

# Prevention Research Collaboration

Annual Report 2019-2020

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SYDNEY**



We acknowledge the tradition of custodianship and law of the Country on which the University of Sydney campuses stand. We pay our respects to those who have cared and continue to care for Country.



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# A message from the PRC Director and our Chair of PRC Strategic Advisory Board

## PRC Annual Report 2019-2020

The publication of our annual report is the occasion for celebrating past achievements and visualising future impact. In 17 years as a Prevention Research Collaboration, we have proven to be a progressive group that actively seeks out new and effective ways of working alongside policymakers and practitioners to make lasting contributions.

Our commitment to prevention work is reflected in our vision, 'Collaborative solutions towards a healthier world'. As you read through this report, you will see many examples of how closely the PRC stands by this vision, advancing collaborative research to inform evidence-based prevention policy and practice in New South Wales and globally.

This report pays tribute to the enormous contribution of Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman. As Director for over 15 years, Adrian has been integral to the PRC's successes and a mentor to many. Although he has transitioned to an Emeritus status Adrian remains strongly engaged in PRC research and strategic leadership.

In the past year, we have seen comprehensive collaboration in translational and policy- and practice-informing research through major programs such as PANORG (Physical Activity, Nutrition and Obesity Research Group), SPRINTER (Sport and Active Recreation Intervention & Epidemiology Research) and PRSP (Prevention Research Support Program). We co-conducted and celebrated many research and policy achievements with our partners EPOCH (Early Prevention of Childhood Obesity Centre for Research Excellence) and TAPPC (The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre).



During 2019-2020 we continued to foster the PRC's most valuable asset, its people. Our early and mid-career researchers have headlined a series of initiatives to strengthen our capability, cultivating a more agile and responsive leadership in prevention research and education. A snapshot of such initiatives follows in these pages.

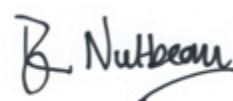
In this report we have tried to give a sense of where we have been and who we are. The PRC personifies a rich tapestry of researchers from diverse cultural backgrounds and disciplines. This is at the very heart of our personality and empathy, underpinning our research scholarship and effective engagement with our stakeholders.

To PRC staff we thank you for your commitment to prevention research and collaboration in the midst of challenging pandemic conditions. The inclusive and respectful way in which you work is impressive.

To our partners and collaborators, we invite you to read the following pages. You will have an idea of the sort of place PRC is and why it is fondly dubbed Hotel California! - words you'll hear often from staff and affiliates alike that express a genuine enduring connection with the PRC's vision and practice.



**Philayrath Phongsavan**  
Director, PRC



**Don Nutbeam**  
Chair, SAB, PRC

# In conversation with Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman AO

For over 30 years, Professor Adrian Bauman has been a driving force in efforts to promote the health benefits of physical activity for chronic disease prevention.

Adrian's research impact has been far-reaching, his dedication to preventing chronic disease has driven countless transformative research and policy changes, including among others the development of physical activity strategies, guidelines and surveillance systems across many countries. After 15 years at the helm, Adrian had stepped down as Director of Prevention Research Collaboration. In this conversation with his successor, A/Professor PH Phongsavan, Adrian reflected on the path his career has taken.

**You have many career highlights. Can you pinpoint 1 or 2 defining moments or key achievements that you would nominate as having a lasting impact on your career?**

“After my Masters of Public Health I applied for a job as a health educator with the Heart Foundation and a very kind medical director of the Heart Foundation then called Paul Magnus said ‘I’m not going to give you the job ‘cause I think you should be a researcher and go on and do a PhD.’ That was a fork in the road. It was a clear pathway where I would have gone down one route and he made a decision that influenced my life in very positive ways for which I am eternally grateful. In terms of career highlights, a career in public health is a roller coaster of political, policy, publication and grant successes and then failures in all of those areas and the complexity of working in public health is that all too often can occur in the same day. All the positives and all the negatives. So, my career highlights, in principles were, developing program evaluation skills, doing community wide program evaluations, changing the field towards sitting time and sedentary behaviour and then changing it back again, when we realised that it was largely attributable to physical activity not being present.”



**Program evaluation is one of your research passions. What is the most interesting evaluation you've ever undertaken and why was it the most interesting?**

“The one that was probably most interesting I never published about was the Illawarra physical activity program which was in about 2002. We developed a community-wide intervention, a mass media campaign, a general practice strategy, a whole-of-government in that municipality task force and we implemented all that stuff, and we made physical activity change. That was my best example of a community-wide program really working using the whole system that I've ever achieved.”

**You are close to notching up 900 peer-reviewed papers. What is your most significant publication to date or one that you are most proud of?**

“As an epidemiological scientist in part of my work I was really pleased to always critically appraise what I do. When we developed the initial epidemiological evidence that showed that sitting was associated with health outcomes, gradually I started doing two or three papers several of them in Denmark and Norway showing that the disbenefits of prolonged sitting were offset by being physically active. In other words, if you were physically active sitting did not pose a risk factor and we did two or three papers there. Then in the 2016 Lancet series we did a meta-analysis that culminated in that work and reset the field when we initiated the field about 10 years earlier. So, it’s about being a good scientist that is self-reflective, self-critical and I was delighted to find evidence that was different to what I’ve been thinking and believing for a while.”



From left: Lesley King, Adrian Bauman, Margaret Thomas and Julie-Anne Mitchell

**Reflecting on your earlier years, were there particular periods in your life and/or individuals who had influenced your public health decisions?**

“Quite a few. When I was a child and an adolescent and thinking about what I wanted to do with my life, my father was a very important influence. He was an academic historian and I saw what an academic did, he sat at his typewriter all day writing books and writing papers and saying ‘I’m doing research.’ One of his old school friends from primary school and high school was a man called Sid Sax who was a seminal thinker in health services and developed public health in Australia. I met Sid many times when I was a kid, just talking about what he did. Along the road, probably three or four people have been seminal in influencing me, at Sydney University, Charles Kerr and John Pearce in my very early years. At the University of NSW, Ian Webster, in setting up the field laboratory in Liverpool in Southwestern Sydney

Area Health Service (now South West Sydney LHD) where I worked for a number of years.”

**You have supervised at least 80 PhD students. What is your philosophy or approach to PhD supervision? What makes a good supervisor/supervisee relationship?**

“I’m absolutely not influenced by the rule book, or the protocol or best practice. Each PhD student is a unique person, coming with a set of skills, a set of interests and reasons for doing a PhD. And my job as a supervisor is to give them an experience and get them out with a PhD. If they are quantitative I’ll direct their PhD in that direction, if they write well I’ll get them to do writing things, if they don’t write well and are not quantitative, I’ll help them a lot more. So, first of all, it’s a very variable thing and secondly, the most excellent ones challenge me all the time. They actually make me think about things that question my assumptions on things and that’s been one of the pleasures along the way. But amongst my PhD students there’s a whole spectrum of abilities and capacities. There’s no one set of rules or one set of criteria that I think they should do or I should do as a supervisor to mentor them, it’s individual based.”

**What was your biggest regret and what did you learn from it?**

“Probably three or four things are regrets and one of them is going to sound as though it shouldn’t be a regret. One regret I have is my most published paper, in fact, the most cited paper in physical activity ever. Which was the International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ), a global effort to develop a physical activity surveillance measure for countries to use for standardising population surveys in all countries. It’s been used tens of thousands of times in clinical settings, in small scale settings, in inappropriate settings and I regret that we didn’t



In June 2021, Adrian was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for his distinguished service to public health, to the prevention of chronic disease, and to tertiary education.

put more caveats around it. We said it's a population measure but it hasn't been used as that so that's one, curious, kind of regret.

Another kind is I've probably gotten an unpublished drawer of 30 or 40 papers that I never published. I never got time to do or got around to and I was doing plenty of publishing so that it wasn't the worry but some of those were really nice papers and I regret them. The third thing is a little tricky. In my career, I taught over 200 units of study, 200 independent semester long courses and that was probably a little bit much, I probably regret doing quite that much. One hundred individual units of study would have been enough teaching 'cause no one remembers that you did all that teaching and I could have spent a little more time doing research management. But none of these are major regrets but they're just things I think about from time to time and reflecting on. I've been very fortunate in my career and I've enjoyed the ride albeit working probably harder than many academics to achieve that."



### What advice would you give your younger self knowing what you now know?

"Probably I wouldn't have listened to myself if my older self gave the younger self advice 'cause my younger self thought I would maintain a job by doing lots of teaching and he was right. I got into the system by teaching a whole bunch of courses early and then I became useful to the public health system and the School of Public Health, so in that sense he wouldn't

have listened to me. The 30 or 40 unpublished papers, he would have said 'I'm busy, I'm tired, I've got to deal with the children.' IPAQ was a very good idea in principle because we got a WHO consensus, we've got multiple countries involved in developing and testing it, it was an excellent idea. We were just misinterpreted by many academics around the world."

### The PRC has been a prominent part of your leadership. When you are cycling in the French Alps how will that compare with your experience in the PRC?

"The PRC was a sheltered workshop shielding the people in the PRC from the vagaries of university rules and regulations and nested within the School of Public Health that was a wonderful place to be. I'm just delighted to have had an association with the School of Public health for more than 35 years. It's been a pleasure and a very good place and more recently within the Charles Perkins Centre that's also been a very interesting trans Faculty, transdisciplinary experiment which we in public health do. In that regard, I'm pleased that PRC was able to co-locate within that (Charles Perkins Centre)."

