

AUSTRALIAN ROTARY HEALTH health probe



October, 2011

ABOUT OUR PhD SCHOLARS

Volume 2 Number 2

AUSTRALIAN ROTARY HEALTH PhD SCHOLARS TO 'GET SOCIAL' ON FACEBOOK

Facebook is a social networking service and website launched in February 2004, operated and privately owned by Facebook, Inc. As of July 2011, Facebook has more than 800 million active users.

Australian Rotary Health has created a profile page, and we are encouraging people to **'like'** our page, and exchange messages. We receive an automatic notifications when people write on our wall. Looking forward to hearing from you all!!

KellyAnne Martinez our Research Officer has put together a special page for [Australian Rotary Health PhD Scholars](#). This page has been set up the Scholarship recipients past and present can keep in touch as well as share some experiences. We are looking forward to hear some great stories coming out of this venture.

Here are the links to Australian Rotary Health Social Networking pages are: **(pages are linked)**

[Australian Rotary Health Facebook](#)

[Hat Day for Mental Health Research Facebook](#)

[Australian Rotary Health Twitter](#)

[HatDay Twitter](#)

[Australian Rotary Health LinkedIn](#)

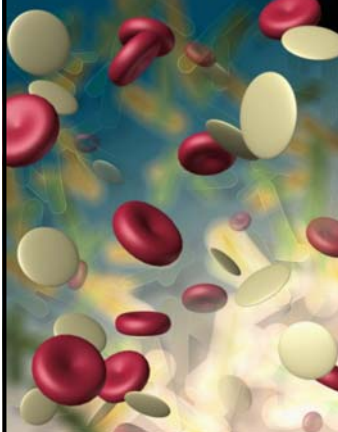
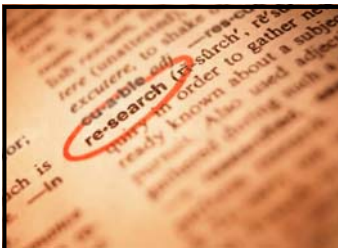


facebook

Facebook helps you connect and share with the people in your life.



Supporting healthier minds, bodies and communities through research, awareness and education



Ian Scott PhD Scholarships 2011

Up to \$29,000 per annum

Ashley Jayne Skilleter

University of New South Wales

A randomized controlled trial of transcranial Direct Current Stimulation to reduce auditory hallucinations and enhance cognitive function in schizophrenia

In 2007 I completed a Bachelor of Science at the University of Queensland, majoring in Neuroscience. I went on to complete my Honours year in the Cognitive Neuroscience laboratory at the Queensland Brain Institute, UQ, in 2008. My honours project employed Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation, a safe technique for transiently disrupting human cortical function in vivo, to investigate the hypothesis that discrete regions of the human posterior parietal cortex play a crucial role in regulating the temporal limits of selective attention.

I then worked for two years as a Research Assistant at the Queensland Brain Institute, where I was involved in designing and running a number of behavioural and neuropsychological research experiments, with a focus on how the brain selectively attends to stimuli within the environment.

Currently I am undertaking a PhD at the University of New South Wales, in conjunction with NeuRa (Neuroscience Research Australia). Under the supervision of Dr Thomas Weickert and Professor Cyndi Shannon Weickert, I will determine the extent to which fronto-temporal tDCS will improve positive (principally auditory hallucinations) and negative symptoms, as well as cognitive deficits in patients with schizophrenia.

I am aiming to forge a career in neuropsychiatric research, with a particular focus on developing interventions and treatments for mental disorders, and understanding the underlying brain mechanisms involved.

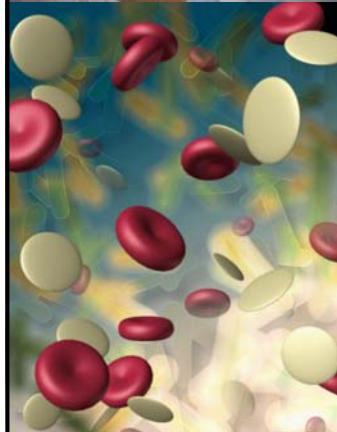
SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

Schizophrenia is a severe mental illness that is characterized by positive symptoms such as hallucinations and delusions, and negative symptoms such as lack of initiative, avolition, and blunted affect. Cognitive dysfunction is now also considered a core feature of schizophrenia, with deficits in the domains of executive control and working memory often manifesting before the onset of other symptoms.

