



LA TROBE
UNIVERSITY

Violet Vines
Marshman Centre
for Rural Health
Research

2020-
2021



Violet Marshman Centre
for Rural Health Research

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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DIRECTOR'S REPORT

When preparing to write the second Director's report for the Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research I revisited Professor Emerita Amanda Kenny's forward from the end of 2020. Mandy wrote that last year was one of the toughest that any of us had lived through, and yet the achievements of the Centre members shone through as a bright light of hope for the future.

I'd like to begin this year's report with an acknowledgment of the work of Professor Emerita Kenny, who left La Trobe University at the end of 2020. Mandy is a force of nature and had a tremendous impact on many academics in the La Trobe Rural Health School during her long and distinguished career. A proud rural nurse, Mandy is acknowledged as an expert scholar in the fields of nursing education and primary health care. With outstanding networks locally and globally, Mandy has made a big difference to the health and wellbeing of rural people and their communities across the world. It was due to Mandy's drive and energy that the VVMCRHR was established in the LRHS and we are grateful that she remains an active member of the Advisory Committee able to contribute to our future success.

As we reach the end of the second year of the VVMCRHR the context we found ourselves in when Mandy wrote the last Director's report remains largely unchanged. The pandemic rages on and we have found a new norm for our ways of working, and indeed researching. Regardless of the lockdowns, and the limitations that this has placed on our research activities, there has been an enormous amount of work undertaken in the Centre this year.

In February we managed to invite all of the LRHS academic staff group to come together to discuss the strategic direction of the Centre, and map how our activities fit alongside other research in the School. As a group we also reflected on how the University's new research strategy could support the Centre in moving forward. The following day, in another rare moment of physical togetherness, the Advisory Committee met in Bendigo to review the Centre's strategic direction. A summary of the academic staff meeting was provided along with a range of discussion papers that traversed the wider landscape of rural health research in Australia.

The excellent feedback from both strategic planning exercises has informed the Centre Management Committee in the finalisation of the VVMCRHR renewal documents, which will also serve as our strategic plan for the next five years. Our refreshed aim and objectives are as follows:

Vision

To be a world leader in eliminating disparities in rural health and wellbeing by facilitating high impact research that is **rurally focused, collaborative and pragmatic.**

- Rurally focused
We focus on the issues for people living outside of metropolitan areas acknowledging that experiences of rural life are geographically, economically, environmentally, sociologically, and culturally diverse.
- Collaborative
We collaborate with rural communities through partnerships and innovative methods of co-design.
- Pragmatic
We work with rural communities to address real world issues and to develop pragmatic local solutions.

Objectives

To achieve our aim, our objectives over the duration of this plan will be to:

1. Demonstrate the University's four cultural qualities in all that we do.
2. Partner with rural people and their families, rural communities and key stakeholders (governments, industry partners, peak bodies) to co-design research that addresses rural health inequity.
3. Conduct research that facilitates opportunities for uptake, translation and real-world impact.
4. Identify and secure sources of funding to sustain and grow the VVMCRHR.
5. Foster an environment that facilitates world-class research outputs, leadership in knowledge translation, and high-quality research training opportunities.

In working towards these objectives, our efforts will be focussed on developing better models of preventative and primary health care for rural communities in areas of existing strength, including chronic disease management, primary health care services and oral health. Operationally, this work will sit under the following research groupings: **preventative and primary health care; diabetes/sleep; and oral public health.**

In late 2020 the Violet Vines Marshman Oration was delivered by Magda Szubanski AO. This thoughtful address considered the importance of community connection in promoting positive mental health in rural Australia. Attended by over 500 people online this was a popular lockdown event.

While the refresh of the Strategic Plan has been a major focus of our work this year, we have also continued to conduct excellent research that produces high quality outcomes, outputs, and impact. Of note, we have successfully secured external research grants to conduct studies in diabetes, breast cancer screening, health service evaluation, active living and Indigenous health. Some of these studies are outlined in greater detail in this report and I encourage you to read more to see how our research groups are making a difference to the health and wellbeing of rural people through their work.

As well, it has been an excellent year for high quality research publications with Centre researchers producing over 80 journal articles. In the middle of 2021, we successfully launched the Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research Partnership Funding Stream. The recipient of the first grant was Ruth Hardman and Sunraysia Community

Health Services for a pilot study into the self-management of chronic disease for people living in rural areas. We are looking forward to a second round of this excellent funding scheme, with the successful recipients to be announced in November 2021.

The 2021 Violet Vines Marshman Oration has been postponed to 2022 due to continued impacts of COVID-19. We envisage that the LRHS conference at VVM Oration will be held in February 2022. We are looking forward to hearing Professor Ruth Stewart, Australia's National Rural Health Commissioner speak to us about the future of rural health.

With 33 members, and 25 higher degree students, the Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research has enormous potential which is being realised regardless of the difficult circumstances we find ourselves in. It has been an honour and a privilege to fill the interim Director role this year, and I look forward to participating as a Centre member in the years to come. With strong strategic plan and continued support from both the Marshman family and La Trobe University, the Centre is poised for an acceleration in activity and success in the short and medium term. While the context has changed somewhat, the challenges remain and our mission to reduce inequity in rural health is now more important than ever. Onwards and upwards.



Professor Jane Mills
Interim Director Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research and Dean, La Trobe Rural Health School

A MESSAGE FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR



Neil Marshman
Advisory Committee
Chair

"It was an honour to be asked to Chair the Advisory Committee and has been a pleasure to work over the past 12 months with the Committee, both Professors Amanda Kenny and Jane Mills and some of La Trobe's Rural Health Schools senior members. When combined the committee brings together a diverse and impressive skillset, knowledge and practical experiences, and a shared enthusiasm for advancing rural health outcomes in the real world. Through making these advances the Centre should bring much prestige to the school and La Trobe more generally.

The Centre's focus on rurally focused, collaborative and pragmatic resonates strongly across committee members who

are encouraging of meaningful no nonsense solutions. As committee member Professor Duckett reinforced when he made the inaugural VV Marshman Oration, rural people lag on many health metrics. Presumably COVID has only increased the challenges and opportunities. The Centre has a truly meaningful role and the Advisory Committee is there to support the Centre achieve its Aim.

Finally, congratulations to Ruth Hardman and Sunraysia Community Health Services for their successful application to the Funding Scheme. It was a well thought-through and presented proposal with a "heads" we win, "tails" we also win prognosis. Either way I look forward to hearing the final "heads" or "tails" call and also to more successful proposals coming forward."

PURPOSE, VISION AND OBJECTIVES

OUR PURPOSE

The Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research (VVMCRHR) was established to narrow the gulf between metropolitan health outcomes and those in regional, rural, and remote areas. Based in the La Trobe Rural Health School (LRHS), our vision is to be a world leader in the elimination of disparities in rural health and wellbeing by facilitating high impact research that is rurally focused, collaborative

and pragmatic. We define rural as being outside of a major Australian metropolitan city and are proud to work with communities and partners throughout the country and globally. We are distinctive for being entirely focused on making a difference, and for putting the needs of rural communities at the forefront of our work.

OUR VISION

To be a world leader in the elimination of disparities in rural health and wellbeing by facilitating high impact research that is:



Rurally focused - We focus on the issues for people living outside of metropolitan areas acknowledging that experiences of rural life are geographically, economically, environmentally, sociologically, and culturally diverse.



Collaborative - We work together with our rural communities using partnerships and innovative methods of co-design.



Pragmatic - We work with rural communities to address real world issues and to develop practical local solutions.

OUR OBJECTIVES

To demonstrate the University's four cultural qualities in all that we do



Partner with rural people and their families, rural communities, and key stakeholders (governments, industry partners, peak bodies) to co-design research that addresses rural health inequity.



Conduct research that facilitates opportunities for uptake, translation and real-world impact.



Identify and secure sources of funding that will sustain and grow the VVMCRHR.



Foster an environment that facilitates world-class research outputs, leadership in knowledge translation, and high-quality research training opportunities.

