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Important Lessons

My research started, at 22 years old, with understanding how many people in inner-city Sydney were homeless and also experiencing schizophrenia. Only 500 metres from my office, a young man named Jonathon died alone from a drug overdose in a refuge for homeless men, having lost his battle with schizophrenia. That man’s mother, Anne Deveson, wrote the book Tell me I’m here about Jonathon’s life. Jonathon and my research taught me two important lessons: that drugs, alcohol and mental disorders often occurred together with devastating effects; and that we will always be playing catch up if we do not focus our research on prevention and early intervention.

In 2012, with these lessons in mind, I established the NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use (CREMS), containing 100+ multi-disciplinary academic and clinical researchers spanning nine national/international universities. CREMS has grown into the world’s leading, dedicated translational research program for the prevention and treatment of comorbid mental health and substance abuse.

Whilst recognised for many years that there is significant comorbidity in these two areas, they have traditionally been approached in isolation - making significant inroads virtually impossible.

Our research is at the forefront of improving the evidence regarding prevention and treatment. It integrates mental health, substance use, psychiatry, psychology, clinical trials, preventive medicine and epidemiology to ensure the science is rigorous, innovative, and truly world-class.

We have pioneered innovative treatments and e-health programs focusing on the prevention of alcohol and drug-related harms using internet-delivered, school-based technologies for students in Australia, the UK and the US.

2017 has been an exciting year for CREMS and our prevention, treatment and epidemiology and translation steams have all be highly successful. A major achievement was the securement of $2,495,969 to establish the Prevention and Early Intervention in Mental Illness and Substance Use NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence (PREMISE). The PREMISE CRE will provide the opportunity for researchers currently working independently across diagnostic silos (addiction, depression, suicide, anxiety, psychosis) to share skills, networks and innovations, synergise data, establish new trials and translate evidence into practice.
“CREMS has grown into the world’s leading, dedicated translational research program for the prevention and treatment of comorbid mental health and substance abuse.”

We were excited to receive funding to develop the online Health4Life Initiative, a world first eHealth program, which aims to help thousands of young Australian high school children reduce their chance of developing chronic diseases, including heart disease and mental health disorders, by preventing and modifying lifestyle risk behaviours that commonly emerge in adolescence. The Health4Life Initiative is a collaborative effort, in partnership with the Paul Ramsay Foundation. It will be led by researchers from the CREMS in collaboration with Northwestern University USA, the University of Newcastle, Curtin University and the University of Queensland.

Our commitment to the translation (knowledge exchange and implementation) of the highest quality research into policy and practice has continued and in 2017 we expanded multi-modal translation model to achieve greater reach among practitioners, policymakers, end-users (consumers) and the general public.

The Australian Government and CREMS have continued to work in partnership to prevent substance misuse and promote evidence based messages about alcohol and other drugs through the Positive Choices (https://positivechoices.org.au/) and Cracks in the Ice (https://cracksintheice.org.au/) online portals. These national portals continue to engage tens of thousands of Australians to disseminate evidence based information about alcohol and other drugs.

Looking forward

The CREMS researchers will continue to dare to take on one of the greatest challenges facing humanity, the burden associated with mental disorders and drugs and alcohol.

We have a better understanding of these challenges, we have new prevention strategies and we have new treatments as a direct result of our work. Over 4 million Australians will experience one of these problems every year and we set ourselves the challenge of finding new solutions.

Thanks

The success of the centre reflects the commitment of the Executive Advisory Board, senior leadership of CREMS, A/Profs Katherine Mills, Tim Slade, Frances Kay-Lambkin, Nicola Newton, Dr Cath Chapman, and our staff.

We acknowledge the many people with lived experience, non-government organisations and partner organisations who have worked in partnership with us and all the teachers, young people and community members who are critical in sharing their experience and co-designing with us.

We thank and acknowledge the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) and the University of New South Wales, where the centre is located.

Professor Kevin Gournay, Chair of the CREMS Executive Advisory Board

Ms Leonie Manns, Chair of the CREMS Executive Advisory Board
The CREMS aims to generate new research to increase the knowledge base regarding the effective prevention and treatment of comorbid mental and substance use disorders via three main streams:

1. Epidemiology
2. Prevention
3. Treatment
CREMS 2017 SNAPSHOT

Our research
Our innovative research program continues to grow.

54 Research Projects

170 Peer reviewed publications

2,100 Citations

40 Collaborations

Dissemination and reach
We are committed to making our research available to the community through a diverse program of dissemination.

45,913 Page views on the CREMS website

9 Webinars delivered to >1,900 viewers

177 Seminars, conference presentations and workshops

15 e-Health programs and online portals publicly available

Our people
We have a dedicated and growing team of academics, students, research officers and professional staff members.

19 Academics

28 PhD Students

20 Research Officers

5 Professional Staff

Grants secured 2012-2017

Total $29,689,526

$16,397,945 CATEGORY 1 (NHRMC, ARC)

$5,990,297 CATEGORY 2 (Government)

$7,301,284 CATEGORY 3 (Non-Government, contract)
ORGANISATIONS

Member Organisations

Four Australian Universities:

1. UNSW Sydney
2. The University of Newcastle Australia
3. The University of Sydney
4. Macquarie University

Three International Universities:

1. University of Birmingham
2. Northwestern University
3. MUSC

Affiliated Organisations

National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre
Black Dog Institute
Centre for Youth Substance Abuse Research
Community Mental Health Drug & Alcohol Research Network
Headspace: Australia’s Youth Mental Health Foundation
Hunter Institute of Mental Health
Institute of Health & Biomedical Innovation
Phoenix Australia
Northern Sydney Drug & Alcohol Service
Queensland University of Technology
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
The Mental Health Services
University of Wollongong
## Governance Structure

### Executive Advisory Board

Makes decisions regarding the prioritisation and implementation of research and the administration of funds and ensures that the key objectives of the CREMS are being met.

**Chairs**

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<tr>
<td>Prof Kevin Gournay (King’s College, London)</td>
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<td>Ms Leonie Manns (consumer advocate)</td>
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**Director**

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<tr>
<td>Prof Maree Teesson</td>
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**Program Director**

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<tr>
<td>Dr Cath Chapman</td>
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Responsible for coordinating activities and making everyday operational decisions.

**Chief Investigators**

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<th>Chief Investigators</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prof Maree Teesson</td>
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<td>Prof Amanda Baker</td>
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<td>A/Prof Katherine Mills</td>
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<tr>
<td>A/Prof Frances Kay-Lambkin</td>
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<td>Prof Paul Haber</td>
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<td>A/Prof Andrew Baillie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof Helen Christensen</td>
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<td>Prof Max Birchwood</td>
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<td>Prof Bonnie Spring</td>
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<td>Prof Kathleen Brady</td>
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### Senior Leadership Advisory Group

Provides leadership and support for the strategic development of the CREMS and oversees the operation of the Centre.

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<td>Senior Leadership Advisory Group</td>
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<td>A/Prof Tim Slade</td>
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<td>Dr Cath Chapman</td>
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### Academic Leadership Group

Provides leadership and management over new research projects, funding, collaboration and dissemination.

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<th>Academic Leadership Group</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Emma Barrett</td>
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<td>Dr Louise Birrell</td>
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<td>Dr Katrina Champion</td>
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<td>Dr Cath Chapman</td>
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<td>Dr Sally Hunt</td>
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<td>A/Prof Frances Kay-Lambkin</td>
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<td>Dr Christina Marel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Louise Mewton</td>
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<td>A/Prof Katherine Mills</td>
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<td>Dr Wendy Swift</td>
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<td>A/Prof Tim Slade</td>
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<td>Dr Mieke Snijder</td>
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<td>Dr Lexine Stapinski</td>
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<td>Dr Matthew Sunderland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof Maree Teesson</td>
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<td>Dr Louise Thornton</td>
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WHO WE ARE

We are the Centre of Research Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use (CREMS), funded by the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). We bring together the largest concentration of nationally and internationally recognised researchers that aim to prevent and treat comorbid mental health and substance use disorders.

To reduce the occurrence and cost of mental health and substance use disorders, preventative interventions need to begin early, before the problems begin to cause disability, and vocational, educational and social harm.

Our research in this area has been on developing and evaluating universal internet-based programs to prevent substance use, mental health disorders, and related harms in adolescents.

Our treatment research aims to develop and evaluate the efficacy of novel interventions to treat mental health and substance use disorders in isolation as well as their combination.

Our research has focused on the testing of psychotherapies, pharmacotherapies and e-health interventions for individuals who have both a substance use disorder and the most common mental disorders including anxiety, depressive and psychotic disorders.