### You have dubbed the PRC 'Hotel California'. Can you explain what you mean by this?

"'you can check out anytime you like but you can never leave' is a line in the Eagle's 1980s song, Hotel California. We've had a number of people leave the PRC or 'check out' and return to PRC a year, three years or even a decade later, therefore they never really leave and that's really been part of our research family feeling. It's been a pleasure to work in PRC and just because I've currently checked out of being on the university payroll it doesn't mean I've left the PRC at all for the next decade or more."

### Adrian, thank you very much for your time today it's been a real pleasure chatting with you.

"Absolute pleasure PH."

To watch the full interview, go to the Prevention Research Collaboration website

– [sydney.edu.au/medicine-health/our-research/research-centres/prevention-research-collaboration.html](https://sydney.edu.au/medicine-health/our-research/research-centres/prevention-research-collaboration.html)



“You can check out anytime you like but you can never leave’ Hotel California by the Eagles. PRC are a family where just like the song, people may ‘check out’ for a while but they tend to return to our PRC family, so never truly leave.”

Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman

# Mission statement



## Our vision

- Collaborative solutions towards a healthier world



## Our mission

- We provide leadership in research, evaluation and education to fight chronic disease



## Our values

- Accountable
- Transparent
- Independent
- Relevant
- Responsive
- Solutions-focused



## Our personality

- Connected
- Collaborative
- Committed
- Innovative
- Influential
- Strategic

**Obesity** Health promotion  
 Measurements  
**Citizen science**  
 Nutrition  
**Mixed-methods**  
 Mass media campaigns  
**Physical activity** **Social media** **Scaling up** **Practice** **Surveillance** **Tobacco control**  
**Policy** **Epidemiology** **Sport** **Evaluation** **Built environment**  
 Social epidemiology  
**Systems thinking**  
**Implementation science**  
 Active living  
**Behavioural research** **Reviews** **Natural experiments**

## Two years at a glance



**\$6.3 million**

in grant funding  
and income



**341**

Peer-reviewed  
publications



**450+**

Students taught



**250+**

Training and capacity  
building participants



**52**

Staff and affiliates



**45**

Honours, MPhil and  
PhD students supervised



Seminars and talks with PRC researchers  
and international experts

## Meet some of our researchers



**Professor William (Bill) Bellew**  
Professorial Fellow

Bill's extensive career has included pioneering work developing the health-promoting school model, managing national projects for England's prevention agency, working as Director of the Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention at NSW Department of Health, working as a global consultant in tobacco control for Bloomberg, and consulting for the WHO at global and regional levels.

With over 20 years' experience in strategy and regulatory framework development, policy analysis, program planning and evaluation, and teaching in public health, Bill's main focus is the prevention of non-communicable diseases. He has examined strategic approaches through 'settings' as well as through social marketing and mass media.

Bill's key interests include promotion of increased physical activity and reduced sedentary behaviour as well as obesity prevention and tobacco control. He is interested in strengthening systems and interventions to increase the uptake of evidence by policymakers and the translation of evidence into more effective, sustainable policies and interventions.

Visit <https://www.sydney.edu.au/medicine-health/our-research/research-centres/prevention-research-collaboration.html> to view our special interview with Professor Bill Bellew and his thoughts on public health leadership development, mentoring and coaching.



**Dr Lindsey Reece**  
Senior Research Fellow

Lindsey has extensive experience in applied research and evaluation, specialising in physical activity, sport and public health. Within her role she is also the Academic Director of the Sport and Active Recreation Intervention & Epidemiology Research (SPRINTER) group – a policy-focused research group in partnership with the NSW Government Office of Sport.

A capable strategist and confident thought-leader, Lindsey is happiest and at her best when managing numerous projects across a portfolio of highly complex, multi-sector programs. She is a global leader in the field, and is on the International Society for Physical Activity and Health advocacy board, and Australasian Society for Physical Activity executive committee.

At the forefront of a paradigm shift, Lindsey's work focuses on re-defining the meaning and value of sport, working at the intersection of academia, policy, and practice. Lindsey's research focuses on the promotion of physical activity and sport at a population level to promote health and wellbeing.



**Dr Thanh-Binh Nguyen-Duy**  
Research Fellow, Policy and Practice

Binh is part of the Physical Activity Nutrition Obesity Research Group (PANORG), conducting policy-relevant research and evaluation projects relating to physical activity, nutrition and obesity prevention, and is committed to providing evidence to support and inform public health policy and practice.

Binh is passionate about pursuing research that improves population health. Several of Binh's studies have received national and global media coverage, and her work has been cited in the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Clinical Protocol 2018, US Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee Scientific Report 2018, and the NHMRC Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Management of Overweight and Obesity in Adults, Adolescents and Children 2013.

Binh's research interests include chronic disease prevention focused on lifestyle risk factors and contributing gender-specific evidence for cardiovascular disease prevention. Her PhD examined innovative aspects of cardiovascular risk in an Australian population of middle-aged and older adults, with a special focus on potential gender differences and behaviours specific to women.



**Professor Ben Smith**  
Professor of Public Health (Prevention and Health Promotion)

Ben re-joined the PRC in 2018, after 12 years at Monash University. His new position is jointly supported by Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD), with a focus on developing collaborative research and translation projects that address prevention priorities in WSLHD. Ben's current role utilises his extensive experience in health promotion program management, evaluation and capacity building.

Ben sits on the Strategic Advisory Board for the PRC, is an Associate Editor of Public Health Research and Practice, a Board Director for Healthy Male, and a member of the Scientific Advisory Committee for the national Ending Loneliness Together initiative.

Ben has worked with a broad range of government and non-government agencies to generate evidence that can be readily applied in the contexts where services and programs are delivered. His research has examined physical activity interventions in health care settings and communities, the influence of the mass media upon beliefs and behaviours, and organisational capacity for evaluation.

**Dr Margaret Thomas**

Senior Research Fellow, Policy and Practice

Margaret has worked in public health and health promotion research and evaluation for over 25 years, including teaching and capacity building. Margaret has worked in a local health area, at the NSW Health Department managing state-wide research and evaluation in health promotion and disease prevention, as an evaluation consultant in the private sector, and as a public health academic. Margaret and her colleagues in the Physical Activity Nutrition Obesity Research Group (PANORG) work closely with the NSW Ministry of Health to provide evidence for population health policy and planning.

Margaret is a quantitative and qualitative researcher and evaluator with an interest in chronic disease prevention interventions, particularly for diet and physical activity. Her research has focused on understanding and addressing socioeconomic health inequalities, and evaluation of health promotion mass media and social marketing campaigns.

**Associate Professor Becky Freeman**

Associate Professor, Public Health

Becky's research interests include tobacco control, food advertising, and how online and social media influence public health. Partnerships with community agencies are essential to her research goals. Becky currently serves as an expert advisor to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on how to monitor and regulate evolving tobacco industry advertising practices. Prior to pursuing her research interests in Australia, Becky worked for both government and not for profit organisations in Canada and New Zealand. You can follow her on Twitter @DrBFreeman

Exposing how commercial determinants negatively impact public health and stall effective policy advances is a common theme in Becky's work.



# Research in action

## The Australian Systems Approach to Physical Activity (ASAPa)

The Australian Systems Approach to Physical Activity (ASAPa) project is a 4-year study funded by the Medical Research Future Fund (through the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre), to gather evidence to guide a whole-of-systems approach to physical activity promotion in Australia.

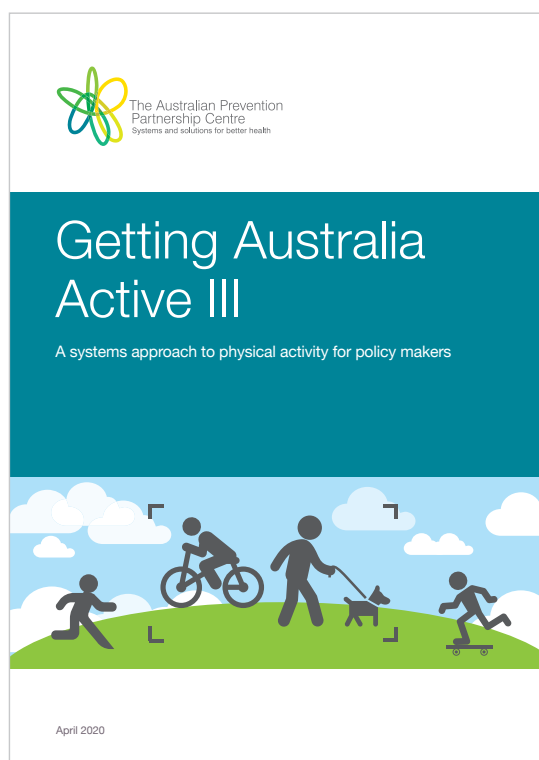
Led by Adrian Bauman, the project team includes Bill Bellew, Ben Smith, Tracy Nau and Karen Lee. Together, the team brings diverse skills including public policy research, law, epidemiology, program design and evaluation, scale up and implementation science, and settings and systems approaches to prevention. The project is being undertaken collaboratively with the National Physical Activity Network

and stakeholders from different sectors, and has international linkages with the WHO and global physical activity policy projects.

The program of research has included an audit and analysis of physical activity policies, programs and prevalence monitoring systems across Australia; co-creation of a conceptual systems map for physical activity; and development of the widely disseminated and

well-received report *Getting Australia Active III: A systems approach to physical activity for policy makers*. Recent research has focused on investigating legal mechanisms for physical activity, and understanding how systems approaches are being understood and applied around the world to promote physical activity.

**Ms Tracy Nau**



“I have used [Getting Australia Active III] so many times already in so many settings. Fantastic!”

