NeuroImaging Genetics through Meta-Analysis (ENIGMA) Consortium, a collaborative network of researchers from around the globe, working together on a range of large-scale studies that integrate data from 70 institutions worldwide. Organised into working groups that tackle questions on neuroscience, genetics and medicine, ENIGMA studies have analysed neuroimaging data from more than 12,826 subjects.

General mental health

Our broad program of research includes:

- development of novel suicide prevention strategies
- assessment of neurobiological markers of disease using magnetic resonance spectroscopy
- behavioural approaches to the sleep-wake cycle and activity modulation
- personalised approaches to education and employment participation.
Federal government commits $30 million to Project Synergy

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull visited Brain and Mind Centre in June 2016 and announced his commitment to invest $30 million in Project Synergy over three years (2017–20), as part of his government’s $192 million mental health policy.

Co-developed by Brain and Mind Centre and Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre, Project Synergy provides young people at risk of suicide with fast access to mental health experts via apps and online tools.

University of Sydney evaluations of Project Synergy trials in Broken Hill, NSW Central Coast and Western Sydney have shown the system effectively identifies young people at risk of suicide and helps them access urgent care from local services such as headspace and Lifeline.

Welcome Professor Markus Leweke, our new Chair of Youth Depression Studies

At the end of 2016, the University of Sydney appointed Professor Markus Leweke as Brain and Mind Centre’s Chair of Youth Depression Studies. Professor Leweke plans to set up an innovative clinical service model at the Marie Bashir Centre, a purpose built facility designed to help people with mental health issues. The service will assess and monitor patients that present with psychiatric problems over an extended period. The primary goal is to uncover the underlying causes of psychiatric illness.

Professor Leweke’s research provides an alternative to traditional diagnostic categories in mental illness. Rather than symptoms-focused treatment, Professor Leweke hopes to uncover the neurobiological factors that underpin a range of psychiatric conditions by working with integrated inpatient and outpatient facilities.
In December 2016, Australia’s first School of Psychology moved its expanded clinics to Brain and Mind Centre. Mental health research, teaching and community clinics, including counselling, psychiatry and neuroscience are now located in the same space. This co-location of services allows for the provision of best practice and cost effective brain and mind services to the community.

The Gambling Treatment and Research Clinic, which sees more than 600 patients per year, received a generous $1.2 million deed of gift by ClubsNSW over three years (2013–16). This led to the appointment of two doctoral students to carry out a retrospective and prospective evaluation of several programs. These include: an innovative multi-venue self-exclusion program, a joint chaplaincy program with the Salvation Army implemented within clubs, and defining and measuring recovery in gambling.

In 2016, the Clinic’s Director, Professor Alexander Blaszczynski, was appointed President of the NSW Psychology Council. Dr Sally Gainsbury also became the Clinic’s new Deputy Director and received an Australian Research Council Discovery Early-Career Researcher Award (DEntra) to explore the influence of features of the online environment on risk taking.

**Research grants awarded**

**Optimising early interventions for young people with emerging mood disorders (Optymise)**

**Led by:** Hickie, I., McGorry, P., Christensen, H., Berk, M., Naismith, S., Glozier, N., Burns, J., Guastella, A., Davey, C., Amminger, P.

**Granting body:** the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Centres of Research Excellence (CREs)

**Years:** 2014–18

**Amount:** $2,499,420

**Bridging the gap from the cradle to the mosh pit**

**Led by:** Jones, C., Scott, S., Dale, R., Banati, R., Booy, R., Lagopoulos, J., Barnett, M., Hill-Cawthorne, G., Hermens, D., Khandaker, G.

**Granting body:** the Health & Medical Research Strategy SPARC Implementation Fund (the University of Sydney)

**Years:** 2015–16

**Amount:** $50,000

**Ketamine therapy among patients with treatment-resistant depression**


**Granting body:** NHMRC Project Grant

**Years:** 2016–18

**Amount:** $606,094

**Men@Work**

**Led by:** Harvey, S., Christensen, H., Proudfoot, J., Mitchell, P., Cockayne, N., Santamaria, J., Bryant, R., Glozier, N., Hickie, I., Buchanan, J., Ryan, R., Calvo, R., Bohle, P., Salvador-Carulla, L. and Fernandez Sanchez, A.

**Granting body:** beyondblue research grant

**Years:** 2015–18

**Amount:** $181,000
InnoWell is an innovative company bringing digital mental health solutions to the people who need them. The first of its kind in the world, InnoWell brings together the academic rigour of Brain and Mind Centre’s mental health expertise and the corporate influence of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC).

InnoWell is one of the University of Sydney’s largest collaborations with a major corporate backer, leading the way for proven research to translate into real-world outcomes.

InnoWell plans to conduct twelve research trials over four years. In its first year, young people, veterans, post-hospital discharge patients and older Australians will use Project Synergy software to track their mental health. Researchers will monitor their engagement with the program and its effectiveness.

Brain and Mind Centre’s role is to ensure the research is of the highest possible standard. As well as to enable access to service users who can both test the platform and provide feedback as part of the research and development process.

The project is a truly joint partnership. Thanks to its corporate backing, there is a clear route to taking the product to scale, with PwC able to expand the project to a mass market. Mental health issues have a clear impact on the economy. By addressing them, we can attain both a social and financial return on investment.
**Youth Mental Health**

**Key projects and clinical trials**

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**Key research projects**

**A new clinical staging model for personalised and responsive care**
We have successfully developed a new clinical staging model to help clinicians accurately identify the severity of illness in a young person. With this knowledge, options for safer and more effective interventions can be discussed between the young person and their treating team, in line with the stage of illness the young person has.

This approach will help healthcare providers deliver better quality services. As well as assist clinicians to consider the potential trajectory of an illness to better guide support, intervention and service design. It has been implemented in a number of headspace services across the country.

**Project Synergy – transforming healthcare services**
We are using new online technologies to develop highly specialised programs for people with mental health problems. Together with the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre and supported by the federal Department of Health, we have developed Project Synergy; an innovative e-mental health ecosystem of care for young people. This incorporates a range of complementary apps and web-based interventions to manage wellbeing and mental health. It uses data collected through digital technologies to promote help-seeking behaviours and, if necessary, facilitate clinical care and engagement with online and face-to-face clinical services.

**Early success – trialling Project Synergy in Sydney**
We have successfully trialled the Synergy platform in five headspace centres across Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network (CESPHN). Young people completed a comprehensive online assessment before entering headspace and Synergy allowed young people and services to see the same health summary information. This resulted in faster detection of suicide risk, quicker access to care, and more accurate treatment planning and allocation of clinical care resources to match the needs of the young person.

Through a participatory design process, clinicians also identified clinical education needs, resulting in training workshops being conducted by researchers to improve service quality and consistency.

**Brain and Mind Youth Platform**
We are developing novel clinical assessment and longitudinal tracking tools using new and emerging technologies to detail psychological, cognitive, social and medical characteristics of depression and plan individualised and effective long-term interventions. The package of tools is referred to as the Brain and Mind Youth Platform and is supported by the Future Generation Global Investment Company (FGG).

Subscription to the Platform allows access to the same level of detailed clinical assessment and tracking techniques as those currently available only at Brain and Mind Centre. This access to specialist care gives young people the greatest opportunity of achieving recovery from clinical depression.

**Wellbeing@Work**
Led by Professor Nick Glozier from Brain and Mind Centre and researchers at the University of New South Wales, the Wellbeing@Work project, funded by beyondblue, examines how we can use technology to improve wellbeing in the workforce. To do this, we have developed algorithms to assess mental health risk, created online manager training resources, and built a 30 day mental health and wellbeing prevention program.

The project has involved thousands of participants from workplaces including Australia Post, Fortescue Mining, Dairy Farmers and more.
Clinical trials

Longitudinal Twin Study

We are leading a large, long-term prospective study of adolescent twins. The project, titled Can We Predict Who Will Develop Major Mental Disorders: A Long-term Study of Adolescent Twins, funded by the NHMRC, tracks real-time developmental trajectories of the onset of anxiety and mood, psychotic, or substance misuse disorders through adolescence and young adulthood. Now at the 20-year reassessment mark, the study will determine the extent to which neurobiological and genetic markers can predict outcomes, to help inform the development of novel prevention or early intervention strategies.

The Fish Oil Youth Depression Study

This team established and conducted the first two sites of The Fish Oil Youth Depression Study: a Randomised, Double Blind, Placebo-Controlled Treatment Trial. The NHMRC-funded randomised controlled trial of omega-3 fish oil in young people with major depression ran at headspace Camperdown and headspace Campbelltown.

In December 2016, we completed data collection on 95 patients. The trial is ongoing until 2018 and will run at four other sites in Perth and Melbourne.

Collaborators: Professors Paul Amminger, Pat McGorry, Alison Yung, Andrew Mackinnon, Michael Berk and Assistant Professor Chris Davey.

Ketamine therapy among patients with treatment-resistant depression

In 2016, researchers from Brain and Mind Centre commenced work on a randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of ketamine therapy among patients with treatment-resistant depression. Funded by an NHMRC project grant, this is the first study of its kind in the world.

In October 2016, the ketamine trial was launched at the Marie Bashir Centre, the first time Brain and Mind Centre research was carried out in conjunction with Sydney Local Health District. The study will trial repeated doses and monitor safety, side effects and implementation issues before treatment is offered to the wider population.

Collaborators: Brain and Mind Centre, UNSW, Monash University, University of Western Sydney (UWS), University of South Australia (UniSA) and Alfred Health.
Youth Mental Health

Key publications


Cluster analysis reveals abnormal hippocampal neurometabolic profiles in young people with mood disorders

Daniel F. Hermens\textsuperscript{a}, Sharon L. Naismith, Kate M. Chitty, Rico S.C. Lee, Ashleigh Tickell, Shantel L. Duffy, Casey Paquola, Django White, Ian B. Hickie, Jim Lagopoulos

Clinical Research Unit, Brain and Mind Research Institute, University of Sydney, Australia

Received 31 October 2014; received in revised form 10 February 2015; accepted 25 February 2015

Abstract

While numerous studies have employed magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS) to determine in vivo neurometabolite levels associated with mood disorders, the findings in both unipolar depression and bipolar disorder have been mixed. Data-driven studies may shed new light on these neurometabolites. These abnormally increased (clusters 1, 2) or normal (cluster 4) or abnormally decreased (cluster 3) in analyses derived four subgroups of patients who were distinguished by all three metabolites. Treatment patterns and short-term outcomes in an early-intervention youth mental health service. Early Intervention in Psychiatry, 10: 88–97.

