

## Season's Greetings

As we close out another year, we want to express our sincere gratitude for your invaluable support to our medical research community. Your contribution has been instrumental in advancing scientific knowledge and improving medical outcomes.



This year, community representation at the School of Translational Medicine has been pivotal in:

- Connecting the community directly with novel research
- Submitting (and in some cases being awarded) grants towards new research
- Shaping and enhancing significance statements for research projects
- Better understanding our stakeholders through journey mapping
- Considering how we can diversify the services we offer to benefit more stakeholders.

We're excited to continue working with you to create a healthier future for all. Thank you for being a part of our community.

**Better understanding the importance of community engagement in research.**



The CaRE committee is thrilled to unveil this animation, created in collaboration with a talented Monash student intern.

It highlights the crucial role of community involvement in medical research, illustrated through relatable, everyday examples.

**Ground breaking research:**

**Brain injury and intimate partner violence**



- Although common across all genders, IPV predominantly affects women, with 1 in 4 Australian women experiencing IPV
- IPV is the leading cause of preventable death, disability, and illness in Australian women aged 15-44, and
- Violence against women and their children has an annual economic cost of AUD \$22 billion.

Despite being declared a national emergency in 2014, intimate partner violence (IPV) remains a major health and welfare concern. Physical attacks during IPV often target the head and neck. Consequently, concussion is one of the most significant health consequences faced by IPV survivors.

What is unique about concussions in IPV is that they frequently occur alongside strangulation, potentially worsening the brain injury. The violence can also be highly repetitive causing further damage. A diagnosis and detection of concussion often relies on self- or witness-report of the incident. This isn't always possible for patients because of 1) fear, 2) not being able to remember the attack as they have lost their memory, and 3) the only potential witness is the perpetrator. However, it is critical to identify IPV-related brain injuries early for proper support and treatment, and so more severe consequences, such as death, are prevented.

**WHAT DID THE RESEARCHERS FIND?**

They examined symptoms and biomarkers in IPV patients who had experienced a concussion within the past 72 hours as an objective method using a blood sample. Many of these patients had experienced strangulation at the same time as the concussion. We found that the IPV concussion patients had higher levels of neurofilament light (a marker of injury to the axon of a brain cell) in their blood. Patients reported a greater severity in their brain injury symptoms compared to healthy individuals and patients who had experienced a concussion that was not due to IPV.

Because the clinical setting of IPV is so complex we also created a rat model of non-fatal strangulation. We investigated the effects of

Learn more  
about the  
research group

strangulation and concussion, both separately and together. We found when rats experienced both injuries at the same time, they had more significant motor and cognitive issues, increased inflammation and injury in the brain, and higher levels of certain brain injury markers in their blood.

## Refer a friend

We welcome participation by all community members impacted by the medical conditions we study.

Express Interest Here

Expressions of interest to join us, from community members are always accepted.

Additionally, we are **currently** seeking community representatives to join specific research projects including:

- **Diabetes (T1 & 2)**
- **Intimate partner violence & brain injury**

**Know someone? Please share!**

## Help Us

Our research goals are to work with the community to develop better ways to diagnose, treat, care for and ultimately cure serious health conditions.

Donate to our CaRE Program!

Some of today's modern research discoveries were only made possible by the support and generosity of donors. Every donation helps our research to progress and create discoveries.

### How will my donation be used?

You can choose how we use your valuable contribution, by either supporting a disease or condition themed area, individual research projects or individual researchers.

All donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

Follow us on X and Facebook!

Keep up to date with our latest news, interesting information & meet the team!



## Noteworthy items from the sector...



### UK report makes 19 recommendations to improve clinical research for participants

The aim of the project was to find out what researchers should do to make sure that the people who take part in clinical research, and those who will be affected by the outcomes of research, are the focus.

[Read the report](#)



### Integrating patient and public involvement and engagement in translational medicine

While public involvement is gaining traction in clinical and applied research, its use in preclinical research remains limited, primarily confined to initial priority-setting and often a one-off event.

[Learn more](#)



### Developing Effective Community Collaborations

A qualitative case study of three high-quality partnerships set in Aotearoa, New Zealand contributes a body of published work to the limited research about the processes and approaches that impact successful collaboration

[Read the article](#)

Together we can work towards improved medical outcomes.

### Ange and the CaRE Committee

CaRE

School of Translational Medicine

Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

**M** WORK  
STUDY  
SUPPORT  
RESEARCH

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