Our epidemiology stream aims to carry out cross-sectional and longitudinal epidemiological studies that examine the prevalence, correlates and natural history of mental health and substance use disorders. We also aim to carry out studies to refine and improve the ways in which disorders are diagnosed and classified.

Our research has used innovative data analytic techniques to undertake secondary analysis of existing epidemiological data sets.

The CREMS aims to translate research findings across all three streams of research. Our research is disseminated via four main mechanisms:

1. Publications and presentations for scientific audiences;
2. Workshops and training for professionals working in substance use, mental health and related fields;
3. The development of evidence-based resources and online portals for the public and professionals; and
4. Contributions to public policy.
Maree is the Director of the CREMS, a NHMRC Principal Research Fellow at the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC), a Professorial Fellow at the Black Dog Institute, UNSW, a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences and Fellow of the Australian Academy of Social Sciences.

Maree’s vision is to build the world’s leading dedicated translational research program for the prevention and treatment of comorbid mental health and substance abuse. While it is widely recognised that there is significant comorbidity in these two areas they have traditionally been approached in isolation, making it virtually impossible to make significant inroads. She seeks to increase our understanding of drug and alcohol and mental disorders, prevent these where possible and improve treatment responses.

Nickie is the Director of Prevention Research at the CREMS. She leads a large program of research developing and evaluating innovative approaches to the prevention of alcohol and other drug use in adolescents. Her main focus is on developing internet-based preventive interventions and improving the sustainability and translation of programs into schools. Nickie has worked extensively on the Climate Schools series for drug prevention, the first online programs shown to reduce substance use.
Katherine is the Director of Treatment Research at the CREMS and an Honorary Research Fellow at the Black Dog Institute. Her research aims to improve our understanding of the relationship between mental health and substance use disorders through epidemiological and clinical research; develop and evaluate innovative treatment responses; and develop evidence-based resources to support the translation of research into practice.

Tim is the Director of Epidemiology Research at the CREMS and is also a Chief Investigator on a number of CRE research grants. His expertise lies in the epidemiology and classification of mental health and substance use disorders where he focuses not only on the cross-sectional epidemiology of mental and substance use disorders but also on examination of the longitudinal and developmental course of mental and substance use disorders, with the particular aim of identifying the patterns of and risk factors for the emergence of these highly prevalent and disabling disorders.

Cath is the Program Director at the CREMS. Her research interests include the epidemiology and prevention of mental and substance use disorders with a focus on using data from large scale population surveys, clinical trials and systematic reviews to improve research, prevention and treatment. She is past Chair and current board member of The Mental Health Services Learning Network (TheMHS), Australia's leading mental health clinical learning network.
Frances leads the CREMS Translation Stream, is a Registered Psychologist, NHMRC Senior Research Fellow and Co-Director of the Mental Health Hub at the Priority Research Centre in Brain and Mental Health, University of Newcastle. She is internationally recognised for innovative technology-based interventions for co-occurring mental health and substance use problems and has pioneered the development, evaluation and large-scale implementation of life-changing, innovative programs across traditionally siloed areas in medicine. Frances maintains a conjoint appointment as an Associate Professor at the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, at UNSW and is a Chief Investigator on several projects that are being conducted at the CREMS.
OUR PEOPLE

Chief Investigators

Prof Maree Teesson, UNSW
A/Prof Katherine Mills, UNSW
Prof Helen Christensen, UNSW
Prof Amanda Baker, The University of Newcastle
A/Prof Frances Kay-Lambkin, The University of Newcastle
Prof Paul Haber, The University of Sydney
Prof Andrew Baillie, Macquarie University
Prof Max Birchwood, University of Birmingham
Prof Bonnie Spring, Northwestern University
Prof Kathleen Brady, Medical University of South Carolina

Senior Research Fellows

Dr Emma Barrett, UNSW
Dr Sharlene Kaye, UNSW
Dr Louise Mewton, UNSW
A/Prof Kirsten Morley, The University of Sydney
A/Prof Nicola Newton, UNSW
Dr Joanne Ross, UNSW
Dr Lexine Stapinski, UNSW
Dr Matthew Sunderland, UNSW
Dr Wendy Swift, UNSW

Associate Investigators

Dr Emma Barrett, UNSW
Dr Sharlene Kaye, UNSW
Dr Louise Mewton, UNSW
A/Prof Kirsten Morley, The University of Sydney
A/Prof Nicola Newton, UNSW
Dr Joanne Ross, UNSW
Dr Lexine Stapinski, UNSW
Dr Matthew Sunderland, UNSW
Dr Wendy Swift, UNSW

Research Fellows

Dr Katrina Champion, UNSW
Dr Christina Marel, UNSW
Dr Louise Thornton, UNSW

Postdoctoral Research Fellows

Dr Louise Birrell, UNSW
Dr Mieke Snijder, UNSW
Doctoral Candidates

Mr Ben Britton, The University of Newcastle
Ms Mary Jean Carmen, The University of Newcastle
Ms Paula Convery, The University of Newcastle
Ms Alexandra Denham, The University of Newcastle
Ms Clara Fritchley, UNSW
Ms Sacha Filia, Monash University
Ms Tanya Hanstock, The University of Newcastle
Mr Geoffrey Hookham, The University of Newcastle
Ms Isabella Ingram, The University of Newcastle
Ms Melissa Jackson, The University of Newcastle
Mr Jake Jubelin, The University of Newcastle
Ms Erin Kelly, UNSW
Ms Ivana Kihas, UNSW
Ms Siobhan Lawler, UNSW
Mr Warren Logge, Macquarie University
Ms Eva Louie, University of Sydney
Ms Kristen McCarter, The University of Newcastle
Ms Samantha McCrabb, The University of Newcastle
Ms Katherine McGill, The University of Newcastle
Ms Rebecca McKenna, The University of Newcastle
Ms Sonja Memedovic, UNSW
Ms Yasmina Nasstasia, The University of Newcastle
Ms Jennifer Peprah, The University of Newcastle
Ms Katrina Prior, UNSW
Mr Van Long Nguyen, The University of Sydney
Ms Carla Walton, The University of Newcastle
Ms Kathryn Woodcock, UNSW
Ms Claire Young, The University of Newcastle

Research Psychologists

Ms Jenny Geddes, The University of Newcastle
Dr Sally Hunt, Thw University of Newcastle
Ms Erin Kelly, UNSW
Ms Stacey McCraw, UNSW
Dr Alyna Turner, The University of Newcastle
Ms Emily Upton, UNSW

Research Officers

Ms Mary-Ellen Brierley, UNSW
Ms Chloe Conroy, UNSW
Ms Hannah Deen, UNSW
Ms Lucy Grummitt, UNSW
Ms Briana Lees, UNSW
Ms Dana Leidl, UNSW
Mr Marius Mather, UNSW
Ms Nina Pocuca, Queensland University of Technology
Mr Brad Shaw, UNSW
Ms Anna Smout, UNSW
Ms Nina te Pas, Curtin University
Mr Joel Tibbetts, UNSW
Ms Rachel Visontay, UNSW
Mr Jack Wilson, UNSW

Associate Members

Prof Sudie Back, Medical University of South Carolina
A/Prof Lucy Burns, UNSW
Dr Natacha Carragher, UNSW
Ms Joanne Cassar, UNSW
A/Prof Julianne Flanagan, Medical University of South Carolina
Dr Danielle Florida, UNSW
Dr Miriam Forbes, Macquarie University
Prof Michelle Moulds, UNSW
Ms Jaelie Skehan, Hunter Institute of Mental Health

Administrative and Professional Staff

Ms Thalia Arnott, UNSW
Ms Jasmin Bartlett, UNSW
Ms Nicole Lestal, UNSW
Ms Maxine Robinson, The University of Newcastle
Ms Kate Ross, UNSW
Early career researchers within the CREMS have access to world-class experts in their field, and receive mentoring in epidemiology, prevention and treatment of co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.

These opportunities provide researchers with the foundations upon which to build their own successful programs of research.

"As an early career researcher within CREMS, I have had the opportunity to lead and coordinate numerous Australian Government and NHMRC funded projects, aiming to improve our understanding of, and responses to, mental and substance use disorders among vulnerable, disadvantaged and often marginalised Australians.

This has included leadership of the development and translation of National Comorbidity Clinical Guidelines and online training program, a large scale longitudinal study of heroin dependence, and service level evaluations. These projects have allowed me to collaborate and build relationships with consumers, carers, clinicians, alcohol and other drug workers, and other academics worldwide."