**Senior policy maker,**  
State Health Department

“As with any policy proposal [a national physical activity strategy is] as much about the science and the art of negotiation, timing and leadership. I’ve been really looking at the work of ASAPa, it’s been really useful.”

**Senior policy maker,**  
Commonwealth Health Department



# Research in action

## Citizen Science in Prevention

Dr Yvonne Laird and Professor Ben Smith from the PRC are conducting the Citizen Science in Prevention Project which aims to explore how citizen science approaches (i.e. those which actively engage the public in the research process) can be embedded into policy and practice in prevention.

Yvonne is co-leading the project in partnership with researchers at the Menzies Centre for Health Policy and Economics, and policy and practice stakeholders from Wellbeing South Australia, VicHealth, South Western Local Health District, and the Department of Health Tasmania. The project is funded by the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre.

The Project seeks to understand the potential of citizen science to meaningfully engage the public in research and decision making in prevention, harness novel

and/or hard to reach data, and mobilise public support for action in prevention. Part of this involves understanding how citizen science can be used in policy and practice settings, including the barriers and facilitators to the use of these approaches, resource and capacity needs, and impacts for policy makers, practitioners and members of the public.

The team is supporting project partners across Australia to lead a range of prevention projects using a citizen science approach including monitoring unhealthy

industry advertising (VicHealth); understanding and promoting active living in rural Tasmania (Tasmanian Department of Health); evaluating community gardens (Wellbeing SA); and understanding perceptions and experiences of changing urban environments (South West Sydney Local Health District).

Our current project partners are Menzies Centre for Health Policy and Economics, Wellbeing South Australia, VicHealth, SWSLHD, Department of Health Tasmania and University of Tasmania.

### Citizen Science in Prevention Community of Practice

The Project recently launched a Community of Practice for people who are interested in using citizen science approaches in prevention. The Community of Practice aims to share insights, learnings and experiences and build capacity in using citizen science approaches in prevention.

The Community of Practice meets bimonthly, alternating between workshops and invited speaker sessions. Workshops are currently limited to project partners however invited speaker sessions will be open to a broader audience. Interested persons can find out more about the Community of Practice by contacting Dr Yvonne Laird ([yvonne.laird@sydney.edu.au](mailto:yvonne.laird@sydney.edu.au)).

**Dr Yvonne Laird**



## Research in action

# Covid-19 and physical inactivity: A tale of two pandemics

In the past year, the COVID-19 Pandemic has significantly impacted public health, social life and the economy around the world.



While restrictions, such as lockdowns and travel bans, are effective in reducing infections, they could lead to unintended negative consequences, such as delayed cancer screening, poorer mental health, and reduced physical activity.

Physical inactivity has been considered a global pandemic, affecting a large proportion of the world's population with substantial health and economic consequences. Being physically active is particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic because physical activity not only prevents future chronic diseases, but also boosts immune function and helps maintain mental health and wellbeing.

On 23 March 2020, Australia introduced the initial lockdown, which lasted for nearly two months. During this time, non-essential travel was prohibited, gyms and sports clubs were closed, while exercising outdoors remained permitted under 'essential activities'. Based on Google Trends data during the lockdown period, our research found a historically high online search interest in topics related to exercise, particularly in home-based exercise in three countries of interest: Australia, USA, and the UK. While there was a concurrent increasing interest in TV shows, the proportionate increases in exercise while accounting for TV shows were highly significant across all three countries. Our research suggests that COVID-19 lockdowns may have nudged more people to be physically active, possibly as a result of:

1. more discretionary time or time at home,
2. increasing health awareness during the pandemic, and
3. public health messages and policies (e.g., considering outdoor exercise as essential activities) that explicitly encouraged the public to be physically active.

The PRC team later extended the study by using population-level data in China and the USA (currently under review), and found a sharp drop in step counts in Shanghai residents in response to the initial lockdown in December 2019, followed by a slow but steady recovery. Our analysis of the data from the USA showed less fluctuation, possibly due to the lack of stringent lockdowns at the national level. Data from both China and the USA suggest that those who were habitually active before the lockdown were more likely to sustain high levels of physical activity during the lockdown. Altogether, findings from these studies highlight the importance of continuing to promote physical activity. The public health communities should consider leveraging the COVID-19 pandemic as a unique opportunity to promote physical activity at the population level.

**Associate Professor Melody Ding**

# Research in action

## Understanding and addressing social isolation and loneliness

Over the past 5–10 years there has been an upswell in epidemiological evidence that both loneliness (subjective dissatisfaction with relationship quality) and social isolation (absence of social connection) are independent contributors to cardiovascular disease, depression and all-cause mortality.



This has drawn attention to these issues as important and neglected public health determinants. In addition to direct health impacts, there is growing evidence that the availability and quality of social networks (as distinct from various types of social support) influences adherence to health protective behaviours, such as physical activity.

Recognising the need to support policy and practice to address social isolation and loneliness, and better understand and harness the influence of social networks for health promotion, numerous researchers in the PRC are engaged in studies to investigate these issues including Prof Ben Smith, A/Prof PH Phongsavan, A/Prof Melody Ding,

Dr Karine Manera, Dr Katherine Owen and PhD candidates Daniel Surkalim and Neta Hagani. External collaborators include Prof Dafna Merom from Western Sydney University and Dr Michelle Lim from Swinburne University of Technology. Several epidemiological projects are underway, using data from large longitudinal studies, including the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) study, UK Biobank, and 45 and Up Study. These are investigating the measurement, prevalence, distribution, predictors and outcomes of loneliness and/or social isolation. The use of large data sets is enabling examination of how the antecedents and consequences of loneliness and isolation vary across

socio-demographic groups, and the interactions between these conditions and health behaviours.

In the area of intervention research, Prof Ben Smith is a member of an investigator group conducting a trial of an online platform to promote neighbourhood connections and network building, being undertaken in Australia, the US and UK. He and Dr Karine Manera are building partnerships in Western Sydney Local Health District with health and community services to develop and evaluate social prescription interventions. This approach, which is well established in the UK, involves health care providers referring their patients and clients to community-based programs to build social connection and to facilitate lasting physical and mental well-being.

During the latter part of 2020 researchers across the PRC with an interest in these issues have come together to form a social health research group. This will provide a space to foster collaboration and project development in this emerging frontier of prevention research and practice.

**Professor Ben Smith**

# Research in action

## Physical Activity Nutrition Obesity Research Group (PANORG)

The Physical Activity Nutrition Obesity Research Group (PANORG) is part of the PRC and is funded by the NSW Ministry of Health under the Research Program for Physical Activity, Nutrition and Obesity Prevention (RPPANOP).

In 2018 we tendered successfully for the new program which runs from 2019-2023. The program aims to generate high-quality policy-relevant research, maximise the use of research evidence, and build the research capability of policy makers and practitioners.

PANORG has been very productive in the first two years of the new funding period, despite the impacts of COVID-19. Working collaboratively with the Centre for Population Health, NSW Ministry of Health, PANORG continues to deliver within the agreed Program of Work that supports evidence-based policy development for healthy eating, physical activity and obesity prevention.

This work program comprises of projects generated by the Ministry, and also policy-relevant research developed by PANORG staff in collaboration with other PRC staff and RPPANOP partners. Our recent work has encompassed policy-relevant rapid literature reviews, evaluation design and implementation, secondary analysis of NSW Health's Population Health Survey and other service data, and research and evaluation capacity-building for Local Health District (LHD) health promotion staff.

### Literature reviews on policy relevant topics

PANORG have recently undertaken several rapid evidence reviews, including:

- New developments in the prevention of obesity among children 0-18 years
- Implementing policies to increase the availability and promotion of healthy food and drink delivered at scale: barriers and enablers
- School meal provision to address food insecurity
- Effectiveness of numeric energy menu labelling and alternative formats and/or content
- Healthy eating and active living, and education related outcomes in children and adolescents.





### Evaluation of NSW Health chronic disease prevention policies and programs

Leonie Cranney has led PANORG’s research for the Evaluation of the Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework and is undertaking a PhD on the work. PANORG worked with the Ministry on the design and implementation of five separate research projects, and one paper has already been published showing strong support by staff and visitors for removing sugar-sweetened beverages from food retail outlets in NSW health facilities.

We continue to undertake secondary analysis of NSW Health’s Population Health Survey data, with papers recently published on two policy-relevant data analysis projects, and two more analysis projects underway.

Bronwyn McGill is leading a project analysing data from the NSW Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service ‘Get Healthy in Pregnancy’ (GHiP) module to understand the association between program engagement and its effects on the trajectory of weight gain of GHiP participants.

### Capacity building for local health promotion staff in research and evaluation

Our four PANORG staff have been working closely with staff from several LHD Health Promotion Services/Units to build capacity for prevention research in health promotion practice. Both Nepean Blue Mountains and South Eastern Sydney have had one staff member complete a 3-5 month, one-day/week secondment with the PRC. They have worked closely with the PANORG team to develop an evaluation plan for a local project and undertake other research tasks such as a literature review or data analysis. Following the secondment, PANORG has provided ongoing ad hoc support to the secondees as needed until they complete their local evaluation project.

PANORG is also supporting South Eastern Sydney and South Western Sydney LHDs on team-based health promotion evaluation and research projects, providing advice and direction on evaluation design and implementation. All projects and secondments are approved by the Centre for Population Health before commencement.

In addition, PANORG has undertaken two capacity building workshops for health promotion staff in two LHDs about program theory and program logic modelling for evaluations.

### Dissemination of PANORG work

PANORG is committed to sharing the results of all work. In addition to several reports prepared for the Ministry, the group has published 10 peer-reviewed journal articles related to the work program during this program funding period, with a number of other papers submitted or currently under preparation.