LINK WITH NATIONAL RESEARCH PRIORITIES

The Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research is directly aligned with the Federal Government's strategic priority of health and wellness. In the subset of health, Government has prioritised:

- Better models of health services to reduce disparities for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups
- Management of local and regional health threats
- Better health outcomes for Indigenous people
- Effective technologies to improve health

The health of rural people is of major interest to the local, state, and federal governments. Our remit and activity are aligned with the state and national health priorities and those reflected by key rural health agencies including the National Rural Health Alliance and the National Rural Health Commissioner.

The VVMCRHR is important to realising LRHS's aspiration to be not only Australia's largest rural health school, but also Australia's best rural health school as measured by its graduates' success as rural healthcare professionals, and its research rankings, by providing an organising framework around which the School's existing expertise in preventative and primary health care research can flourish. The key benefit of VVMCRHR over the normal course of conducting research in a highly multidisciplinary environment such as LRHS is to sharpen the focus on making a difference under a unifying vision with clear objectives.

The VVMCRHR is well placed to attract nationally competitive funding.

2020-2021 SNAPSHOT



33

active
researchers



25

HDR
students



34

current research
projects



81

research
publications



1

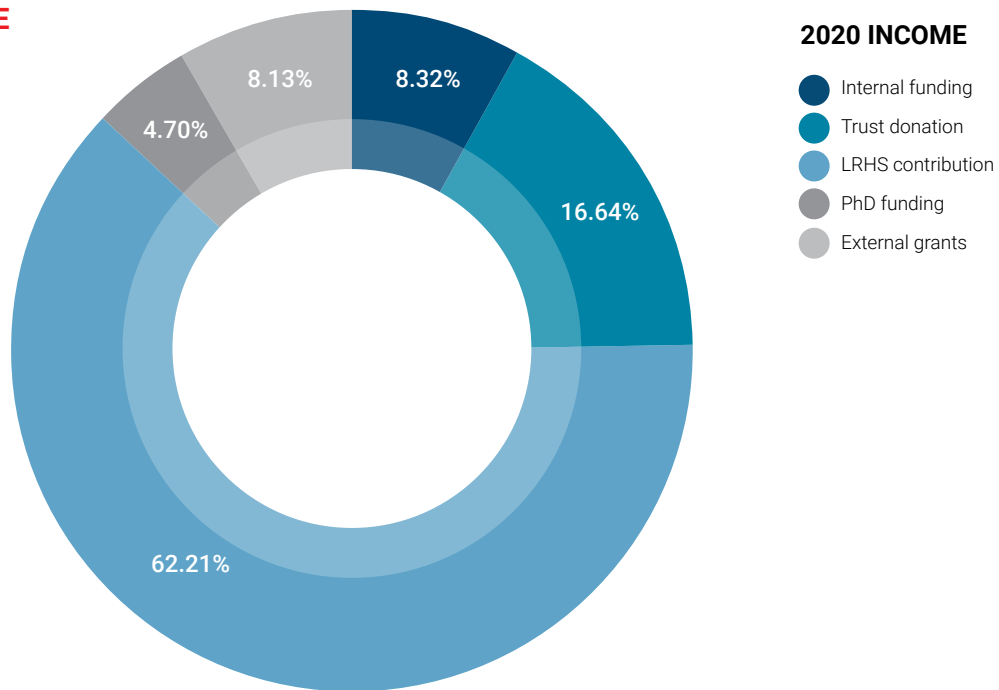
report



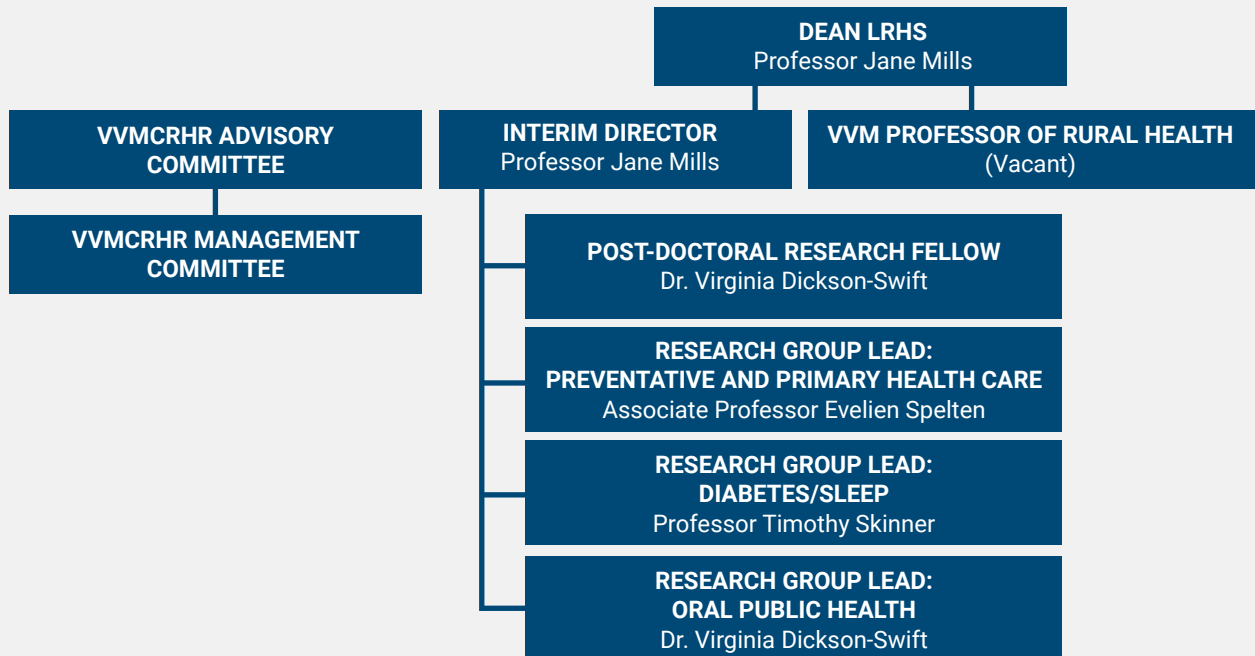
12

conference
presentations

INCOME



ORGANISATION CHART





OUR RESEARCH

Work within the Centre is focussed on developing better models of preventative and primary health care for rural communities in areas of existing strength, including chronic disease management, primary health care services and oral health. Operationally, this work sits in three research groups: **preventative and primary health care; diabetes/sleep; and oral public health**. The research leads for each of these have current active programs of rural health research in these areas. These three researchers are considered core members, alongside the Director.

PREVENTATIVE AND PRIMARY HEALTH GROUP

This research group aims to undertake multidisciplinary research with a focus on equity and access, health care performance, accountability of health systems, and health outcomes for rural people. Research focused on models for health promotion and prevention are central to this group. Some of the greatest comparative disparities in rural health and wellbeing relate to models of health service delivery and available resources. This group will have a focus on developing and testing cost effective, flexible models of service delivery that will increase access with the aim of eliminating disparity.



Lead: Associate Professor Evelien Spelten

Associate Professor Public Health
Teaching and Research position
Department of Rural Health Sciences
7 PhD candidates (Primary) 0.4 part-time

I am an Associate Professor with La Trobe University Rural Health School/ Violet Vines Marshman Research Centre. Since moving from to Australia from the Netherlands 2014, I have rapidly developed my interest and research into rural health issues, with a strong focus on preventative and primary health. My current work involves projects on violence against health care workers, palliative care, supportive cancer care, rural workforce innovations, community paramedicine, and health promotion. I am currently the principal supervisor of 7 regional PhD Students, three of which are industry PhDs with local rural organisations. Much of my work focusses on innovation and quality of care. As an occupational psychologist, I have been

privileged to work interdisciplinary with many different health care disciplines.

I have received awards from the Dutch Psychosocial Society (2010) and was a recipient of the La Trobe University Vice Chancellor's Award (2019). Both awards were granted for my work on bridging the gap between research and practice, collaborating with health care providers and consumers, and building research capacity.

I am currently the Deputy Editor of the Australian Journal of Rural Health, having published 100+ articles, contributed to book chapters and received over \$3 million in research funding.

