

Newsletter

Upcoming Events...

- **19-22 April**

The 13th Annual Congress of the Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand (PSANZ) on 'a top end experience: better birthing, better babies' will be held in Darwin, Australia.

- **5-9 June**

The 29th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Reproductive Immunology will be held in Orlando, Florida.

- **6-11 June**

The Annual Meeting of SLEEP 2009 will be held in Seattle, Washington.

- **10-13 June**

The Annual Meeting of the Endocrine Society ENDO 2009 will be held in Washington, DC.

- **16-19 June**

The Network in Genes and Environment in Development (NGED) forum will be held in Palm Cove, North Queensland.

- **28 June-1 July**

The 25th annual European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) meeting will be held in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Further information at

www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events

LATEST NEWS

HDA Scholars 2009

HDA and Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation have awarded seven PhD top-up Scholarships.

Ms Lisa Akison - Research Centre for Reproductive Health, The Robinson Institute, University of Adelaide.

Primary supervisor - Dr Rebecca Robker. Co-supervisors - Prof Richard Ivell / Prof Rob Norman.
[Investigating molecular mechanisms regulating ovulation](#)

Long Nguyen - School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences, University of South Australia.

Primary supervisor - A/Prof Cory Xian. Co-supervisors - Dr Beverly Muhlhausler / Dr Tetyana Shandala.

[Investigating effects and potential mechanisms of early nutritional intervention on bone growth, bone mass accumulation, and bone structure](#)

Zhi Yi Ong - School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences, University of South Australia.

Primary supervisor - Dr Beverly Muhlhausler. Co-supervisor - Prof Caroline McMillen.

[Determining whether being exposed to maternal junk food diet during fetal life leads to altered development of the central reward pathway](#)

Luca Prisciandaro - Discipline of Agricultural and Animal Science, University of Adelaide.

Primary supervisor - A/Prof Gordon Howarth. Co-supervisors - Dr Mark Geier (SARDI) / Dr Adrian Cummins (QEH) / A/Prof Ross Butler (WCH).

[Identifying probiotic supernatants efficacious in mucositis](#)

Ms Natasha Schranz - Nutritional Physiology Research Centre, University of South Australia.

Primary supervisors - Dr Grant Tomkinson and A/Prof Tim Olds. Co-supervisor - Dr Natalie Sinn.

[The effectiveness of a resistance training intervention targeted at overweight and obese adolescent boys in relation to physical and psychological outcomes measures](#)

Mrs Georgie Crichton - Nutritional Physiology Research Centre, University of South Australia.

Primary supervisor - Dr Karen Murphy. Co-supervisor - Dr Janet Bryan.

[Investigating the effects of low fat dairy consumption on cognitive functioning, psychological well-being, and cardiometabolic health](#)

Ms Dorota Zarnowiecki - Division of Health Sciences, University of South Australia.

Primary supervisor - Dr Jim Dollman. Co-supervisor - Dr Natalie Sinn.

[Exploring resilience in relation to dietary behaviours among children from neighbourhoods of low socioeconomic position](#)

The HDA Scholars will be officially welcomed at a Welcome Function and introduction to HDA on 16 April, 4.45-6.30pm. HDA members are invited to attend and meet the new Scholars and enjoy some food and drink. If you would like to attend and for further details contact

anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au

The official launch of the Robinson Institute was recently held on 11 March and attended by over 200 staff, students and affiliates.

The University of Adelaide launched a new research institute focussing on reproductive health, intergenerational health and new stem cell research that will tackle some of the big issues of prevention of illness for individuals and their offspring through lifestyle choices.

Named after renowned obstetrician Prof Jeffrey Robinson CBE, Emeritus Professor at the University of Adelaide, the Robinson Institute will encompass the University's Research Centre for Reproductive Health, the Centre for Stem Cell Research and the Centre for Early Origins of Health and Disease in a collaborative venture with Adelaide hospitals Lyell McEwin, Women's and Children's, Royal Adelaide and The Queen Elizabeth as well as IMVS/Hanson Institute.

The Robinson Institute is led by reproductive medicine expert and HDA Co-Convenor Professor Robert Norman and involves more than 200 research staff and students with expertise ranging from epidemiology through to molecular biology and genetics.



L to R: Prof Rob Norman, Vice Chancellor & President of University of Adelaide Prof James McWha, the Hon. John Hill Minister for Health, Keynote Speaker Prof Roger Short from University of Melbourne, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Prof Mike Brooks and Prof Jeffrey Robinson.