PANORG has also presented its work to NSW Health and NSW Department of Education stakeholders, as well as to national and international conferences, including the International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity conferences in 2019 and 2020.

### Dr Margaret Thomas

# Research in action

## Evaluating the effectiveness of health campaigns that use digital channels

The Prevention Research Collaboration has extensive experience evaluating public health mass media campaigns for government and non-government organisations. One of the key challenges organisations increasingly face is in understanding and evaluating the impact of campaigns run on digital channels such as social media and online advertising.

Dr Blythe O’Hara, Dr Becky Freeman, Prof Adrian Bauman and PhD candidate Lilian Chan from the PRC are collaborating with several partner organisations in evaluation studies of campaigns that use digital channels, and to better understand what digital engagement with these campaigns means for preventive behaviour outcomes.

### The Shisha No Thanks project

Together with the UNSW Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity, the PRC is conducting two innovative studies to evaluate the Cancer Institute NSW funded Shisha No Thanks project, which aims to raise awareness of the harms of waterpipe smoking.

The first study involves pre- and post- surveys with an SMS community panel of young people to assess changes in awareness and community conversation on the topic of harms of waterpipe smoking. For the second study, the team is conducting a content analysis of Facebook comments posted to the Shisha No Thanks campaign video which went ‘viral’, to determine whether the huge online response represented people who took on board the campaign message.

### Stillbirth prevention

The PRC has been providing evaluation expertise to the Centre for Research Excellence in Stillbirth for two stillbirth awareness-raising campaigns that make extensive use of digital channels. The evaluation findings of the initial pilot state-based campaign, Movements Matter, helped inform the recently launched national campaign, Still Six Lives. The evaluation team is working with the ad agencies to collect process evaluation measures to also help determine which media channels contribute to the campaign’s impact.

### Healthy Lunch Box

Cancer Council NSW’s Healthy Lunch Box initiative provides practical advice to parents about how to prepare healthy lunches for their children, and is promoted through social media, e-newsletters and websites. The PRC is working with Cancer Council NSW to conduct focus groups to understand why some people engage with Healthy Lunch Box material on social media, while others do not; and whether such engagement is linked to behavioural changes.

The overarching aim of these projects is to help organisations understand the impact of their mass media campaigns in the ever-changing and fragmented digital media landscape.

“Digital channels, such as social media, online advertising and TV streaming ads, are fast becoming the main way of reaching the general public, and health organisations need to move and adapt to where people are at. To do that, as a public health community, we need to know how best to use digital channels to promote a message, so that valuable resources are allocated most effectively.”

**Lilian Chan, PhD candidate**



# Research in action

## Sport and Active Recreation INTERvention and Epidemiology Research (SPRINTER)

### Understanding COVID-19 impacts on children's physical activity

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated social inequalities, with disadvantaged communities and culturally and linguistically diverse communities impacted disproportionately. These inequalities are also strongly related to sport and physical activity participation. As we become accustomed to a "new normal" it is essential to understand how COVID-19 influenced population participation in physical activity and sport.

In collaboration with the NSW Government Office of Sport, the Sport & Recreation Intervention & Epidemiology Research (SPRINTER) Group developed a method to optimise their ongoing evaluation research of the NSW Government's Active Kids program, to understand the impact of COVID-19 on families, and provide evidence-based insights to inform strategic decisions in the post COVID-19 environment.

In total, 16,177 parents/carers responded to our online survey on behalf of children and adolescents for the 3-month period June–August 2020 in NSW. Since the COVID-19 restrictions, most respondents reported that children's physical activity levels had decreased (a lot 31%, a little 39%), with the decrease most notable amongst adolescents aged 12 years or over. This decline in children's physical activity was not observed in 2018 and 2019; in fact, increases in children's physical activity levels were observed previously, independent of socio-demographic characteristics.

COVID-19 also influenced the setting for undertaking activity, with most children being active at home (82%), whilst a large proportion went to public spaces (52%). Most children's screen time increased (a lot 48%, a little 37%). Children from higher socioeconomic areas had greater increases in screen time than did those from lower socioeconomic areas.

Active Kids is a NSW Government led voucher program aimed at increasing structured physical activity participation outside of school by reducing the cost barrier. More than 1.2 million school aged children (4.5–18 years old) are potentially eligible for the vouchers. SPRINTER led the design of the Active Kids evaluation framework, and have research data from one of the largest cohorts of children and young people globally.

Our findings suggest that COVID-19 influenced children's physical activity, but did so differentially across socioeconomic strata. Left unchecked, these short-term negative impacts on inequalities associated with physical activity could threaten a further deterioration in global inactivity rates. SPRINTER continues to strengthen its partnership with the NSW Office of Sport and our sport and physical activity partners, to ensure more Australians are more active, more often.

**Dr Lindsey Reece**





## Policy advice

Our evidence reviews relating to obesity prevention, healthy eating and active living among children and adolescents have been used to inform messaging and engagement by the NSW Ministry of Health with the NSW Department of Education on strategic priorities and planning for programs, including planning for the co-development of a state-wide intervention for secondary schools.

The findings of mapping work undertaken by the Australian Systems Approaches to Physical Activity (ASAPa) project to understand existing policies and programs for physical activity in Australia, have been used to inform the development of a national physical activity strategy.

The evidence-based guide 'Getting Australia Active III' developed by the ASAPa project and launched in April 2020, has been used nationally by policy makers to support policy and practice for a whole-of-system approach to promoting population physical activity.

Our evaluation of tobacco control campaigns led by the Cancer Institute NSW, has contributed to the development and implementation of state-wide tobacco control campaigns.

Our Intervention Scalability Assessment Tool (ISAT), published on the websites of the NSW Ministry and the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre, has also been provided to policy agencies including:

- NSW Ministry of Health, Integrated Care Team
- Better Care Victoria
- University of NSW, Kirby Institute
- NSW Office of Preventive Health

SPRINTER was invited to join the steering group to guide the development of the [Future Directions 2019-2022 strategy](#), a plan for the entire sport and active recreation sector. As identified in the strategy, SPRINTER will play a key role in the strategy's implementation.

The results of our literature review on the reach and impact of Parkrun, were adapted for use by Parkrun Global in their planning.





Our Domains of Partnership tool was used by Quit Tasmania’s Social Marketing Program Working Group to evaluate their partnership, which aims to develop, implement and evaluate Quit Tasmania’s social marketing program.

Our rapid evidence review ([prepared by Dr Binh Nguyen and Dr Margaret Thomas](#)) on barriers and enablers to implementing healthy food and drink policies at scale, aimed to guide the NSW Ministry of Health in the development and implementation of future policies to increase the availability and promotion of healthy food and drinks.

- <https://preventioncentre.org.au/news/is-working-in-partnership-worth-it/>

Our evaluation reports of The Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health Facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework have been used to inform ongoing implementation in all NSW hospitals and health facilities.

Throughout 2019 and 2020 SPRINTER, in partnership with the Office of Sport led whole-of-government consultations to inform the development of the NSW Physical Activity Strategy. and will continue to work closely with Office of Sport to deliver the strategy.

SPRINTER led an evidence review which informed the design of the Office of Sport women in sport strategy, *Her Sport Her Way*. SPRINTER has designed the evaluation of the strategy, including a bespoke evaluation of the strategy’s grant program, and has delivered training to build the evaluation capacity of over 35 sport and recreation organisations. SPRINTER continue to support policy, ministerial briefings and other activities and outputs associated with the strategy and its grant program.

Regular presentations on the latest Active Kids program data to Treasury and Premier and Cabinet and other government representatives, by Dr Lindsey Reece (SPRINTER’s director and member of the Active Kids executive steering group and advisory committee) informs the ongoing delivery of this multi-million dollar program.

# Education and capacity building

## 2019–2020 Teaching

PRC staff members are active contributors to teaching and capacity building in the School of Public Health and beyond. In 2019–2020, their contributions included the following.

### University of Sydney teaching

Course/unit name	Staff member	Role
Disease Prevention and Health Promotion	Philayrath Phongsavan	Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor
	James Kite	Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor
	Yvonne Laird	Tutor
	Bronwyn McGill	Tutor
	Anne Grunseit	Tutor/Lecturer
	Margaret Thomas	Tutor/Lecturer
	Karen Lee	Tutor
	Daniel Surkalim	Tutor
	Lucy Corbett	Tutor
	Leonie Cranney	Tutor
	Karine Manera	Tutor
	Adrian Bauman	Lecturer
	Lindsey Reece	Lecturer
	Melanie Crane	Lecturer
Elly Howse	Tutor	
Tobacco control in the 21st Century	Becky Freeman	Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor
	Lewis Keane	Tutor
	Christina Watts	Lecturer/Tutor
	James Kite	Lecturer
	Putu Ayu Swandewi Astuti	Lecturer
	Abby Smith	Lecturer
Public Health Program Evaluation	Anne Grunseit	Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor
	Justin Richards	Lecturer
	Adrian Bauman	Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor
MD Population Health	James Kite	Seminar co-ordinator/lecturer
	Yvonne Laird	Lecturer
	Ben Smith	Lecturer
	Thanh-Binh Nguyen-Duy	Lecturer
	Christina Watts	Lecturer
Pharmacy Services and Public Health	James Kite	Lecturer
	Philayrath Phongsavan	Lecturer
Graduate Diploma in Indigenous Health Promotion	James Kite	Lecturer
	Philayrath Phongsavan	Lecturer
Graduate Diploma in Indigenous Health Promotion	James Kite	Lecturer
	Philayrath Phongsavan	Lecturer
Public Health Capstone/Special Projects	James Kite	Supervisor
	Melanie Crane	Supervisor
	Christina Watts	Supervisor
	Thanh-Binh Nguyen-Duy	Supervisor
	Becky Freeman	Supervisor
	Philayrath Phongsavan	Supervisor
	Adrian Bauman	Supervisor
	Melody Ding	Supervisor
	Bronwyn McGill	Supervisor
	Yvonne Laird	Supervisor
	Stephanie Partridge	Supervisor
	Karine Manera	Supervisor
	Ben Smith	Supervisor

