



MONASH
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MONASH
PRIMARY
AND ALLIED
HEALTH CARE

REHABILITATION, AGEING AND INDEPENDENT LIVING (RAIL) RESEARCH CENTRE

Member eBulletin #31

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A message from the Director

If there is such a thing, then the past one to two months have been “grant writing season”. For researchers, there are two types of grants, the “regular” grants that occur each year and usually have a fairly typical timing that can be worked towards; and the “occasional” or “one off” grants that can occur at any time and often only have a short time from the time of grant announcement to closing date for submissions. Researchers often need to consider both types of grant opportunities. The “regular” grants have the advantage of being able to be prepared over a moderate time – although they still need considerable discipline to ensure they are not just put on the back burner until the last minute, thereby missing out on the obvious advantages of developing a grant over a period of time, with ample time for iterations to go to collaborators, mentors, or others who might do a friendly review for you. The approach of using lead time well is clearly the most desirable approach, but unfortunately many researchers still use the last minute approach to these sort of grants, which often means it will be less competitive than it would otherwise be. The “occasional” or “one off” grants differ in that the time from becoming aware of the grant and its submission date are often short – perhaps 4-6 weeks. In these instances, the researcher needs to consciously weigh up the likelihood of generating a strong application in the context of the timeline, and other competing time demands. There can be value in discussing these sort of decisions with managers or other senior researchers to assist with this decision making. The key thing to avoid is putting in a lot of time in a short period that ends up with a non-competitive grant.

Another advantage of planning early relates to engaging with partner organisations where this is advantageous for a grant (and it is becoming increasingly expected in many funding avenues). To obtain good understanding and trust with a partner organisation, can take some time, so last minute attempts often fail. Often partner organisation letters of support are also required, and these can take some time to work through an organisation to the key person who needs to sign off on these.

I hope you enjoy reading about our activities and outcomes in this e-bulletin, and we welcome any contributions you consider will be of interest to others. Finally, if you have colleagues, or people new to Monash who would like to become a Member of RAIL, and thereby be on our email communications and e-bulletin distribution list, please suggest to them to complete the Member survey [online](#).

Stay safe and well.

Professor Keith Hill

Member profile



Dr Luke Perraton is a lecturer and early career researcher in the Department of Physiotherapy within the School of Primary and Allied Health Care at Monash University. He is an experienced physiotherapist who has worked in musculoskeletal healthcare and physiotherapy education/research for the last 20 years. Luke also holds a Master of Sports and Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy and is a titled Musculoskeletal, Sports and Exercise physiotherapist as recognised by the Australian Physiotherapy Association.

Luke has broad research interests that include musculoskeletal injury, orthopaedic surgery (anterior cruciate ligament injury and total knee arthroplasty), biomechanics, tendinopathy, muscle strength assessment and neurostimulation. His broad interests and research skills have allowed him to collaborate effectively across disciplines within and outside Monash university to help improve the provision of healthcare and patient outcomes.

Current projects include:

- Evaluating the efficacy of group exercise for people with shoulder pain
- Exploring factors associated with progression of osteoarthritis following anterior cruciate ligament injury – in collaboration with La Trobe University
- Evaluating clinometric properties of low-cost assessments of muscle strength
- Evaluating methods to track physical activity and biomechanics in the community for people with musculoskeletal disorders

Luke is currently the musculoskeletal stream lead and unit coordinator in year 1 of the Bachelor of Physiotherapy course at Monash University and co-lead of the Monash Musculoskeletal Research Unit (Follow on Twitter [@MonashMRU](https://twitter.com/MonashMRU)) where he co-hosts a podcast aimed at disseminating research findings to clinicians. You can listen to episodes here: monash.edu/medicine/spahc/physio/mmr/podcast. Luke also hosts a podcast called Physio Foundations which helps students and newly graduated clinicians further develop their foundational knowledge and skills and improve patient outcomes. Listen here: <https://lukeperraton.podbean.com/>. You can follow Luke on Twitter [@LukePerraton](https://twitter.com/LukePerraton)