DIABETES/SLEEP GROUP

This research group focuses on all aspects of diabetes as a chronic condition and the impact it can have on health and wellbeing for rural people. Research includes clinical, public health and sociological concepts related to diabetes and sleep. Investigating acceptable models of care specific to rural communities is central to this groups work to eliminate disparity.



Lead: Professor Timothy Skinner

Professor of Rural Health/Director UDRH
Research position
University Department of Rural Health
3 PhD candidates 0.4 part-time

I trained as a Health Psychologist at the University of Surrey, with my PhD focusing on the social support and illness beliefs of adolescents with type 1 diabetes. I then went on to develop a psycho-educational program for families and teenagers with type 1 diabetes. Following two clinical trials of the program it has been delivered as part of routine care in some paediatric diabetes services in the UK. Following this study I extended my research into the psycho-social aspects of type 2 diabetes. Working with the Portsmouth (UK), diabetes service he I co led the development of a self-management education program for people with newly diagnosed type 2 diabetes. This was then further refined and became the DESMOND program. This was then tested in a multi-centre randomised controlled trial, and then subsequently rolled out across the UK. It is now delivered as part of routine primary or specialist care across the UK, Ireland, Australia and parts of New Zealand.

After moving to Australia in 2007 and then settling in rural Australia in 2008 my expertise and interest in rural health issues has continued to grow. This has led to the extension of my research work on diabetes-to-diabetes prevention and the role of sleep in shaping our physical, social and emotional well-being. This work has led to the established for the Rural Health Sleep Team (RHeST) with colleagues at the La Trobe Rural Health School, University of Western Australia, Federation University, and the University of Queensland. This work includes exploring the role of sleep quality and the health of Indigenous Australians, the impact of rural health work on sleep quality, providing sleep health services for rural Australians. As the research group lead in the diabetes and sleep stream my current research continues to focus on these important topics and how they impact the health and health care of rural and remote Australians and Australian communities. From the 1st January 2022 I will take on the role of Editor in Chief of the Australian Journal of Rural Health.

ORAL PUBLIC HEALTH GROUP

This research group focuses on poor oral health as a non-communicable disease (NCD). Taking a public health approach to oral diseases, our research covers areas of service access, treatment, prevention, promotion, and policy development to improve oral health for rural people. There are identified disparities in public health measures such as fluoridation and access to early childhood oral health care that have a measurable impact on the future health and wellbeing of rural communities. This group uses a tri-level approach to rural health considering the macro, meso and micro conditions that influence disparities in rates of oral disease, adopting a partnership approach to research studies that aim to mitigate known factors through a combination of policy change and models of care.



Lead: Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift

Senior Research Fellow VVMCRHR

Research position

Violet Vines Marshman Rural Health Research Centre

4 PhD candidates

Full time position

I am currently the Senior Research Fellow in the Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research (VVMCRHR) based at the La Trobe Rural Health School. As public health researcher I am interested in how the social determinants of health impact on overall health and they barriers to improving oral health faced by rural Australians. I have over 20 years' experience working in rural communities and my key areas of expertise include public health approaches to health and wellbeing challenges, oral health, qualitative research methodologies, sensitive research, ethics and working with vulnerable rural communities to solve local health issues. Between 2013-2016, I was seconded to Senior Researcher (Rural ECOH project) supported by an NH&MRC partnership grant. Throughout the course of this project, I developed strong interdisciplinary partnerships, working in collaborative

research teams with academics from a range of disciplines and universities, across Australia and internationally. I also worked closely with rural communities throughout Victoria using a range of participatory methods which have enabled better oral health outcomes in regional Victoria and rural Queensland. Since 2016, my interest in oral health research has continued to develop and I am working closely with Dental and Oral Health colleagues at La Trobe, nationally and internationally to develop the oral public health research group. I am a skilled researcher with a particular interest in using innovative qualitative methods to support community change. I have supervised over 15 PhD students based in regional Victoria, have over 80 publications across a range of topics and have been awarded more than \$1.5M in research funding.

The expected outcomes of concerted effort in each of these research areas will be:

- The establishment of a way of working that is accountable, caring, connected and innovative
- Enriched, productive partnerships with rural people, their communities, and their stakeholders
- An increase in external research revenue, high-impact research outputs and high-quality research training opportunities
- Increased translation of the Centre's research findings in ways that make a difference to rural health
- Opportunities for high quality supervision and mentoring for staff and postgraduate students

CENTRE MEMBERS

Professor Jane Mills	Dr. Virginia Dickson-Swift	Dr. Susan Furness	Dr. Yaghma Masood
Professor Emerita Amanda Kenny	Dr. Dan Bendrups	Dr. Jacqui Goode	Dr. Mohd Masood
Professor Mark Gussy	Dr. David Azul	Dr. Lisa Hanson	Dr. Corina Modderman
Professor Hanny Calache	Dr. Kerryn Bagley	Dr. Brad Hodge	Dr. Lyndal Sheepway
Professor Timothy Skinner	Dr. Carina Chan	Dr. Nerida Hyett	Dr. Jacqui Theobald
Professor Len Crocombe	Dr. Samantha Clune	Dr. Susan Kidd	Dr. Emma Zadow
A/Professor Carol McKinstry	Dr. Brad Christian	Dr. Ron Knevel	
A/Professor Evelien Spelten	Dr. Rahila Christian	Dr. Natasha Long	
A/Professor Steve Begg	Dr. Nastaran Doroud	Dr. Rachel Martin	

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

(P)= principal supervisor, (C)=Co-supervisor, E=External to La Trobe

John Baker (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Stephen Begg (P), Mohd Masood (C); Muhammad Rahman (C); Lukar Thornton (E)

Limited Regulatory Oversight of Tobacco Retailers in an Already Disadvantaged Community: Lessons from Regional Victoria

Setho Hadisuyatmana (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Timothy Skinner (P)

Reinventing Health Care Delivery for Indonesian Men Living with Diabetes Mellitus and Sexual Dysfunctions: Mixed Method Study

Stacey Bracksley-O'Grady (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Mohd Masood (P); Karen Anderson (C), Virginia Dickson-Swift (C)

Oral health promotion

Stephen Barrett (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Michael Kingsley (P);

Stephen Begg (C)

The Effects of Behaviour Change Interventions on Physical Activity and Health-Related Outcomes in Ambulatory Secondary Care Patients

Rahila Christian (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Hanny Calache (P); Mark Gussy (C); Teresa Iacono (C)

Exploring Access to Dental services for Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Rural Victoria, Australia.

Siann Bowman (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Carol McKinstry (P); Linsey Howie (E)
The impact and experience of mental health problems for secondary schools in regional and rural Victoria

Anton Sklavos (Master of Philosophy Candidate)

Supervision team: Mohd Masood (P); Kai Lee (C)

Orofacial Infection of Odontogenic Origin Requiring Surgical Management in a Metropolitan and Regional Tertiary Hospital in Victoria: Comparison of Service Provision and Healthcare Cost

Fiona Cochrane (Prof Doc Candidate)

Supervision team: Yvonne Wells (P); Samantha Clune (C)

From Badja to Cobargo: A Longitudinal Study of the Elderly and Community Strength in the Aftermath of the Devastating New Year's Day Fires 2020

Prabhakar Veginadu (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Mohd Masood (P); Hanny Calache (C); Mark Gussy (C)

Understanding the Factors Influencing Access to Public Dental Services for Refugees in Victoria

Michele Conlin (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Evelien Spelten (P); Sean MacDermott (C)

New Approaches to Health Promotion in the Wimmera

Sandra Connor (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Evelien Spelten (P); Margit Edvardsson (C); Christopher Fisher (C)

Adolescent Rural Males's Health: In the Context of Emergent Masculinities

Emily Corbett (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Christopher Fisher (P); Paulina Billett (C); Leesa Hooker (C); Jacqueline Theobald (C)

Sexual Violence in the Loddon-Campaspe Region: The Case for Analytical Frameworks in Support of Primary Prevention Models

Melissa Deacon-Crouch (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Joseph Tucci (P); Stephen Begg (C); Isabelle Skinner (C); Timothy Skinner (C)

How do medications fit into the lifestyles of Indigenous people, with an emphasis on the efficacy of smoking cessation therapy in this population?