My project will recruit a cohort of participants diagnosed with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder, and apply a relatively new brain stimulation technique, transcranial Direct Current Stimulation (tDCS) to address auditory hallucinations and residual impairments in cognition and negative symptoms, all of which are non-responsive to existing antipsychotic medication treatments.

The aim is to determine the extent to which cathodal tDCS of the temporal cortex can reduce auditory hallucinations, and anodal tDCS of the prefrontal cortex can induce positive changes in cognition, in people with schizophrenia who are concurrently taking antipsychotic medication. Symptoms and cognitive function will be evaluated at the beginning and periodically throughout treatment, and the effects of tDCS on brain structure and function will be assessed by means of MRI scans pre-and post-treatment. Finally, the use of a placebo-controlled design will allow us to draw conclusions with regard to the true efficacy of tDCS.

We believe that if a course of tDCS improves cognition and symptoms in people with schizophrenia, then in the future, regular treatment protocols may be devised to reverse the cognitive deficits and reduce the positive and negative symptoms associated with the disease.



Ian Scott PhD Scholarships 2011

Up to \$29,000 per annum

Paul Anderson

University of Melbourne, Vic

Gamma frequency oscillations and the NMDA receptor hypofunction hypothesis of schizophrenia: Exploring functional disconnections in psychosis



My undergraduate studies were at the University of Adelaide where I undertook a double degree; a B.A. majoring in psychology and philosophy and a B.Sc. majoring in physiology and pharmacology. I initially intended on becoming a psychologist but was drawn to investigating the fundamental biological processes that underlie consciousness and awareness; as such I have pursued a career as a neuroscientist.

I undertook my honours in pharmacology (also at the University of Adelaide) with a behavioural neuroscience study investigating the hyperthermic effects of MDMA in rats. With this work I successfully demonstrated that the hyperthermic response to MDMA is mediated in part by an inflammatory process, as opposed to a purely neural pathway as was previously thought. I also showed that inhibiting microglial activation (through the administration of minocycline, an antibiotic with glial-inhibiting properties) can attenuate this hyperthermic response, a finding with potential clinical significance in treating MDMA toxicity as well as relevance to other hyperthermia inducing disease states such as stroke. Following my honours year I worked briefly as a research assistant where I contributed to a pre-clinical study on a potential drug for the treatment of chronic pain.

Following honours I moved to Melbourne to begin my PhD in the epilepsy and neuropharmacology laboratory of Prof. Terence O'Brien in the department of Medicine at the University of Melbourne. I have begun a project under Dr. Nigel Jones examining the electrophysiological correlates of psychosis; my broad background in psychology, physiology and pharmacology gives me a great strength for translational research and we aim to use animal models to facilitate future human studies. This project has the potential to add to schizophrenia research in many ways, from understanding the basic mechanisms that led to the disruption of cognitive processes seen in the disease, to enhancing understanding of the methods of action of antipsychotic medications and providing new methods of assessing both the efficacy of novel treatments and progression of the disease.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This project aims to investigate how disruptions in coordinated brain activity relate to schizophrenia and psychosis, in both animal and human models of psychosis and in patients with schizophrenia. Our major experimental method is the analysis of electroencephalograms (EEGs) to examine high frequency (30-100 Hz) or 'gamma' brain waves, which have been shown to play a key role in working memory, attention and consciousness. These key cognitive functions are also all disrupted in patients with schizophrenia. Theories of the mechanisms underlying schizophrenia have shifted towards disorders of the NMDA receptor system, which can be modelled in humans and animals by the administration of NMDA receptor antagonists (PCP, ketamine, MK-801). These substances cause thought disorder, memory and attention problems, hallucinations and importantly disturbances in gamma frequency brain activity, mirroring the symptoms of schizophrenia.

This project aims to use animal models to examine the effects of NMDA receptor dysfunction via the administration of the NMDA antagonist ketamine, while characterising the effects on gamma frequency brain activity. We will also examine the effects of anti-psychotic drugs on gamma activity and whether they can inhibit or prevent the changes induced by ketamine. We aim to expand these animal studies to human experiments, verifying that the techniques and methods used also work in human subjects and that the observed effects of NMDA antagonists and anti-psychotic drugs on gamma frequency brain activity in rodents translates to humans.

