



MonREN

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



OUR PROFILE

MonREN is Monash University's Practice-Based Research and Education Network, based within the Department of General Practice.

We focus on general practices within Melbourne's east and south-east regions, bringing together members of general practice clinics and teams, primary care researchers, and academics. Through this network, we aim to foster collaborative and meaningful primary care research and education that ultimately improves community health.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prior to 2024, MonREN's focus was on establishing a strong governance foundation, as evidenced by the progress made against our logic model (see Appendix 1).

In March 2024, we welcomed a new Network Manager, Emiko Hunt, who brings a background in business development and marketing. Emiko's focus has been on guiding the network into a stage of consolidation and expansion. She conducted a thorough review and update of our strategic plan, setting three key areas of focus for the next three years:

1. Stability, governance, and expansion
2. Research and education
3. Supporting and connecting those working in general practice.

This annual report outlines the key progress made by, and with, the network in 2024. It highlights continued work to strengthen governance and stability, implement important operational and system improvements, and provide greater support and value to members. Additionally, we've made strides in supporting research groups to advance primary care research.

Looking ahead, MonREN will continue pursuing our three strategic focuses. 2025 will see a heightened emphasis on research and academic contributions, while also expanding opportunities for connection and collaboration across the network.

A MESSAGE FROM PROFESSOR GRANT RUSSELL

Professor of Primary Care Research in the Department of General Practice, Monash University



On behalf of the MonREN team, I am pleased to present our first annual report. This report highlights the work we've undertaken in 2024, a year I believe will be pivotal for both MonREN and its members and partners as we continue to grow and evolve. With the original support and ongoing encouragement from Monash Partners (Monash University's Advanced Health

Research and Translation Centre), MonREN has been developing community-led research and support across Melbourne's East and South-East.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge those who have been instrumental in bringing MonREN to its current stage. Our inaugural Network Manager, Sharon Clifford, navigated the pandemic, championed our consumer representation, and led workshops that fostered meaningful dialogue with our members. We are now fortunate to welcome Emiko Hunt as our new Network Manager. Emiko brings expertise in business, marketing, and strategic planning. Under her leadership, we have professionalised and streamlined our operational and communication systems, with a growing emphasis on fostering collaborative partnerships.

MonREN is increasingly consulted by others at Monash to learn about how best to improve primary care research and integration in a collaborative way. Our members' interests have led to honours projects, and the development of resources and events to meet their needs and requests.

As we move forward, we are committed to continuing to provide valuable education and resources that align with the expectations of our members. MonREN serves as the infrastructure supporting numerous research initiatives, including clinical trials. We are proud to be a major contributor to the TROPHI network in outer Eastern Melbourne, while continuing our involvement in a diverse array of primary care studies.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Russell', written in a cursive style.

Professor Grant Russell

LEADERSHIP AT MONREN

Stakeholder Advisory Group

Andrea Cooper
Angela Jones
Chris Barton
Emiko Hunt
Grant Russell
Helen Skouteris
Malcolm Clark
Nigel Stocks
Paula Davey
Samantha Chakraborty
Sue Viney
Tess Marotta

Steering Committee

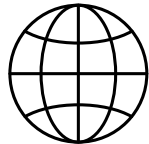
Atish Manek
Chris Barton
Danielle Mazza
Emiko Hunt
Grant Russell
Jennifer Neil
Jordan Crawford
Maria de Leon-Santiago
Monika Coha
Sandra Zovko
Sonia Srinivasan

AT A GLANCE



4 Academic Journal Club sessions

Academic journal clubs foster critical thinking and collaborative learning by engaging participants in the discussion and analysis of recent research, enhancing their understanding of key topics within their field.



New website launched in July

The new website enhances user experience by offering a more intuitive design and navigation. The number of core web pages increased from 5 to 12, with 1,850 webpage views* in 2024.

**Data is generally estimated to be 50% of actual visitor numbers due to visitor acceptance of the Monash cookie banner.*



Research projects supported

MonREN supports primary care research projects through consultation with researchers. In 2024, we provided advice and promoted recruitment for 11 general practice-focused research projects.



New e-communications system launched in July

12 electronic direct mail campaigns sent (overall open rate of 41%) and 4 research-specific e-newsletters (overall open rate of 30%).

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Updated Strategic Plan

MonREN's Strategic Plan was updated in April to align with the Department of General Practice's priorities, and Monash University's Impact 2030 Vision. This updated strategic plan defines clear goals, improves prioritisation, emphasises workflow efficiency, and encourages team direction. The three strategic pillars of focus are:

1. Increasing MonREN's stability, growth and expansion.
2. Improving community health through research and education.
3. Supporting and connecting those working in general practice.

UNDERSTANDING OUR MEMBERS

Member Profiles and Journey Mapping

To better understand our members, we created custom profiles and journey maps for general practitioners, practice managers, and practice nurses. These tools have been used to refine services, tailor communications, and improve the member experience.