Keywords: -inositol, Neuropsychopharmacology, neurometabolic profiles, abnormal hippocampal


Researcher spotlight

Ben Trist, PhD student

Ben Trist, a PhD student at Brain and Mind Centre, is investigating the effects of decreasing levels of copper in the brains of patients with Parkinson's disease. In 2016, he won Parkinson's NSW Young Researcher of the Year Award.

Ben’s interest in Parkinson’s disease partly derives from his first-hand experience of the disease; his grandfather suffered from it. However, it also stems from the influence of his supervisor, Associate Professor Kay Double, who encouraged him to pursue this fascinating area of study. “I have always had an interest in the ageing process and how this process can be determined by an individual’s genetic information, but more intriguingly, by their experiences and lifestyle,” says Ben.

“I think my award is testament to the importance of the work we as a team are carrying out, and shows that our long hours and hard work are producing results that the scientific community and general public perceive as significant,” he adds. “On a more personal level, it has given me a boost of confidence in my abilities as a researcher.”

Since commencing with Brain and Mind Centre in 2015, Ben’s PhD candidature has progressed smoothly. “The Centre’s laboratory and administration facilities have enabled me to mature as a research scientist,” he says. “In particular, the microscopy facilities have allowed me to advance my work on human brain tissue pathology, owing largely to the expertise and technical support of Dr Michael Kuligowski.”

Ben Trist, PhD student.

“...I have always had an interest in the ageing process and how this process can be determined by an individual’s genetic information, but more intriguingly, by their experiences and lifestyle.”
Neuroimmunology

Developing new ways to detect and treat neurological disease.
Autoantibodies are one part of the immune system and are important in many nervous system disorders. In fact, they define certain clinical syndromes. This provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to develop novel diagnostic biomarkers of disease and importantly, develop new and innovative treatments for some of the most debilitating neurological diseases.

Our collective expertise in autoantibody and other biomarker detection, exploration of antibody pathogenicity, neuropathology, imaging and clinical service delivery puts us at the forefront of this research.

Our focus is on identifying and investigating immune and antibody-mediated neurological diseases, including:
- demyelinating diseases such as multiple sclerosis
- motor neurone disease
- psychiatric diseases
- movement disorders
- dementia
- myasthenia gravis and more.

The integration of our basic laboratory research, clinically applied research and health service provision will enable us to readily translate our findings into real world applications.

This research program stems from a collaboration involving a consortium of academics and clinicians from the Westmead Hospital, the Children's Hospital at Westmead, Westmead Institute for Medical Research, Save Sight Institute, Bosch Institute, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and Concord Hospital.
Neuroimmunology
Highlights

The Sydney Research Excellence Initiative

In 2016, the Neuroimmunology team successfully applied to the Sydney Research Excellence Initiative, a new scheme to support Sydney researchers to test new ideas, push disciplinary boundaries and identify ways to scale up research. The project, titled Neuroimmunology and Neuroinflammation: From Biomarker and Pathogenesis to Patient Diagnosis and Improvement of Clinical Outcome, is focused on implementing a neuroimmune service across the University’s campuses to support diagnosis and inform clinical care in patients with suspected neuroimmune disorders. The project focuses on investigating mechanisms of neuroinflammation by identifying and validating novel biomarkers to improve long-term clinical outcomes for patients and their families.

Prizes and awards

Professor Steve Vucic was awarded the Royal Australasian College of Physicians’ Eric Susman Prize and the Australian Academy of Science Gottschalk Medal for his pioneering work to identify mechanisms that underlie motor neurone disease (MND). His research has assisted in the development of new techniques for diagnosing MND, resulting in earlier and more effective interventions.

Associate Professor Michael Barnett was awarded a Sydney Research Accelerator (SOAR) Fellowship to identify and develop new and early biomarkers for multiple sclerosis. Professor Barnett is a leader in multiple sclerosis research and has been instrumental in developing a neuroimaging platform at Brain and Mind Centre.

The SOAR Fellowship provides two years of additional research funding for Professor Barnett to continue his work in detecting and monitoring early signs of multiple sclerosis.

Neurology training

The Australian and New Zealand Association of Neurologists (ANZAN) Neuroimaging and Neuropathology course is an annual training course that has been conducted by Associate Professors Michael Barnett and Michael Buckland for the past four years. Due to its early success, the course is now a compulsory part of advanced neurology training in Australia and New Zealand.

SNAC collaboration

Our collaboration with Sydney Neuroimaging Analysis Centre (SNAC) has continued to publish high impact multiple sclerosis (MS) imaging biomarker research, which translated to clinical trials in 2015. SNAC, in partnership with industry, has sponsored and co-funded a number of our investigator-initiated research studies to assess clinical and neuropsychological outcomes of existing MS treatments. SNAC also provided infrastructure and expertise to support three PhD candidates in 2015–16.
Further MS collaborations

Our dedicated MS clinical trials unit works closely with our multidisciplinary MS Clinic, a 20 year collaboration with MS Limited and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. In 2015, patients of the MS Clinic participated in more than 10 industry Phase 2 to 4 clinical trials or studies and several investigator-initiated studies.

In 2015, our MS clinicians worked with Sydney Local Health District (SLHD) and Medical Safety Systems to develop and trial an automated safety monitoring system for patients treated with alemtuzumab. In mid-2015, the resulting software platform was adopted for clinical use and has been deployed nationwide.

MS Research Australia Brain Bank, co-directed by Associate Professors Michael Barnett and Michael Buckland and funded by MS Research Australia and SLHD, provided characterised donor MS tissue to researchers in both Australia and the United States.
Neuroimmunology
2017 and beyond

Statewide brain autoantibody test referral centre
A key goal of the Neuroimmunology team is to establish a statewide brain autoantibody test referral centre. By pooling together existing expertise and infrastructure from across Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Concord Hospital, Westmead Hospital and Brain and Mind Centre, this collective network of centres will provide patients, clinicians and researchers with a one-stop-shop for neuroimmunology tests.

14th International Congress of Neuroimmunology
The International Society for Neuroimmunology’s 14th International Congress of Neuroimmunology will take place in Brisbane in August 2018. This huge event attracts experts from across the world and will take place in the southern hemisphere for the first time. Brain and Mind Centre’s Neuroimmunology team is heavily involved in organising this conference that will attract a large delegation of experts from across Australia and the world.
Neuroimmunology

Key publications

The Neuroimmunology team was built upon an extensive body of ground-breaking research including a number of seminal papers published in the years leading up to the team’s founding in 2016.

In 2012, our researchers made a seminal discovery of D2R antibody in children with movement and psychiatric disorders:


In 2014, the group discovered a new clinical phenotype in myelin oligodendrocyte glycoprotein (MOG) antibody in demyelinating diseases:


The team also published the largest and most influential paper on the use of rituximab in children with brain inflammation that has seen 75 citations since 2014:


Our MS researchers and clinicians have also been published widely throughout 2015–16:


Student spotlight

Ben Russell, Bachelor of Medical Science (Hons)

Ben Russell graduated in 2016 with a Bachelor of Medical Science (Hons), after completing his final honours project at Brain and Mind Centre. His project, titled: ‘Novel sources of tumour-derived biomarkers: neurosurgical CUSA aspirates as an enriched source of exosomal biomarkers’ won the University Medal for its high marks and outstanding quality.

“My project involved analysing brain tumour material to potentially develop new biomarkers to aid in diagnosis and monitoring of tumour behaviour,” says Ben. “I was able to identify specific molecules found in more lethal tumours, compared to less aggressive ones.”

Ben’s project was supervised by Dr Kim Kaufman, Head of NeuroOncology Biomarker Discovery and Translational Research, and Associate Professor Michael Buckland, Head of the Molecular Neuropathology Program at Brain and Mind Centre and Head of the Department of Neuropathology at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

“Both Michael and Kim were amazing supervisors,” says Ben. “Through Michael we had the ability to go straight to the hospital and change protocols to help collect samples. Kim had all the expertise and know-how when it came to processing and analysing them. If either were just one step further removed, this project wouldn’t have been possible. I think this really validates a lot of what gets said about places like Brain and Mind Centre – the integration of clinical services and research is such an invaluable relationship.”

“Ben Russell, University Medal recipient.”
ForeFront Ageing and Neurodegeneration

At the forefront of research into ageing and neurodegeneration.
Neurodegenerative diseases are becoming increasingly prevalent in our ageing population. They have a devastating impact on those affected and their families and place a huge economic and social impact on our society. Our research groups work together to help reduce this impact by improving the services offered to those affected, enhancing support for carers and offering new hope through clinical trials and the development of novel treatments.

Our research covers most neurodegenerative disorders, including frontotemporal dementia, motor neurone disease, Parkinson’s disease, dementia with Lewy bodies, and Alzheimer’s disease, as well as healthy brain ageing.

Our long-term research aims are to be able to improve and expedite diagnosis and to better understand how neurodegenerative processes work so that we can treat and potentially halt these debilitating diseases.

Our collaborative research program incorporates several research groups and laboratories, all focused on different but interrelated aspects of ageing and neurodegeneration.

The ForeFront Ageing and Neurodegeneration team is committed to discovering early detection methods, identifying new treatments and understanding the underlying mechanisms of neurodegenerative disease.
The Forefront team

ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorders Laboratory, led by Professor Glenda Halliday
Our laboratory studies the origin and development of neurodegenerative dementias and movement disorders. Our focus is on how neurodegeneration manifests when symptoms first show and how this relates to genetic makeup, changes identified in the brain, and blood markers of different pathologies. The aim is to identify and validate biomarkers that could be used in the diagnosis of neurodegenerative diseases and/or for monitoring responses to new classes of drugs for these debilitating disorders.

ForeFront Neurogenetics and Epigenetics Research Group, led by Associate Professor Jonathon Kwok
Our group studies the relationship between genetic changes and features of dementia and related disorders. We also examine lifestyle and epigenetic factors in these diseases. Our research studies genetic variants in specific genes that have been implicated in sporadic and heritable forms of dementia and other neurodegenerative diseases. We focus on understanding how genetic mutations cause or increase the risk of disease to work towards better treatment strategies.