Dr Christina Marel
Early Career Researcher Representative
CREMS Executive Advisory Board, 2017
MENTORING AND LEADERSHIP

The CREMS has a demonstrated commitment to mentoring the next generation of comorbidity researchers in Australia and internationally.

The CREMS strives to provide a collaborative and supportive research environment where researchers at all stages in their careers are given opportunities to develop, learn, lead and thrive. A number of specific activities within the centre support mentoring and leadership.

Senior Leadership Advisory Group
Meets weekly. Responsible for strategy, priorities, collaborations, funding and management.

Academic Leadership Group
Meets monthly to discuss current and new research projects, funding, collaboration and dissemination. All academic staff attend this meeting once per quarter.

Research Groups
Each of epidemiology, prevention, treatment and translation groups meet quarterly to discuss priorities, upcoming projects and to brainstorm.

Early Career Training Program
Provides support and training to early career researchers through monthly seminars and workshops.
The CREMS had 10 early career researchers (ECR) from UNSW Sydney and The University of Newcastle

Dr Sally Hunt
Dr Sally Hunt is an ECR at The University of Newcastle and is a registered psychologist, focusing on comorbid conditions including affective disorders, and alcohol/other drug use problems. Sally's current research is examining the effectiveness of eHealth interventions for a variety of populations including young people with alcohol misuse and depression and mothers in the post-natal period.

Dr Mark Deady
Mark is an ECR at UNSW School of Psychiatry. His research focuses on e-mental health, depression and anxiety and substance use, and the development and evaluation of eHealth interventions for the prevention and treatment of common mental disorders. Mark currently leads one arm of the Well@Work program as part of the workplace mental health team.

Dr Emma Barrett
Emma is an ECR at NDARC and a registered Forensic Psychologist. Her research interests include links between substance use, trauma and aggression. In 2016-2017, Emma undertook a prestigious Fulbright Scholarship at the Medical University of South Carolina, U.S. where she developed an integrated treatment for co-occurring traumatic stress and substance use in young people.

Dr Louise Birrell
Louise is an ECR at NDARC whose research focuses on the comorbidity of anxiety, depression and alcohol use in adolescence. Louise has worked on large randomised controlled trials of online school-based prevention for mental health and substance use. In 2017, Louise led the launch and development of a mobile app for the Cracks in the Ice online toolkit.

Dr Katrina Champion
Katrina is an ECR at NDARC. Her research aims to explore how we can use technology to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of young people. As part of an NHMRC Early Career Fellowship, she is currently based at Northwestern University where she leads a program of research to develop and evaluate online multiple health behaviour interventions to address chronic disease risk factors among adolescents.

Dr Mark Larsen
Mark is an ECR at the Black Dog Institute. His research focuses on the use of technology in mental health, particularly in suicide prevention. He leads a research project using text messaging to reduce repeat suicidal behaviours and associated risk factors such as alcohol use.
Dr Mieke Snijder

Mieke is an ECR at NDARC. Mieke works with Aboriginal communities to develop and evaluate programs that can prevent and reduce drug and alcohol use and related harms amongst Aboriginal youth. During her PhD she worked with three Aboriginal communities in NSW to develop community-based programs that were effective in reducing alcohol-related crimes and harms in the communities. She is currently developing a school-based drug prevention program that is culturally inclusive for Aboriginal high school students.

Dr Christina Marel

Christina is an ECR at NDARC. Christina’s research focuses on the management and treatment of comorbid mental and substance use disorders. She led the development of the most recent National Comorbidity Guidelines and online training program, for alcohol and other drug workers and students across Australia. Christina’s work also focuses on long-term trajectories of heroin dependence and comorbid mental disorders.

Dr Louise Thornton

Louise is an ECR at NDARC whose research focuses on the development and evaluation of a mobile application for multiple health behaviour change among people with mental health problems. Her areas of interest include multiple health behaviour change, qualitative research methods and the role of mobile and web 2.0 technologies in health promotion and interventions.

Dr Michelle Tye

Michelle is currently an ECR at the Black Dog Institute and Deputy Director of research in LifeSpan suicide prevention. She is particularly interested in the early universal prevention of mental health and suicide, and using e-health tools to reduce suicidal risks among young people. Michelle is also leading an innovative program of research in early mental health and suicide prevention as part of a prestigious NHMRC Early Career Fellowship. The program aims to aims to establish an upstream approach to mental health and suicide prevention by introducing evidence-based prevention in primary school aged children.
PhD STUDENTS
in 2017

The CREMS had 30 PhD researchers from UNSW Sydney, Macquarie University and the University of Newcastle

Ms Louise Birrell
Supervised by Tim Slade, Nicola Newton, Maree Teesson
"Untangling comorbidity: substance use and mental health in young Australians"

Mr Ben Britton
Supervised by Amanda Baker, Greg Carter
"Eating as Treatment: RCT of motivational interviewing in head and neck cancer."

Ms Mary Jean Carmen
Supervised by Frances Kay-Lambkin, Kylie Bailey
"Intimate Partner Violence and Recovery Paradigms."

Ms Paula Convery
Supervised by Melinda Hutchesson, Frances Kay-Lambkin
"Development and evaluation of a multi-behaviour lifestyle intervention for University students."

Ms Alexandra Denham
Supervised by Amanda Baker
"The unmet needs of carers of stroke survivors."

Ms Sacha Filia
Supervised by Jayashi Kulkarni, Amanda Baker, Caroline Gurvich
"A comprehensive assessment of factors related to smoking and other cardiovascular disease risk factors among people experiencing serious mental illness."

Ms Clara Fritchley
Supervised by Emma Barrett, Katherine Mills
"Therapeutic Alliance on the NSW Drug Court Program."

Ms Tanya Hanstock
Supervised by Frances Kay-Lambkin, Simon Dennis
"Online healthy lifestyles treatment in people with Bipolar Disorder."

Mr Geoffrey Hookham
Supervised by Keith Nesbitt, Frances Kay-Lambkin
"Gaming for Life: Serious games for engagement and immersion in education and treatment."

Ms Isabella Ingram
Supervised by Peter Kelly, Frank Deane, Amanda Baker
"Loneliness does not discriminate: An examination of loneliness amongst treatment-seeking substance use dependent populations."

Ms Melissa Jackson
Supervised by Amanda Baker
"Targeted antenatal smoking cessation intervention in high-risk substance dependent pregnancy."

Mr Jake Jubelin
Supervised by Carole James, Frances Kay-Lambkin
"The SHADE online intervention in Contemporary Veterans."

Ms Erin Kelly
Supervised by Maree Teesson, Nicola Newton, Lexine Stapinski
"Bullying and substance use in adolescents: risks and responses."

Ms Ivana Kihas
Supervised by Katherine Mills, Emma Barrett, Maree Teesson
"The comorbidity of traumatic stress, problematic substance use and disordered eating behaviours among Australian adolescents."

Ms Siobhan Lawler
Supervised by Lexine Stapinski, Emma Barrett, Maree Teesson
"The developmental pathways to aggression and violent offending and clarify the role of adolescent substance use as a risk factor for future violent behaviour."
### PhD STUDENTS