Course/unit name	Staff member	Role
Lifestyle and Chronic Disease Prevention	Yvonne Laird Philayrath Phongsavan Adrian Bauman Bill Bellew Stephanie Partridge Limin Buchanan Becky Freeman Melody Ding	Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor Lecturer/tutor Lecturer/tutor Lecturer/tutor Tutor Lecturer Lecturer
Chronic Disease Prevention and Control	Yvonne Laird Adrian Bauman	Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor
Public Health Advocacy	Becky Freeman	Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor
Climate Change and Public Health	Melody Ding Melanie Crane	Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor Lecturer
Introduction to Biostatistics	Katherine Owen Mengyun Luo	Tutor Tutor
Physical Activity and Population Health	Daniel Surkalim Melanie Crane Adrian Bauman	Co-ordinator/lecturer/tutor Lecturer Lecturer
Sustainable Development and Population Health	Daniel Surkalim Melanie Crane	Tutor Lecturer
Community and Public Health Nutrition unit of the Masters in Nutrition and Dietetics	Becky Freeman	Lecturer
Health Challenges: Physical Inactivity	Emmanuel Stamatakis	Co-ordinator/lecturer



# Spotlight on PhD candidates

Micro insights into a PhD journey from some of our current and future researchers.



## Dr Bronwyn McGill

**Evaluating a weight loss maintenance program for Australian private health insurance members with chronic disease**

I completed a PhD evaluating a secondary prevention weight loss maintenance program offered to private health insurance members in 2020. Although I had worked at the PRC as a research assistant prior to starting my PhD, I had limited understanding or expectations of how to complete the research needed to write a thesis. I was fortunate to be well supported every step of the way and drew on and learnt from people with a wealth of experience and knowledge within the PRC. My supervisors, colleagues and fellow-PhD students provided a friendly, quirky and flexible working environment, conducive to building the necessary research skills.

**“Although the PhD journey was essentially about becoming a better researcher, it was much more: building confidence, resilience, and networks to carry forward into the next stage of my career.”**



## Christina Watts

**Tobacco industry interference in supply-side policies in Australia**

My PhD research broadly investigated the tobacco industry’s tactics to interfere, influence and undermine supply-side (retail) tobacco control policies, and explored the implications for future tobacco retail reforms. I gathered quite a lot of new insights into how tobacco companies market their products and drive sales within Australia’s restrictive legislative environment, many of which were surprising and covert.

Reflecting on my PhD journey, it was an incredibly rewarding experience. I have formed connections and friendships with leaders in my field, conducted and published exciting and policy-relevant research, and gained invaluable skills in research, writing, presenting, and media communications – just to name a few!

**“To help stay motivated and on track, I think it’s really important to research topics that you are truly passionate about and interested in. Doing a PhD will not come without its challenges, but if your research excites you, the process will be enjoyable and motivating.”**



### **Daniel Surkalim**

#### **Loneliness in the Millennium: A Profile of Loneliness and Interventions Across the Lifespan**

My PhD looks at loneliness across the lifespan, aiming to establish it as a health epidemic. It seeks to serve as a nexus between public health and psychology, and hopefully bring attention to what has been an underserved area of health.

I am approaching the third year of my PhD and am currently in the process of data analysis and submitting for publications. It has been a new experience. The topic itself is broader and a lot more complicated than what was initially expected. There was a steep learning curve, but I feel like I am starting to get my head around the complexities of the issue.

**“An important piece of advice that I was given is to put your hand up for opportunities, especially earlier on in the PhD process. You get a lot busier down the line, so be open to early collaborations and projects when you can.”**



### **Lucy Corbett**

#### **Understanding Australian schoolteachers’ health needs: unwrapping the potential for prevention**

My PhD explores the issues relating to teachers’ well-being and stress, and teachers’ lifestyle and chronic disease risk. In this second year of my PhD, I am focused on submitting publications and collecting data. So far, my research has revealed gaps in the evidence base around available professional development programs for teachers and the relationship between teachers’ lifestyle and their well-being.

Before I embarked on a PhD I was a secondary school teacher, so this project has personal importance to me. Whilst the journey has been filled with unexpected challenges, I am really enjoying the experience as I know I am contributing to an important area of research.

**“I think it is important to value and be interested in your research as this will help to sustain motivation. I would also encourage working on a variety of projects with others as an interesting way to improve knowledge and research skills.”**

# Seminars and talks

A sample of our health related seminars, workshops and talks.

Seminar title	Presenters	Partner Institution/Group	Date
Academic develop scheme – School of Public health	Lindsey Reece	Development funds Sydney	2019
UK learnings from Sport and Physical Activity policy	Lindsey Reece	Invited presentation and panel discussion Melbourne and Sydney	2019
Epidemiological/statistical seminars on analytical method of compositional analysis for 24 hour data	Nida Gupta Charlotte Lund Rasmussen	The National Research Centre for the Working Environment (NRCWE), Charles Perkins Centre	February 2019
Scaling Up and Complex program Evaluation	Mel Crane	Institute of Musculoskeletal Health	February 2019
Introduction to Evaluation Workshop	Anne Grunseit	Prevention Research Collaboration NSW Ministry of Health	February 2019
The Use and evaluation of social media in public health campaigns	James Kite Blythe O’Hara	Prevention Research Collaboration Charles Perkins Centre	March 2019
A Cooks tour of obesity from a public health perspective	Menzies Institute for Medical research	Invited speaker	March 2019
Workshop on Complex program Evaluation	Menzies Institute for Medical research	Workshop facilitation	March 2019
Physical activity and a healthy lifestyle: ‘curated samplers of my random thoughts and research experience	Melody Ding	Australian Catholic University seminar Sydney	March 2019
Systems Wide Approaches to Public Health: From Theory to Practice’	Harry Rutter	University of Bath Prevention Research Collaboration Charles Perkins Centre	April 2019
SPRINTER Symposium Fourth Annual symposium for the NSW Government Office of Sports innovative research partnerships with the University of Sydney’s SPRINTER Group	Lindsey Reece	University of Sydney	May 2019
How to maximise your job opportunities	Melody Ding	The University of Sydney China Study Centre Sydney	May 2019
Urban Design, Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour & Public Health – New Insights Using Space Syntax	Mohammad Javad Koohsari	Waseda University Prevention Research Collaboration Charles Perkins Centre	May 2019
Sprinter Seminar	Darren Simpson Lindsey Reece Katherine Owen Bridget Foley Kerry Turner Scott Watkins Craig Beed Bill Bellew	Sport NSW, NSW Office of Sport, Parkrun, Hockey NSW, Prevention Research Collaboration (SPRINTER)	May 2019
Physical activity within the broader context of behavioural health: An epidemiological approach	Melody Ding	University of Graz seminar Graz, Austria	June 2019
Women and Heart Disease Forum	Binh Nguyen	Prevention Research Collaboration	June and August 2019
How to accomplish GAPP 2018-2030	Melody Ding	HEPA Europe (European Network for the Promotion of Health-Enhancing Physical Activity) Odense, Denmark	August 2019

Seminar title	Presenters	Partner Institution/Group	Date
Childhood obesity: assessment and management	Louise Baur	NZ General Practitioner CME Conference Christchurch, New Zealand	August 2019
Managing obesity with Very Low Energy Diets, mal replacement and drug therapy.	Louise Baur	NZ General Practitioner CME Conference Christchurch, New Zealand	August 2019
Lifestyle & behavioural interventions: Benefits, expectations and outcomes	Louise Baur	NZ General Practitioner CME Conference Christchurch, New Zealand	August 2019
Session for practice nurses	Louise Baur	NZ General Practitioner CME Conference Christchurch, New Zealand	August 2019
From active training to active living: Why the built environment is a key to creating an active society	Melody Ding	Annual Scientific Meeting of Australian Cardiovascular Health and Rehabilitation Association Sydney	August 2019
Time to put a dollar sign on physical inactivity and make friends with economists	Melody Ding	HEPA Europe (European Network for the Promotion of Health-Enhancing Physical Activity) Odense, Denmark	August 2019
How to accomplish GAPPa 2018-2030	Melody Ding	HEPA Europe (European Network for the Promotion of Health-Enhancing Physical Activity) Odense, Denmark	August 2019
Seminar: Bariatric surgery in adolescents	Louise Baur	European Congress on Diabetes Barcelona	September 2019
Physical activity epidemiology	Melody Ding	University of Copenhagen seminar Copenhagen, Denmark	September 2019
How to build a career narrative	Melody Ding	Sydney Early-Mid Career Academic Network Sydney	October 2019
Quantifying the current and future burden of cancer attributable to modifiable risk factors for cancer incidence: the ComPARe study	Christine Friedenreich	University of Alberta, Calgary	October 2019
Introduction to Evaluation Workshop (MoH)	Anne Grunseit	University of Sydney	October 2019
Public Health approaches to implementation science and dissemination research	Ross Brownson	Steven H. and Susan U. Lipstein Distinguished Professor of Public Health, at Washington University in St Louis, Missouri	October 2019
Implementation lessons for engaging older people in physical activity programs	Ben Smith	Prevention Research Collaboration, Charles Perkins PAREE Theme, The Institute of Musculoskeletal Health	October 2019
ASAPa: a research-practice partnership to promote a systems approach to physical activity in Australia	Tracy Nau	Prevention Research Collaboration, Charles Perkins PAREE Theme, The Institute of Musculoskeletal Health	October 2019
Strengthening health promotion practice through evaluation workshop	Ben Smith	Monash, Prevention Research Collaboration, Australian Health Promotion Association	November 2019
World Obesity Day, Opportunities for Physical Activity	Adrian Bauman	Prevention Research Collaboration	March 2020
World Obesity Day Social Determinants	Philayrath Phongsavan	Prevention Research Collaboration	March 2020

# Grants, awards, peer and industry acknowledgments

Congratulations to our grant and award winning researchers.