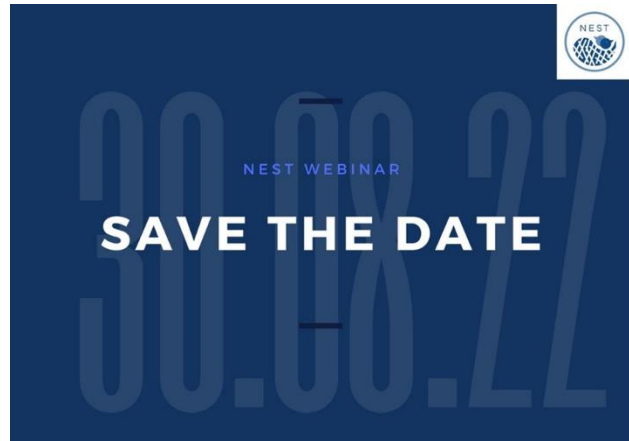
Member and Partner forum

Upcoming RAIL forum

RAIL is pleased to announce the next forum entitled Science communication skills, including visual abstracts, sketch noting and data visualisation. For this forum, RAIL will be teaming up with the Network of Early career Sleep researchers in Training

(NEST) from the Australasian Sleep Association. We have three outstanding presenters lined up:

- Dr Em Bould, Senior Research Fellow, Occupational Therapy Department, School of Primary and Allied Health Care, Monash University
- Professor Jill Dorrian, Dean of Research, Justice & Society, UniSA
- Dr Amelia Crabtree, Alfred Health and Safer Care Victoria



Details as follows: Tuesday August 30, 13:30 - 15:00 AEST via Zoom

Official registration details to come.

Previous RAIL forum

In our most recent forum titled ‘*Overcoming challenges to conducting clinical trials in health service settings*’, we had the opportunity to hear from Dr Natasha Brusco, Dr Christina Ekegren and Dr Lisa Higgins about the planning stages of a clinical trial and how they can determine your chance of success, recruitment and data collection tips for stepped wedge trials, and data management key steps. A lively discussion was had about the importance of researchers “breaking the fifth wall” and explaining the inner workings of a trial, to assist other researchers in planning their own trials.

Grant success

Dr Natasha Layton of RAIL Research Centre is a Co-Investigator on a successful Canadian grant worth over \$500,000. Running from September 2022 Sep - Aug 2027 this Canadian Institutes of Health (CIHR) Project Grant is entitled *Dementia management in Canada: Is there a case for implementing and investing in assistive technology products and services (AT) bundles?*

Excitingly, a team of knowledge users including Public Health Agency of Canada, Alzheimer Society of Canada, and Toronto Dementia Research Alliance, join the investigator team which comprises NPI: R. Wang. PI: B. Chan. Co-I: A. Mihailidis. Collaborators: A. Burhan, N. Layton, H. Osman



RAIL 2022 EMCR awardee profile

In this RAIL eBulletin edition, we are profiling Dr Pamela Carreno-Medrano, one of our three recent RAIL seed grant awardees:

Dr Pamela Carreno-Medrano is a Research Fellow at Monash Robotics. She received a combined B.Eng. degree in computer engineering from the École Nationale d'Ingénieurs de Brest (France) and an M.Sc. degree in computer science from Universidad EAFIT (Colombia) in 2012. She completed her PhD at the University of Bretagne-Sud, France, in 2016. Her research focuses on developing autonomous, intelligent agents (virtual and embodied) that can adequately interact with humans in short- and long-term scenarios. In particular, she is interested in investigating how the information humans convey through their movements and action choices can be used to inform and guide a robot's actions and social-interactive behaviour. Her research interests include robot interactive learning, socially assistive robots, and digital health.

