

Dr Felice Jacka—Ian Scott Scholar, 2005-2008

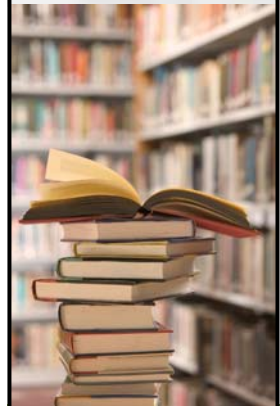
Dr. Felice Jacka has been listed in the "The Year in Psychosis and Bipolar Disorder: The Most Important Studies of 2010" for proving that women who consume a diet high in sugar and processed food are 35% more susceptible to depression and 32% more likely to develop anxiety related disorders.

Six years after Australian Rotary Health launched her career by funding her PhD study, 'the relationship between mood and anxiety disorders and nutrition', former Ian Scott scholar Dr. Felice Jacka has completed a study entitled 'Association of western and traditional Diets with depression and anxiety in women' which has found a definite link between the foods we eat and mental disorders.

The breakthrough findings are the first indication of a connection between lifestyle factors and mental disorders, the significance of which has seen Dr. Jacka listed in the "The Year in Psychosis and Bipolar Disorder: The Most Important Studies of 2010".

The study broke down common food items into three distinct categories; the "traditional" diet, comprised of vegetables, fruit, meat and whole-grain foods; the "western" diet which included processed food, white bread, sugar, and beer; and the "modern" diet comprised of fruits and salad, fish, tofu, beans, nuts, yogurt, and red wine.

Findings from the study indicate that women who habitually ate from the 'western' diet were 35% more likely to develop depression and 32% more likely to develop anxiety related disorders, compared to those who ate a 'traditional' diet.

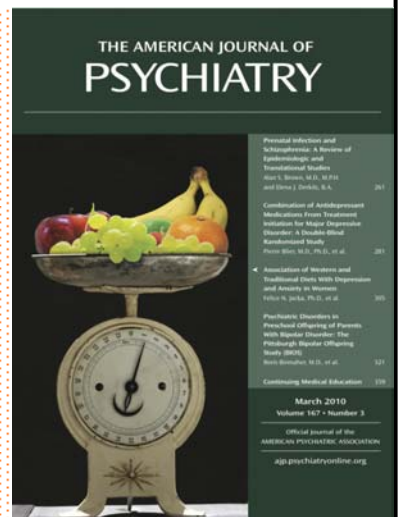


Related Articles:

Poor diet and mental health problems linked in teenagers: Study—Title linked (26th September 2011)

A healthy diet equals a healthy mind—Title linked (12 July 2011)

Nutrition and Psychiatry—Title linked to Australian Rotary Health Website and download editorial



MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH GRANTS 2011

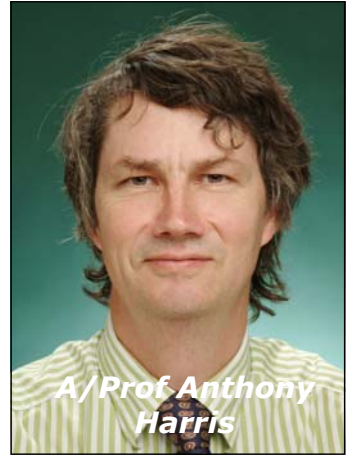
Associate Professor Anthony Harris

Co Investigators: Mr William Gye & Dr Marie Antoinette Redoblado Hodge
University of Sydney, NSW

Amount Awarded: \$64,629

Does cognitive remediation improve employment prospects for people with a mental illness returning to work?

Awarded in 2011



Dr Anthony Harris is an Associate Professor in the Discipline of Psychiatry, Sydney Medical School at the University of Sydney, a senior staff specialist psychiatrist for the Prevention Early Intervention and Recovery Service in the Sydney West Area Mental Health Service and the Director of the Clinical Disorders Unit at the Brain Dynamics Centre, Westmead Hospital.