#### in 2017

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Warren Logge</td>
<td>Andrew Baillie, Paul Haber</td>
<td>&quot;The thinking behind drinking: what role does executive functioning have in progression to and maintenance of alcohol use disorders.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Eva Louie</td>
<td>Kirsten Morley, Paul Haber</td>
<td>&quot;Improving management of comorbid substance use and mental illness with an integrated and stepped care approach.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Samantha McCrabb</td>
<td>Billie Bonevski, Amanda Baker, John Attia</td>
<td>&quot;Development and evaluation of an online smoking cessation program for hospitalised patients.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Katherine McGill</td>
<td>Frances Kay-Lambkin, Gregory Carter</td>
<td>&quot;Using sentinel unit data to inform clinical practice for hospital-presenting deliberate self-harm.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Rebecca McKenna</td>
<td>Tracy Burrows, Frances Kay-Lambkin</td>
<td>&quot;Healthy eating in Defence Force Personnel!&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Sonja Memedovic</td>
<td>Joanne Ross, Tim Slade, Maree Teesson</td>
<td>&quot;Depression in people with opioid dependence.&quot;</td>
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<td>Ms Yasmina Nasstasia</td>
<td>Amanda Baker, Robyn Callister, Sean Halpin</td>
<td>&quot;The antidepressant effects of exercise among young people: Pathways to change; mind, body or behaviour.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Van Long Nguyen</td>
<td>Devanshi Seth, Paul Haber</td>
<td>&quot;Evaluation of phosphatidyl ethanol as a marker of alcohol use in clinical settings.&quot;</td>
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<td>Ms Jennifer Peprah</td>
<td>Frances Kay-Lambkin, Conor Gilligan</td>
<td>&quot;Adolescent suicide bereavement in families: Exploring the grieving process and post-intervention among families in Ghana.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Katrina Prior</td>
<td>Joanne Ross, Maree Teesson, Katherine Mills</td>
<td>&quot;The relationship between social phobia, depression, and substance use disorders: The impact on treatment outcomes.&quot;</td>
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<td>Ms Mieke Snijder</td>
<td>Anthony Shakeshaft, Bianca Calabria, Annemarie Wagemakers</td>
<td>&quot;Maldahnalanga: Integrating rigorous research and community participation in Aboriginal community-based research&quot;</td>
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<td>Ms Carla Walton</td>
<td>Amanda Brker, Greg Carter</td>
<td>&quot;RCT of DBT in borderline personality disorder.&quot;</td>
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<td>Ms Kathryn Woodcock</td>
<td>Frandes Kay-Lambkin, Maree Teesson, Amanda Baker, Katherine Mills, Peter Stanwell</td>
<td>&quot;Managing comorbid substance use and trauma in Australian veterans and their partners: Assessing the acceptability and effectiveness of internet-delivered psychological support programs.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Claire Young</td>
<td>Felice Jacka, Frances Kay-Lambkin, Michael Berk, Adrienne O’Neill</td>
<td>&quot;An online dietary intervention for people with depression.&quot;</td>
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I am now in my second year of my PhD and I can’t believe how the time has passed. After completing honours in Criminology at UNSW a few years ago I applied for a job with CREMS which was offered to me. I enjoyed the independence of honours and was keen to continue with research, so it was not long before I set things in motion to become a student once again.

One of the things I have found really wonderful about doing a PhD at CREMS is the level of support I have had from my supervisors and colleagues, right from the very beginning when I was preparing applications for admission and scholarships to where I am now. Having some idea of how extraordinarily busy my PhD supervisors are on an average day, I am always surprised by how they can be so generous with their time. We have regular PhD meetings scheduled in to touch base, discuss progress and steps moving forward. There will be periods when we meet less frequently, and regular meetings certainly don’t work for everyone, but I am grateful that the time has been set aside for me if I need to discuss anything. Also, after speaking with graduate students outside of CREMS I understand and appreciate just how unusual this level of support is.

Whether working as a research assistant or in my candidature, I have been given so many valuable opportunities for training, development and collaboration. I have the ability to access incredible cross sectional and longitudinal data sets and there are regular professional development meetings and information seminars that I can attend. Rather than a culture of competition, I feel I am a part of a culture of respect and support and it’s inspiring to work alongside people who are genuinely passionate about the research that they do. I am incredibly grateful to have a supervision team that provides such a wealth of experience, perspectives, resources and skills. I feel that conducting research as a career is a privilege not without its challenges, but it is a place that I wake up and want to be in every day.
Community Research Mentoring Project

CMHDARN

Aim of the program:
Developed in partnership with the Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Research Network, the broad aim is to provide workers in community mental health and substance use organisations who have an interest in research with academic mentor support to develop their research knowledge and skill development.

The Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Research Network (CMHDARN) initiative:
CMHDARN is a joint initiative of the NSW Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies and the Mental Health Coordinating Council. CMHDARN partnered with CREMS to develop a mentoring scheme that aims to build the research capacity of community mental health and alcohol and other drug organisations. The partnership provides the opportunity for CREMS ECRs to provide short-term mentoring in research to individuals and organisations working in the sector. This initiative gives members the opportunity to gain experience mentoring others, as well as build their own links with community services, and be involved in stakeholder driven research.

Specific aims include:
1. Facilitate an increase in worker confidence, knowledge and skills in the area of research.
2. Provide mentors with an opportunity to enhance their understanding of community managed organisations and the specific operational issues which may impact on the conduct and implementation of research.
3. Further develop a research culture within community managed organisations.
4. Develop deeper understanding by academic researchers of practice-related issues of organisations operating in the community sector and stakeholders’ interests (e.g. consumers, clients, carers).

For further information, or to sign up and be matched with a postdoctoral research fellow from CREMS, go to: http://www.cmhdaresearchnetwork.com.au/our-activities/mentoring-program/
DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

*Reach refers to the number of unique people who saw our content on Facebook.
**Impressions refers to the number of times our content was delivered to Twitter streams.
Tonight: Dr Emma Barrett among scholars presenting as part of TEDx Fullbright Sydney, Theme: Knowledge, Reason and Compassion @tedxsydney

CREMS Director Prof Maree Teesson and Jack Nagle presenting the Truth About Ice for #StruggleStreet. Help is available! @MTeesson @Real_DrugTalk

12:31 AM - 30 Nov 2017
3 Retweets 7 Likes

Comorbidity @CREComorbidity

Congratulations to the wonderful Dr Cath Chapman who was awarded the 2017 Australian Rotary Health Knowledge Dissemination Award for her work on Cracks in the Ice at the @SMHR conference! Go team @CREComorbidity!! @ausrotaryhealth @cracksintheice @NDARCNEWS #smhr2017

7:58 PM - 7 Dec 2017
14 Retweets 27 Likes

Comorbidity @CREComorbidity

Congratulations to our director Prof Maree Teesson for being awarded the @SMHR Founders Medal! #SMHR2017 @MTeesson

7:10 PM - 20 Jun 2017
5 Retweets 6 Likes

More awards for the @CREComorbidity team..
Congratulations to Dr Matt Sunderland for receiving the Society for Mental Health Research Rising Star Award!!! @m_sunderland @NDARCNEWS @SMHR #SMHR2017

Congratulations Dr Louise Mewton! @LouiseMewton has been awarded a highly competitive UNSW Scientia Fellowship to further our understanding of the way alcohol use develops over the lifespan

≡ CREMS applauds Australia’s majority YES vote - a win for equality! ≡
#marriageequality

ARCHIVED - AU Bureau of Stats @ABSStatsarchive
79.5% of eligible Australians responded to the survey. 61.6% supported changing the law to allow same-sex couples to marry and 38.4% did not.
In 2017 there were 45,913 page views of our website www.comorbidity.edu.au made by 17,370 users over 22,179 sessions.

89% of visitors were returning and the average time visitors spent on the website was 1.44 minutes.

The majority of visitors originated in Australia (65%) and most of the international visitors were from the US (16%), India (4%), U.K. (4%) then Canada and New Zealand.

The most downloaded item in 2017 was the Guidelines on the management of co-occurring alcohol and other drug and mental health conditions in alcohol and other drug treatment settings (second edition).
The 2017 CREMS Webinar Series featured nine webinars presented by our world leading experts. Targeting clinicians, allied health professionals, teachers, consumers, carers, and anyone with an interest in issues related to mental health and substance use, the series reached a live audience of 866 and recordings of the webinars were viewed 1061 times.

Brief evaluation surveys were distributed to participants immediately after each live session and 462 evaluation surveys were completed. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive with 94% either strongly agreeing or agreeing that the webinars were valuable and 92% indicated that they are very likely or likely to attend another CREMS webinar.

Our webinars can be accessed at www.comorbidity.edu.au/training/webinars.

Webinar highlights from 2017

**Effects of ice on the brain and body, and implications for responding.**

PROF NICOLE LEE

This webinar explains the effects of methamphetamine on the brain and body, and the resulting impacts on functioning.

**Personality-targeted interventions for prevention: the Preventure program.**

A/PROF NICOLA NEWTON & MS ERIN KELLY

This webinar provides information about personality-targeted drug prevention in schools and an introduction to the Preventure program.

**National Comorbidity Guidelines: An evidence-based resource for drug and alcohol workers.**

DR CHRISTINA MOREL, A/PROF KATHERINE MILLS, MR JACK WILSON

This webinar introduces the guidelines. The guidelines aim to increase knowledge and awareness of comorbid mental health conditions in AOD treatment settings.
How to support families and friends with a loved one using methamphetamine.

A/PROF FRANCES KAY-LAMBKIN

This webinar describes the challenges faced by families and friends of those struggling with ice ("crystal methamphetamine") addiction and introduces an online support program.

Where can I find trusted evidence-based information about the drug ice? Cracks in the Ice virtual tour.

DR CATH CHAPMAN

This webinar provides information on recent trends in use of the drug ice in Australia and introduces a new online toolkit providing evidence-based information.

How to talk with teenagers about alcohol use.