Prof Tanya Monro, Director of Centre of Expertise in Photonics at University of Adelaide with Prof James McWha

Ms Grace Portolesi MP, Member for Hartley with the Hon. Carolyn Pickles



Prof Jeffrey Robinson



L to R: Chairman of the Robinson Institute Board Mr Mark Coleman, Institute Manager Mrs Jo Close, Mr Michael Edgecombe from Indigo Consulting Group, Prof Bik To Clinical Director of Haematology from SA Pathology and A/Prof Stan Gronthos from IMVS/Hanson Institute Co-Director of Centre for Stem Cell Research.



L to R: Prof Roger Short, Prof Simon Maddocks Chief of SARDI, E/Prof Colin Matthews from University of Adelaide.



L to R: Mr Glenn Rappensberg Executive Director and Mr Dennis Earl Chairman from Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation with Prof Rob Norman.



L to R: Prof John Carver Head of School of Molecular & Biomedical Science University of Adelaide, Dr Duncan McFetridge MP Shadow Minister for Science & Information Economy, Mr Maurice Henderson Director of the QEH Research Foundation.

Cocktail reception



MEMBER PROFILE - DR NICOLETTE HODYL

DISCIPLINE OF OBSTETRICS & GYNAECOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE



Dr Nicolette Hodyl is a post-doctoral fellow in A/Professor Vicki Clifton's research group in the Discipline of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Adelaide.

Her current research aims to determine factors that contribute to immuno-competence in human neonate, and characterize this development following pathological pregnancies and preterm delivery. A large part of this work will focus on the impact of perinatal glucocorticoid

exposure. In addition to this, Nicki has been examining the effects of maternal asthma in pregnancy on fetal growth and feto-placental immunity.

In 2008, Nicki received her PhD, which was carried out at the University of Newcastle NSW, under the supervision of Dr Deborah Hodgson. Her doctoral thesis characterized the development of the immune system in an animal model of gestational infection. This thesis profiled the offspring's innate immune response to bacterial exposure across the lifespan, and characterized subsequent pain thresholds in these animals, which are also critically determined via cytokine pathways.

This work has already led to a number of publications and

invitations to present in symposia at national neuroscience meetings, as well as presentations in national and international forums.

Throughout her PhD, Nicki has been a winner of a number of awards including the Best Oral Presentation (Student) at the International conference of the Fetal and Neonatal Physiology Society, Australian Psychological Society Prize, Award for Research Excellence (University of Newcastle), Basic Science Prize (University of Newcastle) and a number of faculty and society travel grants to attend international and national conferences.

More recently she was the recipient of a Colin Matthews Research Grant to begin her post-doctoral studies.

In her final year of her PhD, Nicki worked as a research assistant for the Mothers and Babies Research Centre at the John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle.

This research aimed to characterise peripheral blood flow in women with pre-eclampsia and healthy pregnancies to assess differences in haemodynamic regulation. Previous to this, Nicki worked in the Sleep Disorder Laboratory, at The Royal Newcastle Hospital, as an EEG technician.

Dr Nicolette Hodyl

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HDA TRAVEL GRANT

RECIPIENT CONFERENCE REPORT 2009



Dr Ming Li
Research Fellow
Chronic Disease Epidemiology
 Division of Health Sciences,
 University of South Australia

With the assistance of the HDA travel grant, I was honoured to attend the 5th Asia-Oceania Conference on Obesity on 5-8th Feb, in Renaissance Convention Centre, Mumbai, India and presented my research on obesity in children and adolescents in China.

This conference is the 5th bi-annual meeting of Asia Oceania Association for Study of Obesity (AOASO) and the regional chapter of International Association for Study of Obesity (IASO) and accommodated approximately 500 delegates from around the world including both developed and developing countries such as USA, UK, Australia, New Zealand, China, Singapore, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Iran, and India etc.

The 3-day full packed conference started with two extensive training courses on the first day, topics including the assessment, mechanism, health outcome, prevention and treatment of over-

weight and obesity in children and adults. On the following two days, world prestigious researchers presented cutting-edge overviews in various areas in obesity field in the plenary sessions. For example, Prof. David Allison presented a thinking provoking review of the aetiology of obesity. Prof. Tim Gill showed the possible explanation for increased levels of weight related co-morbidities in Asia. Prof. Yuji Matsuzawa presented based on his research the profound mechanism of visceral obesity and adipocytokines. And Prof. Phil James overviewed community health approach to prevent obesity, to just name a few. Each wonderful plenary session aroused heated discussion and I feel I learned from them and my view was broadened.