After graduating from the University of Sydney, Dr Harris completed training as a psychiatrist in Sydney. He then worked as a consultant in the area of psychogeriatrics in the United Kingdom before completing research work at the Zentralinstitut für Seelische Gesundheit in Mannheim, Germany in the field of psychophysiology. On return to Australia he worked in clinical and administrative positions in the Wentworth and Sydney West Area Mental Health Services in Sydney before specialising in the field of early intervention in psychosis. He completed a PhD in the area of psychophysiology in schizophrenia in 2003. His research has concentrated on the psychophysiology of schizophrenia and depression, imaging studies and treatment, particularly cognitive remediation in schizophrenia.

Dr Harris has also helped restructure the teaching program in psychiatry at the Sydney Medical School and has conducted research into the application of novel teaching programs. He is presently on the Management Committee of the Schizophrenia Fellowship of New South Wales and a member of the Board of the Research Trust Fund of the Fellowship.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This study aims to help people with a mental illness get back to work successfully. Unemployment and subsequent poverty and welfare dependence are major problems for people with a severe mental illness. Efforts to break this cycle using interventions such as supported employment have improved the chance of a person with a severe mental illness obtaining and keeping a job. However the majority of people with severe mental illness are still unemployed. An important predictor of poor functioning for people with severe mental illness is the cognitive functioning of the person, that is how well they can concentrate, remember or plan.

This study will employ computer assisted cognitive remediation, an approach that has been demonstrated to improve cognitive function in severe mental illness, to improve cognitive functioning and then test to see if this intervention improves overall employment outcomes when combined with a supported employment program. This study will be conducted in a community based setting in cooperation with the Schizophrenia Fellowship of New South Wales, a non-government organisation that is operating 8 supported employment centres through regional and metropolitan areas in New South Wales, thus making this study an important demonstration of effectiveness of psychosocial treatment in community care.



MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH GRANTS 2011

Dr Christopher Lee

Co Investigators: Professor Peter Drummond,
Professor Arnoud Arntz &
Assistant Professor Joan Farrell
Murdoch University, WA

Amount Awarded: \$60,430

Multi-site randomised controlled trial of group schema
therapy for borderline personality disorder

Awarded in 2011



Dr Christopher Lee

Dr Christopher Lee was Senior Clinical Psychologist at a major teaching hospital in Perth (Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital) for 11 years where he set up the Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) treatment team for Borderline Personality Disorders (BPD).

He is now program chair in clinical psychology at Murdoch University. He has had extensive training from leading figures in DBT, and has been accredited in Schema Focused Therapy by the International Society of Schema Therapists. Chris has conducted workshops in treating personality disorders throughout Australia and overseas for the last 15 years. He is involved in research on personality disorders and posttraumatic stress disorder. He has published in the areas of personality assessment and the treatment of PTSD. He has received international awards for research excellence for his work in PTSD. He currently sits on the BPD expert reference group advising the federal minister for health.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is a chronic condition affecting between one and two percent of the population. It is associated with immense distress and suffering and has one of the highest self-harm rates of all the psychiatric disorders. In the last five years, a treatment specifically developed for borderline personality disorder namely Schema Therapy has been found to be more effective than existing usual treatments and a specialized form of psychodynamic therapy. When compared to other specialized treatments, Schema Therapy has very low drop-out rate and is very effective, not only in reducing symptoms, but in improving quality of life. Schema Therapy can lead to full recovery from BPD and normal functioning. However, this therapy is yet to be tested outside of the centres that developed the programme.

This study is part of a large scale international study to investigate the efficacy of the treatment programme across six countries and five languages. The research will compare two different delivery modes of Schema Therapy with existing treatments to see if there is some benefit of this new therapy. The study will enable us to determine not only if the therapy is beneficial in other parts of the world, but by including an Australian site, we can make specific recommendations in an Australian context.

If the project finds that Schema Therapy does have an advantage over typical treatments then this would have significant implications for a wider adoption of this approach within Australian mental health context. People with Borderline Personality Disorder have complex mental health and health needs and are high utilisers of the health services. More efficient treatments would not only reduce their suffering but decrease the costs associated with managing this disorder.

MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH GRANTS 2011

Professor Richard Mattick

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre/University of NSW
Co Investigators: Professor Jakob Najman, Associate
Professor Kypros Kypri, Dr Tim Slade, Dr Laura Vogl,
Dr Delyse Hutchinson, Dr Raimondo Bruno
& Ms Monika Wadolowski

Amount Awarded: \$68,059

Young people, drinking and the parental supply of
alcohol: a longitudinal cohort study

Awarded in 2011



Prof Richard Mattick

Richard Mattick is Professor of Drug and Alcohol Studies at the National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales, where he was Director from 2001 to 2009. Professor Mattick is recognised for his research into the treatment of opioid and psychostimulant dependence, alcohol dependence, and mental health disorders. His major research interests are in understanding the effectiveness of treatments, evidence-based medicine, and research that improves preventative interventions for drug and alcohol use disorders. Professor Mattick's most recent research has focused on risk factors influencing the development of drug abuse and dependence. He has recently been involved in preparing a systematic review of the empirical research on the effects of parental alcohol use disorders on children and families.

Professor Mattick has been a member of the NSW Expert Advisory Group on Drugs and Alcohol (advising the NSW Minister for Health) and a member of the Australian National Council on Drugs (advising the Prime Minister) since 2004 and he was recently a member of the Australian Delegation to the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna in March 2008 and March 2009, and he regularly works as an advisor to WHO and UN working groups.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

Alcohol use is a common health risk behaviour amongst Australian adolescents. It is associated with long-term alcohol-related problems in adulthood, and in the short-term, can lead to use of other substances, delinquent behaviour, injuries and physical fights, and unplanned and unprotected sex. Research shows parents have an important role in preventing adolescent alcohol use and misuse. One common strategy used by Australian parents is to provide alcohol to their child, believing this is the best way to teach their children how to drink responsibly.

The need to understand the impact of the parental supply of alcohol on adolescents is reflected by a 2007 review of parental supply of alcohol commissioned by the Australian Government Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy to members of this research team. The review found that despite being common in Australia, the short- and long-term effects of parental supply of alcohol are currently unknown. Parental supply of alcohol may in fact be unintentionally harmful for young people, reducing psychosocial barriers to alcohol. Another important research gap includes factors such as quantity and frequency of alcohol supplied, and context of how alcohol is consumed, including parental supervision, which are largely overlooked in the research. Such factors are likely to have very important implications for adolescent alcohol use, and the development of different drinking patterns.

Other factors, such as family relationships, parental supervision, peers, and a young person's individual behaviour are all likely to also influence the impact of parental supply. However, how such factors influence the impact of parental supply is also currently unclear. Gaining a clear understanding of how parental supply impacts upon adolescent alcohol use and misuse in young Australians is needed to better educate parents, families and policy-makers about appropriate preventive strategies for this developmentally critical period.

MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH GRANTS 2011

Dr Nicola Reavley

University of Melbourne, Vic
Co Investigators: Professor Tony Jorm &
Associate Professor Eoin Killackey

Amount Awarded: \$55,000

Guidelines for tertiary education institutions on how
to support students with mental health problems

Awarded in 2011

Dr Nicola Reavley is a Research Fellow at Orygen Youth Health Research Centre (OYHRC), University of Melbourne. She works on a number of projects, including the MindWise project, which aims to evaluate the effects of a multifaceted mental health literacy intervention in further education students.



Dr Nicola Reavley

Prior to working at OYHRC she worked at the Centre for Rheumatic Diseases, University of Melbourne where her role was to manage the development and pilot testing of the Australian WorkHealth Program - Arthritis. During this period she was also a Chief Investigator on the Victorian Department of Health-funded Review of Workplace-Based Diabetes Prevention Initiatives project which was successfully concluded in June 2009 and was used to inform the Council of Australian Government (COAG) workplace health policy.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The aim of the project is to develop guidelines for tertiary education institutions on how to support students with mental health problems in order that they achieve successful educational outcomes. This will be done by reviewing the evidence on strategies for this and assessing expert consensus on which strategies are appropriate.