PROF STEVE ALLSOP

This webinar provides an overview of effective strategies for preventing teenage alcohol use, it discusses ways to approach conversations and provides suggestions for navigating common challenges.

Australian trends in cannabis use and attitudes towards cannabis legalisation in a period of international policy change.

DR WENDY SWIFT

This webinar discusses population trends in Australian cannabis use and attitudes towards cannabis legalisation between 2001 and 2013.

What can parents do to prevent teenage substance use?

DR LOUISE THORNTON, MS DANA LEIDL

This webinar provides an overview of the important role parents can play in preventing adolescent substance use, and introduces a new online program.

Mental Health and Substance Use: Illuminating the issues and solutions.

PROF MAREE TEESSON

Over the last 10 years Australia has been leading the way in developing new and effective treatments for comorbidity, this webinar shares the results of this research and efforts to disseminate the findings so Australians have access and benefit.
Online Portals

Clearing the Cloud
www.clearingthecloud.org.au
An online portal that houses prevention and treatment programs for substance use and mental health problems that have been developed by the CREMS and can be accessed via the internet. In 2017 1,726 users accessed the portal, spending an average 4.52 minutes per session and visiting an average of 12.66 pages per session.

Climate Schools
www.climateschools.com.au
An online portal that provides access to the Climate Schools programs. As of the end of 2017, 434 schools have registered nationally.

Cracks in the Ice
https://cracksintheice.org.au
Launched in 2017 and funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, this portal provides trusted, evidence-based, and up-to-date information and resources about crystal methamphetamine (ice) for the Australian community. Since launch 41,511 users accessed the site and visited 166,483 pages.

Eclipse
Funded in 2015 by the NSW Department of Health, this online portal aims to improve engagement with effective treatments among service providers across NSW by increasing access to online evidence-informed treatments. In the five months following the first training day in 2017 over 4,130 users accessed the tool, spending an average 5.56 minutes per session and visiting nearly 8 pages during a session.

Positive Choices
https://positivechoices.org.au
Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, this portal facilitates access to evidence-based drug and alcohol education and prevention resources for teachers, students and their parents. In 2017 71,711 users accessed the site and visited 259,813 pages.

Comorbidity Guidelines
www.comorbidityguidelines.org.au
Launched at the end of November 2017, the Australian Government Department of Health funded Comorbidity Guidelines online training program is a free, evidence-based e-learning program for alcohol and other drug workers, or students studying courses in alcohol and other drugs or mental health. In December 2017, 724 visitors viewed >22,000 pages.
• The CREMS releases a newsletter to provide regular updates on the progress of the CRE. Each newsletter includes feature articles written by CREMS staff as well as news, new projects and publications, upcoming seminars, workshops, webinars and events.

• There were 722 subscribers to the newsletter in 2017. Subscribers include academics, researchers, clinicians, policy makers and members of the general public.

• There were 526 downloads of the newsletter in 2017.
**AWARDS**

**Amanda Baker**  
National Health and Medical Research Council Senior Research Fellowship; Division of Psychological Research, Education and Training (DPRET) of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) Outstanding Academic Mentor Award

**Emma Barrett**  
Australian Institute of Policy & Science New South Wales Young Tall Poppy Science Award; Australian Therapeutic Communities Association (ACTA) Excellence in Research and Evaluation Award; University of New South Wales Apte Scholarship; New South Wales Health Early-Mid Career Researcher Fellowship

**Katrina Champion**  
National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Disease Prevention (ODP) Finalist, Early-Stage Investigator Lecture Award; National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre Annual Symposium Outstanding Research Poster Award; Ian Potter Foundation Travel Grant; National Health and Medical Research Council Early Career Fellowship

**Helen Christensen**  
University of New South Wales Innovation of the Year Award

**Sally Hunt**  
University of Newcastle School of Medicine and Public Health Award for Early Career Research and Innovation Excellence

**Ivana Kihas**  
Australian Rotary Health PhD Scholarship

**Siobhan Lawler**  
University of New South Wales Scientia PhD Scholarship

**Briana Lees**  
National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre Research Symposium Outstanding Research Poster Award; University of New South Wales Scientia PhD Scholarship; Australian Rotary Health Ian Scott PhD Scholarship
AWARDS

Christina Marel
Alcohol and Other Drug Excellence in Research Award; Australian Drug Foundation Excellence and Innovation in Research

Louise Mewton
University of New South Wales Scientia Fellowship; Australian Institute of Policy and Science Young Tall Poppy Science Award; Australian Rotary Health Post-Doctoral Fellowship

Katherine Mills
National Health and Medical Research Council Senior Research Fellowship

Kirsten Morley
New South Wales Health Early-Mid Career Researcher Fellowship

Mieke Snijder
New South Wales branch of the Public Health Association of Australia President’s Award for Contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health; National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre Kevin Rozzoli Community Impact Award

Lexine Stapinski
National Health and Medical Research Council Translating Research Into Practice (TRIP) Fellowship

Matthew Sunderland
Society of Mental Health Research Rising Star Award

Louise Thornton
University of New South Wales Vice-Chancellor's Post-Doctoral Fellowship; National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre Margaret Hamilton Award
AWARDS

Climate Scools
Led by Nicola Newton
Alcohol and Drug Foundation Innovation in the Prevention and Education category, National Alcohol and other Drug Excellence and Innovation Award

Cracks In The Ice
Led by Cath Chapman
Australian Rotary Health Knowledge Dissemination Award

Positive Choices
Led by Lexine Stapinski
Mental Health Council of New South Wales Mental Health Promotion and Wellbeing Mental Health Matters Award
Acute pharmacotherapy evaluation for alcohol use disorder

Alcohol use disorders represent some of the most prevalent and costly disorders in Australia and new treatments are urgently needed. Novel pharmacotherapies hold much promise for improving acute treatment of alcohol use disorders, however, their efficacy is not well-established. Funded by a private research foundation, this project commenced in late 2016 and will establish protocols to evaluate novel pharmacotherapies for efficacy in an acute treatment paradigm.

Age, period and cohort trends in cannabis use and attitudes towards cannabis legalisation in Australia, 2001-2016

While there have been several changes in the policy landscape surrounding the legal status of cannabis and its medicinal use internationally since 2000, policy in Australia has remained largely static. There have been few stringent examinations of trends in cannabis use examining the potential impacts of age, birth cohort and historical period. However, there is evidence that there may be a closing gender gap in cannabis use, and that use prevalence may be related to attitudes towards use. This analysis will be the first examination of age, period and cohort trends in Australian cannabis use and attitudes towards cannabis legalisation between 2001 and 2016, providing important comparative data from a country in which there were no substantial policy shifts on cannabis use during this period.

Australian Alcohol Treatment Outcome Study

Despite the existence of effective treatments for alcohol use disorder, little is known about predictors of effectiveness in clinical treatment settings. The Australian Alcohol Treatment Outcome Study is a national study led by Professor Sanson-Fisher at the University of Newcastle and involving Paul Haber (the CREMS, University of Sydney) to determine predictors of treatment effectiveness for alcohol use disorder in current practice. Variables including mental health measures at the patient, provider and service level will be evaluated across multiple treatment services.

The Australian Treatment Outcome Study

The Australian Treatment Outcome Study (ATOS) is a landmark Australian NHMRC-funded cohort study examining long term outcomes from heroin dependence. The 11-year follow-up commenced in 2012, making it one of the longest and most comprehensive prospective studies of heroin users internationally. Findings have been published in leading journals including Addiction, Drug and Alcohol Dependence, and Addictive Disorders and their Treatment and analysis of this dataset is ongoing. In 2017 NHMRC funding was awarded to the CREMS to conduct an 18-20 year follow-up of this important cohort. The follow-up will commence in 2018 and the findings have the potential to substantially improve mental and physical health outcomes for heroin users.
Binge drinking and the adolescent frontal lobe

Adolescence is a critical period for brain development, with active rewiring of circuitry that is necessary in successful development of “adult” adaptive patterns of behaviour. Binge drinking practices may interfere with the development of these important circuits, promoting continued impulsive behaviour, alcohol abuse and risk of alcohol dependence. The current study, funded through UNSW Sydney, aims to examine, for the first time, the effect of binge drinking on crucial development of connectivity in relation to cognition, among adolescents.

Birth cohort trends in the global epidemiology of alcohol and cannabis use in men and women

Traditionally, alcohol and cannabis use and related harms are more prevalent in men than women. However, new evidence suggests this gap is narrowing. In the first study of its kind internationally, this project aimed to systematically summarise the published literature on sex differences in a number of key indicators of alcohol and cannabis epidemiology to examine whether these indicators have changed over time. Findings were published in 2016 and 2017.