ForeFront Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease Research Group, led by Associate Professor Kay Double
Our research is focused on understanding the cause and neurodegenerative processes in Parkinson’s disease and other movement disorders so that we can better treat and ultimately prevent these conditions. Our laboratory-based research focuses on understanding how degenerative disorders, such as Parkinson’s disease, dementia with Lewy bodies and motor neuron disease, damages brain and nerve cells. We are also researching how we can achieve a slower disease progression and better quality of life for patients. We work to develop better and earlier diagnostic tools and targeted treatment strategies for Parkinson’s disease.

ForeFront Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory, led by Associate Professor Jonathon Kwok
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ForeFront Clinical Parkinson’s Disease and Dementia with Lewy Bodies Research Group, led by Professor Simon Lewis
Our research is dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with Parkinson’s disease, dementia with Lewy bodies and related disorders and ultimately, to finding a cure for these diseases. By working with people affected by parkinsonism, we aim to find ways to predict the disease and to stem its progression. We work closely with other researchers who focus on brain conditions related to Parkinson’s disease. We also collaborate with NeuroSleep, the Centre for Translational Sleep and Circadian Neurobiology, which seeks to better understand the relationship between sleep and a healthy brain.
ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group, led by Professor Matthew Kiernan
We are a multidisciplinary team focused on clinical neurology. We work to understand the mechanisms behind neurodegenerative diseases, develop novel diagnostic tools and trial new treatment strategies. We are currently investigating mechanisms, biomarkers and possible prevention strategies for neurodegeneration in motor neurone disease, frontotemporal dementia, chemotherapy-induced neurotoxicity, stroke, Machado-Joseph disease, spinal muscular atrophy and other inherited neuropathies. We also conduct clinical trials to investigate potential treatments for motor neurone disease, chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy and other disorders.

Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group, led by Professor John Hodges and Associate Professor Olivier Piguet
Frontotemporal dementia is the second most common degenerative disease that causes dementia in younger adults. Our research group is dedicated to identifying better ways to diagnose frontotemporal dementia, finding the cause and developing effective treatments for the condition. Our multidisciplinary research examines the neurological, psychological and biological brain function in frontotemporal dementia, as well as how the disease impacts on the lives of patients and their families.

ForeFront Healthy Brain Ageing Program, led by Professor Sharon Naismith
We aim to determine whether changes in vascular risk factors, mood, sleep and lifestyle can effectively reduce cognitive decline, symptoms of depression and dementia-related brain changes in later life. Our research targets modifiable risk factors by providing early identification, intervention and prevention programs for people at risk for dementia. We evaluate clinical interventions including brain training programs, group-based psychoeducation programs to improve sleep disturbance, home-based exercise programs for people with early-stage dementia, and the development of internet-based tools to improve health and wellbeing, reduce depression and minimise vascular risk factors in older adults.

Patient at the Healthy Brain Ageing Clinic with Professor Sharon Naismith (right).
ForeFront Ageing and Neurodegeneration
Highlights

Welcoming a world-leading team

In 2016 Professors Glenda Halliday, John Hodges and Associate Professor Olivier Piguet joined the Brain and Mind Centre, along with their significant team of researchers.

As long-term collaborators, joining forces with our pre-existing translational research teams at the Brain and Mind Centre has provided significant opportunities for advancing research into these highly debilitating disorders.

We welcome their internationally-renowned program of research, focused on developing treatments for dementia and other neurodegenerative diseases.
The ForeFront Ageing and Neurodegeneration team was highly successful in the 2015 NHMRC-ARC Dementia Research Development Fellowships. Eleven outstanding researchers in our team were awarded fellowships.

These were:
- Dr Camillo Hoyos: sleep-wake disturbances and cardio-metabolic dysfunction in at-risk dementia: a novel pathway in neurocognitive decline.
- Dr Shantel Duffy: neuroimaging insights into sleep-wake dysfunction in older adults at risk of developing dementia.
- Dr Angela D’Rozario: sleep, plasticity and neurodegeneration: targeting sleep to improve cognition in mild cognitive impairment (MCI).
- Dr Loren Mowszowski: cognitive interventions for older adults at risk of dementia and with early-stage neurodegenerative disease.
- Dr Sharpley Hsieh: cognition in motion: characterisation and evolution of cognitive dysfunction in motor neurodegeneration and frontotemporal dementia.
- Dr Fiona Kumfor: identifying novel markers to differentiate frontotemporal dementia from Alzheimer’s disease.
- Dr Cristian Leyton-Moscoso: disentangling aphasic syndromes in Alzheimer’s disease.
- Dr Sivaraman Purushothuman: Lewy bodies in patients with dementia – determining common and unique mechanisms in relation to Alzheimer’s disease.
- Dr Surabhi Bhatia: role of apolipoprotein D in Alzheimer’s disease and frontotemporal dementia.
- Professor Simon Lewis: predicting dementia and Parkinson’s disease in the clinic.
- Dr Rachel Tan: dual and multiple proteinopathies in neurodegenerative dementias – risk factors, prognostic indicators and clinical ramifications.
- Dr Rebekah Ahmed received an NHMRC Early-Career Fellowship in 2016, titled Characterisation of Eating Behaviour and Metabolic Phenotypes Across Neurodegenerative Diseases; Insights for Survival and Progression.

In 2016, Professor Glenda Halliday led a successful $17 million NHMRC Program Grant titled Frontotemporal Dementia and Motor Neurodegenerative Syndromes. Frontotemporal degeneration of the brain is a leading cause of morbidity due to a pathologically heterogeneous, rapidly-progressing group of disorders with behavioural, language and motor deficits.

With this program grant, Professor Halliday’s internationally recognised team will continue to develop the necessary tools and therapies to effectively diagnose, manage and treat these disorders, with a particular focus on understanding the unusual genetics underpinning them and fast-tracking any potential treatments.
Woolcock NeuroSleep Clinic

The Woolcock NeuroSleep Clinic was established at Brain and Mind Centre in 2016 to advance collaborative research in translational sleep and circadian neurobiology. NeuroSleep is focused on improving cognition, workplace safety and health outcomes in patients with sleep concerns including shift workers, patients with sleep disorders, neurodegenerative diseases, and/or mental health problems.

The establishment of the Neurosleep Clinic was the result of our collaborations with the Woolcock Institute and a $2.5 million NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence grant in 2014 for NeuroSleep: Centre for Translational Sleep and Circadian Neurobiology.

Awards and promotions

The following team members received awards in recognition of research excellence in 2016:

- **Professor Simon Lewis**: in recognition of his cutting-edge research and excellence in teaching, Simon was promoted to Professor of Cognitive Neurology at Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney.
- **Professor Matthew Kiernan**: Matthew was awarded the M.J. Eadie Award for Career Achievement in Neuroscience.
- **Dr Rebekah Ahmed**: Rebekah was awarded the James Lance Young Investigator Award from the Australian and New Zealand Association of Neurology and the Susie Harris Travelling Fellowship from the Motor Neurone Disease Research Institute of Australia.
- **Professor Carolyn Sue**: Carolyn was awarded the Australian Mitochondrial Disease Foundation Community Award, as head of ForeFront Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease Research Group.
- **Dr Brianada Koentjoro**: Brianada was awarded the Presidential Award by the International Movement Disorder Society in Berlin, for his research on Parkinson’s disease, as part of ForeFront Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease Research Group.
- **Benjamin Trist**: a PhD student from the Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory, Benjamin was named as Parkinson’s New South Wales Young Researcher of the Year, for his work on a new protein abnormality in the Parkinson’s disease brain.

Community and industry appointments

In 2016, Professor Matthew Kiernan was elected President of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Neurologists (ANZAN).

Associate Professor Kay Double was re-elected to the position of Executive Secretary of the Australasian Neuroscience Society in 2016, the peak professional body for neuroscience research in Australia and New Zealand. She was also elected Chair of the Parkinson’s New South Wales Advisory Group, a group of researchers and clinicians who provide expert advice on Parkinson’s disease to Parkinson’s New South Wales.

Professor Carolyn Sue became the only Australian to join the Wellcome Trust Centres of Excellence Review Panel in the United Kingdom, a philanthropic body providing funding to 14,000 scientists worldwide.

Education

For the past two years, Professor Simon Lewis has delivered a highly successful teaching course, titled *Masterclass: Diseases of the Ageing Brain*. The course provides training to geriatricians, general practitioners, physicians, allied health workers, nurses and other healthcare providers in Australia and overseas, on the practical clinical aspects of common diseases affecting the ageing brain, including:

- Alzheimer’s disease
- Lewy body dementia
- Parkinson’s disease
- stroke.
Members of our team received the following research grants:

**Research grants awarded**

A selective prevention trial using novel pharmacotherapies in an older age cohort at risk for depression  
*Led by*: Naismith, S.L., Christensen, H. and Hickie, I.B.  
**Granting body**: NHMRC  
**Project Grant**  
**Years**: 2014–16*  
*extended to 2017*

NeuroSleep: the Centre for Translational Sleep and Circadian Neurobiology  
**Granting body**: NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence  
**Years**: 2014–18  
**Amount**: $2,496,739

Modifying the trajectory of insidious late life cognitive decline using computerised cognitive training  
*Led by*: Valenzuela, M. and Naismith, S.L.  
**Granting body**: NHMRC  
**Project Grant**  
**Years**: 2015–18  

ARTFUL: a program for people living with dementia  
*Led by*: Museum of Contemporary Art (Filopovic, Y.), Naismith, S.L. and Alzheimer’s Australia.  
**Granting body**: Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation  
**Years**: 2015–17  
**Amount**: $220,000

Brain oxidative stress and cognitive function in older adults with diabetes and pre-diabetes who are ‘at risk’ of dementia  
*Led by*: Hoyos, C., Naismith, S.L., Colagiuri, S. and Duffy S.  
**Granting body**: Diabetes Australia  
**Year**: 2017  
**Amount**: $59,902

PRT MEDIC: Progressive Resistance Training for Metabolic Syndrome and Depression Integrated Care: a randomised controlled trial  
**Granting body**: Diabetes Australia  
**Year**: 2017  
**Amount**: $59,837
Investigating the utility of oxidative stress as a biomarker for cognitive decline and dementia: a longitudinal magnetic resonance imaging study in ‘at risk’ older adults and Alzheimer’s disease
Led by: Duffy, S. and Naismith, S.L.
Granting body: Mason Foundation
National Medical Program
Year: 2016
Amount: $59,672.55

