

# Sydney Health Partners Newsletter

May 2017

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## A message from the Executive Director



I hope this edition of the Sydney Health Partners newsletter finds you all well. I have enjoyed meeting many of you over the last few months, and in April I had the pleasure of meeting with the leaders of our Clinical Streams. It was most encouraging to see the progress that is being made, and I look forward to meeting with the leaders of our Cross Cutting Themes next month. For those of you I am yet to connect with, you can find out more about our vision for Sydney Health Partners, in this [Q&A](#) on our website. I am also very pleased to report that you can now stay connected with Sydney Health Partners via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). These channels will help us tell our story and share the successes of all of our partner organisations, and I encourage you to like and follow our pages for all of our latest updates.

Another priority has been cementing Sydney Health Partners' alliance with our fellow Advanced Health Research and Translation Centres (AHRTCs), and continuing our discussions with the Federal Government around how the AHRTCs can support the Medical Research Futures Fund (MRFF) to deliver against its Strategic Plan. These discussions are ongoing and remain positive, and I will continue to provide updates as they come to hand. I am further news after the Federal Budget is announced this week.

Forward planning has also been a focus for the operational team over the last couple of months, and as part of this process we recently reviewed the objectives of Sydney Health Partners. I would like to take the opportunity to reaffirm our vision and commitment to transform the way research helps improve the health of our community by:

**Delivering patient and public benefit:** accelerating the transfer of research innovations into health care improvements.

**Achieving effective collaboration:** facilitating a culture that cuts through the barriers to collaborative, efficient working among researchers and clinicians

**Managing at scale:** demonstrating that a collaborative translational research model can be successfully applied in a large diverse health system

**Enhancing international competitiveness:** supporting the partners to compete effectively for research resources and talent.

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In other news, it was very pleasing to see an overwhelming response to our call for information on currently-recruiting Clinical Trials to be included in the Sydney Health Partners [ClinTrial Refer App](#). The App is a very important initiative that will better connect clinicians, researchers and patients – with the aim of increasing recruitment to trials and giving patients the opportunity for improved access to emerging therapies and treatments. You can also read more about the work of the [Clinical Trials Stream](#) later in our newsletter.

Looking ahead there are also some [important dates](#) that I would like to add to your calendar. In particular I would like to draw your attention to The Sydney Health Partners Annual Forum, which is being planned for October. A confirmed date and location will be provided as planning progresses, with the Forum providing an excellent opportunity for all of our Partner organisations and stakeholders to come together, share updates on our progress and successes and, most importantly, learn from each other. A social event for networking and engaging with stakeholders from outside of our Partnership is also planned for the evening. I look forward to seeing you there.

And finally, I would like to take a moment to congratulate Professor Roger Reddel, of the Children's Medical Research Institute, on receiving the [Neil Hamilton Fairley Medal for 2017](#) for his outstanding contribution to the field of medicine. Professor Reddel is a valued member of Sydney Health Partners' Governing Council and I know everyone will join me in commending him for this prestigious award and acknowledgement of his outstanding achievements in the field of cancer research.

Thank you for your commitment to Sydney Health Partners. I look forward to working together with you in the months ahead.



With best wishes,

Professor Garry Jennings AO  
Executive Director  
Sydney Health Partners

# Stream and Theme Updates: Musculoskeletal, Clinical Trials and Informatics

We will profile three of Sydney Health Partners' Streams and Themes in each edition of our newsletter. This edition we are taking a look at Musculoskeletal, Clinical Trials and Informatics Streams.

## Musculoskeletal

The Musculoskeletal Clinical Stream is working to improve the quality of care provided to people living with musculoskeletal disorders such as osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis as well as disabling ankle, knee and low back pain. Musculoskeletal conditions such as osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and low back pain – as well as devastating disorders like osteogenesis imperfecta and osteoporosis - are a major cause of disability. In Australia these conditions affect 7 million people, and are a National Health Priority.

You can read more about the Musculoskeletal Stream's work [here](#) and hear from one of their patients [here](#).

## Clinical Trials

The Clinical Trials Cross Cutting Theme is working to help researchers and clinicians conduct clinical trials across Sydney Health Partners' member organisations and, in turn, improve patient outcomes through better evidence-based treatment and access to emerging treatments.

The Clinical Trials Cross Cutting Theme is a multi-disciplinary team, including active clinical trialists and research administrators. Its goal is to embed clinical trials into clinical practice within Sydney Health Partners' Local Health District Partners, ensuring patients receive outstanding care.

You can read more about the work of the Clinical Trials Theme [here](#).

## Informatics

The Informatics Cross Cutting Theme's vision is to harness technology and data to promote wellness, prevent disease, and improve healthcare delivery and quality of life. Informatics and eHealth has the potential to transform all aspects of healthcare and research, including how care is accessed and assessed, how health information is managed and what online tools and mobile devices are being used to improve and maintain health and wellbeing in a more effective and efficient manner.

The Informatics Theme has developed an Informatics and eHealth Strategy for Sydney Health Partners to achieve its vision, and has recently formed an Informatics and eHealth Steering Committee that will drive its delivery.

You can read more about the work of the Informatics Theme [here](#).



Professor David Hunter,  
Musculoskeletal



Professor Chris Maher  
Musculoskeletal



Professor Joshua Burns  
Musculoskeletal



Professor Jonathan Morris  
Informatics



Professor Simon Finfer  
Clinical Trials



# Community Engagement



Sydney Health Partners is continuing its discussions with patient and carer representatives to explore how to better engage with them in health and medical research. To date, three forums have been held at Royal North Shore Hospital, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, and Cumberland Hospital, attended by 16 people. One-on-one interviews have also been conducted with members of the Sydney Children's Hospital consumer network, and other health and research groups with experience in engaging consumers in health research.