RAIL 2022 EMCR grant – Project description

Dr Pamela Carreno-Medrano (Monash Robotics, Faculty of Engineering) - Chief Investigator

Other investigators: Professor Dana Kulić (Monash Robotics, Faculty of Engineering), Dr Natasha Brusco (RAIL Research Centre, School of Primary and Allied Health Care, Monash University), Dr Aislinn Lalor (Department of OT, RAIL Research Centre, School of Primary and Allied Health Care, Monash University), Associate Professor Leah Heiss (Monash Art, Design and Architecture)

Project title: Socially assistive robots for the prevention of musculoskeletal disorders

Summary: In Australia, seven million people suffered from musculoskeletal conditions (MSD) in 2017-18. MSD can be preventable through education and programs that reduce sedentary behaviour and facilitate symptom self-management. However, poor adherence, exacerbated by a lack of individualisation, is an issue. This project will complete vital pilot work to prevent MSD through a preventative



rehabilitation self-management program. To improve adherence, this project uses socially assistive robots (SARs). Endowed with social, learning, and interaction capabilities, SARs represent a promising means to promote and support self-care in a socially engaging and adaptive manner. To address the lack of individualisation, this project investigates co-design methodologies through which users and health professionals actively contribute to the design of the SAR system and identify

personalised strategies that users are willing to adopt in the long-term. We request \$15000 to complete the development of the SAR sensing and acting capabilities and conduct two co-design sessions where participants will use the developed robot capabilities to design interaction and personalisation strategies for the SAR. By working directly with the robot, participants will experience realistic versions of the system and be empowered to provide salient feedback and suggestions for the design and development of the full first SAR prototype.

RAIL paper of the month

Patient Judgement of Change with Elective Surgery Correlates with Patient Reported Outcomes and Quality of Life

Morris ME, Atkinson V, Woods J, Myles PS, Hodge A, Jones CH, Lloyd D, Rovtar V, Clifford AM, **Brusco NK**.

ABSTRACT

Obtaining pre-surgery PROM measures is not always feasible. The aim of this study was to examine if self-reports of change following elective surgery correlate with change scores from a validated PROM (15-item Quality of Recovery (QoR-15)). This cross-sectional study across 29 hospitals enrolled elective surgery patients. PROMs were collected one-week pre-surgery, as well as one- and four-weeks post-surgery via an electronic survey. We examined associations between patient “judgement of change” at one and four-weeks after surgery and the actual pre-to post-surgery PROM change scores. A total of 4177 surveys were received. The correlation between patient judgement of change, and the actual change score was moderately strong at one-week ($n = 247$, $r_s = 0.512$, $p < 0.001$), yet low at four-weeks ($n = 241$, $r_s = 0.340$, $p < 0.001$). Patient judgement was aligned to the direction of the PROM change score from pre- to post-surgery. We also examined the correlation between the QoR-15 (quality of recovery) and the EQ-5D-5L (QOL). There was a moderately strong positive correlation between the two PROMs ($n = 356$, $r_s = 0.666$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that change in quality of recovery was related to change in QOL. These findings support the use of a single “judgement of change” recall question post-surgery.

Morris ME, Atkinson V, Woods J, Myles PS, Hodge A, Jones CH, Lloyd D, Rovtar V, Clifford AM, **Brusco NK**. (2022) Patient Judgement of Change with Elective Surgery Correlates with Patient Reported Outcomes and Quality of Life. *Healthcare*, 10(6):999. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare10060999>

Draft WHO Global Report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities

At the 74th World Health Assembly in May 2021, Member States adopted resolution WHA74.8 on [The highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities](#), providing the World Health Organization (WHO) with a mandate to continue its commitment to promote disability inclusion in the health sector. The resolution specifically requests WHO to develop a global report on the highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities by the end of 2022.

WHO has drafted a summary and full Report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities, and is now seeking consumer and community stakeholder feedback on this draft by 5/8/22. Specifically, feedback is sought on the structure of the report and the key issues discussed in each section, provided through an online survey. For a copy of the draft summary and full report, and to provide feedback, go to <https://www.research.net/r/WHOReportHealthEquityPWDs>

Seniors week festival presentation: Digital technologies promise to support positive ageing – but what are they, and how might we use them?

As part of 2022 Victorian Seniors Festival events, RAIL Independent Living Stream Lead A/Prof Libby Callaway will provide a free community talk at the Carlton Library from 6.30pm-7.30pm on Wednesday 26/10/22. Her presentation - "Using Digital Technology To Live A Healthier Life" - will provide an overview of what digital technologies include, how they can help us to live healthier lives, and possible next steps for digital connection.