Brigette Glossop (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Wendy Mee (P); Paulina Billett (C); Evelien Spelten (C)

Youth, technology, incivility: cyberbullying and Australian youth, a rural perspective

Gigi Guan (MAppSc Candidate)

Supervision team: George Mnataganian (P); Stephen Begg (C); Crystal Lee (C); Angela Crombie (E)

Comparison of Early Warning System Scores for Detection of Clinical Deterioration for Patients in Hospital Emergency Departments

Ruth Hardman (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Evelien Spelten (P); Stephen Begg (C)

Social determinants of self-management capacity

Michelle Hood (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Virginia Dickson-Swift (P); Robert Townsend (E)

Who Cares for the Carer? The Caregiver's Perspective: Supporting Regional Victorian Caregivers during End-of-Life Care Pre and Post Loss

Kathy Jordan (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Amanda Kenny (P); Carina Chan (C); Virginia Dickson-Swift (C)

Exploring, Understanding, and Addressing Loneliness in Rural Communities

Angela Martin (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Evelien Spelten (P); Sean MacDermott (C); Peter O'Meara (E)

Community Paramedicine: Is prevention better than cure in improving the health of rural and remote South Australian?

Diana Nabbumba (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Rachel Winterton (P); Suzanne Hodgkin (C); Jacqueline Theobald (C)

Examining Responsibility Allocation within the Social Care System for Older people in Rural Uganda: An Ecological Systems Approach

Susan O'Neill (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Evelien Spelten (P); Stephen Begg (C);

Optimising Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Care in Rural Australia: Investigation of the Current Issues Around ENT Care, and Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of Health Interventions.

George Petrou (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Mark McEvoy (P); Stephen Begg (C); Angela Crombie (C)

Examining the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Health and Well-Being of Rural and Regional Healthcare Workers

Fiona Randall (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Mark McEvoy (P); Angela Crombie (C); Timothy Skinner (C)

Examining the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Health and Well-Being of Rural and Regional Healthcare Workers

Tara Williams (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Evelien Spelten (P); Ali Lakhani (C)

The Health Impacts of Loneliness and Social Isolation in Rural Populations

Rachel McAleer (PhD Candidate)

Supervision team: Amanda Kenny (P), Lisa Hanson (C), Jo Spong (C)

Early career physiotherapy transition in the rural context. How can this process be best supported?

STAFF PROJECTS

PREVENTATIVE AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE (PPHC)

Violence against emergency health care workers; focus on the perpetrators

Evelien Spelten (VVMCRHR), Peter O'Meara (Monash University), Gina Agarwal (McMaster University Canada), Leigh Kinsman (University of Newcastle), Richard Gray (La Trobe University), Anthony McGillion (La Trobe University/RMH), Penny Buijx (University of Newcastle), Damhnatt McCann (University of Tasmania), Brodie Thomas (VVMCRHR), Julia van Vuuren (La Trobe University) Alycia Jacob (University of Newcastle), Rebecca Schultz (Alice Springs Hospital)

Community Palliative Care to support dying at home

Evelien Spelten (VVMCRHR), Leigh Kinsman (University of Newcastle), Gina Agarwal (McMaster University Canada), Peter O'Meara (Monash University, Leeroy Williams (La Trobe University, Easter Health), Alan Shiell (La Trobe University), Saskia Duijts (IKNL, The Netherlands), Ruth Hardman (Sunraysia Community Health Services/La Trobe University), Andrea Grindrod (La Trobe Palliative Care Unit), Julia van Vuuren (La Trobe University), Susan Morgan (Loddon Mallee Regional Palliative Care Consortium, Bendigo Health), Hannah Jackson (La Trobe University)

Supportive Cancer Care

Evelien Spelten (VVMCRHR), Carlene Wilson (La Trobe University, ONJCR), Hui Gan (Austin, La Trobe University, ONJRC), Kerryn Pike (La Trobe University), Eva Yuen (La Trobe University, ONJRC), Saskia Duijts (IKNL The Netherlands), Jan Maarten van der Zwan (IKNL Netherlands), Ruth Hardman (La Trobe University/SCHS), Bryan McDade (Rare Cancers Australia)

Breast cancer screening for women over 75 years

Virginia Dickson-Swift (VVMCRHR), Irene Blackberry (JRI), Evelien Spelten (VVMCRHR), Carlene Wilson (La Trobe University, ONJCR, Eva Yuen (Deakin and La Trobe Universities)

Development of a rural consumer panel to inform health research and teaching

Evelien Spelten (VVMCRHR), Virginia Dickson-Swift (VVMCRHR), Timothy Skinner (VVMCRHR), Jane Mills (VVMCRHR)

The development of the GoHealth model: A decision-support tool for policy makers

Steve Begg (VVMCRHR) advisor to the project team consisting of Jo-An Atkinson (University of Sydney), Danielle Currie (Sax Institute) Jacqueline Davison (Sax Institute), Paul Crosland (Deakin University), Jaithri Ananthapavan (Deakin University), Haitham Taha (Sax Institute), Stuart Brentnall (Sax Institute)

RURAL HEALTH CONSUMER PANEL

We are currently establishing Australia's first Rural Health Consumer Panel (RHCP) that will be based in the VVMCRHR. We aim to pilot the panel in Mildura working in partnership with Sunraysia Community Health Services and Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research (NIVEL). The aim of the RHCP is to enable systematic involvement of wide range of key stakeholders (including but not limited to academics, health and social care practitioners and educators, clinicians, researchers, industry, patients, carers, families and rural community members) to drive innovation in health service design and delivery for improved rural health and wellbeing. Similar consumer panels are used extensively in Australia (e.g: Consumers Health Forum, 2021) and internationally (Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research (NIVEL) but none focus specifically on the unique challenges for rural communities. The development of the RHCP directly addresses this issue.

Addressing Health Inequalities in the Murray PHN

Catchment Area: ENT Hotspots

Steve Begg (VVMCRHR), Evelien Spelten (VVMCRHR)

Evaluation of integrated area-based health systems for children and young people

Corina Modderman (VVMCRHR), Werner Vogels

Evaluation of Headspace Services in Western Victoria

Carol McKinstry (VVMCRHR), Lisa Hanson (VVMCRHR), Elena Wilson (LRHS)

LMARG Deadly Choices Aboriginal Health Data Analysis

Steve Begg (VVMCRHR)

Evaluation of Aldara Yenara's indigenous youth mentoring program

Corina Modderman (VVMCRHR), Mishel McMahon (LRHS), Werner Vogels, David Copley (LRHS)

DIABETES/SLEEP (DS)

Australian research agenda for psychosocial and behavioural research in diabetes

Hendieckx, C. (Diabetes Victoria & Deakin, Holmes-Trustcott, E. (Diabetes Victoria), Ng, A. (La Trobe), Lee, C. (University of Sydney), Skinner, T.C. (VVMCRHR), Speight, J. (Diabetes Vic and Deakin University)

A nurse led and Aboriginal Health Worker supported model for Obstructive Sleep Apnoea diagnosis and management in remote Queensland

Fatima, Y. (James Cook University), Martis, G., Skinner, I. (LRHS), Skinner, T.C. (VVMCRHR), Bucks, R.S. (UWA), Eastwood, P., Jatrana, S., Mamun A. (University of Queensland)

Co-designed sleep health program to achieve better sleep and improved mental health symptoms in Indigenous adolescents

Fatima, Y. (James Cook University), Mamun, A. (University of Queensland), McDaid, L. (University of Queensland), Smith, S. (University of Queensland), Skinner, T.C. (VVMCRHR), Bucks, R. (UWA), Blunden, S., Yiallourou, S., Eastwood, P.

Implementation to Prevent Diabetes from Bump 2 baby (Impact Diabetes B2B)

Teede, H. (Monash University), Harrison, C. (Monash University), Skinner, T.C. (VVMCRHR), Laws, R., Boyle, J. (Monash University), Campbell, K.