A report is currently being drafted, summarising the findings of all of the forums and interviews and recommending actions for Sydney Health Partners and our Partner organisations to facilitate enhanced engagement with patients, carers and members of the community.



# Funding Opportunities



The NHMRC Translating Research into Practice (TRIP) Fellowship applications for funding in 2018 are now open. The Fellowships provide support for health care professionals, health care personnel, health systems personnel, health researchers and health policy makers to translate evidence into health care and public health improvements.

They provide for a two-year, 0.5 full time equivalent position and ensure time for Fellows to develop the range of skills needed for leadership in research translation.

## The objectives of the scheme are to:

- build capacity in research translation by supporting future leaders to undertake projects focused on translating robust or best-available evidence into practice that will either have localised health benefits to patients or broader and deeper impact on health care, the health system, public health, national policy, and/or service delivery; and
- create a critical mass of experts in the area of research translation to support and sustain change in the long term.

Key dates are below, and further information can be found [here](#).

Eligibility and compliance check period	Thursday 11 May – Wednesday 17 May
UON Deadline for final application	5pm Wednesday 24 May 2017
NHMRC Submission Deadline	5:00pm Wednesday 31 May 2017

# Funding Opportunities



## Ramaciotti Awards now open

The Ramaciotti Medal for Excellence in Biomedical Research 2017 is open, with nominations closing on 31 May 2017. The Ramaciotti Medal is an annual award of \$50,000. The Medal honours an individual who has made an outstanding discovery (or discoveries) in clinical or experimental biomedical research that has had an important impact on biomedical science, clinical science, or the way in which healthcare is delivered.

The Ramaciotti Health Investment Grants are also open for applications, with grants of up to \$150,000 awarded to individuals in universities, public hospitals or institutes for a contribution towards the undertaking of health or medical research with the potential path to clinical application within five years.

Calls for Expressions of Interests (EOI) are also open for the 2017 Ramaciotti Biomedical Research Award. This year the \$1 million grant is open to NSW applicants only, and is awarded every two years to a group or individual undertaking biomedical research within universities, public hospitals, medical research institutes or other similar organisations.

Further information, and guidelines, for all of the above grants and awards can be found [here](#).



## Member news



### RPA Robotics Surgery Training Institute opened by Minister Hazzard

The new RPA Robotics Surgery Training Institute was officially opened by the NSW Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research, Brad Hazzard on 10 April. The Institute is an Australian-first partnership between Sydney Health Partners members Sydney Local Health District and the University of Sydney, along with Device Technologies and da Vinci Surgical Systems - bringing together clinical care, research, training and state-of-the-art medical technology. The Institute is the first of its kind in the southern hemisphere and will train surgeons from across Australia and Asia in robotic techniques for cardiovascular, urology, gynaecology and colorectal procedures.

You can view ABC News' coverage of the opening [here](#).



### Researchers from Heart Research Institute on Channel 9 News

Researchers from the Heart Research Institute, a member of Sydney Health Partners, were featured on Channel 9 News discussing the link they have discovered between a cancer-causing protein and blood clots. Cancer patients who are four times more likely to suffer from clotting stand to benefit from the breakthrough.

You can view the coverage on Channel 9 News [here](#).



### Study by The George Institute for Global Health and the University of Sydney finds cardiovascular disease is not a 'man's disease'

Researchers from Sydney Health Partners members The George Institute and the University of Sydney spoke to ABC News about their recent study that found that men are significantly more likely than women to have their heart disease risk factors measured by their GP. The study also found that younger women at high risk of cardiovascular disease were 37 per cent less likely to be treated with the appropriate preventative medicines than their male counterparts.

You can view the article [here](#).

# Dates for the Diary



## Save the Date: Sydney Health Partners' Annual Forum: October 2017

Sydney Health Partners' Annual Forum is being planned for October. More information will be provided as planning progresses, with the Forum providing an opportunity for all of our Partner organisations and stakeholders to come together, share successes and provide updates on progress. A social event will also be held in the evening and opened to a wider audience to provide an opportunity for networking with key stakeholders from outside the Partnership. Keynote speakers who can share their experiences with research translation in the health system are also being investigated.

If you would like to be part of the Program Committee to help plan the program for this year's Forum please contact Vanessa Williams at [vanessa.williams@sydney.edu.au](mailto:vanessa.williams@sydney.edu.au).

## Sydney Innovation and Research Symposium: 22-24 June 2017

Sydney Local Health District's Sydney Innovation and Research Symposium will be held from 22 to 24 June. The Symposium will bring together clinicians, researchers and service managers over three days and will include a day (22 June) focused on research; how to carry it out, how to commercialise it and where it might take health into the future. Sydney Health Partners will be presenting at the Symposium, and we encourage our members to attend.

## 6th Annual NHMRC Symposium on Research Translation: 14-15 November 2017

The NHMRC Symposium will be held in Brisbane from 14-15 November. The theme is "The Butterfly Effect: Translating knowledge into Action for Positive Change", with a focus on the action needed to improve the health and wellbeing of Australia's First Peoples through effective translation of health, wellbeing and medical research into policy and practice. There are many great examples of how knowledge has been translated into action for positive change across Sydney Health Partners, and we encourage as many of our Partners as possible to submit abstracts. This is also an important opportunity to raise the profile of Sydney Health Partners and demonstrate how together we are transforming the way research improves patient care and public health. Please also send a copy of your abstract to [vanessa.williams@sydney.edu.au](mailto:vanessa.williams@sydney.edu.au) so that we can assist in preparation and promoting the great work being undertaken by our Partnership.