HOMEeCare: caring for the dementia caregiver and their loved one via the HOMEeCare exercise and mindfulness for health program
Granting body: Dementia Collaborative Research Centres
Year: 2016
Amount: $99,856.09

Assessing sleep-wake cycles in paediatric traumatic brain injury using actigraphy
Led by: Lah, S. and Naismith, S.L.
Granting body: School of Psychology Research Infrastructure Block Grant, University of Sydney
Year: 2016
Amount: $10,845

Evaluation of a 12-week combined psychoeducation and home-based exercise program on mood and wellbeing in older adults with early Alzheimer’s disease
Granting body: Alzheimer’s Australia Dementia Research Funds
Year: 2015
Amount: $50,000

A therapeutic intervention in Alzheimer’s disease intranasal oxytocin administration to enhance emotion processing and reduce caregiver burden
Led by: McCade, D., Naismith, S.L. and Guastella, A.
Granting body: Alzheimer’s Australia Dementia Research Funds
Year: 2015
Amount: $50,000

Does the use of intranasal oxytocin improve emotional functioning and reduce carer burden in Alzheimer’s disease?
Led by: Naismith, S.L., McCade, D. and Guastella, A.
Granting body: ANZ Trustees
Mason Foundation
Year: 2015
Amount: $59,300

Utilising novel biomarkers to develop predictors of neurodegeneration
Granting body: Sydney Research Excellence Initiative (SREI)
Year: 2017–2019
Amount: $150,000

A randomised controlled trial of an enriched environment intervention to improve sleep and cognitive outcomes in older adults at risk from dementia
Led by: Anderson, C., Naismith, S.L., Rajaratnam, S.W. and Cain, S.W.
Granting body: The Mason Foundation
Years: 2015
Amount: $35,000
We are committed to the early detection of and developing treatments for neurodegenerative diseases to understand their underlying disease mechanisms. Our goal for 2017 is to work cohesively in our new home at Brain and Mind Centre, in order to establish new clinics for people with neurodegenerative diseases, conduct new trials of potential therapies, discover new ways of measuring the success of these trials and to continue work on determining disease mechanisms to target in future treatments.
ForeFront Ageing and Neurodegeneration
Key projects and clinical trials

Key research projects

Nodal function in peripheral neuroinflammatory disorders target antigens, functional significance and treatment response.
Collaborators: Professor Matthew Kiernan, Dr Nidhi Garg, Dr Susanna Park, Professor John Pollard, Dr Emily Mathey and Professor Steve Vucic
Funding body: National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)

Defining Lewy Body dementia
This research resulted in the publication of new diagnostic criteria for the diagnosis and management of dementia with Lewy bodies, published in highly cited journal Neurology. It was also the fourth consensus report of the Dementia with Lewy Body Diagnosis consortium.
Collaborators: Dementia with Lewy Body Diagnosis Consortium (including Professor Glenda Halliday)

Validation of the Movement Disorders Society Parkinson’s disease diagnostic criteria
Brain and Mind Centre was the only site in the southern hemisphere to take part in the validation of the newly proposed diagnostic criteria for Parkinson’s disease.
Collaborators: Ron Postuma (Montreal) and Daniela Berg (Kiel)
Funding body: Michael J Fox Foundation and the International Movement Disorders Society

Clinical trials

A randomised, cross-over study to evaluate efficacy and tolerability of FLX-787 in patients with motor neurone disease
This clinical trial is investigating spasticity and cramps in patients with motor neurone disease.
Collaborators: Professor Matthew Kiernan, Dr Susan Mathers, Dr Robert Henderson, Neuroscience Trials Australia and Thomas Wessel, Flex-Pharma
Funding body: Flex-pharma

Project MinE
Collaborators: Professor Leonard van den Berg and Professor Matthew Kiernan
Funding bodies: Motor Neurone Disease Research Institute of Australia, ALS Centrum Nederland and ALS Nederland

The Lighthouse Project
Collaborators: Professor Matthew Kiernan, Professor Julian Gold, Professor Dominic Rowe, Professor Steve Vucic, Dr Susan Mathers and Professor Paul Talman
Funding body: Cure for MND Foundation and Australian MND Association Research Institute of Australia (MNDRIA)

A new pathology in the Parkinson’s disease brain
Collaborators: Brain and Mind Centre, University of Bordeaux (France), King’s College London (United Kingdom), Neuroscience Research Australia (Sydney) and University of Technology Sydney (UTS)
Funding body: Parkinson’s NSW
ForeFront Ageing and Neurodegeneration

Key publications

The ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group


The Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory


The Clinical Parkinson’s Disease and Dementia with Lewy Bodies Research Group


The Healthy Brain Ageing Program


The Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease Research Group


The Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics

- 

Alleviating human suffering with medicinal cannabis.
The Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics

Our core business

The Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics was founded in 2015, thanks to an unprecedented pledge of $33.7 million to the University by Barry and Joy Lambert – the largest single gift in the history of the University of Sydney. The Lambert Initiative, based at Brain and Mind Centre, is a long-term research program exploring the medicinal potential of the cannabis plant.

Our vision is to conduct the high quality research required to discover, develop and optimise safe and effective cannabinoid therapeutics in Australia and beyond.

The Lambert Initiative provides national and international leadership in the science of medicinal cannabinoids and in the discovery and development of cannabis-based medicines. Our activities span a wide spectrum of basic science and clinical activities, from plant science, cellular and preclinical pharmacology, to medicinal chemistry and drug discovery, with the ultimate goal of producing cannabinoid-based medicines and ensuring their availability to patients.

Advocacy and education

In parallel with our scientific endeavours, the Lambert Initiative also acts in an advocacy and educational capacity, providing synthesis of evidence and guidance for clinicians, targeting consumers, health professionals and politicians and influencing regulatory approaches and public health policy.

For many patients and families, the future of medicinal cannabis is one of hope: hope that legislation will change to make medical cannabis and future cannabinoid drugs more accessible. Hope that attitudes change to encourage practitioners to prescribe medicinal cannabis. A key aspect of the Lambert Initiative’s vision is to provide tangible scientific evidence to help translate hope into reality.
The Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics

Highlights

In our first year of operation, we established a state-of-the-art research facility at Brain and Mind Centre and have recruited quality national and international researchers to the team.

In addition, we have:

- established multidisciplinary collaboration to support our research
- established a supply of purified cannabinoids from industrial hemp and organic syntheses
- discovered novel therapeutic indications for some cannabinoids and novel modes of action
- made important translational discoveries that deepen our understanding of the efficacy of cannabinoid therapeutics
- used scientific expertise and evidence to influence the regulatory landscape.

The PELICAN study

The PELICAN study, launched in July 2015, gives a voice to families living with epilepsy, to share their experiences of wanting to use cannabis to treat seizures. The study involves interviews with parents and the collection and chemical analysis of oils and extracts already being used in the community, to link the cannabinoid content to its therapeutic effects. Parents have the option of finding out the results of the analysis and are provided with education on the cannabis plant, its constituents, and current clinical safety data.

The PELICAN study has the potential to provide better understanding of the cannabinoid components that provide these therapeutic effects, which may lead to novel medications that could prove extremely effective.

Survey into cannabis use for epilepsy management

Published in *Epilepsy & Behaviour*, the Epilepsy Action Australia study, in partnership with the Lambert Initiative, surveyed 976 respondents to examine cannabis use in people with epilepsy, their reasons for using cannabis and any perceived benefits self-reported by consumers (or their carers).

The survey revealed that 14 percent of people with epilepsy have used cannabis products as a way to manage seizures. The study also showed that of those with a history of cannabis product use, 90 percent of adults and 71 percent of parents of children with epilepsy reported success in managing seizures after using cannabis products.

Across all respondents, the main reasons for trying cannabis products were to manage treatment-resistant epilepsy and to reduce side effects compared to standard antiepileptic drugs. The number of past antiepileptic drugs used was a significant predictor of medicinal cannabis use in both adults and children with epilepsy.
Medical cannabis trial for chemotherapy patients

A clinical trial using a new form of cannabis developed by our researchers is assessing the use of the drug to prevent nausea and vomiting in people undergoing chemotherapy.

The trial is part of the NSW Government’s $21 million commitment to support medicinal cannabis reforms. It will be coordinated at the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre and aims to develop a better understanding of how cannabis products can provide relief to patients undergoing chemotherapy who have not had their symptoms controlled by standard treatments.

This trial represents a major advance for cannabis-based medications. It’s an oral capsule of reliable doses of cannabinoids extracted from cannabis plants, under pharmaceutical grade conditions.

Cannabinoid replacement drug trial to help cannabis smokers quit

This pioneering study builds on our team’s previous work, which demonstrated that Sativex® suppressed cannabis withdrawal symptoms in an inpatient setting.

If the trial of Sativex® proves effective, it could be a promising breakthrough in the treatment of cannabis dependence, which affects one in ten users. Cannabis dependence can contribute to an array of health problems, including cognitive, psychiatric, cardiovascular and respiratory disorders.

Existing treatments for cannabis dependence have had only modest success. Current best practice counselling approaches, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), have a 70 to 80 percent relapse rate within six months. Treatments for acute cannabis withdrawal have similar relapse rates.

As with treatment of many other addictions, our team is keen to examine the effects of combining counselling with medication, an approach proven to be more effective than using either approach in isolation.

Awards

Dr Michael Bowen from Brain and Mind Centre’s Lambert Initiative, was awarded the Eureka Prize for Outstanding Early-Career Researcher on 1 September 2016. The prestigious Eureka Prize rewards excellence in the fields of scientific research and innovation, science leadership, school science, and science journalism and communication.

Dr Bowen’s award recognised his work on discovering and developing novel treatments for serious brain disorders. He has established that oxytocin and novel molecules that target the brain’s oxytocin system are effective treatments for alcohol-use disorders, substance-use disorders and social disorders.

Dr Bowen has demonstrated that exogenously administered oxytocin is able to powerfully inhibit alcohol consumption. He has also shown that oxytocin blocks alcohol’s ability to act as key addiction pathways in the brain. He is currently involved in a phase II clinical trial to translate these effects on humans.