The Brain Games: Using brain training to prevent adolescent mental illness

Cognitive training exercises that focus on improving executive functioning have been shown to reduce symptoms related to several mental health and substance use problems. However, it is not yet clear whether such training can also prevent the onset of these problems. The current fellowship funded through Australian Rotary Health aims to develop and test an exciting and innovative personality-targeted mental health prevention program based on cognitive training tasks (The Brain Games) to prevent the onset of a range of mental health and substance use problems in youth.

Breaking the Ice: An online intervention program for young people (aged 16-25 years) using crystal methamphetamine

*Breaking the Ice* is an internet-based brief early intervention for psychostimulant use, including ice (crystal methamphetamine). It aims to target light-moderate psychostimulant use and those who are at high risk of progressing to dependent or problematic use, or who are already experiencing problems, but are not seeking help. Originally developed in collaboration with researchers from the Australian National University, UNSW Sydney, Curtin University, the CREMS, in partnership with NSW Health and Curtin University, and with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health, to better target young people aged 16-25 years.

Brief telephone interventions for reducing alcohol use and related harms in young people accessing emergency departments

Nationally, 10,000 young Australians present to emergency departments with alcohol-related injuries and illnesses each month. Much of this adversity could be prevented if more young people had access to effective brief interventions for alcohol use. Telephone-delivered brief interventions provide an innovative, youth friendly and accessible way of delivering treatment. This is the first clinical trial to compare the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of telephone-delivered brief interventions for reducing alcohol use and related harm in young people.
**Bullying, substance use and mental health**
This project, funded through UNSW Sydney (PhD Scholarship), examined school bullying focusing on its associations with substance use and mental health. It aimed to assess the effectiveness of a targeted intervention on bullying involvement using data from the Preventure component of the CAP (Climate and Preventure) study. It is one of the first studies to assess the impact of a targeted substance use prevention program on bullying.

**The CAP Study – Combining effective universal and targeted approaches to drug prevention**
The CAP (Climate and Preventure) study is a landmark NHMRC funded trial of a combined universal and selective approach to preventing substance use and related harms in adolescents. Twenty-six schools and 2,190 participants (aged 13-14) were recruited to the study in 2012 and followed up through to the end of 2015. In 2016 an NHMRC grant was awarded to follow-up this important cohort as they transition from high school from 2017-2019. The CAP trial represents a world-first in the prevention of substance use among adolescents and an exciting collaboration with Professor Patricia Conrod from the University of Montreal.

**The Climate Schools Combined (CSC) study: Internet-based prevention for anxiety, depression and substance use in young Australians**
The Climate Schools Combined (CSC) study is an NHMRC funded trial which evaluates an online combined prevention approach for substance use, depression and anxiety. Over 6000 students from 71 schools across NSW, QLD and WA were recruited to the study in 2014. Interventions were delivered in 2014 and 2015 and students were followed up until the end of 2016. In 2017 NHMRC funding was awarded to follow-up this cohort from 2018-2021 as they transition out of high school. The CSC Study is the first trial, internationally, to develop an integrative online prevention model for mental health and substance use problems among adolescents.

**The CSI (Climate Schools Interactive) study: A cluster randomised controlled trial of the internet-based Climate Schools: Ecstasy & Emerging Drugs Module**
Funded through the NHMRC (Postgraduate Research Scholarship), the CSI (Climate Schools Interactive) Study evaluated the Climate Schools: Ecstasy & Emerging Drugs module, an online school-based prevention program designed to educate adolescents about the harms associated with illicit drug use. The program was trialled among 1126 year 10 students over a two-year period through a cluster randomised controlled trial. In 2016, the final two-year follow-up data was collected from participants and data were analysed and presented at national conferences in 2017. This study is the first trial, internationally, of an internet-based prevention program dedicated specifically to the prevention of ecstasy and new psychoactive substance use.

**Climate Schools Plus: Development and evaluation of an online integrated student and parent program to prevent alcohol and cannabis harms among adolescents**
Parents play a key role in preventing substance use and related harms among adolescents. Despite this, there is currently no Australian substance use prevention program targeting both students and parents, and no integrated model internationally, that adopts an online delivery approach. In 2016, The Australian Government Department of Health funded the CREMS to develop and test the first integrated, online substance use prevention program for students and parents from 2016-2018, as part of the work of national prevention portal, Positive Choices (www.positivechoices.org.au). The project builds on the effective Climate Schools programs for students, an Early Career Fellowship awarded to Dr Nicola Newton by The Society for Mental Health Research, and a two-year collaboration with Dr Ina Koning, a prevention researcher from Utrecht University, The Netherlands.
The comorbidity of traumatic stress, problematic substance use and disordered eating behaviours among Australian adolescents

This PhD project is funded by the Australian Rotary Health and National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre PhD Scholarships. The comorbidity of traumatic stress, problematic substance use and eating disorders will be first explored through a systematic review. The project will use national data of Australian children and adolescents to explore the current trends of relationships between problematic substance use and disordered eating behaviours. Using data obtained through the COPE-A Study, the project will also explore the impact of traumatic stress on longitudinal outcomes of individuals with a substance use problem, focusing on links between eating disorders, substance use and post-traumatic stress disorder. These findings will inform treatment provisions and outcomes, encouraging more inclusive treatment options and more comprehensive prevention strategies for young people at risk of developing these comorbid disorders.

Cracks in the Ice: Development of an online toolkit to provide trusted evidence-based information about crystal methamphetamine ("ice") for the Australian Community

As part of a response to the National Ice Task-force Final Report, The Australian Government Department of Health funded the CREMS to develop Cracks in the Ice (www.cracksintheice.org.au), an online toolkit which aims to improve access to evidence-based information, online resources and support around crystal methamphetamine ("ice") for the Australian community. Developed with input from over 400 community members across Australia, and in collaboration with researchers from the CREMS, the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) and the National Drug Research Institute (NDRI), the site was completed in late 2016 and officially launched on April 3rd 2017. Additional funding was also received in 2016 from the Australian Government Department of Health for the ongoing maintenance and development of the Cracks in the Ice online toolkit from 2016-2018.

Criminal trajectories of young people with substance use problems: understanding developmental pathways to aggression and violent offending

Research shows there are strong links between substance use and aggression however the specific timing and mechanisms that underlie this relationship are not well understood. This study, funded through the UNSW Scientia scholarship program, will examine the role of adolescent substance use as a risk factor for aggression and violent behaviour among young people. This study will contribute to the literature by identifying developmental windows of greatest importance in this relationship, with the potential to inform the timing and nature of intervention approaches.

Development of a culturally appropriate online toolkit to prevent methamphetamine (ice) related harms among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Funded by The Australian Government Department of Health as part of the ongoing development of the Cracks in the Ice online toolkit, this project aims to improve access to culturally appropriate evidence-based resources about crystal methamphetamine ("ice") for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including information about how to access services and/or support. It is led by Professor Dennis Gray and A/Prof Ted Wilkes at the National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University in collaboration with the CREMS.
Although there is a high burden of mental illness in Australia, most people with mental health problems do not seek help. A major reason for this unmet need is a lack of precise and systematic methods for identifying mental health problems in the community. Funded by the NHMRC this project will develop and validate several rapid assessment toolkits using advanced statistical techniques to select optimal items for short forms as well as computerized adaptive testing. Brief, precise screening tools are critical to provide clearer pathways for people with mental health problems to access online and primary care services.

### Development and population-based validation of hierarchical adaptive mental health screeners

Although there is a high burden of mental illness in Australia, most people with mental health problems do not seek help. A major reason for this unmet need is a lack of precise and systematic methods for identifying mental health problems in the community. Funded by the NHMRC this project will develop and validate several rapid assessment toolkits using advanced statistical techniques to select optimal items for short forms as well as computerized adaptive testing. Brief, precise screening tools are critical to provide clearer pathways for people with mental health problems to access online and primary care services.

### Develop and pilot online comorbidity tools to improve treatment engagement and effectiveness in mental health and substance use problems

Funded in 2015 by the NSW Department of Health, this project aims to improve service delivery for co-occurring mental health and substance use problems by developing and evaluating a number of online assessment and treatment tools for a range of comorbidities. The project aims to improve engagement with effective treatments among service providers across NSW by increasing access to online evidence-informed treatments.