Ian Scott PhD Scholarships 2011

Up to \$29,000 per annum

Karissa Searle

University of Melbourne, VIC

Attention and Mental Health outcomes in extremely low birth weight/very premature infants:
An fMRI study of adolescents



Karissa Searle

Karissa Searle holds an Honours degree in Science from the University of Melbourne. Her studies focused on the areas of psychology and neuroscience. Through study in these areas Karissa established that adverse brain development and outcomes in the paediatric populations were her target interests.

In 2007 Karissa completed her honours year investigating the neural correlates of spatial working memory in young boys with dysthymic disorder using functional magnetic resonance imaging techniques. During this year she also gained part-time employment at the Academic Child Psychiatry Unit at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, where she obtained experience working with children within a clinical setting. In 2008 she further enhanced her knowledge about functional magnetic resonance imaging through full-time employment with the Howard Florey Institute, Neuroimaging group. Karissa has been awarded the Ian Scott Scholarship by Australian Rotary Health to undertake a full-time PhD with the University of Melbourne.

Her PhD project will examine attention processes and mental health outcomes in a group of adolescents who were born extremely premature, using magnetic resonance imaging techniques. With a background in psychology and neuroscience, and a strong interest in paediatric mental health and brain development, Karissa hopes that her work will support a preventative approach to mental illness in the preterm population and will lead to better outcomes for those affected by these illnesses.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

Advances in medical treatment over the last 30 years have vastly improved the survival rate of premature and very low birth weight babies, with most surviving without major disabilities. Unfortunately the improved survival rate has not been accompanied by improvements in cognitive and behavioural delays. In particular, inattention has been found to be the most commonly reported behavioural problem in very premature/low birth weight babies at all stages of development. The relationship between the attention problems and brain development needs to be further explored given the strong association between inattentive behaviour and the development of diagnosable Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

The aim of this project is to determine the relationship between structural and functional brain differences in adolescents born premature and/or underweight, with a particular focus on attention processes. Importantly, this project will be the first to investigate the relationship between mental health outcomes and brain function in adolescents born very premature.

In this study, information about brain structure and function will be collected using non-invasive magnetic resonance imaging in a group of nearly 300 adolescents born extremely premature and/or underweight in 1991/1992. The information will be correlated with psychological and behavioural assessments. This combination of sophisticated brain imaging technology with behavioural data is the first comprehensive investigation of the interaction between brain function and attention processing; assumed to be important in the causes and symptoms of a range of disorders including ADHD and mood disorders such as depression and anxiety. By determining the underlying structural and functional bases of attention processing in this unique group of adolescents, Karissa's study hopes to develop treatments to reduce long-term illness and the severity of developmental and behavioural delays.

Supporting healthier minds, bodies and communities through research, awareness and education

Research Companions 2011

Up to \$29,000 per annum

Whitcroft Family PhD Scholarship Mental Health Monika Wadolowski

National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre/University of NSW
Parental modelling and supply of alcohol: Does this improve or worsen drinking outcomes in young Australians?



Monika
Wadolowski

In July 2010, Monika Wadolowski commenced work on her PhD with the National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) at the University of New South Wales, investigating the mediating effects of parental modelling, behavioural factors and mental wellbeing on adolescent drinking trajectories in relation to the parental supply of alcohol in Australia. This research forms part of a large-scale longitudinal national study investigating the short- and long-term impacts of parental supply of alcohol on Australian youth. Monika's PhD is supervised by Professor Richard Mattick and Dr Delyse Hutchinson. Monika has been awarded a Whitcroft Family PhD Scholarship and Australian Postgraduate Award to conduct her PhD research. Monika also works as a Research Officer at NDARC in the area of parental supply of alcohol.