Recipient(s)	Year	Grant or fellowship
Wilson A, Redman S, Hawe P, Bauman A et al	2019	The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre 2019-2023
Wolfenden L, Wiggers J, Bauman A, Rissel C, Wilson A, Grimshaw J, Yoong S, Elliot J, Doran C, Lee H	2019	CRE in Implementation for Community Chronic Disease Prevention 2019-2023
Wen LM, Baur L, Rissel C, Hayes A, Phongsavan P, Xu H, Taki S	2019	A partnership approach linking two randomised controlled trials for optimising early obesity prevention programs for children under 3 years
Tiedemann A, Sherrington, C, Lord, S. (Grunseit A - AI)	2019	Preventing falls in older age with yoga-based exercise: effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and implementation
Chow, C., Redfern J, Bray JE, Semsarian C, Jennings, Bauman A, Kumar S. et al	2019	First CPR: Improving health outcomes for people suffering out of hospital cardiac arrest
Redfern J, Briffa T, Gallagher R, Jennings G, Bauman A, Wood D, Ratcliffe J, Brieger D, O'Neil A.	2019	Solving the long-standing evidence-practice gap associated with cardiac rehabilitation and secondary prevention of coronary heart disease
Young J, Solomon M, Riedel B, Steffens D, Morton R, Denehey L, Herio A, Koh CE, Li Q, Bauman A	2019	PRIORITY TRIAL – Preoperative exercise for patients undergoing major abdominal cancer surgery: A Multicentre Randomised controlled Trial
Stamatakis E, Thogersen-Ntoumani C, Holterman A, Chau J, Gale J, Tudor-Locke C, Maher C, Thorgesen, Koster, A-M, & Johnson N (Grunseit A )	2020	Development of a framework for maximising population health gains through high intensity incidental physical activity
Bray J, Finn J, Clark R, Nehme Z, Stub D, Smith K, Chow C, Cadilhac D, Kasza J, Cameron P, ... Smith B (AI-B)	2020	Heart Matters: a Heart Safe Communities partnership to improve cardiovascular awareness and response to symptoms in regions at highest risk of heart attacks
Ferreira P, Ferreira M, Bauman A, Hodges P, Maher C, Simic M, Morton R, Lonsdale C, Li Q, Baysari M	2020	The Get Healthy Coaching Service to reduce the burden of low back pain: effectiveness, cost effectiveness, and scalability
Nathan N, Wolfenden L, Wiggers J, Bauman A, Rissel C, Naylor PJ, Sutherland R.	2020	A randomised trial of an intervention to sustain schools' implementation of a state-wide physical activity policy
Hassett L, Grunseit A, Bauman A, Smith BJ.	2020	Physical activity promotion by health professionals to increase physical activity: two hybrid type II implementation effectiveness cluster randomised waitlist controlled trials in hospital outpatient settings
Sherrington C, Lord S, Crotty M, Haines T, Byles J, Seibel M, Cameron I, Close J, Howard K, Bauman A.	2020	NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in the Prevention of Fall-related Injuries.
Cheung NW, Chow C, Smith BJ	2019	A Customised Digital Health Intervention to Reduce Diabetes Risk for Women with Recent Gestational Diabetes
Tiedemann A, Stahi A, Sherrington C, Smith B, Oliveira S.	2019	Peer-volunteer support to promote participation in group-based fall prevention exercise: multi-stakeholder and end-user consultation to adapt the UK ACE model for Australia
Reece L, Bellew W, Phongsavan P, Foley B, Owen K	2019	Evaluation Tender – Paddle Australia



Recipient(s)	Year	Grant or fellowship
Reece L, Bellew W, Phongsavan P, Foley B, Owen K	2019	Evaluation Tender – Sport Australia
Reece L, Bellew W, Phongsavan P, Foley B, Owen K	2019	Evaluation Tender – Parkrun
Bauman A, Reece L, Bellew W, Phongsavan P, Foley B, Owen K.	2019	SPRINTER
Bauman A, Phongsavan P, Allman-Farinelli M	2019	NSW Research program in physical activity, nutrition and obesity
Nolan G, Smith BJ	2019	Active Neighbourhoods for Older Australians
Grunseit A.	2019	This was to work in collaboration with researchers at UTAS on Australian boost sample for the health of adults longitudinal observational (HALO) study
Ding M.	2019	University of Sydney and Fudan University Partnership Collaboration Awards 'building a healthy, sustainable and livable urban environment: A multidisciplinary international collaboration'.
Bhatt A, Peng C, Peeters A, Bell C, Freeman B, Johnstone M, Zorbas C, Martin J	2019	Creating novel methods to monitor the marketing of products that increase the risk of cancer to children: An intelligent systems approach
Backholer, K, Bhatt, A, Peng, C, Peeters, A, Bell, C, Freeman, B, Johnstone, M, Zorbas, C, Martin, j	2019	Creating novel methods to monitor the marketing of products that increase the risk of cancer to children: An intelligent systems approach.
Eberhard J, Bauman A, Smith B.	2020	Oral health social marketing: development of a campaign in Western Sydney Australian Dental Industry Association
Professor Katina D'Onise, Katherine Potifex, Emma Saleeba, Dr Annemarie Wright, Karen Wardle,	2020	Engaging the public in the wider conversation about prevention in Australia
Driscoll S, Bishay R, Ahlenstiel G, Smith B.	2020	The effect of activity monitors on physical activity and health related outcomes in adults attending a public bariatric program
Lim M, Holt-Lunstad J, Qualter P, Smith B (AI)	2020	Evaluation of the Nextdoor Connect 1.0 Campaign Next Door Inc.
Li Ming Wen, Louise Baur, Sarah Taki, Rafael Calvo, Huilan Xu, Limin Buchanan, Rachel Jones, Philayrath Phongsavan	2020	Developing and evaluating an interactive web-based Healthy Beginnings program for preventing obesity in the first year of life
Professor Anna Timperio, Dr Kim Jose, Dr Melanie Davern, Dion Lester, Kate Garvey, Dr Samantha Rowbotham	2020	Developing benchmarks and a smart online tool for assessing walkability in regional and rural communities: Supporting rural Australians to live healthy, active lives.

# Grants and awards

Recipient(s)	Year	Award, peer and industry acknowledgments
Associate Professor Melody Ding	2019	2019 Eureka Prize for Emerging Leader in Science
Lucy Corbett	2019	2019 PHAA Student Think Tank Competition
Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman	2019	League of Scholars – Field Leader (research) in Public Health in Australia
Dr James Kite	2019	Public Health Research and Practice Excellence Awards – Highly commended
Professor Emmanuel Stamatakis	2019	Appointed member of the Guidelines Development Group of the World Health Organisation
Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman	2019 and 2020	Clarivate Most Highly Cited Academics for 2019 and 2020
Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman	2020	Top 10 Most Highly Cited Academics 1996-2018 – PLOS
Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman and Professor Don Nutbeam	2020	Most Highly Cited Academics by Subject Area 1996-2018 Public Health and Health Services – PLOS
Associate Professor Becky Freeman	2020	Appointment to NHMRC Electronic Cigarettes Working Committee
Dr Bronwyn McGill	2020	Sydney Women’s Leadership Program (Academic Staff)
Professor Louise Baur	2020	President-Elect of World Obesity Federation
SPRINTER Group	2020	Research Project Award at the Parks and Leisure Australia NSW/ACT Awards of Excellence
Associate Professor Becky Freeman	2020	Guest Editor – Public Health Research and Practice
Professor Margaret Allman-Farinelli	2020	2020 Vice Chancellor’s Award – Outstanding Teaching and Research
Dr Lindsey Reece	2020	ISPAHs 8 Investments for Physical Activity – Advocacy Lead
Bridget Foley	2020	PHRP Excellence Awards – Best in Practice
Karen Lee, Andrew Milat, Anne Grunseit, Kathleen Conti, Luke Wolfenden, Adrian Bauman	2020	PHRP Excellence Awards – Highly commended – Practice Papers
Andy Bravo, Bridget Foley, Christine Innes-Hughes, Blythe O’Hara, Bronwyn McGill and Chris Rissel	2020	Public Health Research & Practice Excellence Awards – Best In Practice Paper
Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman	2020	PLOS Study – 443 University of Sydney Academics in Top 2% of researchers globally

# Spotlight on our affiliates

## Early Prevention of Obesity in Childhood

### EPOCH

The NHMRC Centre for Research Excellence in the Early Prevention of Obesity in Childhood (CRE-EPOCH) is a collaboration between researchers, practitioners and policy-makers from seven universities across Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Based at the Prevention Research Collaboration, the Centre is funded from 2016–2021 and is led by Professor Louise Baur.

CRE-EPOCH aims to advance the research, practice and policy to prevent obesity and its impact from early childhood. In 2019–2020, the EPOCH collaboration published many significant publications related to its foundational work.