Quantitative Data Feasibility Assessment and Analysis Services for the Evaluation of the Australian Government's Investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (PHC) through the Indigenous Australians' Health Programme (IAHP)

Christopher Doran (CQU), Steve Begg (VVMCRHR), Robert Sanson-Fisher, Anthony Shakeshaft (UNSW), Chris Oldmeadow (Hunter Medical Research Institute), Boyd Potts (CQU), Erika Langham (Allen & Clarke)

Active Living Census data: Physical activity analysis for City of Greater Bendigo

Stephen Barrett (Bendigo Health), Steve Begg (VVMCRHR), Lincoln Fitzgerald (City of Greater Bendigo)

Evaluation of the Nukal Murra Health Support Service

Christopher Doran (CQU), Steve Begg (VVMCRHR), Roxanne Bainbridge (CQU), Anthony Shakeshaft (UNSW), Boyd Potts (CQU), Erika Langham (CQU)

Implementation Action to Prevent Diabetes from Bump 2 Baby (IMPACT DIABETES B2B)

O'Reilly, S., Rokicki, S., Skinner, T.C., Laws, Campbell, Teede, Soldartis Harrison, Dahl. McAuliffe, Norman, Boyle, Burden, Campoy, Puertas, Molina, Harrison Terkildsen-Maindal

Integrated Personalised Diabetes Management Goes Europe

EIT Health Innovation by Design, Jones, A.J., Bardam, J.E., Glümer, C., Skinner, T.C., Vrangbæk, K., Noergaard, K., Brander, E., Schliess, F.S., Wang-Sattler, R., Holle, R., Kownatka, D., Laxy, M.

A randomised trial of an intensive education intervention using App and network of involved diabetes patients to improve glycaemic control of type 2 diabetes patients

Igumbor, E.O., Nwose, E.U., Skinner, T.C., Oguoma, V.M., Akintunde, A.A., Ulasi, I.I.

A community-based randomised trial of lifestyle intervention using targeted shared care approach on pregnancy outcomes in Nigerian women with gestational diabetes mellitus but without diabetes mellitus

Ulasi, I.I., Young, E., Nwose, E.U., Akintunde, A.A., Skinner, T.C., Oguoam, V.M., International Diabetes Federation. 2018-2020

Nurse led and Aboriginal Health Worker supported model for Obstructive Sleep Apnoea

Timothy Skinner (VVMCRHR), Isabelle Skinner (LRHS)

ORAL PUBLIC HEALTH (OPH)

Community Pharmacy Oral Health education - Dry mouth

Hanny Calache (VVMCRHR), Rachel Martin (NRCH), Bradley Christian (VVMCRHR), Kevin McNamara (Deakin University), Carolyn Loton (Junto's Marketing)

Social practices of oral health in Australian preschool children

Linda Slack-Smith (UWA), Daniel McAullay (ECU), Paul Ward (Flinders), Hanny Calache (VVMCRHR)

Oral health in rural Victoria: The role of local government municipal public health planning

Virginia Dickson-Swift (VVMCRHR), Len Crocombe (VVMCRHR)

The Management of Noncommunicable Diseases (MND) unit of the World Health Organisation Regional Office for the Western Pacific

Bradley Christian (VVMCRHR), Mark Gussy (VVMCRHR)

Water fluoridation in rural Victoria

Virginia Dickson-Swift (VVMCRHR), Len Crocombe (VVMCRHR), Vincent Versace (Deakin)

Comparisons of rural and metropolitan oral health in adult Australians over time

Len Crocombe (VVMCRHR), Masood Mohd (VVMCRHR), Virginia Dickson-Swift (VVMCRHR), Australian Research Centre in Population Oral Health (Researchers TBA)

Social practices of oral health in Australian preschool children

Linda Slack-Smith (UWA), Daniel McAullay (ECU), Paul Ward (ECU), Hanny Calache (VVMCRHR)

The perspectives of stroke survivors, their carers, and allied health professionals on oral health care of stroke survivors

Shahrukh Khan (VVMCRHR), Leonard Crocombe (VVMCRHR), Virginia Dickson-Swift (VVMCRHR), Lucy O'Malley (University of Manchester), Silvana Bettiol (University of Tasmania), Craig Smith (University of Manchester)

Access to oral health services for rural communities: A review

Mark Gussy (VVMCRHR and Lincoln University), David Nelson (Lincoln University), Amanda Kenny (VVMCRHR), Virginia Dickson-Swift (VVMCRHR), Mohd Masood (VVMCRHR), Ron Knevel (VVMCRHR)

Barriers and enablers of doing research among dental academics in India

Research Team: Dr Mohd Masood (VVMCRHR), Professor Mark Gussy (University of Lincoln, United Kingdom), Professor Tim Newton (King's College London, United Kingdom), Professor Satu Lahti (University of Turku, Finland), Professor Jocelyn Fine (University of McGill University, Canada), Professor Om Prakash Kharbanda (AIIMS, India)

Malocclusion traits and oral health-related quality of life in Finnish national population

Rantavuori Kari (University of Turku, Finland), Silvola Anna-Sofia (University of Turku, Finland), Suominen Auli (University of Turku, Finland), Masood Mohd (University of Turku, Finland), Suominen Liisa (University of Turku, Finland), Lahti Satu (University of Turku, Finland)

COMMUNITY WATER FLUORIDATION IN RURAL VICTORIA

Community based water fluoridation is a cost-effective and equitable initiative that is supported by overwhelming scientific evidence and internationally recognised as one of the most important public health interventions. The provision of fluoride plays a crucial role in both preventing and reducing tooth decay however not all Australians can access a fluoridated water supply. The National Oral Health Plan recommends fluoridation of towns > 1000 population but despite meeting the population targets many rural towns in Victoria do not currently have access to water fluoridation. VVMCRHR researchers Dr. Virginia Dickson-Swift and Professor Len Crocombe have undertaken a mapping exercise exploring the water fluoridation status of rural towns throughout Victoria. Results have highlighted that many rural towns with poor oral health status, with >1000 population do not currently have water fluoridation. Working closely with local governments we have identified opportunities to highlight this to state government and other key bodies through the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans. We are working closely with the City of Greater Bendigo and the Heathcote community (through Heathcote Health) to provide support for advocacy and lobbying for water fluoridation of the Heathcote water supply.

OPTIMISING EAR, NOSE AND THROAT (ENT) CARE IN RURAL AUSTRALIA: INVESTIGATION OF THE CURRENT ISSUES AROUND ENT CARE, AND DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION OF A HEALTH INTERVENTION

Susan O'Neill is a PhD candidate of LaTrobe University, her thesis title is 'Optimising Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) care in rural Australia: Investigation of the current issues around ENT care, and development, implementation, and evaluation of a health intervention'. The 2016 'Perils of Place' report by the Grattan Institute identified four ENT hotspots in rural Victoria; two of which are located in the Murray Primary Health Network (PHN) region. These hotspots highlight the inadequate ENT care delivery in the region, resulting in a higher than average rate of potentially preventable hospitalisations. Based in Mildura, this research is industry funded by Murray PHN. The collaborative approach between LaTrobe and Murray PHN has been invaluable to this research, providing the universities theoretical background in guiding the research development and Murray PHNs on the ground networks ensuring the projects outcomes are relevant and address the populations needs. The anticipated outcomes will be greater understanding of current issues around the diagnosis and care of ENT conditions in rural regions, and the development and evaluation of an intervention for improved ENT care delivery in the primary health care sector.