Monika completed her Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Psychology & Sociology at the University of Sydney, graduating with Class I Honours in 2007. Monika also previously worked with the University of Sydney School of Public Health on a range of epidemiology and preventive public health research projects. Her previous research work focused on the areas of evidence-based medicine, cancer screening, decision making and informed choice, decision aid development and implementation, and alternative medicine.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

Surprisingly, large-scale population surveys show that Australian parents are the largest supplier of alcohol to adolescents. Alcohol is also the largest contributor to the burden of Australian mental health disorders and injuries across all ages. According to the most comprehensive available data on Australian adolescent alcohol use, in 2005, 40% of 12 year olds had tried alcohol, increasing to nearly 90% of 17 year olds. Research shows that adolescent alcohol use is associated with other substance use, including illicit drugs, criminal activity, suicide attempts, physical fights and injuries, and unplanned and unprotected sex. Some parents may believe initiating their child with small quantities of alcohol within the family setting may teach responsible drinking. Other parents may feel their child is responsible enough, supplying alcohol to consume unsupervised. Likewise, other parents may choose not to supply alcohol, believing this is the most appropriate to teach responsible drinking. Furthermore, factors such as delinquency, having substance-using peers, anxiety and depression may also have important mediating effects on the impact of parental supply of alcohol on drinking patterns. Despite this, how parental supply of alcohol impacts adolescent drinking patterns over time is in fact unclear due to a lack of research in this area. There is a clear policy and community need to better understand the role of parental supply of alcohol on drinking patterns of young Australians, and what other factors may impact upon this. Using a longitudinal design, this research will recruit up to 1,500 young Australians aged 13 years old and one of their parents from secondary schools across NSW and Tasmania.

Both parents and youth will participate in regular surveys measuring youth and parent alcohol use, quantity, frequency and context of alcohol supply, family and peer relationships, delinquency and behavioural factors, and parental monitoring. This will provide comprehensive insight into alcohol initiation and drinking patterns over time in groups who differ across a range of mediating factors. This research will provide much-needed evidence-based guidance for Australian policy makers, health professionals, communities and families for the development of appropriate screening and preventive measures.

Supporting healthier minds, bodies and communities through research, awareness and education

Funding Partner PhD Scholarships 2011

Up to \$29,000 per annum

Australian Rotary Health/Rotary District 9680

Rotary Club of Glenhaven
The Ron Nichol Dementia Scholarship
Dementia

Marshall Axel Dalton

Neuroscience Research Australia/University of NSW
Characterization of episodic memory deficits in frontotemporal dementia and Alzheimer's disease.



Marshall Dalton is a PhD candidate in cognitive neuroscience at the University of New South Wales, faculty of Medicine. Marshall has been employed as a research assistant at the Neuroscience Research Australia since 2007. As a member of the ageing and neurodegeneration research community at Neuroscience Research Australia he has been investigating potential mechanisms underlying the recent observation that individuals who engage in more complex mental activity throughout their lifetime have a reduced risk of developing dementia. He has been conducting neuropathological analyses in an attempt to identify how complex mental activity may reduce an individual's risk of developing dementia. He is also deeply involved in investigating neurogenesis, the process by which neurons are created in the brain.

He completed a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree with a major in Psychology in 2005. During the honours year research component, he investigated a reportedly cognitive enhancing herb named Bacopa monniera (Brahmi) and the potential neural mechanisms behind its cognitive enhancing effects. He also focussed on the neuropsychology of emotion and the effects of drugs on the brain.

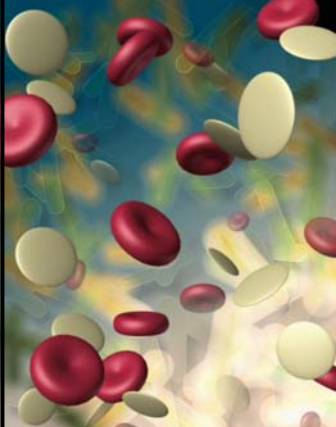
While an undergraduate student he worked as a counsellor for high school children involved in criminal behaviour and upon completing his degree in 2005 he gained a position as a probation/parole officer helping facilitate the reintegration of individuals into society upon release from Jail.

Outside of the Psychology and research domains, Marshall has lived and worked in Japan for a total of three and a half years as a sister city relationship liaison officer and an English teacher in primary schools. While in Japan he enjoyed snowboarding and mountain climbing and studied many aspects of Japanese culture as well as the language which he speaks fluently.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

As the general population gets older, it is accompanied by an increase in individuals at risk of developing dementia. Early and accurate diagnosis of these individuals is critical so that appropriate management strategies can be established. Current clinical tools lack sensitivity to differentiate among dementia subtypes reliably increasing the risk of misdiagnosis. Such misdiagnoses are costly for the individuals concerned, their families and society in general. The aim of this project is to develop clinical tests that will improve diagnostic accuracy and, in turn will lead to relevant treatment options for individuals in the early stages of dementia.