The publications provide important evidence on the importance of early intervention (from pregnancy or early infancy) to reduce unhealthy weight gains and improve health behaviours; potential costs and affordability of different types of early childhood obesity prevention interventions; policy gaps and opportunities for early prevention of childhood obesity; and key elements for the successful translation, maintenance and scale-up of intervention programs within a public health policy framework.

CRE-EPOCH is also a major repository for early childhood obesity prevention trials worldwide. Several of the EPOCH CRE members were awarded an NHMRC grant to lead studies involving these trials. For more information:

– [topchildcollaboration.org](http://topchildcollaboration.org)

The CRE looks forward to continuing its research and disseminating key findings with broader stakeholders. We have been holding webinars presented by our early and mid career researchers which can be accessed through:

– [earlychildhoodobesity.com/past\\_events.html](http://earlychildhoodobesity.com/past_events.html)

**Professor Louise Baur**



# Spotlight on our affiliates

## The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre

### Implementation and scale-up

Our work in the area of Implementation and Scale-up is funded by the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre. Our aim is to enhance the reach of effective prevention programs in Australia to the whole population, by improving understanding of implementation processes and practice and building capacity for scale-up. [This project](#) is led by Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman and the investigator team includes Melanie Crane, Anne Grunseit, Karen Lee and Erika Goldbaum. Collectively, our team has strong expertise in scale-up and implementation science as well as epidemiology, complex program design and evaluation, and systems approaches to prevention.

In undertaking this project, we have been collaborating with a range of the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre's funding partners including ACT Health, South Australia Department for Health and Wellbeing, Tasmanian Department of Health and VicHealth as well as the Australian Government Department of Health, Cancer Council Australia and NSW Ministry of Health, along with links with other research institutions nationally and internationally such as the National Centre of Implementation Science, University of Newcastle and Sydney Health Partners.

Our program of research includes developing methods and resources for improving prevention practice through better program implementation and scale-up. This has involved:

- Conducting research to understand the gaps in scale-up practices
- Reviewing available literature to develop and test new tools and models for scale-up
- Conducting and supporting scaled-up evaluations while assessing programs implemented at scale, working with stakeholders in the design and evaluation of their programs
- Conducting research into the facilitators and barriers of sustaining interventions at scale with the aim of increasing their sustainability.

A key aspect of our work involves providing advice and support on a range of scale up activities for prevention programs, including for the use of the tools and guides we have developed, in practice. This extends the evaluation work that PRC has been doing for many years. One of our recent tools ([the Intervention Scalability Assessment Tool](#)) has since been translated to French for use internationally by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). Our work bridges the work we do with the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre and the work we do with the NSW Ministry of Health, and is an area of current and ongoing public health importance.

**Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman**



# Spotlight on our affiliates

## World Health Organisation

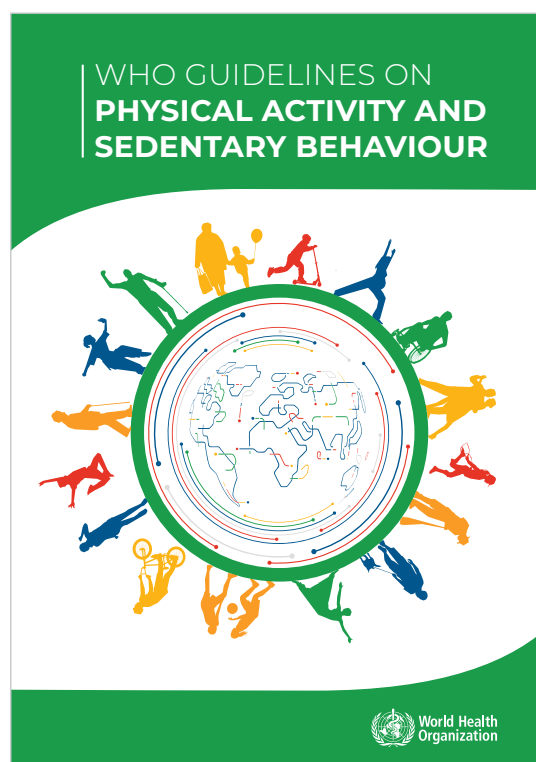
### WHO Collaborating Centre

In 2019 and 2020, the PRC continued its global engagement as co-host of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Physical Activity, Nutrition and Obesity, with the Boden Institute at the University of Sydney.

Members of the Centre and PRC affiliates Professor Manos Stamatakis and A/Professor Hidde van der Ploeg (VU, Amsterdam) provided outstanding leadership in the development of the revised global physical activity guidelines (released November 25, 2020). Professor Stamatakis was co-Chair of the 2020 WHO Global Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines Development Group and from August 2019 to December 2020 led the adult physical activity guidelines development subgroup. A/Professor Hidde van der Ploeg was a member of the Physical Activity Guidelines Committee that Professor Stamatakis co-chaired.

**Advocacy for WHO:** In March 2020, the USA threatened to withdraw funding from WHO. Professors Bauman and Colagiuri, the Centre Co-Directors launched a social advocacy movement across the network of WHO Collaborating Centres in Australia and Asia-Pacific region, signed by all Collaborating Centres and sent to the Australian Government to make a clear position statement on behalf of WHO. The process generated substantial radio, print and television media interviews to advocate for WHO's usefulness to prevention and all aspects of public health globally. The media coverage persisted for some weeks.

**Associate Professor Philayrath Phongsavan**



# Spotlight on our affiliates

## NSW Local Area Health Districts

### Working with our NSW LHDs

The PRC has been working closely with a number of Local Health Districts (LHDs) over the past year to support health promotion research and evaluation at the local level. Under the PANORG contract with the Centre for Population Health, NSW Ministry of Health, the PANORG team offers support to build the skills and experience of LHD health promotion teams to evaluate their health promotion projects.

The team has engaged with South Eastern Sydney LHD health promotion staff to develop and implement an evaluation of the Healthy Children, Healthy Families project and provided ongoing support to the South Western Sydney LHD Health Promotion Service for the evaluation of the Growing Healthy Kids in South Western Sydney project. The PANORG team has also provided ad-hoc research advice to LHD health promotion teams on research design and statistical analysis.

Professor Ben Smith recently organised a joint Forum between the PRC and the Western Sydney LHD Health Promotion Service where the staff of the two organisations shared information and project learnings and discussed opportunities for joint research and evaluation activities around key Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) priorities.

Work continues with Sydney LHD (Health Promotion Unit) and Population Health Research and Evaluation Hub to develop, implement and evaluate telehealth and web-based projects focussed on the first 2000 days to prevent early childhood obesity. The PRC has initiated preliminary discussions for joint research on clinical services and diabetes prevention in the local health district.

The PRC model of working together with LHDs to develop joint research and evaluation projects, mentor staff, and build research and evaluation skills and capacity has resulted in the establishment of valuable relationships with many LHDs including Nepean Blue Mountains, Murrumbidgee, and the Central Coast.

**Dr Margaret Thomas**



“People acting together as a group can accomplish things which no individual acting alone could ever hope to bring about.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt





# It takes a village

To create collaborative research solutions, it takes a village. Our thanks to the many individuals who walk the research journey with us.

## Affiliates

Title/Name	Where they are from	Year
Chris Rissel	Office of Prevention Health Ministry of Health/Flinders University (Northern Territory)	2016-current
Hidde van der Ploeg	Amsterdam UMC	2015-current
Josephine Chau	Macquarie University	2018-current
Karolina Engelen	University of Wollongong	2018-current
Lesley King	Lesley King Consulting	2015-current
Louise Hardy	Royal Australian College of Physicians (Retired)	2018-current
Tom Carroll	Carroll Communications	2017-2020
Jo Mitchell	Policy by Proxy	2020-current
Sarah Taki	Sydney Local Health District	2020-current
Seema Mhrshahi	Macquarie University	2020-current
Limin Buchanan	Sydney Local Health District	2020-current



“Great things  
in business  
are never  
done by  
one person;  
they’re done  
by a team  
of people.”