Centre researchers have extensive collaborative links with external organisations, industry partners and the wider community. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

Current Health Service and Community Partners

- Rochester and Echuca District Health Service
- Echuca Regional Health
- Benalla Health
- Gannawarra City Council
- Swan Hill District Health
- Northern District Health Services
- Alice Springs Hospital
- Kyabram Health
- Bendigo Health
- Bendigo Community Health
- Bendigo Bank
- City of Greater Bendigo
- Murray PHN
- Department of Health- Loddon Mallee
- Loddon Campaspe Primary Care Partnership
- Heathcote Health
- Castlemaine District Community Health
- Albury Wodonga Health
- Western Victoria PHN
- Sunraysia Community Health
- Barwon Health

Australian university and Institutes partners

- University of Western Australia
- University of Sydney
- University of Queensland
- Central Queensland University
- Edith Cowan university
- Flinders University
- James Cook University
- Deakin University
- University of Tasmania
- Western Sydney University
- Hunter Medical Research Institute
- University of Adelaide
- Sax Institute
- University of Newcastle
- Diabetes Victoria
- National Ageing Research Centre
- Olivia Newton John Cancer Centre
- Dental Health Services Victoria
- Dental Health Tasmania
- Australian Dental Association
- University of New South Wales

International partners/ collaborators

- Lincoln University Centre for Global Rural Health (Oral health)
- Manchester University (Oral health)
- University College London (Dental Public Health)
- University of New York (Oral health)
- NIVEL (Preventative and Primary Health Care)
- McMaster University (Preventative and Primary Health Care)
- Kings College London (Oral Health)
- Turku University Finland (Diabetes)
- IKNL The Netherlands (Diabetes)

GRANTS SUCCESS

PREVENTATIVE AND PRIMARY HEALTH GROUP

Motivations and behaviours in relation to breast cancer screening for women over 75 years

Virginia Dickson-Swift (VVMCRHR), Irene Blackberry (JRI), Evelien Spelten (VVMCRHR), Carlene Wilson (La Trobe University, ONJCR, Eva Yuen (Deakin and La Trobe). Funding \$280,872

The BreastScreen Australia program invites women aged between 50 and 74 years to have a mammogram every 2 years. Women aged 40-49 years and those over 75 years are also eligible to receive free mammograms but are not sent an invitation. Studies on mortality reduction from breast cancer screening in women aged 70-79 years have noted many inconsistencies in the data that may impact our understanding of breast cancer screening motivations and behaviours for older women. The aim of this project is to investigate breast screening motivations and how this impacts the behaviour of Australian women aged 75+ with a particular focus on the key barriers for women in rural and regional areas.

Measuring effectiveness of service streams

Evelien Spelten (VVMCRHR), Corina Modderman (VVMCRHR). Funding \$75,600

FamilyCare, a regional Victorian human service provider in partnership with La Trobe University Shepparton campus, has funded an industry PhD scholarship. The aim of the project is to develop a data platform to support evidence informed practice. Capturing accurate, consistent and reliable data on FamilyCare's activity levels, is essential for client outcomes and service user feedback to support staff. This project aspires to not only a change functionality but support an evolution of workplace and practice culture that enhances reporting on the quality of services delivered.

Evaluation of the Nukal Murra Health Support Service

Christopher Doran (CQU), Steve Begg (VVMCRHR), Roxanne Bainbridge (CQU), Anthony Shakeshaft (UNSW), Boyd Potts (CQU), Erika Langham (CQU). Funding \$8000

This project was commissioned by the Western Queensland Primary Health Network (WQPHN) to evaluate the Nukal Murra Health Support Service (NMHSS). In 2017, the WQPHN launched the NMHSS to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement under the Integrated Team Care (ITC) program. ITC (and its predecessors the Care Coordination and Supplementary Services and Improving Indigenous Access to Mainstream Primary Care programs) was established by the Australian government to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with complex chronic diseases unable to effectively manage their conditions through access to one-on-one assistance by Care Coordinators. ITC provides the opportunity for PHNs to develop flexible approaches to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's access to high quality, culturally appropriate health care, including care coordination services. It allows PHNs to develop innovative approaches that best meet local needs through the commissioning process. The project was a formative evaluation of the NMHSS against the aims and objectives of the ITC and considered:

- the effectiveness of the NMHSS;
- the potential enablers of the NMHSS; and,
- opportunities to strengthen the alliance through, for example, additional training and/or education.

ORAL PUBLIC HEALTH GROUP

Social practices of oral health in Australian preschool children

*Linda Slack-Smith (UWA), Daniel McAullay (ECU), Paul Ward (UWA) **Hanny Calache (VVMCRHR)**. Funding: \$86,556*

The aim of the study is to explore “social practices” of oral health in Australian preschool children. We use this emerging theory to move away from focusing on individuals and individual behaviour (and blame) to identify and map social practices: actions, materials, and meanings families attribute to child’s oral health. Expected project outcomes include identifying practices promoting or undermining children’s oral health that can inform upstream and downstream policy directions and practices to improve health outcomes. This offers a new approach to “wicked” problems, such as oral health, where extensive effort has not reduced morbidity and cost despite rhetoric that oral health is preventable. We will investigate social practices in the context of oral health in four different social/cultural/geographical groups:

1. Aboriginal families
2. Families who live in rural/regional setting (led by La Trobe University)
3. Families who live in low socioeconomic status (SES) areas
4. Families who undertake parenting practices to reduce perceived ‘toxins’ for their children (e.g. eating organic, no fluoride in water or vaccinations).

Impact of COVID-19 on oral health

***Virginia Dickson-Swift (VVMCRHR), Ron Knevel (VVMCRHR), Elizabeth Sari (LRHS), Rachel Martin (LRHS)**. Funding \$15,000 (LRHS)*

The aim of the survey is to provide information about oral health status, service use and prevention activities of Australian adults throughout the COVID-19 restrictions. Results from this study can then be used to assist service providers, researchers, and policy makers to design dental care systems that are responsive to the needs of their local populations and prioritise care for vulnerable groups including those with multi morbidities into the future.



ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee of the Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research provides strategic advice on the Centre's vision and agenda. The committee has played a key role over the past year in assisting with the development of the Centre's vision. We met in October 2020 via zoom due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place at the time. At this meeting we agreed on began the process of strategic planning including developing the TOR for the committee and drafting operational and strategic plans. This meeting was followed up in February 2021 with a rare face to face gathering on the Bendigo campus. The Advisory Committee spent the day workshoping the strategic directions of the Centre guided by the Chair, Neil Marshman. Since February 2021 the committee has been actively involved in the development of the Research Centre Renewal documents and continue to provide strategic advice to the Centre management.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dr Neil Marshman is Chair of the Advisory Committee of the Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research. Dr Marshman obtained a PhD in soil microbiology from the University of New South Wales. His career spanned forty years in the mining and electricity sectors where he worked in environmental, health and safety roles in Australia, Papua New Guinea, the United Kingdom and India. Dr Marshman, together with his brothers and mother, became a trustee of the VV Marshman Charitable Trust in 2006 and continues to promote the rural health improvement originally envisaged by the Trust. He participates in several postgraduate and early career mentoring programs and sits on two sub-committees of the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand, and the Melbourne University Office of Environmental Programs Community and Industry Advisory Board.

Professor Jane Mills is the Acting Director of the VVMCRHR and Dean and Head of the La Trobe Rural Health School at La Trobe University. She is one of Australia's most experienced primary healthcare academics having led and managed teams in both government and tertiary sectors. She is an experienced clinician and researcher with over 32 years' nursing experience, mainly in rural health services. She is also an internationally recognised grounded theorist and expert in qualitative methodologies, including action research. Professor Mills' research focuses on rural health, the health workforce, health system strengthening and nursing education.

Emeritus Professor Stephen Duckett is the Health and Aged Care Program Director at the Grattan Institute. He has a reputation for creativity, evidence-based innovation and reform in areas ranging from the introduction of activity-based funding for hospitals to new systems of accountability for the safety of hospital care. From 1996-2006 he was Dean of the then Faculty of Health Sciences at La Trobe University, and a Pro-Vice-Chancellor for much of that period. He was appointed an Emeritus Professor of the University in 2014. An economist, he is a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences.

Professor Emerita Amanda Kenny was the inaugural Violet Marshman Professor of Rural Health and Director of the Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research. Professor Kenny is a registered nurse and midwife and is an expert in primary health and rural health policy. She is internationally recognised for her expertise in multidisciplinary participatory research, co-design and integrated knowledge translation.

Dr Catherine Lees is the Director of Education, Training and Research at Echuca Regional Health. Dr Lees completed her PhD in tumour immunology at Victoria University. She worked in cancer education at the Cancer Council Victoria before moving to the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners to manage the College's national research, grants and ethics program. In 2004, Dr Lees joined the Ethics and Research Department at the Royal Children's Hospital, where she remained for 12 years before moving to regional Victoria to pursue a career in rural and regional workforce development. Dr Lees is the acting Executive Director for Human Resources at Echuca Regional Health and currently completing an MBA.