Report of decline in memory is the most common complaint of older adults and may be a sign of dementia. Objective evidence of memory deficits is the core clinical sign of Alzheimer's disease (AD): the most common type of dementia. This deficit affects mostly episodic memory, which is our ability to lay down new memories for specific events and retrieve these memories at a later stage (for example, what I had for dinner last night). Disturbance of episodic memory is also present in frontotemporal dementia (FTD), a type of dementia affecting different brain regions and with a different pathological mechanism to AD. Current clinical tests only provide global measures of episodic memory and are therefore unable to differentiate the memory deficits in these two groups reliably. This is despite the fact that episodic memory deficits in AD and FTD are likely to be caused by a breakdown in different aspects of episodic memory.



Funding Partner PhD Scholarships 2011

Up to \$29,000 per annum

Australian Rotary Health/Rotary District 9500 Rotary Club of Whyalla, SA

The Fenwick Scholarship
Multiple Sclerosis

Jo Anne Schinke Stratton

University of Melbourne, Vic

Characterising the roles of gp130 receptor and SOCS3 upon neural precursor-mediated remyelination of the demyelinated central nervous system.



Jo Anne Schinke
Stratton

Jo began studying in Melbourne in 2006 after growing up in Vancouver, Canada. While living in Vancouver she enjoyed the mountains, wilderness and beaches; but also focused on furthering her Bachelor of Exercise Science. Science has always been a great interest. She said, "I have always questioned the way things work, enjoyed learning about the biology of human systems and I get excited knowing that there is still a vast unknown world of physiology left to discover."

Jo's father was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in 1996. Her passion for MS research stemmed from this personal experience of the disease. Being awarded a Funding Partner Scholarship to do her PhD in MS research is a great achievement. Jo said she is "looking forward to all the challenges and experiences that are to come".

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

Aims:

To understand how new cells called oligodendrocytes are regenerated in the brain after oligodendrocyte death.

Project overview:

Multiple Sclerosis occurs when myelin, a fatty substance that wraps around the nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord much like insulation around an electrical cable, becomes damaged.

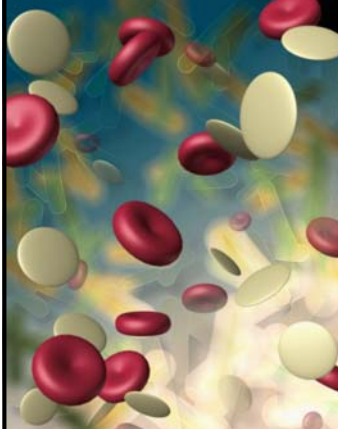
Myelin is produced by oligodendrocytes which are specialised cells that support the function of nerve cells. In diseases such as Multiple Sclerosis, oligodendrocytes die and the myelin that they produce is lost resulting in damage to the nerve cells that they insulate. When this happens nerve cells no longer function normally, resulting in symptoms such as blurred vision and walking difficulty. This PhD project will investigate a process of cell renewal in the brain and spinal cord as a consequence of the death of cells called oligodendrocytes.

One of the consequences of oligodendrocyte death is the spontaneous generation of new oligodendrocytes. This process of cell replacement helps restore function to the nerve cells by replacing the myelin that was initially lost. Although this process occurs spontaneously, it does not occur very efficiently and becomes progressively less efficient with time.

Jo Stratton's research aims to unravel how oligodendrocytes are regenerated to determine how this process can be enhanced to protect nerve cells more efficiently. The study will use an animal model to determine:

- ▶ the precise mechanism by which the cells are regenerated and
- ▶ the genes responsible for controlling this process

Understanding which genes control regeneration of oligodendrocytes could translate into developing new strategies to treat Multiple Sclerosis and prevent long-term disability.



Funding Partner PhD Scholarships 2011

Up to \$29,000 per annum

Australian Rotary Health/District 9780 Rotary Club of Ballarat South, Vic

Diabetes

Anna Roy

Victoria University, VIC

The effect of different dietary fatty acids and weight loss on endocannabinoid and adiponectin signalling in the skeletal muscle



Anna Roy

Anna is 24 years of age and has been a student at Victoria University since 2002, during this time she has completed a Certificate II Hospitality (2002-2003), Certificate IV in Science (2005), Certificate in Foundation Studies (2006), Bachelor of Science majoring in Nutritional Therapy (2007-2009) and Honours in Biomedical Sciences (2010). Anna received a scholarship opportunity over the summer of 2009/10 which was funded by the Faculty of Health, Science and Engineering at Victoria University. This scholarship was to investigate a possible obesity and type two diabetes mellitus (T2DM) pharmacotherapy and also assist in research which focused on molecular signalling that regulates protein handling by the kidney.