### Development of an integrated cognitive-behavioural therapy for substance use and post-traumatic stress among adolescents

There is a critical need to intervene early in the trajectory of substance use disorders (SUD) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to prevent long-term psychological and physical health problems. However, there are currently no proven treatments for adolescents with comorbid SUD and PTSD. This project, funded by the NSW Health, a scholarship from the Australian-American Fulbright Commission, and supported by an NIH South Carolina Clinical & Translational Research (SCTR) Institute grant, enabled us to collaborate closely with research leaders in the U.S. to develop a world first integrated exposure-based treatment for substance use and traumatic stress among adolescents called COPE-A. In 2017 NHMRC funding was awarded to undertake a randomised controlled trial of this treatment which will commence in 2018.

### Efficacy of behavioural activation treatment for co-occurring depression and substance use disorders: The Activate Study

Behavioural Activation Treatment for Depression (BATD-R) developed in the USA is an innovative structured treatment that aims to activate clients in specific ways that will increase rewarding experiences in their lives. The current NHMRC funded study sought to examine the efficacy and feasibility of a modified version of BATD-R (Activate’) in reducing symptoms of depression and substance dependence among individuals in residential rehabilitation and opioid substitution therapy. The trial was conducted between 2013 and 2015, and results are currently being evaluated.

### Development and evaluation of a mobile-delivered substance use intervention for people with mental disorders

People with mental disorders die up to 20 years earlier than the general population. Cardio-vascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of this excess mortality. This fellowship, funded through UNSW Sydney, aims to develop and evaluate the first mobile-based program for CVD risk reduction for people with mental disorders, MyHealthPA. It will allow users to track their smoking, alcohol use, fruit and vegetable consumption, physical activity and mood on their smartphone as well as set goals and track progress, and is tailored to the unique needs of people with mental disorders. The project represents a world-first in applications for people with mental disorders.
Enhancing comorbidity competency in mental health and substance use treatment services

This project, funded through a NSW Health Early-Mid Career Fellowship, aims to adapt and implement two promising toolkits that have been designed to assist services in evaluating and improving ability to address co-occurring disorders - the Dual Diagnosis Capability in Addiction Treatment (DDCAT) and the Dual Diagnosis Capability in Mental Health Treatment (DDCMHT) Toolkits. This research will be undertaken in collaboration with comorbidity research leaders at the CREMS and stakeholder partners (i.e. consumers and clinicians in adolescent and adult mental health and substance use treatment services) who will be engaged early and consistently to ensure effective implementation. This innovative response has the potential to significantly improve the standard of care for many Australians living with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.

Evaluation of a new biomarker for alcohol use in clinical populations

This study is being conducted at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital involving assessment of phosphatidyl ethanol to detect unreported alcohol use in clinical populations. The assay was validated in 2016 and clinical sample recruitment will proceed in 2017 onwards.

Empowering young people to make positive health choices: Translation of evidence-based drug and alcohol prevention to Australian adolescents

Alcohol and other drug use are among the leading causes of disease burden for young Australians, and the choices young people make can have profound effects for many years to come. To reduce this substantial burden, effective prevention and early intervention is crucial. This translating research into practice (TRIP) fellowship funded by the NHMRC addresses a known gap in the implementation of evidence-based drug prevention in Australian schools and responds to a recent call from Australian principals for additional resources to support schools in building capacity to respond to drug and alcohol issues.

Evaluation of the CAYLUS youth worker brokerage program

Established in 2002, the Central Australian Youth Link Up Service (CAYLUS) supports community initiatives aimed at reducing the supply of, demand for, and harms associated with, substance misuse among young people across Central Australia. The CREMS researchers are assisting CAYLUS to establish a rolling monitoring and evaluation process for the activities it runs through the Youth Worker Brokerage Program, to examine the impact of its programs on local level community crime and petrol sniffing to improve the standard of youth programs in this critical area of need. The second stage of the evaluation commenced in 2016 and will be ongoing until 2019.

Evaluation of a tailored online hospital and post-discharge smoking cessation program for orthopaedic trauma surgery patients

Smoking during an inpatient stay in hospital increases the risk of complications associated with orthopaedic surgery, resulting in increased length of admission and a variety of complications which are associated with higher costs. This NHMRC funded randomised controlled trial aims to evaluate the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of an online smoking cessation program for orthopaedic trauma patients and its effect on clinical patient outcomes.
The Health4Life Initiative: An innovative online primary and secondary prevention intervention.

Chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, cancers and mental disorders, are the leading cause of death and disability in Australia. Poor diet, smoking, risky alcohol use, physical inactivity, recreational screen time, and poor sleep are the “Big 6” risk factors associated with chronic disease. Alarmingly, these risk behaviours are high among young Australians (aged 12-17). Funded by The Paul Ramsay Foundation, this project will develop and evaluate an innovative model to enable the use of evidence-based online health and well-being programs across Australia. A cluster randomised controlled trial (RCT) will be run in 80 schools (8000 Year 7 students) across NSW, WA and QLD beginning in mid-2019. This will be the first trial of a tiered eHealth intervention that concurrently targets six key lifestyle risk factors among adolescents, prior to the onset of chronic disease.

HNECC Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Primary Care Capacity Building Program

This project delivers a practice change intervention to create and improve collaborative and integrated care pathways for patients with substance use (including those with co-occurring mental health problems). Primary care practice nurses and GPs are trained in a method to screen, refer and provide brief intervention for drug and alcohol use problems, as well as co-occurring mental health problems. In addition to training, a number of evidence-based practice change strategies are included to ensure the implementation of the program; stakeholder engagement, supervision and ongoing systems support, tools and resources, audit and feedback and systems and prompts.

Improving management of comorbid substance use and mental illness with an integrated and stepped care (ISC) approach

The Multi-modal Translation Intervention Package (MTP) has been designed to train counsellors and aid implementation of integrated stepped care (ISC) in the treatment of comorbidity in Local Health Districts (LHDs) of NSW. Funded by the NSW Health Translational Research Grants Scheme, this project is a translational formative evaluation that will firstly, evaluate the impact of the MTP to (a) increase proficiency and uptake of ISC; (b) enhance clinician knowledge and attitudes and; (c) improve substance use and mental health outcomes. Secondly, it will examine barriers and facilitators of integrated stepped care implementation. Thirdly, it will deliver the MTP resources and sustainability recommendations to NSW Health for future rollout. Ultimately, the project will promote the identification, assessment and clinical management of comorbidity within the drug and alcohol services of NSW LHDs.

Making inroads to understand and interrupt the cycle of Anxiety and Drinking

There is substantial burden associated with comorbid anxiety and alcohol use disorders, and the transition into early adulthood represents a key risk period. Despite this, very little is known about the developmental sequence of these disorders, or how to intervene to prevent escalation. This fellowship, funded by the Society for Mental Health Research, represents a world-first study to address crucial questions about the unfolding of these disorders over time, and how they interact. It will provide critical information about when and how to intervene to prevent the onset and exacerbation of alcohol and anxiety comorbidity. In 2017, the Australian Rotary Health funded a trial of the program to determine the benefits for young people living in Australia.

Managing adverse lifestyle factors in bipolar disorder: A randomised controlled trial

This project aims to conduct a world-first trial to evaluate a healthy lifestyles intervention in bipolar disorder. In 2015 UNSW Sydney provided seed-funding for the collection of pilot data and the development of a framework to support the scaling up to a full trial. An application for funding of an RCT was submitted to NHMRC in 2017.
A multiple health behaviour approach to prevent common and emerging risk factors for chronic disease: development and evaluation of a novel online intervention for Australian adolescents

Six behavioural risk factors (poor diet, physical inactivity, smoking, alcohol use, screen time and unhealthy sleep patterns; “the Big 6”) have been identified as the strongest determinants of poor health outcomes for Australians. These behaviours typically develop in adolescence, commonly co-occur as clusters, and increase the risk of chronic disease, such as heart disease, cancers and mental disorders in adulthood. This project will develop an online intervention to concurrently address the Big 6 risk factors among Year 7 students. This program aims to promote current physical and mental wellbeing among youth, whilst also reducing their risk for later disease. Scoping activities to inform intervention development commenced in 2017. Development will continue in 2018 and the prevention program will be trialled in 80 Australian schools in 2019 as part of the Health4Life Initiative.

New solutions for reducing the harm of tobacco smoking with highly addicted smokers: A pilot study of electronic nicotine devices for smoking cessation with drug and alcohol treatment clients

This pilot trial funded by Victoria Health Promotion Foundation, Innovation Research Grant aims to assess the feasibility, potential effectiveness and acceptability of providing two forms of smoking cessation support (electronic nicotine devices or Nicotine Replacement Therapy) plus proactive Quitline support among people being discharged from a residential withdrawal facility.