Professor Toby Wilkinson is the current Vice Chancellor of Fiji National University (FNU). Prior to joining FNU, Prof Wilkinson was Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Lincoln, UK, with an extensive portfolio of responsibilities including; the College of Science (incorporating Science, Engineering and Medicine) and the College of Business, regional partnerships between technical and vocational education and higher education, portfolio development, online programmes and micro-credentials, civic engagement, external relations and internationalisation, advancement, marketing and communications and a group of five primary and secondary schools sponsored by the university. Professor Wilkinson is an expert on ancient Egyptian civilisation and is one of the leading Egyptologists of his generation.

Mr Stephen May is the Chief Advancement Officer of Alumni and Advancement at La Trobe University. He is a highly successful senior advancement executive with extensive experience in fundraising, alumni relations, strategic marketing, financial management and business development. He has built significant expertise and experience in international markets by growing engagement with international alumni, students and their families.

Professor Andrew Hill is the Associate Provost (Research) in the College of Science, Health and Engineering at La Trobe University. Prior to this appointment, he was Director of the La Trobe Institute for Molecular Science (2016-19). Professor Hill is an expert on how abnormal proteins and RNA travel from cell to cell and are involved in neurodegenerative diseases. His laboratory also works on the biology of small noncoding RNA and their potential use as diagnostics in neurological and infectious diseases. He has published over 170 research papers and edited three books.

Mrs Marie Aitken is an experienced psychologist and board director committed to improving health and wellbeing outcomes for country people. She is the Board Chair of Wimmera Health Group (Horsham and Dimboola), and a member of the Western Victoria PHN (Primary Health Network) Board; she was previously a member of the Rural Northwest Health Board. Marie has a wealth of experience working professionally with individuals and as a volunteer with various community groups. She is keenly aware of the disparities that exist between the health outcomes of rural people when compared to city people and believes that rurally focussed research is central to finding urgent solutions to these health inequities.

Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift is the postdoctoral research fellow at the Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research. She is a public health researcher with over 20 years' experience working in rural communities. Dr Dickson-Swift specialises in public health approaches to health and wellbeing challenges, oral health, qualitative research methodologies, sensitive research, ethics and working with vulnerable rural communities to solve local health issues.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FUNDING

The first round of the VVM Partnership Funding was awarded in May 2021. We had four strong applications that were assessed by the Partnership Funding sub-committee consisting of Jane Mills, Neil Marshman and Marie Aitken. The successful applicant was Ruth Hardman from Sunraysia Community Health Services in Mildura.

Ruth's project due to begin later in 2021 will explore how social, community, genetic and environmental factors influence the health outcomes of people with chronic disease and look to establish an innovative care model.

Sunraysia Community Health Services (SCHS) has been awarded \$50,000 for the pilot study from the VVMCRHR and SCHS will also contribute \$50,000. The funding will be used to set up, conduct and evaluate a pilot model over two years with intention of expanding the trial to other rural community service organisations.

The pilot study builds on work completed by SCHS Pain Rehabilitation Physiotherapist, Ruth Hardman, who has been investigating the same topic as part of her Industry PhD studies with La Trobe University and SCHS.



Ruth Hardman

SCHS CEO Simone Heald says people from rural areas living with chronic diseases, often face barriers to self-manage their health concerns.

"SCHS is a progressive organisation that understands the community in which we work. We are experts in health and wellbeing and feel the current health system we operate in does not always meet the needs of all community members, particularly our clients who live in lower socio-economic conditions. Our clinicians witness this in their everyday practice, and to now have the opportunity to be involved in establishing an innovative care model specific to this cohort is extremely valuable.

"I have personally been so appreciative of the work and dedication of Ruth Hardman during the completion of her PhD, as Ruth has evidenced what clinicians have anecdotally experienced with their clients, and there is now an opportunity to enhance the care delivered, ensuring it meets the needs of community and improves their health and wellbeing," said Ms Heald.

The second round of the partnership funding opened in late July and closed on September 30th. The successful grants will be announced November 8th, 2021.

"...Ruth has evidenced what clinicians have anecdotally experienced with their clients, and there is now an opportunity to enhance the care delivered, ensuring it meets the needs of community and improves their health and wellbeing,"



THE VIOLET VINES MARSHMAN ORATION

The Violet Vines Marshman Oration is an annual event designed to engage people in discussion about rural health and wellbeing.

Orators are chosen for their expertise in areas that impact rural communities and for their ability to inspire people at all levels.

Consistent with the philosophy of the Centre, the Oration is not focused on a purely academic audience. Rather, it is a community celebration of rural Australia where guests are informed about rural health and social issues, and encouraged to think about how they can contribute to meaningful change.

REFLECTIONS ON THE ORATION

Virginia Dickson-Swift- Senior Research Fellow VVMCRHR

The news of the 2020 VVMCRHR Orator spread quickly with more than 500 people registering to hear the wonderful storyteller, activist and comedian Magda Subanszki, AO. I have always been an avid fan of Magda's from her early days in D-Generation, Big Girls Blouse and Fast Forward with my favourite character in the early days being the enigmatic sports reporter Pixie Ann Wheatley. Later when she appeared as Sharon Strzelecki I fell in love, as I saw much of myself reflected in dear Sharon. An avid netball fan (lacking in talent), funny, a passionate friend and a bit rounder than the 'average' woman. She raised the profile of all the poor Wing Defenders in the world with her signature "if you need, if you need"!! reminding us all that everyone deserves a chance to be bought into the game.

I didn't know much about Magda's early life until I read her book "Reckoning" for my local book club early in 2018. The opening sentence of the book struck me, and I was hooked... "If you had met my father, you would have never, not for an instant, have thought he was an assassin". Listening to her oration and her retelling of the impact of generational trauma on her and her family, she was both raw and honest. Life has not been easy for her, and she has had her share of ups and downs. Magda has a unique way of challenging

The 2020 Violet Vines Marshman Oration was delivered by Magda Szubanski AO on Tuesday November 24. Magda discussed the negative impact of social media on mental health and attracted a lot of community and media interest with the National Rural Health Alliance running a story in their popular online magazine, *Partyline*. The National Rural Health Alliance, is a peak body working towards healthy and sustainable rural, regional and remote communities. You can read a copy of the article here: <https://www.ruralhealth.org.au/partyline/article/magda-szubanski-talks-mental-health-marshman-centre-oration>.



the big questions in her public life (weight, sexuality, COVID, online bullying, generational trauma) that have personally affected her. She tells her story with just a hint of humour and a profound commitment to make things better for others. It was wonderful to hear about her work as an Ambassador for Phoenix Australia improving outcomes for people who have been affected by trauma. Magda spoke openly about the need to listen to people, support them to tell their own stories and the importance of time to heal. All of these align well with my own philosophy and that of the Centre as we work with local communities to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.

I don't know if Violet Vines Marshman was a netball fan, but I am pretty sure she would have loved Magda's oration. A strong, articulate woman with a profound sense of social justice and desire to make the world a better place would be just the type of person Violet would have over for a cup of tea and a chat.

2021/2022 ORATION

The VVM Oration for 2021/2022 will be delivered by the National Rural Health Commissioner, Professor Ruth Stewart. The Rural Health Commissioner is an independent, statutory office holder, appointed under Part VA of the Health Insurance Act 1973 (the Act). The Commissioner Office works with regional, rural and remote communities, the health sector, universities, specialist training colleges and across all levels of government to improve rural health policies and ensure there remains a strong focus on the needs of rural communities. Since it was established in November 2017, the Office has become an important part of our government's approach to improving rural health outcomes. Professor Stewart's Office will include Deputy Commissioners who will support the Commissioner and provide expertise across a range of vital rural health disciplines such as nursing, allied health and Indigenous Health. The Office will contribute to significant health reforms already under way, including in primary health care reforms, workforce, and training. The Office will drive innovation, with a clear focus on supporting on-the-ground improvements.



MEMBER NEWS

MEMBERSHIP

We currently have 33 Centre members and our membership continues to grow. We have welcomed 3 new members in 2021. Professor Leonard Crocombe, Dr. Jackie Goode, Associate Professor Steve Begg. Each of these new members brings a wealth of research experience and expertise.