For her honours project, Anna's research has looked at whether GPR55 is expressed in rodent skeletal muscle. It has also looked at the effect of blocking putative cannabinoid receptors GPR55/ GPR18 using the synthetic compound O-1918 and the effect on skeletal muscle metabolism. This experiment has been completed in lean, obese and diabetic skeletal muscle.

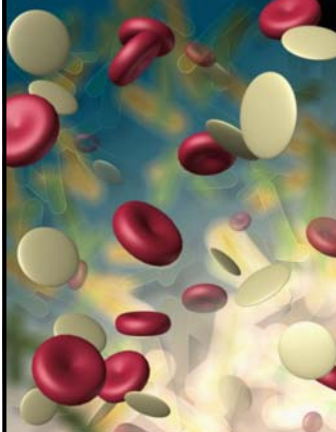
The findings from this research indirectly indicate that GPR55 and/or GPR18 may be expressed in skeletal muscle and may play a role in the regulation of skeletal muscle metabolism. Indicating that targeting these receptors may be beneficial in treating obesity and T2DM. During her PhD Anna plans to continue to investigate the roles that these receptors play in health conditions, particularly obesity and T2DM.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:


Obesity and its related pathophysiological conditions are rapidly increasing in epidemic proportions world-wide, with one chronically associated condition being T2DM. Obesity and T2DM consequently occur as a result of metabolic disturbances, resulting from an increase in energy consumption, reduced energy expenditure and an increase in energy storage. Due to the rise in mortality and morbidity rates associated with these conditions there is a need for an effective and practical treatment which is essential to help reduced these health burdens.

The endocannabinoid system presents as a pharmaceutical target for obesity and T2DM as it has been demonstrated to regulate energy balance, both through reducing appetite and increasing energy expenditure. An important regulator of whole body energy metabolism is the skeletal muscle. The endocannabinoid system has two known receptors, cannabinoid receptor one (CB1) and cannabinoid receptor two (CB2), along with a number of other possible cannabinoid receptors, including G-protein coupled receptor 55 (GPR55) and G-protein coupled receptor 18 (GPR18). GPR55 and GPR18 may account for some of the physiological effects of the endocannabinoid system that cannot be attributed to CB1 and CB2.

Endocannabinoids are synthesised on demand from arachidonic acid which is derived from omega-6 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA). Australians consume a diet high in omega-6 PUFA, as vegetable oils are high in these fats. The consumption of vegetable oils has increased over past years in Australia as a substitute to oils/ fats high in saturated fats. This increase in consumption is linked to evidence that replacing foods high in saturated fatty acids with PUFA reduces the incidence of cardiovascular disease. However, omega-6 PUFA, arachidonic acid is a precursor for endocannabinoids such as anandamide and 2-arachidonyl glycerol. Activation of CB1 by these ligands has been shown to negatively impact energy metabolism by increasing appetite and reducing energy expenditure.



PAST IAN SCOTT PhD SCHOLARS



Allison Milner holds an honours degree in psychology from Griffith University, Brisbane, Queensland. Her primary area of study was the relationships between work, wellbeing and the transition to parenthood, with particular attention on how parents mediated the competing demands of employment and family under the pressures of globalisation. After pursuing some further study in Organisational Psychology, Allison began her employment at the Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Prevention (AISRAP) in 2006, where she continues to be based. Her work at this institute is connected to a long-term World Health Organisation project called 'START' (Suicide Trends in At-Risk Territories study), which seeks to investigate the trends and characteristics of suicide in a number of culturally diverse areas of the world, and to provide an intervention for suicidal behaviour in locations where there is none. She is also involved in several other research projects and publications at AISRAP.

It is this international background that provided the impetus for her current PhD topic- the relationship between globalisation, social contexts, and suicide. Allison was awarded an Ian Scott Scholarship by Australian Rotary Health to undertake this area of study on a full-time basis in 2008.