Dr Bowen is also one of the lead inventors of a series of small molecules that powerfully stimulate the brain oxytocin system, overcoming some of the limitations of administering oxytocin. Clinical trials to test one of these molecules in humans is underway.
The Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics 2017 and beyond

Cannabinoid researchers join forces

In May 2017, the University of Sydney and Thomas Jefferson University (TJU) in Philadelphia, USA agreed to collaborate on education and research on the therapeutic uses of cannabinoids. Both universities have dedicated centres, supported by the generous funding of the Lambert family, to conduct their work on medicinal cannabis.

This is an exciting opportunity for research collaboration to identify novel cannabis-derived treatments for epilepsy, pain and metabolic disorders.

The recent launch of the Lambert Center for the Study of Medicinal Cannabis and Hemp within the Institute for Emerging Health Professions adds to TJU’s healthcare and medical research focus.

The two Lambert research centres will explore collaborations in:
- clinical trials of extracts of cannabis plants as adjuncts or alternatives to conventional prescription medications in treating and preventing disease
- academic exchange to facilitate the training of scientists and clinicians in the cannabinoid scientific space
- educational programs for physicians, other medical professionals and the public.
The Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics

Key publications


Technical Facilities

State of the art research and clinical facilities.
Technical Facilities
Our core business

Brain and Mind Centre fosters an environment that supports world leaders in mental health, neuroscience and neurology. Our researchers are supported by strong research capabilities, underpinned by a network of shared research facilities in imaging, neuropathology, microscopy and a neurology laboratory.
Imaging

Our state-of-the-art imaging facilities span preclinical and clinical imaging, as well as the Sydney Neuroimaging Analysis Centre.

Preclinical imaging
Brain and Mind Centre is home to the University of Sydney and ANSTO Node of the Australian National Imaging Facility. This shared facility provides researchers with access to state-of-the-art imaging capabilities for research. The preclinical imaging platform includes micro-PET, PET-CT, PET/SPECT/CT and 3T MRI scanners as well as autoradiography, radio-metabolite analysis and tissue counting facilities.

Our imaging researchers are focused on developing new technologies for non-invasive imaging and imaging biomarker development. We collaborate with many researchers, both at Brain and Mind Centre and overseas, to develop new imaging methods and test new drugs and interventions for various brain disorders, including neurodegenerative diseases, mood disorders and cancer.

Our imaging scientists have an outstanding track record in preclinical imaging innovation, developing novel technologies for the advancement of neuroimaging research and understanding of disease processes.

Clinical imaging
Southern Radiology is a leading provider of radiological services in Sydney, operating a network of radiology practices across the city, including an imaging research facility at Brain and Mind Centre. This facility houses a state-of-the-art 3 Tesla Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scanner, capable of running structural, diffusion, functional and spectroscopic imaging for research as well as for patient care.

Through our collaboration with Southern Radiology, Brain and Mind Centre researchers have developed a sophisticated multinuclear spectroscopy program that provides the ability to image a range of spectroscopic nuclei. The technique, known as magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS), is used to study the metabolic changes associated with diseases that affect the brain. It also provides additional information on top of the structural information that is obtained from MRI alone.

Our researchers are studying the changes that occur in the brain as a result of a particular disease, which may ultimately be helpful in the clinical diagnosis and treatment of these diseases.

Sydney Neuroimaging Analysis Centre
Also housed at Brain and Mind Centre’s Mallett Street campus is the Sydney Neuroimaging Analysis Centre, a cutting-edge facility that uniquely integrates in-house neuroimaging research with a dedicated, regulatory-compliant commercial image analysis facility for Phase 2, 3 and 4 clinical research trials.
Neuropathology

Our extensive expertise in neuropathology allows us to analyse the molecular and cellular basis of neurological diseases, including brain tumours and neurodegenerative conditions.

In doing so, we can identify new ways of diagnosing these disorders when the disease first manifests, allowing patients to benefit from the most effective interventions available, as early as possible. By increasing our knowledge of the underlying basis of these diseases, we can help progress the development of new and more effective treatments.

We are working on developing novel blood tests that enable early detection of major diseases, including brain tumours and multiple sclerosis. We are also investigating brain tumour tissue to learn more about its complex genetic makeup and how brain tumours manipulate their surroundings in order to grow.

Our neuropathology research program is part of the Royal Prince Alfred Department of Neuropathology: the only neuropathology department in New South Wales that provides specialist diagnostic expertise, including:

- tissue-based diagnostic services for the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
- a second opinion service for complex cases from across NSW and overseas
- molecular testing services for brain tumours
- NSW state referral laboratory for Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease (CJD) diagnosis
- autopsy neuropathology
- muscle biopsy pathology.

Microscopy

Brain and Mind Centre’s microscopy facilities provide researchers with access to sophisticated technology to observe diseases of the brain and mind at a micro level.

The microscopy facility based at Brain and Mind Centre forms part of Sydney Microscopy and Microanalysis (SMM), the University of Sydney’s largest core facility run by the Australian Centre for Microscopy and Microanalysis. This cross-disciplinary research centre is one of the most comprehensive microscopy centres in the world, with world-class instrumentation and technical expertise available for all researchers.

In early 2017, the microscopy core facility was rolled into the University’s core facility: Sydney Microscopy and Microanalysis (SMM). This gives us access to a combined facility management booking system that allows users to seamlessly book any microscopy platform across Brain and Mind Centre, Madsen and the Charles Perkins Centre.

Neurology Laboratory

Brain and Mind Centre’s Neurology Laboratory is Australia’s first specialised neuromuscular pathology unit. We are one of the world’s leading centres for diagnosis and research into nerve and muscle diseases.

The Neurology Laboratory, a collaboration between the University of Sydney and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, is a state reference laboratory for peripheral nerve and muscle histopathology (NATA/RCPA Accreditation Number 2146). Established in the late 1960s, the laboratory was the first specialised neuromuscular pathology unit in Australia. We remain one of the world’s leading centres for diagnosis and research into diseases of nerve and muscle.

The laboratory holds one of the largest curated nerve archives in the world. This repository is an invaluable resource for research and teaching across brain and mind sciences. The laboratory has produced more than 300 original research publications and trained numerous PhD and other higher degree students.
Technical Facilities

Highlights

In December 2016 the microscopy team were awarded a research portfolio SHINE award from the University of Sydney, recognising their outstanding commitment to partnering with the research community as well as the wider University.

Research grants awarded in 2017

A system for simultaneous brain PET and behavioural measurements in freely moving mice
Led by: Meikle, S.
Granting body: DVC Research/ Bridging Support Grant
Years: 2017
Amount: $30,000

Total-body PET technology and methods for biological systems research in metabolic disorders and mental illness
Led by: Meikle, S.R. and Cherry, S.R.
Granting body: University of Sydney – University of California, Davis Priority Partnership Collaboration Awards Program 2017
Years: 2017
Amount: $40,000

Research grants awarded in 2016

National Imaging Facility (NIF) UNSW Nodes
Led by: Meikle, S.
Granting body: NSW Department of Industry/Research Attraction and Acceleration Program
Years: 2016–19
Amount: $810,000

A novel scintillating optical fibre array for cancer imaging and therapy
Granting body: Australian Research Council (ARC)/Linkage Projects (LP)
Years: 2015–18
Amount: $288,170

PET imaging of learning-related plasticity in awake behaving rats
Led by: Balleine, B., Meikle, S. and Fulton, R.
Granting body: Australian Research Council (ARC)/ Discovery Projects (DP)
Years: 2016–20
Amount: $995,000
Imaging research

Imaging brain behaviour
In 2015–16, our team used a new technique for the first time in the real world. This technique, which we have developed over the past 10 years, enabled us to undertake positron emission tomography (PET) brain imaging on animals while they were conscious and freely moving. This means we can study how the brain responds to its environment, what chemical changes take place during certain behaviours and how this affects disease.

In 2015–16, we collaborated with researchers at the University of New South Wales to use this new imaging technique to understand the role of dopamine in learning-related plasticity.

Total-body PET technology and methods for biological systems research in metabolic disorders and mental illness
While PET can probe the metabolic and signalling pathways underlying chronic disease processes, the key questions in mental illness and diabetes cannot be addressed using single organ imaging. This proposal brings the research teams at the University of California, Davis and the University of Sydney together to develop completely new quantitative whole body PET imaging approaches to study chronic diseases.

Collaborator: Professor Simon Cherry, University of California, Davis.
Funding body: University of Sydney – University of California, Davis Priority Partnership Collaboration Awards Program.

Neuropathology research

A state-wide centre for forensic pathology
In June 2015, Brain and Mind Centre’s neuropathology service became a state-wide forensic pathology service, making us the largest centre for brain autopsy examination in New South Wales.

This NSW Health recognition consolidates us as a national centre for expertise alongside NSW Health Pathology and Sydney Local Health District.

Next generation sequencing
In 2016, we acquired a new deep sequencer (next generation sequencing technology) to diagnose and research diseases of the brain and mind. We can sequence 80 million strands of DNA at the same time. This means that we can research much more tailored drug therapies. For example, we can now profile a person’s brain tumour to assess them for tailored drug targets and therefore provide patients with more treatment options.

Susannah Hallal, Dr Maggie Lee, Dr Kim Kaufman and Associate Professor Michael Buckland (left to right).
A centralised laboratory

A new centralised laboratory will allow microscopy equipment to be consolidated from across Brain and Mind Centre, to allow better service and guidance from the microscopy technicians.

The laboratory will house all the microscopy systems that are currently managed by SMM, as well as a newly acquired slide scanner, new analysis computers and new fluorescence microscopes. The facility will also be home to two new confocal systems, which were acquired as part of a NHMRC / University of Sydney grant by Professor Glenda Halliday. One of these systems is optimised for multiparameter fluorescence analysis of slides, while the other is configured for the time-lapse or real time observation of live cells and tissues in culture.
Technical Facilities

Key publications


Professor Iain McGregor (left) and Associate Professor David Allsop.
Our focus on translating research into real outcomes that improve patient care and treatments sets us apart from other institutions. As the multidisciplinary home for mental health and neuroscience at the University of Sydney, we are part of an institution with a proven track record of research excellence, which benefits communities near and far. In fact, the University of Sydney is number one in Australia for research impact, according to the 2017 CWTS Leiden Rankings.

Our transformative work would not be possible without philanthropy. In a climate where it has never been more difficult to secure competitive grant funding for our researchers, philanthropy has allowed our innovative research to thrive and importantly, helped to support the future generation of scientific leaders; early-career researchers.