During the conference, researchers presented orally or by poster their own piece of study and share ideas and knowledge related to the study. My presentation on primary prevention of obesity in children and adolescents in China also was of interest to some delegates. We discussed more and networking after my allocated time. This is a good opportunity for me to learn from peers and experts around the world in opening my view and understanding of obesity, one of my research focus, and in future contacting with each other.

Dr Ming Li

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The newly formed Environment Institute at the University of Adelaide is holding a free 12 part public seminar series **Climate Futures**, and follows on from the highly successful *Climate 2030* and *Climate Q&A* series. The seminar series will explore leading edge developments that will enable society to adapt to anticipated future changes in our climate. Convened by specialists, the presentations are suitable for anyone with an interest in the challenges posed by climate change for a sustainable society.

The Climate Futures lecture series will be presented on **Wednesdays** at **5-7pm** in the Horace Lamb Lecture Theatre, University of Adelaide North Terrace campus, from **4 March** to **8 April** and from **29 April** to **2 June**. Note that the final presentation is on **Tuesday 2 June** at **6-8pm**.

The seminars are free of charge and registration is recommended using the email address at environment@adelaide.edu.au

Date	Seminar Topic
1 April	Reshaping urban environments <i>Convenor: Associate Professor Veronica Soebarto</i>
8 April	Options for carbon capture and storage <i>Convenor: Professor John Kaldi</i>
29 April	Living on the edge - Human responses to climate change <i>Convenor: Emeritus Professor Martin Williams</i>
6 May	People, culture and religion <i>Convenor: Dr Paul Babie</i>
13 May	Impacts of climate change - Challenges for rural communities <i>Convenor: Dr Peter Hayman</i>
20 May	The carbon economy <i>Convenor: Professor Christopher Findlay</i>
27 May	Emergency response - Can we cope? <i>Convenor: Dr Peng Bi</i>
2 June	Climate futures *Note different day and time: Tuesday, 6-8 pm <i>Convenor: Dr Steven Cork</i>

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK ONLINE FORUM

The Australian Government is providing an innovative online forum for early childhood educators and others with an interest in early childhood to access and trial the Early Years Learning Framework. You will also be able to take part in discussions and provide feedback directly to the Australian Government.

The Early Years Learning Framework is an early childhood education curriculum framework designed to guide delivery of high quality and nationally consistent early childhood programs.

The draft Early Years Learning Framework is currently being trialled in 29 sites across Australia. Feedback from these trials, as well as the online forum, will be used to prepare the final Early Years Learning Framework. The framework will be implemented in July 2009. The framework is delivering on a Rudd Government commitment to improve outcomes and opportunities for children in their early years. The online forum will run from 14 March to 20 April 2009.

The Early Years Learning Framework online forum will be available for registered participants. Further information is available at www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood

NATIONAL HEALTH & HOSPITALS REFORM COMMISSION

[A Healthier Future for all Australians - Interim Report](#)

The National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission was appointed in early 2008. The Interim Report includes directions and proposals for reform of our health care system arising from consultations and deliberations to date.

4 themes were identified which encapsulate directions for reform:

Taking Responsibility

Individual and collective action to build good health and wellbeing – by people, families, communities, health professionals, employers and governments.

Connecting Care

Comprehensive care for people over their lifetime.

Facing Inequities

Recognise and tackle the causes and impacts of health inequities.

Driving Quality Performance

Better use of people, resources, and evolving knowledge.

The full report can be found at www.nhhrc.org.au



PAPO

Predicting
Adverse
Pregnancy
Outcomes

Are you planning to get pregnant?
OR
Are you less than 12 weeks pregnant?

If you answered YES

Would you consider being involved in an exciting research study which aims to improve the health of future mothers and babies?

If so contact the PAPO study on

Ph: (08) 8161 8226

About the PAPO study

Pregnancy loss/miscarriage, pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure in pregnancy), having a premature baby or small for gestation baby are common pregnancy problems affecting up to 1 in 4 couples. At present, there is no way to predict which couples will develop these pregnancy problems.

The aim of the PAPO study is to develop tests so that couples with a high risk of these problems can be identified early in pregnancy.

Prediction will allow prevention and treatment of these problems for future pregnant women and their babies.

What does taking part in PAPO mean for you?