An online intervention and support package for families/friends supporting loved ones using methamphetamine

Ice ("crystal methamphetamine") use not only affects people using the drug, but it also has an adverse impact on their family, friends, and their community. However, there are few resources for families and friends supporting loved ones using ice. This project is supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Health as part of the ongoing development of the Cracks in the Ice online toolkit (www.cracksintheice.org.au). The project aims to develop an online resilience and wellbeing program to support the families and friends of people who use methamphetamine. It is an exciting collaboration with Prof Richard Velleman, University of Bath and Mrs Gill Velleman, creators of the SAFE 5-Step Model for supporting affected family members and friends.

Positive Choices: Development of a national prevention portal to provide access to evidence-based online substance use prevention resources for school communities

In 2014, the Australian Government Department of Health funded the CREMS to develop Positive Choices (https://positivechoices.org.au/), an online portal to help school communities access evidence-based information to prevent substance use and related harms among adolescents. The portal was developed with input from teachers, parents and students across Australia and officially launched by Prime Minister Turnbull in December, 2015. In 2016, The Australian Government committed to four years of funding from 2016-2020 to support ongoing development and maintenance of the portal. This project represents a significant investment by The Australian Government in prevention of substance use problems among young Australians.
Alcohol and other drug use is a major concern in Australia, and despite a dearth of information about patterns of use in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth, the limited evidence available suggests these young people are at even greater risk. The current project, funded by The Australian Government Department of Health as part of ongoing development of the Positive Choices prevention portal, aims to develop a culturally appropriate alcohol and drug information and prevention portal for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to develop a culturally appropriate school-based drug prevention program based on the effective Climate Schools program. It is being conducted in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and stakeholders including A/Prof James Ward, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, University of South Australia and Gilimbaa, an Indigenous Creative Design Agency.

Alcohol use disorders account for 5% of the world’s burden of disease. Current treatments are very limited. While there is existing animal research, this NHMRC funded study (project grant) determines the benefits of a novel treatment, oxytocin nasal spray, to reduce cravings and drinking levels in dependent populations. Outcomes could establish a new, effective and safe treatment to manage alcohol dependence in the community.

PREMISE - NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Prevention and Early Intervention of Mental Illness and Substance Use

Substance use and mental disorders are among the leading causes of burden of disease in young people globally. The peak of this disability occurs in those aged 15-24 years old and corresponds with the typical period of onset of these problems. Funded by the NHMRC in late 2017 the PREMISE CRE will provide a world first synergy of the leading prevention and early intervention research and translation programs in mental health and addiction across five Australian universities (UNSW Sydney, University of Melbourne, University of Newcastle, Deakin University and University of Sydney), providing the opportunity for researchers currently working independently across diagnostic silos (addiction, depression, suicide, anxiety, psychosis) to share skills, networks and innovations, synergise data, establish new trials and translate evidence into practice. PREMISE will be funded from 2018-2022 and aims to facilitate a critical aim of the Australian Government’s program of reform in mental health and addiction.

Primary universal prevention of alcohol and drug use and related harms: An overview of reviews

Given the manifold detrimental health effects associated with alcohol and illicit drug use, considerable resources have been dedicated to preventing their use and related harms. Primary prevention strategies aim to halt or delay the onset of substance use and interrupt the transition to more serious use amongst occasional users. Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, this review was conducted in 2016 and technical report submitted to the Australian Government Department of Health in 2017. It aimed to review and summarise the literature on universal prevention of alcohol and drug use and related harms.

The RADAR project: Identifying early warning signals on the pathways to alcohol use disorder

Funded by the NHMRC in 2015, this 5-year project aims to investigate the development of alcohol use disorder among Australian adolescents. The first of its kind in the world, it will closely track the emergence of problematic alcohol use among a cohort of 18 year-old Australian adolescents to better understand developmental trajectories of alcohol related problems and to identify crucial windows for prevention and early intervention.

A randomised controlled trial of oxytocin nasal spray for alcohol dependence

Alcohol use disorders account for 5% of the world’s burden of disease. Current treatments are very limited. While there is existing animal research, this NHMRC funded study (project grant) determines the benefits of a novel treatment, oxytocin nasal spray, to reduce cravings and drinking levels in dependent populations. Outcomes could establish a new, effective and safe treatment to manage alcohol dependence in the community.
A randomised controlled trial of online versus telephone-based information and support: Can electronic platforms deliver effective care for lung cancer patients?

Telephone support lines can provide helpful informational, emotional and practical support for cancer patients via telephone-based or electronic platforms. However, very little rigorous research has been directed toward examining the efficacy of such services in improving outcomes. This study, funded by the NSW Cancer Council, examines whether: proactive telephone or online-delivered support produces outcomes superior to printed information; and if proactive online-delivered support produces outcomes comparable to proactive telephone support among outpatients with lung cancer.

The relationship between social phobia, depression and substance use disorders: The impact on treatment outcomes

This project, funded by the Australian Government and Australian Rotary Health (PhD scholarships), will use national data to explore the prevalence of mood and anxiety disorders among individuals with a substance use disorder in the general population, as well as investigate the correlates associated with this comorbidity. Using data obtained through the Activate Study, this project will also explore the impact of social phobia on the longitudinal outcomes of individuals with a substance use disorder and depression. It will provide important information to guide the timing and targeting of treatment for this population.

Scoping current practices and support needs of healthcare providers in Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Care Network (CESPHN) in relation to addressing patients' co-occurring mental health and alcohol and other drug issues

Funded through the Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network (CESPHN) this project aims to conduct a scoping exercise to evaluate the support needs of healthcare providers in the Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network (CESPHN) in working with co-occurring mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) issues among their patients, with a view to providing recommendations for workforce development and capacity building.

SHED-IT Recharge: Development and evaluation of a gender-tailored program designed to improve men's physical and mental health

Funded by the Hunter Medical Research Institute, Phase I of this study will investigate feasibility and efficacy of a self-help, gender-tailored weight loss program for male workers with or without the provision of additional program components targeting stress and mental health. Phase II of this study will test the efficacy of the SHED-IT: Recharge program to improve the physical and mental health of a community sample of overweight and obese men with depression.

Social well-being and engaged living (SWEL) intervention for Australian youth at risk of mental health and other adverse outcomes

Adolescence is a period of rapid physical, emotional and social growth. Many young people lack the socio-emotional skills to negotiate the transition through adolescence, and are at risk of disengaging from education, family and community. Funded by the NHMRC (project grant), this is the first clinical trial to investigate the efficacy of a telephone-delivered intervention for increasing social engagement, emotional health and well-being of disengaged rural and urban youth.
Understanding the comorbidity of depression and problematic substance use: A search for shared cognitive risk factors

This project, funded by the Australian Government and UNSW Sydney (PhD scholarships), aims to shed light on the comorbidity of depression and problematic substance use by untangling the longitudinal relationship between these disorders, and considering potential cognitive risk factors that underpin this comorbidity. Findings were based on data from the Australian Treatment Outcome Study and the Activate Study. The results suggest that the relationship between depression and substance use is cross-sectional in nature, rather than either disorder posing a risk for the other in the future, and that a cognitive construct known as repetitive negative thought may be implicated in the comorbidity between these disorders.

Untangling comorbidity: substance use and mental health in young Australians

Adolescence is a time when both mental health and substance use problems first emerge. This project, funded through the Australian Government and Australian Rotary Health (PhD scholarships), investigated the co-morbidity of mental health problems and substance use in young Australians. The study utilises both large epidemiological datasets to map the developmental sequence of anxiety and mood disorders and first alcohol use in the Australian population as well as longitudinal clinical trial data to determine when, how and why these problems occur together. This project was completed in 2017.
Update, development and translation of the National Comorbidity Guidelines

In 2014 the Centre of Research Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use was funded by the Australian Government Department of Health to update and revise the National Comorbidity Guidelines to bring them up to date with the most current evidence, and to develop an online training program for AOD workers to improve uptake and translation into clinical practice. The second edition of the Guidelines aim to provide alcohol and other drug workers with evidence-based information on the management of comorbid mental health conditions in alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment settings, and were launched in September 2016. Hard copies have been distributed to all AOD services and tertiary institutions across Australia. The online training program was released in November 2017, and will be officially launched in February 2018.

Using epidemiology to inform the prevention and early intervention of mental and substance use disorders in Australia

Over the last 5 years researchers at the CREMS have been analysing a number of large scale Australian population surveys to answer questions about the diagnosis, prevalence and correlates of mental and substance use disorders to better inform the timing and targeting of prevention and early intervention. These datasets include the 2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, The National Drug Strategy Household Surveys, and most recently, the second Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, which was conducted in 2013-2014.
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