When it comes to philanthropy, the impact our donors have on advancing mental health and neuroscience research is very significant. 100 per cent of donations received go directly to funding innovative research that may otherwise not be supported through traditional grant streams.

Unprecedented and monumental donations such as the Lambert Initiative are incredible, but understandably rare. More often, donations support the appointment of specific research staff, enabling us to attract the best talent from across Australia and the world. Over the last two years, we have received more than $6 million in donations to support research, scholarships and services across child development and behaviour, youth mental health and addiction, and ageing and neurodegeneration.

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Supporting Early-Career Researchers

Philanthropy is vital to funding our Early-Career Researchers (ECRs). ECRs in the field of mental health and neuroscience often struggle to gain the vital research experience necessary to win grant funding.

A philanthropic gift allows ECRs to continue to work in their chosen field without having to turn to other research areas where grant funding is perhaps more easily available. By supporting career progression and translational research, we ensure the best talent is attracted to this field and is advancing research our donors care deeply about.

The Bluesand Foundation Scholarship in Alzheimer’s disease, for example, will provide $360,000 to support an ECR as a research fellow for the next three years to undertake translational research in this critical area.

Donations fund our ECRs’ work across all areas. The Adolf Blasser Charitable Trust has contributed $240,000, enabling Joanne Carpenter to transition from PhD student to research fellow.

“The generous support of the Adolf Basser charitable trust has allowed me to commence a post-doctoral position following the completion of my PhD and to continue building on my previous research without stopping to look for other funding opportunities,” says Joanne. “This has meant I am able to continue in my area of interest and expertise, and I can focus on extending this important research to provide a deeper understanding of the role of the body clock in mood disorders.”

The Johnston Fellowship has also supported work in emerging mood disorders by investigating hormonal therapy and hormonal development in young women. This Fellowship was established in 2014 for two years and was recently renewed for an additional three years, representing an overall contribution of $625,000.

“My family and I consider the work The University of Sydney’s Brain and Mind Centre does to be of great importance in understanding causes and formulating treatment strategies in the area of mental health,” says Mr. Johnston. “Its contribution to improving mental health will have a significant impact on outcomes for those affected and the broader community. We understand first-hand the impact hormonal related depression can have and how important it is to advance knowledge and services in this area. Through the Johnston Fellowship we hope to also encourage more promising researchers and clinicians to pursue this important area, helping further develop the Brain and Mind Centre to achieve all it can in serving future generations.”

“Bluesand Foundation has long supported Alzheimer’s research and we were motivated by both personal experience and our confidence in the University’s ability to conduct this important research. We are excited by the work the Brain and Mind Centre is now leading and are pleased to be supporting the next generation of research leaders in this field, who will be critical to advancing this research and making significant breakthroughs.”

Bluesand Foundation
High impact philanthropy

One of the largest philanthropic donations over the last two years has come from a private family to establish the Kam Ling Barbara Lo Chair in Neurodegenerative Disorders. This $1.5 million commitment will help to establish a new Chair in translational research for the next five years. A Chair is the pinnacle of research, and is the most effective way of transforming research and its culture, as Professor Matthew Kiernan, the current Bushell Chair of Neurology, has done so effectively. “Philanthropic donations are vital at every level. From supporting a PhD student to fully funding a Chair position, these gifts allow us to continue our work but also to expand into areas of new focus and attract the best talent to be able to do this,” says Professor Kiernan.

“Our move to a more interdisciplinary method of working will place more focus on examining the links and similarities between neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson’s and Motor Neurone Disease and will significantly contribute to our already important work in ageing and neurodegeneration.”

The appointment of the Kam Ling Barbara Lo Chair and a team specifically focused in this direction will allow for a significant increase in the Brain and Mind Centre’s combined efforts to combat disorders of the brain and mind by generating high impact research that translates into improving patient outcomes.

“This new chair, generously funded for the next five years, will enable the Centre to double down on its efforts in finding effective treatments for diseases such as Parkinson’s and Motor Neurone Disease, as well as bring a more strategic approach to the research.”

Professor Matthew Kiernan
Bushell Chair of Neurology
Measuring impact, working for outcomes

There has never been a more promising time to support mental health and neuroscience research. The advancements that will emerge in this field over the next five to ten years in particular will transform knowledge and practice and ultimately help to improve outcomes for patients and their families. Philanthropy will remain an essential part of our success and ability to realise these breakthroughs and discoveries.

We deeply value relationships with all supporters and partners who understand the role that high-quality, multidisciplinary and translational research plays alongside clinical services in driving real outcomes. The impact of their support is immeasurable and increasingly pivotal to our success.

To find out more about how you can support our work, please visit sydney.edu.au/brain-mind/donate

Thanks to our donors

The Brain and Mind Centre wishes to thank all of our donors. Your generosity keeps our work possible and together we raised over $6 million in donations June 2015-June 2017.

No gift is too small and we welcome contributions of any size. We wish to particularly thank the following people who donated $1000 or more. Thank you too to all our donors who wish to remain anonymous and to all those who have contributed over the last two years.

ClubsNSW, The Garnett Passe and Rodney Williams, Memorial Foundation, Estate of the Late Christopher J Wood, Mr Michael R Johnston, Bluesand Foundation Pty Ltd, St Vincent’s Private Hospital Sydney, Adolph Basser Charitable Trust, The Mill House Foundation, Future Generation Investment Company, Dr Eleanor Jew, Southern Scene Pty Limited, Mrs Helen Breekveldt, Liberty International Underwriters, Breekveldt Holdings Pty Ltd, Mr Fred Street (AM), Joseph and Clara Vucetic, Harper Bernays Charitable Trust, Parkinson’s Society of the Gold Coast Inc., The Yulgibar Foundation, John and Catherine McCabe, Mrs Rae Cottle, Mr Ian William J wood, Meeting for Minds Charitable Foundation, Dr Jill M Hawker, Cecil and Richard Churm (OBEMs), Michaela Dupont-Louis, Mrs Christine Windeyer, Mr Alastair Griffin, Hunters Hill Quilters, Estate of the late Santiago Vasco, Macquarie Group Foundation, Mr Heath McLaren, Mr Robert Luciano, Parkinsons ACT Incorporated, Mr Craig Whitworth, Mr David E Landa (OAMMs), Debbie and Zac Seidler, Patricia and Grae McKenzie, Mrs Anne Osborne Sullivan, Craig and Suzanne Whitworth, Follow the Seed Australia Pty Ltd, Mrs Cveta Lillyman, University of Sydney Union, ROAM Communities, Ms Elaine Chang, Conversely, Mrs Hilary Marion Cairns, Ms Eleanor Sydney-Jones, Dr Steven K C Lee, Mr Robert Phillips, Dr Marion G Maxwell, Dr Doug Wilkins, Dr Jean Palmer, Ms Mimi Le, Mr Ian Boyd, Ms Lesley Bradley, Mr Robert A Johnston, AC Monte Sant Angelo College, Mr Leslie P Pongrass, Ms Diane Chaffey, Ms Cara Chriqui, Ms Mimi Le, Mr Ian Boyd, Ms Lesley Bradley, Mr Robert A Johnston, AC Monte Sant Angelo College, Mr Leslie P Pongrass, Ms Diane Chaffey, Ms Cara Chriqui, Ms Susan Fielding, Mrs Bunny Gardiner–Hill, Mr Miles Prosser.
## Brain and Mind Centre

### Our teams

Our unique teams consist of academics, researchers, students and professional staff. They are the lifeblood of Brain and Mind Centre. We acknowledge and give thanks for their tireless hard work, diligence and dedication to their research, which can, and is, changing the world.

### The Child Development and Behaviour Team

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<th>Academic staff</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Professor Mark Dadds, NHMRC Principal Research Fellow and Professor of Psychology, Team Leader</td>
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<td>- Professor Adam Guastella, Principal Research Fellow Psychiatry, Team Leader</td>
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<td>- Associate Professor David Hawes, Associate Professor of Psychology, Team Leader</td>
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<td>- Associate Professor Natalie Silve, Clinical Associate Professor, Paediatrics and Child Health</td>
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<td>- Professor Russell Dale, Professor of Paediatric Neurology</td>
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<td>- Dr Meryn Lechowicz, Senior Clinical Psychologist</td>
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<td>- Dr Fran Doyle, Senior Project Leader</td>
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| - Dr Antoinette Redoblado-Hodge, Clinical Neuropsychologist |
| - Dr Sonia Sultan, Senior Clinical Psychologist |
| - Dr Christine Song, Postdoctoral Research Fellow |
| - Dr Lucy Tully, Senior Project Leader |
| - Antonio Mendoza-Diaz, Postdoctoral Researcher |
| - Dr Christina Thai, Clinical Psychologist |
| - Dr Patrycja Piotrowska, Postdoctoral Researcher |
| - Shrujna Patel |
| - Elizabeth Nguyen |
| - Zahava Ambarchi |
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The Youth Mental Health Team

Academic staff
- Professor Ian Hickie, Program Leader
- Professor Jane Burns, Senior Academic
- Associate Professor Daniel Hermens, Head of Neurobiology stream
- Ms Tracey Davenport, Head of Technology stream
- Mr Shane Cross, Head of Clinical Services Development Stream
- Professor Adam Guastella, Senior Clinical Researcher
- Professor Sharon Naismith, Senior Neuropsychologist
- Associate Professor Louise Nash, Post-graduate Education
- Professor Niels Buus, Suicide intervention
- Professor Sally Cripps, Bayesian statistics
- Professor Jim Lagopoulos, Neuroimaging expertise
- Professor Richard Banati, Neuroimaging expertise

Professional staff
- Ms Lisa Whittle, Research Product Manager
- Ms Alyssa Milton, Post-Doctoral Research fellow
- Ms Candace Brennan, Office Manager
- Ms Sarah Piper, Research Officer
- Mr Django White, Research Coordinator and Data Manager
- Ms Amelia English, Senior Project Officer
- Ms Natalia Zmicerevska, Research Psychologist
- Ms Alissa Nichles, Clinical Research Officer

PhD students
- Frank Iorfino
- Ashleigh Tickell
- Jeanne Gehue
- Joanne Carpenter
- Ashlee Grierson
- Peta Eggins
- Casey Paquola
- Dr Laura Ospina-Pinillos
- Vanessa Cheng
- Cate McHugh
- Kate Chitty
- Ange Weinrabe
- Jacob Crouse