Professor Leonard Crocombe (joined the Centre in May 2021)

I am the Professor of Rural Oral Health at La Trobe University, an Honorary Professor in Dentistry at the University of Papua New Guinea and a Visiting Research Fellow at the Australian Research Centre for Population Oral Health (ARCPOH) at the University of Adelaide. I have worked as a private dental practitioner in rural and regional areas of Australia, as the State Coordinator of the Tasmanian Dental Service and consulted for the Australian Graduate Dental Year Program. I currently consult for the Rural Flying Doctor Service in Tasmania, the University of Papua New Guinea Dental District and am the Patron of the Papua New Guinea Dental Association.

I have seen the poor oral health of rural Australians firsthand and understand that “throwing more money” at the problem to improve access to dental care is not sustainable in the longer term, that any interventions need to be cost-effective, and that a preventive population health and minimal intervention approaches are needed to improve oral health.

I completed my PhD in oral health outcomes in 2009 to obtain the necessary research skills to improve community oral health, and since then have published over 70 papers in peer-reviewed journals, presented at over 130 conferences, drafted over 40 submissions and reports, and led a collaboration between the Universities of Adelaide, Tasmania and Western Australia in the successful application to establish an APHCRI Centre for Research Excellence in Primary Oral Health Care. As well as overseeing eight research projects under four themes (successful aging and oral health, rural oral health, Indigenous oral health and the oral health of people with special needs), my role was to advise Commonwealth policy makers on oral health. I have also been awarded a NHMRC Translating Research into Practice (TRIP) Fellowship in aged care oral health.

I have now reached a stage in my life where I want to use my research skills, professional experience and numerous contacts within the dental world and in health administration to improve the oral health of rural Australians and in Papua New Guineans. I also want to leave a legacy of developing free-thinking national and international oral health researchers and leaders who will continue my work. Becoming part of the Violet Vines Centre for Rural Health Research will assist me to fulfill that goal.



Dr. Jacqueline Goode (joined the Centre in August 2021)

I am a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Dentistry and Oral Health in the La Trobe Rural Health School. I have been a dentist for over 30 years and have worked in both the private and public dental systems in Victoria. I completed my Master of Applied Science degree at La Trobe exploring the experiences of people with a dental problem who seek care in a hospital emergency department. My doctoral studies focussed on improving access to dental care for adults experiencing homelessness in a regional area of Victoria. My research interests focus on oral health and dental care for vulnerable people, particularly those that live in rural and regional Australia. I am an active member of the Australian Dental Association and the International Association for Dental Research and am a regular presenter at regional, national and international conferences. I undertake reviewing for the Journal of Public Health Dentistry.



Associate Professor Stephen Begg (joined the Centre in June 2021)

I am an epidemiologist with over 25 years of experience in research and consultancy. I have held senior leadership roles in both academia and the public sector and is currently Director of Research & Industry Engagement with the La Trobe Rural Health School (LRHS). I am probably best known for my work on quantifying the drivers of health inequalities using burden of disease methods, a field which I helped develop in Australia and to which I have contributed through positions at the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Harvard University and as a consultant for governments in Australia, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. Over the years I have contributed to many influential reports including WHO's World Health Report, the World Bank's Global burden of disease and risk factors, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's The burden of disease and injury in Australia 2003, and the Queensland Government's Making Tracks: Toward closing the gap in health outcomes for Indigenous Queenslanders by 2033. I currently supervise eight higher degree by research students and manage a diverse portfolio of industry-driven research relating to rural health including the Loddon Mallee Healthcare Worker COVID Study. Since joining the LRHS in 2013, I have been successful in gaining \$4M in competitive and industry funding. I have published over 90 peer-reviewed journal articles and other works over my career. I am looking forward to being part of the Violet Vines Centre for Rural Health Research and working closely with other centre members, researchers, partners and communities to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for rural people.

PHD COMPLETIONS

Congratulations to Centre members Drs Corina Modderman, and Jacqueline Goode who were both awarded their PhDs in the past year.

PHD EXAMINATIONS

John Baker is under examination and Stephen Barrett has passed his PhD in August and his award will be conferred over the coming months.



CONFERENCE, REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

CONFERENCES

September 2020 - Vienna European Respiratory Society International Congress

Virtual presentation:

The educational needs of people with bronchiectasis in a pulmonary rehabilitation setting

Type: Poster

Authors: Lee, A., Smith, R., Osadnik, C., King, P., McAleer, R.

October 2020 - Monash University Melbourne Monash University Physiotherapy Research Conference

Virtual presentation:

"Teach me how to look after myself" - what people with bronchiectasis want from education in a pulmonary rehabilitation setting

Type: Oral workshop

Authors: Smith, R., McAleer, R., King, P., Osadnik, C., Lee, A.

November 2020 - Virtual WPATH 26th Scientific Symposium

Virtual presentation:

How can voice and communication specialists and mental health professionals work together to promote wellbeing in gender diverse people? A transdisciplinary conversation. Mini-Symposium presented at WPATH 26th Scientific Symposium

Type: Oral workshop

Authors: Azul, D., Hancock, A. B., & Sinnott, V. (2020)

November 2020 - Webinar International Webinar

Virtual presentation:

Conversation in Grounded Theory

Type: Oral presentation

Authors: Mills, J. & Birks, M.

December 2020 - Bendigo La Trobe Rural Health School 2020 Graduate Research Festival

Virtual presentation:

In a pandemic, the PhD journey continues, as do experiences of loneliness.

Type: Poster

Authors: Jordan, K. Kenny, A., Dickson-Swift, V., Chan, C.

December 2020 - Monaco 4th World Bronchiectasis and NTM Conference

Virtual presentation:

"Teach me how to look after myself" - what people with bronchiectasis want from education in a pulmonary rehabilitation setting

Type: Poster

Authors: Lee, A., Smith, R., Burr, L., Chang, A., Holmes-Liew, C., Jayaram, L., King, P., Middleton, P., Morgan, L., Nguyen, T., Smith, D., Stroil-Salama, E., Thomson, R., Waring, J., Waterer, G., Wong, C., McAleer, R.

February 2021 - North East Victoria LGBTIQ+ inclusive practice conference

Virtual presentation:

Working with trans and gender diverse people in a culturally responsive way. Workshop presented at LGBTIQ+

Type: Oral workshop

Authors: Azul, D.

April 2021 - Australia

TSANZSRS 2021 (The Australia & New Zealand Society of Respiratory Science and The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (ANZSRS/TSANZ) Annual Scientific Meeting for Leaders in Lung Health & Respiratory Science)

Virtual presentation:

"Teach me how to look after myself" - what people with bronchiectasis want from education in a pulmonary rehabilitation setting

Type: Oral presentation

Authors: Lee, A., Smith, R., Burr, L., Chang, A., Holmes-Liew, C., Jayaram, L., King, P., Middleton, P., Morgan, L., Nguyen, T., Smith, D., Stroil-Salama, E., Thomson, R., Waring, J., Waterer, G., Wong, C., McAleer, R.

June 2021 - Podcast Words Matter Podcast

Podcast:

Grounded Theory

Type: Oral presentation

Authors: Mills, J. & Birks, M.

July 2021 - International International Institute for Qualitative Methods TQ2U Thinking Qualitatively

Virtual presentation:

Loneliness of older people in rural communities: A mixed methods study.

Type: Poster

Authors: Jordan, K. Kenny, A., Dickson-Swift, V., Chan, C.

July 2021 - International International Institute for Qualitative Methods TQ2U Thinking Qualitatively

Virtual presentation:

Undertaking qualitative research on sensitive research.

Type: Workshop

Authors: Dickson-Swift, V.

July-Aug 2021 - Virtual VASTA Rising voices virtual conference

Virtual presentation:

Best practices for vocal pedagogy with gender diverse students. Paper presented at VASTA virtual conference.

Type: Oral workshop

Authors: Quoresimo, L., & Azul, D.

REPORTS

June 2021

An Evaluation of Nukal Murra Health Support Services

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