This project takes a public health approach to suicide, and seeks to investigate how the social-environmental changes brought about by globalisation have influenced trends (1980-2006) of male and female suicide in 34 countries. The results of this study suggest that globalisation has influenced suicide both directly and indirectly, and changed the known relationships between ecological risk/ protective factors and suicide.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

A Cross-Cultural Examination of the Relationship between Globalisation and Suicide in the Western Pacific, Europe and the Americas

Suicide is recognised as a serious problem throughout the world. To date no research has been conducted on the impact of globalisation – defined as 'transformation of the world' - on suicide, despite past research showing that changes in societal functioning are associated with changes in suicide rates (Bjerregaard & Lynge, 2006; Booth, 1999; Rubenstein, 1992).

This study investigated whether factors associated with globalisation are related to suicide in countries in Europe, the Americas, Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Western Pacific (Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Samoa, Fiji and Singapore). Globalisation not only affects the economic and technological performance of a country; it has implications for lifestyle, health outcomes and societal functioning. As a country responds to the influence of globalisation, research suggests an increase in stress-related and chronic diseases such as cancer and heart disease (Beaglehole & Yach, 2003) as well as an increased prevalence of mental illnesses like anxiety and depression (Bhugra & Mastrogianni, 2004). This research project originally targeted the impact of globalisation on suicide in the Western Pacific region. This is because the Western Pacific:

- currently has the highest rate of suicide in the world (WHO,2004)
- is experiencing rapid social, economic and cultural changes, *and*
- contains countries with great variations in cultural background

However, Allison Milner decided the study would benefit from a larger sample size that includes Africa, the Americas, Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean region.

Allison Milner

Griffith University, Qld

Ian Scott Scholar: 2008-2010

Project Title: Suicide in Countries of the Western Pacific Region: The impact of Globalisation on Trends of Fatal Suicidal Behaviour



PAST FUNDING PARTNER SCHOLARS 'WHERE ARE THEY NOW?'

Sponsoring Clubs were Rotary Clubs of Belvoir Wodonga, Vic and Carlingford NSW

Jennica completed her PhD at Royal North Shore Hospital investigating methods to measure upper motor neuron involvement in motor neuron disease, using a combination of transcranial magnetic stimulation and diffusion tensor imaging. She was awarded the Bill Gole Post-doctoral Fellowship from the MNDRI to study the effects of a potential therapeutic and neuroprotective strategy in motor neuron disease.

Dr Jennica Winhammar, PhD

University of Sydney NSW

Years Funded: 2005-2007

PhD Scholarship investigating Motor Neurone Disease



Sponsoring Clubs were Rotary Clubs of Pennant Hills, Winston Hills and Dural NSW

Dr Brian Tse is currently at the Prince of Wales Clinical School. His research interests are in three broad areas: ovarian cancer, tumour immunology and glycobiology. Dr Tse's group recently found that patients with advanced serous gynaecological cancers have different levels of immunoglobulins (IgM and IgG) to various glycans (carbohydrate structures) compared to healthy women. They have shown that some of these are tumour-associated carbohydrate antigens (TACAs). The research aims to understand the underlying mechanisms responsible for this effect.

Dr Brian Tse, PhD

University of NSW, NSW

Years Funded: 2007-2009

PhD Scholarship investigating Prostate Cancer

Sponsoring Club was Rotary Club of Strathmore, Vic 'Bartolina Peluso Scholarship'

Dr India Bohanna is currently in the Faculty Medicine, Health and Molecular Sciences—James Cook University (Public Health and Tropical Medicine)

Winner of the Early Career Researcher 2011 Award with the following study:

What do we know about cannabis use in remote Cape York Aboriginal communities?

Anecdotal reports suggest that high rates of cannabis use and dependence are significant issues in Indigenous communities in north Queensland, however there is little 'hard evidence' to support or refute this. We aimed to investigate cannabis use for the first time in Cape York Indigenous communities. Using a culturally validated 'research yarning' approach, we collected quantitative and qualitative data on cannabis use and its impacts on individuals, families and communities. This research provides critical data needed to develop tailored interventions aimed at reducing illicit drug use and its impacts in remote Indigenous communities.

Dr India Bohanna, PhD

Howard Florey Institute, Vic.

Years Funded: 2007-2010

PhD Scholarship investigating Dementia