Honours students
- Sophia Bogaty

Academic and professional collaborators
- Professor Nick Martin
- Professor Paul Amminger
- Professor Cheryl Jones
- Professor Simon Carlile
- Mr John Mendoza
- Professor Pat McGorry
- Professor Jan Scott
- Professor Kathleen Merikangas
The Psychology Clinic

Academic staff
- Associate Professor Maree Abbott, Director of Clinical Training
- Ms Shylaja Gooley, Director Psychology Clinic
- Professor Caroline, Hunt Head Clinical Psychology Unit
- Professor Stephen Touyz, Clinical Professor
- Ms Frances Gibson, Clinical Psychologist
- Ms Katy O’Neill, Clinical Psychologist
- Dr David Horry, Psychologist
- Associate Professor David Hawes
- Associate Professor Sunny Lah
- Associate Professor Paul Rhodes,
- Ms Chantal Braganza, Clinical Psychologist
- Professor Louise Sharpe, PG Coordinator

PhD students
- Amy Leigh Burton
- Jaymee-Lee Chebli
- Elizabeth (Liza) Chervonsky
- Sarah Ellis
- Rosanna Francis
- Catherine (Katie) Gittins
- Andreea Heriseanu
- Ben Huntingdon
- Alice Lo
- Sharlene Mantz
- Claire Mcaulay
- Kimberley Mcgregor
- Matthew Modini
- Melissa Noetel (Fietz)
- Angelique (Angie) Ralph
- Jennifer Read
- Elizabeth Stewart
- Jemma Todd
- Ruth Wells
- Elpiniki Andrew
- Sarah Leila Barakat
- Rachel Brownlow
- Virginia Burgdorf
- Carri Ann Fisher
- Daniel Forrest
- Danielle Gessler
- Lauren Harvey
- Emma Jones
- Brittany Killer
- Cecilia Law
- Bridie Leonard
- Rachel Menzies
- Belinda Poole
- Amy-Lee Sesel
- Stephanie Tesson
- Shannon Webb
- Julia White
- Michael Zhang
- Matteo Zuccala
- Brooke Adam
- Phillip Aouad
- Cate Broomfield
- Madeleine Ferrari
- Jennifer Malecki
- Eileen Seah
- Chloe McGrath
- Nahian Chowdhury
- Rose Iannuzzelli
- Amelia Scott
- Zac Seidler
- Alison Clark

Masters students
- Stefan Bogdanov
- Lucy Braude
- Melanie Brookes
- Nadine Devaki-Wright
- Renata Hadzic
- Samantha Joplin
- Cassandra Josslyn
- Aspasia Karageorge
- Daniel Kimber
- Daria Kouznetsova
- Meredith Medway
- Khai Sng
- Jo-Elle Stein
- Valerie Yeung
- Sarah Barrett Jones
- Emily Bartlett
- Rachel Barton
- Melissa Blair
- Alison Clark
- Katherine Dobinson
- Michelle Edwards
- Gavin Entwistle
- Michael Fitzpatrick
- Gracie Garber
- Bree Gregory
- Emma Lamph
- Ben Larke
- Ursula Legoe
- Roisin Lynch
- Lucinda Mairs
- Gregory Martin
- Kristie McDonald
- Teleri Moore
- Alicia Moss
- David Muir
- Claudia Nielson-Jones
- Nurul Praharso
- Greg Quarterly-Scott
- Imogen Richards
- Ran Shi
- Avalon Tissue
- Megan Turnbull
The Gambling Treatment and Research Clinic

Professional staff

- Miss Suzanna Azevedo, Research Assistant / MCP Candidate
- Ms Brittany Ager, Research Assistant DCP / MSc Student
- Ms Louise Bezzina, Research Assistant, MCP Candidate
- Ms Olivia Schollar-Root, Research Assistant, MCP Candidate
- Ms Louise Bezzina, Research Assistant, MCP Candidate
- Ms Belinda Ingram, Education Support Officer
- Ms Cindy Li, Administrative Assistant
- Ms Layal Haydar, Psychology Clinic Receptionist

Academic and professional staff

- Professor Alex Blaszczynski, Director, Gambling Clinic
- Dr Fadi Anjoul, Deputy Director and Clinical Psychologist
- Dr Sally Gainsbury, Deputy Director, Research
- Ms Kirsten Shannon, Psychologist and Manager
- Christopher Hunter, Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Supervisor
- Janine Bleakley, Psychologist
- Martin Wierczorek, Psychologist
- Ms Jennifer Molinari, Psychologist
- Ms Kerrie Macalister, Provisional Psychologist

- Hanna Kallenberg, Provisional Psychologist
- Trisha Knowland, Provisional Psychologist
- Sarah Rees, Provisional Psychologist
- Michelle Beckett, Project Manager
- Miss Brittany Keen, Research Assistant / PhD Candidate
- Mr Dylan Pickering, Research Assistant / PhD Candidate
- Jessica Lam, Research Assistant
- Elle Formica, Intake Officer
The Neuroimmunology Team

- Associate Professor Fabienne Brilot-Turville, Principal Research Fellow
- Professor Russell Dale, Paediatric Neurologist
- Professor David Brown, Immunologist
- Professor Steve Vucic, Neurologist
- Dr Melanie Wong, Senior staff specialist in paediatric allergy & immunology
- Dr Sudarshini Ramanathan, Neurologist
- Professor David Booth, Principal Research Fellow
- Professor Graeme Stewart, Clinical Professor of Immunology
- Professor Matthew Kiernan, Bushell Chair of Neurology
- Dr Emily Mathey, Postdoctoral Researcher
- Professor Michael Barnett, Neurologist
- Associate Professor Stephen Reddel, Neurologist
- Associate Professor Michael Buckland, Neuropathologist
- Associate Professor William Phillips, Physiologist
- Professor Stephen Adelstein, Clinical immunologist
- Dr Nicolas Urriola, Clinical immunologist
- Associate Professor Clare Fraser, Neuro-opthalmologist
- Professor Ian Hickie, Professor of Psychiatry
- Dr Susanna Park, Physiologist

PhD students
- Heidi Beadnall
- Joshua Barton
- Mahtab Ghadiri
- Chenyu (Tim) Wang
- Saeideh Ebrahimkhani

Multiple Sclerosis

Academic staff
- Associate Professor Michael Barnett, Team Leader
- Emeritus Professor John Pollard, Professor of Neurology, MS clinician and researcher
- Professor Simon Hawke, Jessie Alberti Senior Principal Research Fellow
- Associate Professor Stephen Reddel, Associate Professor Neurology, neuroimmunology clinician
- Associate Professor Weidong (Tom) Cai
- Dr Judith Spies, MS clinician/researcher
- Dr Jane Frith, MS clinician/researcher
- Dr Todd Hardy, MS clinician/researcher
- Dr Linda Ly, postdoctoral researcher
- Dr Sidong Liu, postdoctoral researcher
- Ms Caitlin Dawes, psychologist

Professional staff
- Dr Marinda Taha, clinical trials coordinator
- Miss Ishana Dixit, research assistant
- Miss Deleni Walters, research assistant
- Ms Annemarie O’Connell, research nurse/clinical nurse consultant

Honours students
- Antonio Clark

Students – Engineering/IT and BMC
- Scott Lill
- Suman Regmi
- Antonio Lopes
- Scott Lill
- Mayisha Khan