The latter will be done through a formal consultation process with the members of two expert panels. The first will consist of professionals in the field and will include disability liaison unit staff, student counsellors, and researchers on student mental health. The second panel will consist of consumer advocates who have had experience of being a tertiary student with a mental health problem.

The strategies will be published as a set of guidelines and made freely available to tertiary education institutions that may use them to develop policies and procedures for facilitation of good educational outcomes for students with mental health problems.

Mental Illness Research

Objectives of the Australian Rotary Health:

- To provide financial support to research projects within Australia that have the potential to enhance the health of the community.
- To stimulate research activities within Australia by facilitating communication between participants in specified fields.
- To support specific research fields for a minimum of three years.

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



POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS 2011

Colin Dodds Post Doctoral Fellowship

Dr Monique Robinson
Telethon Institute for Child Health Research/
University of Western Australia, WA

Amount Awarded \$75,000

Early life influences on child and adolescent mental health problems: A life-course approach to prevention and intervention

Awarded in 2011

Dr Monique Robinson completed the degrees of Master of Psychology (Clinical) and Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Western Australia in 2010. Monique is also a registered clinical psychologist working in the field of child and adolescent mental health.

Monique's primary research focus has been on the antenatal determinants of behavioural development throughout childhood and adolescence, including stress, hypertension, alcohol and cigarette smoking. This research has been based at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in Western Australia, where longitudinal follow-up continues on a prospective pregnancy cohort that provides the data for Monique's research, the Western Australian Pregnancy Cohort (Raine) Study.

Within the last two years Monique has published 13 journal articles, in addition to four reports, one letter and one invited book chapter. Monique has presented her work at numerous international meetings and has been the recipient of 12 early career researcher awards to date.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

In keeping with global figures, around one in five Australian children will develop some form of behavioural problem by the time they reach adulthood. Research that aims to reduce the burden of psychological illness has become of great interest for both Australian health and economic policy. Over recent years this has created an increasing focus on developmental psychology in order to understand how mental health problems are initiated and fostered over time. The thinking is that the best method for avoiding poor outcomes in mental health is to build and promote positive outcomes right from the very start of life. Monique's project explores the early life influences on mental health development in order to inform prevention and intervention.

Monique's research is concerned with longitudinal behavioural outcomes from age two to 21 years with regards to each of three early life risk factors (elevated body mass index, increasing time to pregnancy and late preterm birth), with the potential for further exploration as required. This involves the analysis of data from the Western Australian Pregnancy Cohort (Raine) Study.

A second part of the research is concerned with the evaluation of pregnancy-based interventions in order to target antenatal risk and thereby improve long-term mental health outcomes. This part of the research aims to develop a "blueprint" for a future randomised controlled trial in pregnancy-based interventions.



Dr Monique Robinson



PAST MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS

Dr Britt Klein—Research Project Grant, 2006-2007



'PTSD Online: Development and evaluation of an internet based intervention for the treatment of acute PTSD and the treatment and prevention of chronic PTSD'

Through creating an online treatment facility for anxiety and post traumatic stress disorder, Dr. Brit Klein has facilitated an obvious reduction in the clinical severity of symptoms in patients who seek treatment through her website.

The emergence of e-therapy has become widely used as a means of treatment thanks to projects such as this that proved their efficiency in allowing effective, free treatment for mental disorders.

Funding from Australian Rotary Health allowed a number of developments to both the 'Anxiety Online' site and 'PTSD Online' site, two e-therapy outlets designed to provide information about anxiety and other mental disorders, formulate an e-pass for a psychological assessment and referral system, and give treatment options to the patient as well as offering fully automated self-help or therapist-assisted e-therapy programs.

The automated systems on these websites have created a prominent reduction in the clinical severity of the patient's condition and created a confidence within patients that they can manage their own health care needs. Benefits to healthcare workers have also become obvious through these funded evaluations with a rise in health care professionals referring to the program to improve their skills-set and treatment procedures.