For details and free bookings, go to <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/using-digital-technology-to-live-a-healthier-life-tickets-367937018527>

Short course - Designing and using surveys and questionnaires in healthcare



This course will introduce participants to the theories, concepts and practice of developing and using surveys in clinical research and practice.

WHAT TO EXPECT: Participants will gain practical skills on how to write good survey questions, using Qualtrics as a platform for developing surveys, and understanding the pitfalls of surveys and questionnaires, particularly with respect to validity and reliability. This course will also include a

series of case studies on how surveys have been implemented into clinical practice, and the key learnings we can take from our experiences.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND? This course will be useful for those new to survey design, as well as those who would like to improve their skills and knowledge. It will also benefit people who are planning to design a survey in the future (PhD students, clinicians, teaching academics), and those who plan to use previously developed surveys for research may also benefit.

- Health care providers (medical, nursing and allied health staff)
- Health service researchers
- Policy makers and program managers
- Quality managers
- Higher Degree by Research students (e.g. PhD or Masters)
- Teaching associates and academics

SHARING PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE: Our course coordinators and presenters are leaders in mixed methods health research, and all have significant experience in survey design and implementation, and teaching.

COURSE DETAILS

PRESENTERS:

- Dr Sze-Ee Soh
- Dr Darshini Ayton
- Dr Renata Morello
- Ms Udari Colombage

DATE: 12 & 19 August 2022 (Participants may register for one or two days of the course) **TIME** 9:30am - 4:30pm

VENUE: Online via Zoom

COURSE FEE: 1 day: \$325 incl. GST 2 days: \$650 incl. GST (10% discount for Students / Monash staff / Monash alumni / Alfred staff / VHA members)

FURTHER INFORMATION & REGISTRATION -

<https://www.monash.edu/medicine/sphpm/study/professional-education/designing-and-using-surveys-and-questionnaires-for-clinical-practice>

Emerging Researchers in Ageing Conference – abstract submission extension to Wed August 3



[ERA 2022](#)

New Directions in Research on Ageing
10 November 2022 | Virtual

With support from the ARC Centre of Excellence in Population Ageing Research (CEPAR), ERA is delighted to present the **20th National Conference of Emerging Researchers in Ageing**.

[ERA 2022](#) is being co-chaired by **Associate Professor Tim Windsor** (Flinders University) and **Dr Helen Barrie** (University of South Australia).

An interactive virtual event

The ERA 2022 conference will be held virtually, with interactive activities to maximise opportunities for participation, including:

- An **Ask the ERA Brains Trust session**, for selected students and early career researchers to get answers to key research questions from relevant experts (call for expressions of interest forthcoming)
- A **Virtual breakout room**, for attendees to connect with other emerging researchers during the conference

All oral presentations will be conducted 'live' via Zoom (i.e., not pre-recorded); presenters must be available 10am - 5pm (ACDT) on Thursday 10 November 2022 to present (please check your local time, noting daylight saving)

[Call for abstracts – CLOSE WEDNESDAY](#)

The ERA 2022 Conference Organising Committee warmly invites the submission of abstracts for **oral presentations** from Honours, Masters, PhD, Professional doctoral students, and early career researchers engaged in ageing-related research from any discipline.

Please download the **Abstract Guidelines and Submission Form** from the [ERA 2022](#) website for further information and submission instructions.

The call for abstracts is now open and will close on **WEDNESDAY 3 AUGUST 2022**.

Early and mid-career research support activities

Although the staffing level for RAIL at this point is small, we are keen to provide support for any early or mid-career researcher that we can. We are happy to provide an external review perspective of grants you are preparing as one avenue of support. If you would like to discuss possibly accessing this service, please email Karine in the first instance (spahc.rail@monash.edu).

Member contributions

We would love to showcase current research from our members. We invite you to submit a short story (and relevant images) about any research you are working on that aligns with RAIL. Submissions are due by the 30th of each month to spahc.rail@monash.edu.

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<https://www.monash.edu/medicine/spahc/rail>

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spahc.rail@monash.edu

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