Steve Jobs

# Our Executive Leadership Team

Leading us through strategic and operational decisions are our Executive team



**A/Professor Philayrath Phongsavan**



**Professor Ben Smith**



**Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman**



**Professor William (Bill) Bellew**



**Dr Lindsey Reece**



**A/Professor Melody Ding**



**Dr Margaret Thomas**



**Lisa Avery**



**Catherine (Cathie) Kiernan**

# Our Governance Team

## PRC Strategic Advisory Board Members



**Professor  
Don Nutbeam**



**Lisa Avery**



**Associate Professor  
Philayrath Phongsavan**



**Professor  
Ben Smith**



**Emeritus Professor  
Adrian Bauman**



**Dr Andrew Milat**



**Meredith Claremont**



**Karen Jones**



**Julie-Anne Mitchell**



**Vladimir Williams**



**Dr Sian Rudge**



**Adjunct Associate  
Professor Lesley King**



**Niki Kajons**



**Associate Professor  
Megan Passey**



**Professor Tim Gill**



**Professor Louise Baur**



**Professor Ian Caterson**



**Professor Margaret  
Allman-Farinelli**



**Professor  
Stephen Colagiuri**



**Associate Professor  
Li Ming Wen**



**Adjunct Professor  
Bill Bellew**



**Dr James Kite**



**Professor Chris Rissel**



**Dr Phil Hamdorf**



**Dr Jo Mitchell**

# Prevention Research Collaboration Strategic Advisory Board 2019–2020

<b>PRC Strategic Advisory Board Secretariat</b>		
Professor Don Nutbeam Chair	Sydney Health Partners and University of Sydney	2017–current
Lisa Avery Secretariat	Prevention Research Collaboration, University of Sydney	2014–current
<b>Board Members</b>		
Meredith Claremont	Executive Director, Centre for Population Health, NSW Ministry of Health	Member 2019–current
Dr Andrew Milat	Director, Evidence and Evaluation, NSW Ministry of Health	Member 2014–current
Karen Jones	Chief Executive, NSW Office of Sport	Member 2020–current
Beth Stickney	A/Director, NSW Office of Preventive Health, NSW Ministry of Health	Member 2019–current
Julie Anne Mitchell	Director Health Strategy, National Heart Foundation of Australia	Member 2014–current
Dr Sian Rudge	Head, Evidence for Action Division, Sax Institute	Member 2014–current
Dr Jo Mitchell	Executive Director, Centre for Population Health, NSW Ministry of Health (at time of membership)	Member 2014–2019*
Nicole Kajons	Director, Health Promotion, Central Coast Health District	Member 2014–current
Adjunct Associate Professor Lesley King	Principal Consultant, Lesley King Consultancy	Member 2014–current
Vladimir Williams	Analyst, Maternal, Child and Family Health, NSW Ministry of Health	Member 2014–current
Dr Phil Hamdorf	Executive Director, Sport Development, NSW Office of Sport (at time of membership)	Member 2019–2020*
Professor Chris Rissel	Director of NSW Office of Preventive Health (at time of membership)	Member 2014–2019
A/Professor Philayrath Phongsavan	Director, Prevention Research Collaboration, University of Sydney	Member 2014–current
Emeritus Professor Adrian Bauman	Professor, Prevention Research Collaboration, University of Sydney	Member 2014–current
Professor Margaret Allman-Farinelli	Professor of Dietetics, University of Sydney	Member 2014–current
Professor Ben Smith	Prevention Research Collaboration, University of Sydney	Member 2020–current
Professor Louise Baur	Professor of Child and Adolescent Health, incorporating the Douglas Burrows Chair of Paediatrics	Member 2014–current
Professor Tim Gill	Professor, Boden Institute of Obesity, Nutrition, Exercise and Eating Disorders, University of Sydney	Member 2014–current
Professor Ian Caterson	Director, Boden Institute of Obesity, Nutrition, Exercise and Eating Disorders	Member 2014–current
Professor Stephen Colagiuri	Professor, Boden Institute of Obesity, Nutrition, Exercise and Eating Disorders, University of Sydney	Member 2014–current
Professor Megan Passey	Associate Professor and Director of Research University Centre for Rural Health, University of Sydney	Member 2014–current
Professor Li Ming Wen	Director of Research and Evaluation Hub, Population Health, SLHD NSW Health	Member 2014–current
Adjunct Professor Bill Bellew	Adjunct Professor, Prevention Research Collaboration, University of Sydney	Member 2014–current
Dr James Kite	Lecturer and Research Fellow, Prevention Research Collaboration, University of Sydney	Member 2019–current

\*We offer our deepest thanks to Dr Jo Mitchell, Dr Phil Hamdorf and Professor Chris Rissel for their wisdom and sound advice during their tenure as PRC SAB Members

# A small sample of visitors to the PRC

## Visitors

Professor Harry Rutter	Professor of Global Public Health, University of Bath, UK
Professor Chris Lonsdale	Associate Dean, Research, Australian Catholic University, Sydney, Australia
Dr Mark Green	Senior Lecturer in Health Geography, University of Liverpool, UK
Dr Javad Koohsari	Research Fellow in Urban Design and Health, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
Professor Ross Brownson	Steven H and Susan U Lipstein Distinguished Professor of Public Health, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, USA
Dr Christine Friedenreich	Associate Scientific Director, O'Brien Institute of Public Health, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Professor Helle Maindal	Professor of Health Promotion, Department of Public Health, Aarhus University, Denmark
Associate Professor Charlotte Klinker	Senior Researcher, Diabetes Prevention, Steno Diabetes Centre, Copenhagen, Denmark
Professor Karim Khan	University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada



SPH Collaborations



# Committees and societies

## Dr James Kite

Committee Member, Social Marketing Program Advisory Group, Quit Tasmania, Cancer Council Tasmania	2020-current
Committee Member, Education Support Curriculum Planning and Management Project: Reference Group, University of Sydney	2019-current
Committee Member, Healthy Eating Active Living Social Marketing Evaluation Advisory Group, NSW Ministry of Health	2019-current
Committee Member, Early Career Academic and Postgraduate Subcommittee (ECAPS), Council of Academic Public Health Institutions Australasia (CAPIA)	2019-current
Committee Member, NSW/ACT Branch, Australian Health Promotion Association	2018-current
Founding member of the Prevention Research Collaboration Early & Mid-Career Academic Peer Support Group	2015-current

## Dr Philip Clare

Member of Statistical Society of Australia	2016-current
Member of International Society for Clinical Biostatistics	2016-current
Committee Member, Healthy Eating Active Living Social Marketing Evaluation Advisory Group, NSW Ministry of Health	2019-current
Member of American Statistical Association	2016-current

## Professor Ben Smith

Associate Editor, Editorial Board, Public Health Research and Practice	2019-current
Scientific Advisory Committee, Ending Loneliness Together	2019-current
Board Director, Healthy Male	2018-current
Chair, Management Committee, Healthy Male	2020-current
Editorial Advisory Board, Health Promotion Journal of Australia	2013-current
Evaluation and Research Advisory Committee, Achievement Program, Cancer Council Victoria	2018-2020

## Dr Stephanie Partridge

Officer of the Young Adult Special Interest Group, International Society of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity	2020
Officer of Allied Health, Scientists and Technologists Council Executive Committee, Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand	2020
Community Engagement Officer of Young Professionals Committee, International Association of Adolescent Health	2019
Co-Chair of Early and Mid-Career Researcher Subcommittee, Faculty of Medicine and Health, The University of Sydney	2020



### Associate Professor Melody Ding

Executive committee member of the Global Observatory of Physical Activity	2020
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### Associate Professor Becky Freeman

Expert Advisory, WHO working group to develop specific guidelines to address cross-border tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship	
Expert Member, Cancer Council and National Heart Foundation National Tobacco Issues Committee	2020-current
Expert Member, NHMRC Electronic Cigarettes Working Committee	2020-current
Chair, Oceania Tobacco Control Conference Program Committee	2019

### Dr Anne Grunseit

Member, Pain Revolution member Evaluation Committee	2019-current
Member, Tobacco 21 Tasmania member T21 Steering Committee	2019-current
Member, Research Advisory Board Committee, Veteran Sport Australia	2019-current

### Dr Lindsey Reece

Executive committee member and Co-chair Advocacy Committee for Australasian Society for Physical Activity (ASPA)	2020
Board member and global advocacy lead International Society for Physical Activity and Health (ISPAH)	2020-current
Board member Outdoors NSW and ACT	2019-current
Global research board member for Parkrun	2017-current
Research advisory committee for Veteran Sport Australia	2020-current
The Adaptive Movement – Steering committee WheelChair Sports NSW	2020-current
Special Interest Group Physical Literacy ASPA (Bridget represents me)	2020-current

### Bridget Foley

Social Media Interaction Committee for International Society for Physical Activity and Health (ISPAH)	2020-current
Early Career Professional Committee representative for Australasian Society for Physical Activity (ASPA)	2020-current

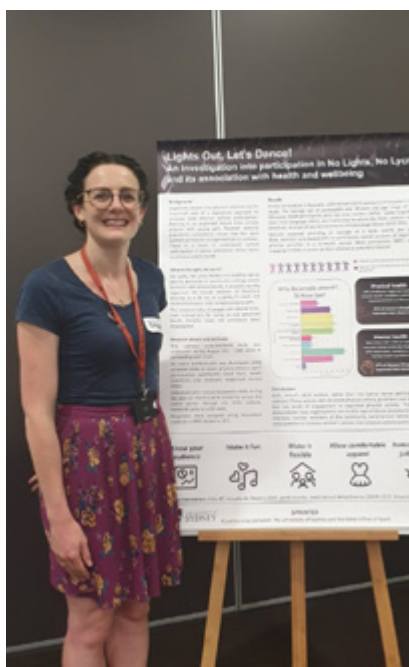
# Publications

PRC researchers, partners and affiliates published over 340 peer-reviewed publications in 2019–2020 encompassing a varied range of chronic disease prevention related topics.

Full list of publications is available at:

- [sydney.edu.au/medicine/public-health/prevention-research/news/publications.php](https://sydney.edu.au/medicine/public-health/prevention-research/news/publications.php)

Our PhD students Bridget Foley, Daniel Surkalim and Erika Goldbaum proving the effectiveness of disseminating their research via the poster method.



## Our Supporters and Funders

We gratefully acknowledge the following organisations whose ongoing support allow us to make a real impact in the world of health research.

- ACT Health
- ARC
- Australian and New Zealand Musculoskeletal Clinical Trials Network
- Cancer Council Victoria
- Central Coast LHD
- Department of Health Australian Government
- Murrumbidgee LHD
- Nepean Blue Mountains LHD
- NHMRC
- Nxt Door Foundation
- MRFF Sydney Health Partners
- NSW Ministry of Health
- NSW Office of Sport and Recreation
- Parkrun
- Paddle Australia
- Sport Australia
- Sydney LHD
- South East Sydney LHD
- South West Sydney LHD
- The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre
- The Charles Perkins Centre
- University of Sydney Global Engagement Office
- University of Tasmania
- Western Sydney LHD

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The University of Sydney NSW 2006

[sydney.edu.au/medicine/public-health/prevention-research](https://sydney.edu.au/medicine/public-health/prevention-research)  
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