The long term benefits of the institution of e-therapy expand to the economy also, with systems in Australia able to undergo a ten-fold expansion without creating any additional costs while at the same time offering the same, high quality care to patients.

Dr Claire Kelly—Research Project Grant, 2005-2007

'Development of Mental Health First Aid Standards - Hugh Lydiard Fellowship' After researching suitable guidelines for practicing Mental Health First Aid, Dr. Claire Kelly's project has improved the delivery of the program that has since become available in 15 countries around the world.

Mental Health First Aid is a course designed to assist those in a mental health crisis in the same way medical first aid assists those with a physical injury before professional health can be administered. The course also has a significant role in destigmatising mental illness through education.

By drawing on research gathered from three panels of health care professionals, carers and consumers, as well as consulting literature, guidelines were able to be developed based on an 80% or more consensus of the importance of each point.

The developed guidelines were then able to be provided free of charge on the Mental Health First Aid website where they can be easily accessed by all wishing to learn about the Mental Health First Aid process. These guidelines have also been published in a number of journals and have since been included in the Edition 2 Mental Health First Aid course that was launched in 2010.

Funding by Australian Rotary Health allowed for initial stages of research to be undertaken which then generated interest in Mental Health First Aid from within other funding bodies, contributing significantly to the success of the course. Mental Health First Aid courses are now available in 15 countries with specialised programs within Australia for different cultural groups. A two-day course is also available through Australian Rotary Health for Rotary Clubs to organise within their community.



PAST MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS

Dr Jane Pirkis—Research Project Grant, 2003

'The impact of media reporting of suicide on actual suicidal behaviour'

After finding irresponsible media reporting of suicide causes an increase in suicide rates within Australia, Dr Jane Pirkis' research has been used to form guidelines of how to report events of suicide that are now widely used by Australian media.



Numerous international studies have proven that a heavy focus of suicide in the media can lead to an increase in suicide rates; however Dr. Jane Pirkis was the first to conduct a study into this trend within Australia; her research directly resulting in a decrease in the nation's suicide rate.

Her study, 'The impact of media reporting of suicide on actual suicidal behaviour', aimed to show trends of media-reported suicide and examine the relationship between these reports and actual suicidal behaviour.

Dr. Pirkis' research found 39% of media items caused an increase in male suicide and 31 % were followed by an increase in female suicide. The study also proved that reports of suicide on television were more likely to cause an increase in suicide related deaths than any other medium.

Reports that occurred in a period of multiple suicides and that detailed completed rather than attempted suicide were also more likely to generate a spike in deaths. The findings of this research contributed to guidelines put out by *Mindframe* that directed how Australian media should safely report suicide through a book called '*Reporting suicide and mental illness*' that has contributed to Australian media taking more responsibility in their reporting of suicide, and a reduction of suicide rates occurring after these news items are presented.

Prof. Susan Paxton—Research Project Grant, 2003-2005

'An examination of the efficacy of an internet delivered group therapy program for body image and eating problems: a randomised controlled trial'

Professor Susan Paxton has successfully identified ways that online therapy can be used to increase the accessibility of treatment for body dissatisfaction and disordered eating in young women, successfully reducing the prevalence body image issues in participants.



Body image distress is consistently rated as a main concern of young adults with approximately 5% of young adult females having a clinical eating disorder. Professor Paxton found the internet medium allowed those with body dissatisfaction to openly discuss their issues, after which their level of dissatisfaction was noticeably reduced.

With an increased need for specialist intervention due to restrictions in treatment caused by a lack of programming, high cost, geographical distance and a fear of the stigma associated with mental illness, a group therapy program for the treatment of body dissatisfaction and disordered eating was established through an online medium.

Through eight online, group sessions that involved a prescribed agenda and feedback from in-between session activities, participants were able to discuss the social pressure to be thin, relationships with themselves and those around them and their own motivation to change. These findings have since been used as the forerunner for a successful online prevention intervention program for teenage girls entitled, '*My body, My life*'.