MS Fellow
- Dr Justin Garber
ForeFront Ageing and Neurodegeneration Team

Academic staff

- Professor Glenda Halliday, NHMRC Senior Principal Research Fellow, Professor of Neuroscience, team leader ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Associate Professor John Kwok, Research geneticist, team leader ForeFront Neurogenetics and Epigenetics Research Group
- Professor Matthew Kiernan, Bushell Chair of Neurology, team leader ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Professor Steve Vucic, Professor of Neurology ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Professor John Hodges, Professor of Cognitive Neurology, team leader Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Professor Olivier Piguet, NHMRc Senior Research Fellow, Professor of Neuropsychology, team leader Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Professor Simon Lewis, NHMRC Dementia Research Fellow, Professor of Cognitive Neurology, team leader ForeFront Parkinson’s Disease and Dementia with Lewy Bodies Research Group
- Professor Carolyn Sue, Professor and Director of Neurogenetics, team leader Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
- Associate Professor Kay, Double Associate Professor of Neuroscience, team leader Forefront Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- Professor Sharon Naismith, Leonard P Ullman Chair in Psychology, team leader Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Professor Jillian Kril, Professor of Neuropathology ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Dr Claire Shepherd, Director and Facility Manager ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Professor Stanley Prusiner, Professor of Neurology and Biochemistry ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Professor Ian Blair, Professor of Neuroscience ForeFront Neurogenetics and Epigenetics Research Group
- Professor Rosa Rademakers, Professor of Neuroscience ForeFront Neurogenetics and Epigenetics Research Group
- Dr Jonathon Rohrer, MRC Clinician Scientist ForeFront Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia/Neurogenetics and Epigenetics
- Professor Amy Brodtmann, Professor of Stroke and Cognitive Neuroscience Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Professor Dominic Rowe, Professor of Neurology ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease/Parkinson’s Disease
- Professor Ian McKeith, Professor of Old Age Psychiatry ForeFront Parkinson’s Disease and Dementia with Lewy Bodies Research Group
- Professor Lars Ittner, Professor of Medicine ForeFront animal modelling
- Dr Yasi Ke ARC Research Fellow ForeFront animal modelling
- Professor Michael Kassiou Professor of Medicinal Chemistry ForeFront imaging & drug design
- Professor Victor Villemagne, Professor of Medicine ForeFront imaging
- Professor John Magnussen, Professor of Neuropathology ForeFront imaging
- Professor John Mattick, Professor of Molecular Biology ForeFront RNA biology
- Professor Antony Cooper, Professor of Neuropathology ForeFront Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- Associate Professor David Finkelstein, Senior Research Fellow ForeFront Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- Associate Professor Woojin Scott Kim, Neuroscientist in molecular biology, animal models and translation ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Dr Carol Dobson-Stone, Senior Research Fellow and geneticist ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Dr Nicolas Dzamko, NHMRC CJ Martin Fellow and biochemist ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Dr Yuhong Fu, Senior Research Fellow ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Dr Susanna Park, Senior Lecturer ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Associate Professor Muireann Irish, ARC Future Fellow and neuropsychologist Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
− Dr Jin-Sung Park Senior Research Fellow Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
− Dr Kishore Kumar, Clinical Senior Lecturer Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
− Dr Mac Shine, NHMRC CJ Martin Fellow, neurologist and neuroimagery ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
− Dr Rachel Tan, Dementia Research Fellow and neuroscientist ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
− Dr Sivaraman Purushothuman, Dementia Research Fellow and neuroscientist ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
− Dr Surabhi Bhatia, Dementia Research Fellow and neuroscientist ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
− Dr Katherine Phan, Postdoctoral Research Fellow ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
− Dr Sharpley Hsieh, NHMRC Dementia Research Fellow and neuropsychologist ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Michael Lee, OSMR Postdoc Fellow and physiotherapist ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr William Huynh, Postdoctoral Fellow and neurologist ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Emma Devenney, Postdoctoral Fellow and neurologist ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Emily Mathey, Research Fellow ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Neil Simon Neurologist ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Tim Howells Research Officer and neurophysiologist ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Rebekah Ahmed, NHMRC Early Career Fellow and neurologist Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group and Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Kazumoto Shibuya, Neurologist and visiting scholar ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Nortina Shahrizaila, Neurologist and visiting scholar ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Jose Manuel Matamala, Neurologist and visiting scholar ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Parvathi Menon, Neurologist ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr Nimeshan Geevasinga, Neurologist ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
− Dr James Burrell, NHMRC Early Career Fellow and neurologist Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
− Dr Cristian Leyton Moscoso, Dementia Research Fellow and neurologist Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
− Dr Fiona Kumfor, NHMRC Dementia Research Fellow and neuropsychologist Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
− Dr Ramon Landin-Romero, Research Fellow and neuroimagery Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
− Tooba Zaidi, Research Administration Officer Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
− Dr Claire O’Callaghan, NHMRC CJ Martin Fellow and neuropsychologist ForeFront Parkinson’s Disease and Dementia with Lewy Bodies Research Group
− Dr Kaylena Ehgoetz-Martens, Postdoctoral Research Fellow ForeFront Parkinson’s Disease and Dementia with Lewy Bodies Research Group
− Dr Elie Matar, Training Neurologist ForeFront Parkinson’s Disease and Dementia with Lewy Bodies Research Group
− Dr Ryan Davis, NHMRC Early Career Fellow and neurologist Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
− Dr Brian Koentojoro, Research Fellow Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
− Dr Ariadna Recasens, Research Fellow Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
− Dr Gautam Wall, Associate Lecuturer Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
− Dr Shantel Duffy, Dementia Research Fellow and neuroscientist Healthy Brain Ageing Program
− Dr Angela D’Rozario, Dementia Research Fellow and neuroscientist Healthy Brain Ageing Program
− Dr Camilla Hoyos, Dementia Research Fellow and neuroscientist Healthy Brain Ageing Program
− Dr Loren Mowszowski, Dementia Research Fellow and neuroscientist Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Dr Negar Memarian, Postdoctoral Research Associate Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Teneille Clinch, Genetic Counsellor ForeFront Neurogenetics and Epigenetics Research Group/Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Elle Elan, Genetic Counsellor ForeFront Neurogenetics and Epigenetics Research Group
- Professor Michael Fulham, Neurologist and RPAH PET Imaging ForeFront Imaging
- Dr Yu-ichi Noto, Neurologist and visiting scholar ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Dr Smriti Agarwal, Neurologist and visiting scholar ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Dr. Jun Tsugawa, Neurologist and visiting scholar ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Dr Yan Ma, Neurologist and visiting scholar ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Dr Yoshimitsu Shimatani, Neurologist and visiting scholar ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Dr Nick Cordato, Geriatrician, neurologist and visiting scholar Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Cassandra Kaizik, Research Assistant/Occupational Therapist Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Chengtao Liang, Research Assistant Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Dr Karen Crawley, General Practitioner Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease

- Dr Jerome Ip, Neurologist and visiting scholar Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Dr Catriona Ireland, Geriatrician and visiting scholar Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Dr Boris Guennewig, DINAD Bioinformatician Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Dr Haley LaMonica, Clinical Neuropsychologist Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Dr Zac Chatterton Lecturer ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory/Neurogenetics and Epigenetics Research Group

**Professional staff**

- Heidi Cartwright, Forefront Coordinator/SRA, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Dr Jude Amal-Raj, Team Coordinator, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Thomas Cunningham, Database Manager, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Asheeta Kumar, DINAD Participant Coordinator, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Marianne Hallupp, Laboratory Manager/SRA, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Eve Jary, Research Assistant, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Nikita He, Research Assistant, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Dr Farzaneh Atashrazm, Research Assistant, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Gayaturi Perera, Research Assistant, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Shikara Keshiya, Research Assistant, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Dr Yue Yang, Research Assistant, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Eleanor Ramsey, Research Coordinator, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Dianne Tyson, Executive Assistant, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Margie Zoing, MND Clinical Nurse Consultant, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Nicollette Thornton, Clinical Trials and Clinic Coordinator, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Tiffany Li, Research Assistant, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- David Foxe, Senior Research Officer, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Dr Leone Chare, Research Officer, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Nicole Mueller, Frontier Donor Coordinator, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Angela Scharfenberg, Research Assistant, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Kelly Nicholas, Research Coordinator, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Sarah Homewood, Frontier Clinic Administration Assistant, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Jessica Hazelton, Research Assistant, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Annu Mothakunnel, Research Assistant, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Cynthia Murray, Research Assistant, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Nathan Bradshaw, Research Assistant, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Lucie Bahron, Research Assistant, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Stephanie Wong, Research Assistant, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Mirelle D'Mello, Research Assistant, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Tooba Zaidi, Research Administration Officer, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Zoe-Lee Goldberg, Frontier Research Assistant, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Deborah Hammond, Specialist Nurse, ForeFront Parkinson’s Disease and Dementia with Lewy Bodies Research Group
- Veronica Cottam, Research Assistant and Laboratory Manager, ForeFront Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- Alice Gibson, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Caitlin Dawes, General Psychologist, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Kahala Dixon, Research Nurse/Assistant, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Claire Burrows, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Stacey West, Research Assistant, Healthy Brain and Ageing Program

PhD students
- Guinevere Lourenco, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Tony Hsiao, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Ye Zhao, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Noman Bakhshi, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Jianqun Gao, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Diba Rastegar, ForeFront Dementia and Movement Disorder Laboratory
- Dr Thanuja Dharmadasa, PhD student and neurologist, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Dr Nidhi Garg, PhD student and neurologist, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Jashelle Caga, PhD student and health psychologist, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Hannah Timmins, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Elizabeth Highton-Williamson, PhD student and MND donor coordinator, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
- Rosi Hutchings, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Sherry Chen, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Jill Long, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Nikki-Anne Wilson, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Sicong Tu, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Cherie Strikwerda-Brown, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Emma Johnson, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Andi Musrah, Frontier Frontotemporal Dementia Research Group
- Adam Vujic, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Jennifer Szeto, ForeFront Parkinson’s Disease and Dementia with Lewy Bodies Research Group
- Moran Gilat, ForeFront Parkinson’s Disease and Dementia with Lewy Bodies Research Group
- Kate Ahmad, Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease Nick Blair, Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
- Christine Wools, Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
- Jason Gu, Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
- Isabel Yeap, Genetics of Parkinson’s Disease
- Benjamin Trist, Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- Sian Genoud, Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- Kathryn Mathews, Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- Eurwin Suryana, Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- Karl Aoun, Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- Nathan Cross, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Jake Palmer Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Johannes Michaelian, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Madeleine Andrews, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Natasha Gabay, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Bradley Skinner, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Jonathon Pye, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Carla Haroutonian, Healthy Brain Ageing Program

**Honours students**

- Terence Wong, Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- James Carrick, Healthy Brain Ageing Program
- Alice Tricks, Healthy Brain Ageing Program

**Masters students**

- Dr Alexis de Roquemaurel, Neurodegeneration Research Laboratory
- Dr Dev Nathani, Masters student and medical officer, ForeFront Motor Neurone Disease Research Group
The Lambert Initiative

**Academic staff**
- Professor Iain McGregor, Team Leader
- Associate Professor David Allsop, Associate Clinical Director, Lambert Initiative for Cannabinoid Therapeutics
- Associate Professor Jonathon Arnold, Associate Director, Preclinical Research
- Dr Michael Bowen, NHMRC Peter Doherty Fellow
- Dr Lyndsey Anderson, Research Fellow
- Dr Anjali Bhardwaj, Research Fellow
- Dr Jordyn Stuart, Postdoctoral Research Fellow
- Dr Miguel Bedoya Perez, Postdoctoral Research Associate in Behavioural and Chemical Ecology

**PhD students**
- Dilara Bahceci
- Natalia Brzozowska
- David Clarke
- Kristie Smith
- Stephanie Todd
- Thomas Arkell

**Master students**
- Oliver Tan
- Marieke Graat

**Honours students**
- Joel Raymond
- Sara Scott
- Hannah Gutmann
- Cilla Zhou
- Sarah Abelev
- Charlotte Fletcher

**Professional staff**
- Ms Kristin Anderson, Executive Officer
- Dr Natalie Elias, Executive Officer
- Ms Cheryl Handford, Laboratory Manager
- Miss Jessica Gugusheff, Research Assistant
- Mr Richard Kevin, Research Assistant
- Miss Bianca Wilson, Research Assistant
- Dr Marika Heblinski, Research Associate
- Mr Jia Luo, Research Associate
- Ms Anastasia Suraev, Research Associate
- Miss Elia McGregor, Volunteer
- Mr Victor Trevino, Volunteer
- Mr Ivan Low, Research Assistant

The Technical Facilities Team

**Professional staff**
- Ms Janelle Wright, Animal Facility Officer
- Mr Vince Zappala, Animal Technician
- Ms Debbie Brookes, Assistant Animal Technician
- Mr Mark Elgario, Assistant Animal Technician
- Mrs Sylvia Lohrengel-Kuhner, Administration Manager, Sydney Imaging Core Research Facility
- Dr Govinda Poudel, Senior Technical Officer, Clinical, Sydney Imaging CRF
- Dr Michael Kuligowski, Senior Technical Officer
- Dr Pamela Young, Professional Officer: Light and Optical Microscopist