- ★ A 12 week pregnancy blood test
- ★ If possible a pre-pregnancy blood test
- ★ A simple dietary and medical health questionnaire will need to be completed

For more information contact

Dr Denise Furness

Ph: (08) 8161 8226 or Mob: 0412 613 985

Email: denise.furness@adelaide.edu.au

The PAPO Study is funded by an NHMRC Project Grant awarded to Professor Gus Dekker at the University of Adelaide. The study is being conducted at two sites - Women's and Children's Hospital, and the Lyell McEwin Hospital.



THE UNIVERSITY
OF ADELAIDE
AUSTRALIA



Women's and Children's Hospital
ADELAIDE



Servicing the Community of Central Northern Adelaide

HDA EVENTS PROGRAM

HDA's Event Program will be commencing in May right through to November

*HDA Thematic Evenings
HDA Career Development Events
HDA 5th Annual Oration
HDA Symposiums and more...*

.....stay tuned for your email alerts for our HDA events....or go to www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation

Since 1976 the Foundation has provided grants to support research into conditions that may affect the health, education and welfare of children in South Australia and Northern Territory. Each year the Foundation disburses approximately \$1,000,000. Individual grants are generally supported up to a maximum of \$75,000 per annum. 'Early Career' grants are generally supported up to a maximum of \$35,000 per annum. Projects may be supported for a maximum of 2 years.

Applications close 30 April. Further details at www.crf.org.au

Macquarie Bank Foundation

The Macquarie Bank Foundation focuses its resources in six core areas – arts, education, environment, health care, health research and welfare. They are also committed to projects specifically aimed at supporting indigenous communities.

Applications open all year round. Further details at www.macquarie.com/foundation/aboutus/application_process.htm

Neuroscience Research Grants - Pfizer Australia

Grants are open to medical graduates who are early in their research career having commenced research (or returned after an appropriate break) within the last five years or are currently in advanced training. Funding for the Neuroscience Research Grants will be up to AU\$44,000 (including GST) per annum for 12 months.

Applications close 14 April. Further details at www.nsrgrants.com.au

Paediatric Endocrine Research Grants - Pfizer Australia

Grants are open to medical graduates who have obtained specialist qualifications within the last five years, or are currently in advanced training, or are graduates returning to research after an appropriate break. Funding for the Paediatric Endocrine Research Grants will be up to AU\$55,000 (including GST) per annum for 12 months.

Applications close 29 May. Further details at www.apecgrants.com.au/Paediatric

Cancer Research Grants - Pfizer Australia

These grants are open to medical graduates who are early in their research career having commenced research (or returned after an appropriate break) within the last five years. Funding for the Cancer Research Grants will be up to AU\$55,000 (including GST) per annum for 12 months.

Applications close 5 June. Further details at www.crgants.com.au/Oncology

Thrasher Research Fund - Early Career Award (Paediatrics)

The Thrasher Research Fund has announced the fourth year of its Early Career Award Program in for 2009. The Fund will continue to make 30 awards in 2009, expanded from 21 awards in 2006-2007.

There are three funding cycles per year for New Researcher Award Program grants. Up to ten grants per cycle will be made in 2009. The Fund is open to a variety of research topics important to children's health. The Fund's current focus is on clinical/translational paediatric research. Emphasis is placed on projects with the potential for findings that could be clinically applicable in a relatively short period of time for the prevention, diagnosis and/or treatment of paediatric medical problems.

Application cycles for 2009 'concept submissions' close 13 February, 19 June and 16 October. Further details at www.thrasherresearch.org

NEW HDA MEMBERS

Dr Melissa Whitrow

Research Fellow

Discipline of Public Health, University of Adelaide

Dr Whitrow's research area is in life-course and social epidemiology (social determinants of health, ethnicity and health, child and adolescent growth, respiratory health, cardiovascular health).

Dr Cuong Tran

Research Fellow and Affiliate Lecturer, University of Adelaide
Gastroenterology Unit, CYWHS

Dr Tran's research area is in nutrition and gastroenterology (zinc nutrition and gastrointestinal infections and disorders).

Mr Tod Fullston

Post Doctoral Researcher

Discipline of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, University of Adelaide

Mr Fullston's research area is in genetics of gamete and early embryo biology addressing what effects male obesity has on molecular parameters of sperm.

Ms Rebecca Taylor

PhD Student / Occupational Therapist

School of Health Sciences, University of South Australia

Ms Taylor's research area is in child and adolescent health, children with disabilities and development of computer based survey measuring participation of 10-15 year olds in everyday activities.