Member Survey

In June, MonREN conducted a member survey to assess member needs and preferences. The 14% response rate was in line with industry standards. The insights gathered have and will continue to be used to shape decision making.



PARTNERSHIP AND INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

Strategic Partnerships

MonREN increased its focus on partnership development in 2024 as a means to further grow and increase reach. Initial conversations and foundational work took place with Monash University Clinical Trials Centre (MUCTC), General Practice Supervision Australia, and General Practice Registrars Australia. Investing in the foundations of these working relationships will enhance our work, collaboration, and impact moving forward.



GOVERNANCE

Steering Committee and Stakeholder Advisory Groups

MonREN has a diverse and dedicated Steering Committee, and Stakeholder Advisory Group with all members retained throughout 2024. Collaborative and insightful directive and decision making has come from these engaged stakeholders and we continue to work to strengthen our governance team.

Health Consumer Engagement

MonREN has three health consumer representatives who sit on the Stakeholder Advisory Group and provide valuable lived health consumer experience to inform activity and decision making. It is integral for MonREN to prioritise community centred care, alongside shared decision making. This year efforts were made to maintain regular communication with these representatives, which we will continue to build upon.

DATA MANAGEMENT AND E-COMMUNICATIONS

Database Management

Clean membership data is essential to achieving MonREN's strategic goal to connect and communicate with members. MonREN's database system underwent review, with a data cleansing process initiated to ensure improved communication. This database cleansing and updating will continue in 2025.

E-Communications System and Workflow

To address complexities in email distribution, MonREN adopted a paid e-communications account in June. This new system has improved e-communication efficiency with better reporting and data insights. 12 email campaigns were sent in 2024, achieving an overall average open rate of 40%.

ACADEMIC, SCHOLARLY & RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

Conference Presentations

MonREN presented at the Australasian Association for Academic Primary Care (AAAPC) conference in August, showcasing our collaborative work as a Practice-Based Research Network. This presentation helped elevate MonREN's visibility in the academic community and facilitated valuable networking opportunities.

Student Supervision for Scoping Review Project

MonREN welcomed two students during the year to support a scoping review research project on Practice-Based Research Networks (PBRNs). We expect this review to be completed in 2025 and will seek publication, providing a scholarly contribution to the field of health system integration.

Research Support

MonREN supported an array of primary care research projects through consultation with researchers, and promotion through our communication and network channels. We worked with 11 research studies to provide advice and promote recruitment through a variety of channels.



Left to right: Emiko Hunt, Jordan Crawford, Chris Barton at an Academic Journal Club

EVENTS

Academic Journal Club

MonREN hosted four Academic Journal Clubs. These events aim to foster critical thinking and collaboration while delving into current primary care research.

Topics and presenters for 2024:

- *Health impairment allegations against doctors* Presented by Dr Jennifer Neil
- *Afterhours telehealth in Australian residential aged care facilities.* Presented by Dr Jordan Crawford
- *Impact of general practice nurse intervention to improve blood pressure control.* Presented by Dr Sharon James
- *The influence of psychological safety on feedback conversations in general practice training.* Presented by Dr Monika Coha

GP Supervisors Workshop

MonREN supported the Department of General Practice's Education team to host an online workshop for GPs who supervise Monash University's medical students. This successful event will continue to be supported via MonREN in 2025.

MARKETING AND BRANDING

Branding and Design Collateral

MonREN engaged a professional graphic designer to develop a comprehensive brand guide and new marketing collateral. This effort has enhanced MonREN's professional visual identity and is an essential tool in member re-engagement and partnership development efforts for 2025.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

New Website

In August, MonREN launched a new website within the Monash University web environment, expanding the site from 5 to 13 core web pages. The site offers enhanced support, resources, and integration for members and researchers, with the capacity for ongoing content updates via an easy-to-use content management system.



MonREN is Monash University's Practice-based Research and Education Network. We work with General Practitioners, Practice Nurses, and Practice Managers to support and generate meaningful research and education that improves community health.

We're part of the Department of [General Practice](#).



We work with Melbourne's south-east, and eastern clinics and general practice teams.



Committed to growing primary care education and research.



Established in 2010 within the Department of General Practice.



About MonREN

Learn about our leading practice-based research and education network.



General Practice team members

If you work in general practice, access this section for information, membership and resources.



Researchers, academics and project managers

For information on undertaking research with the MonREN network, please check this section.

2025 PRIORITIES



INTERNAL PROMOTION AND INTEGRATION

- **Promotion within Monash University:** Continue promoting MonREN within Monash University's schools, departments, and research centres to increase awareness, engagement, and internal collaboration.
- **Stakeholder relationships:** Continue to grow and nurture internal (Monash University) relationships. Enhance stability through governance and promote growth through new connections.

RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

- **Scoping Review Completion:** Complete the *Practice-Based Research Networks and Health System Integration* scoping review project.
- **MonREN-Led Research Project:** Initiate a robust MonREN-led research project that aligns with our strategic priorities. Ensure collaborative, community- and clinic-led research is a priority focus.
- **Research Compilation Framework:** Establish a robust framework for tracking research collaborations.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT, CONNECTION, AND EDUCATION

- **Member Data Enhancement:** Update and expand member data for better collaboration and communication.
- **Increase communication and engagement with members:** Further connection with members and clinics with increased two-way communication. Provide networking and collaboration opportunities between members and those aligned with MonREN.
- **New Member Acquisition Plan:** Develop and implement strategies to attract new members to MonREN in order to grow primary care research and education.
- **Events:** Increase member participation, professional development, networking and research outputs through a range of MonREN-led and collaborated events.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- **Partnership Agreements:** Continue to grow and formalise strategic alliances with both internal and external stakeholders through valuable partnerships. Work to strengthen MonREN's output and impact through collaboration and teamwork.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With thanks to our:

Partners and collaborators



Monash Partners
ACADEMIC HEALTH SCIENCE CENTRE

Monash University
Department of General Practice

Monash University
Clinical Trials Centre

Senior management team

Chris Barton, Grant Russell and Jennifer Neil.

Steering committee members

Atish Manek, Chris Barton, Danielle Mazza, Emiko Hunt, Grant Russell, Jennifer Neil, Jordan Crawford, Maria de Leon-Santiago, Monika Coha, Sandra Zovko and Sonia Srinivasan.

Advisory group members

Andrea Cooper, Angela Jones, Chris Barton, Emiko Hunt, Grant Russell, Helen Skouteris, Malcolm Clark, Nigel Stocks, Paula Davey, Samantha Chakraborty, Sue Viney and Tess Marotta.

Appendix 1: MonREN Logic Model

INPUT

ACTIVITIES

OUTPUTS

EARLY OUTCOMES

LATE OUTCOMES

Existing structure of a PBRN

Positive past collaborations with Academic Health Science Centre

Preliminary funding *

Staff availability

Departmental members with an interest

Interested GPs and practice staff (with and without past involvement in DGP studies)

Other health organisations interested in the success of the PBRN

Data availability

Assumptions:
Clinicians have

- the time to participate
- The interest in participating

Investigators have

- funded grants
- Commitment to the PBRN

PBRN management

Recruit PBRN lead + staff

Develop operating procedures (incl ethics) + strategic plan

Refine existing governance structure

Develop communication plan

Development

Identifying and engaging key stakeholders

Learning from international best practice

Assessing stakeholders' needs

Link with key organisations

Collaborative decision making around priorities

Designing and implementing priority initiatives

Identify educational research needs

Establishing secondary data

PBRN management

PBRN leadership + staff appointed

Operating procedures + strategic plan in place

Governance structure established

Enact communication plan

- website, newsletter, social media

PBRN infrastructure

Engagement strategy for affiliated and new stakeholders

PBRN data base and data strategy

Initial research projects

Educational

- faculty to steering group
- Visibility to teaching practices

Sustainable funding model

Academic Journal Club

Availability of secondary data

Investigator led, collaborative research projects

Clinician led research projects

Research funding applications

Functioning PBRN with appropriate staffing

Adequate funding and resources

Stakeholder engagement

Up-to-date PBRN register

PBRN data repository and procedures

Staff and stakeholder research training / capacity building

Collaborative relationships with key organisations

Improved

- patient experience
- population health
- cost-efficiency
- work life of providers

Designing, undertaking and reporting on research to improve care within the whole healthcare system

A sustained integrated PBRN is reached

Integrated PBRN model is perceived/ experienced positively by patients and members

Other health organisations interested in the success of the PBRN

Increased regional academic capacity

Use of PBRN research by PBRN clinicians

Integrated PBRN model used elsewhere

INPUT

ACTIVITIES

OUTPUTS

EARLY OUTCOMES

LATE OUTCOMES

Newly developed PBRN

Collaboration with Academic Health Science Centre and SPHPM

12 months funding *

New manager with marketing perspective

Patchy departmental awareness

Some GPs and Practice staff recent involvement

Awareness of MonREN within other researchers

NO data assurance

Assumptions:
Clinicians have
• the time to participate
• The interest in participating
Investigators have
• funded grants
• Commitment to the PBRN

PBRN management

REVIEW operating procedures (incl ethics) + strategic plan

REVIEW governance structure

Development

ENGAGE key stakeholders

STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL LINKS

Assessing MEMBERS' needs

Link with key organisations

REVIEW PRIORITIES

BUILD EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES

Establishing secondary data

PBRN management

PBRN leadership + staff appointed

Operating procedures + strategic plan in place

Governance structure established

Enact communication plan
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PBRN infrastructure

Engagement strategy for affiliated and new stakeholders

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