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HEALTH CARE

## REHABILITATION, AGEING AND INDEPENDENT LIVING (RAIL) RESEARCH CENTRE

### Member eBulletin #35

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## A message from the Director



Welcome to the final RAIL e-bulletin for the year. We hope you have had a good year in 2022, and wish you a happy and relaxing transition into 2023. Our next e-bulletin will be in February 2023.

RAIL has had an extremely busy and successful past 1-2 months of the year, as you will see through the e-bulletin items below. I want to take the opportunity to thank all of the RAIL staff who continue to produce an amazing and exciting range of ideas, projects, outputs and impacts. Also special thanks to our growing support network, including our External Advisory Committee

(special thanks to Chair Professor Nicola Kayes, and our two community representatives – Grainne Cruikshank and Margaret Thomas) and our Executive (Internal) Advisory Committee, our members and partners, and now our growing Friends of RAIL group, for your wonderful support throughout the year.

I hope you enjoy reading about our activities and outcomes in the 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 complete the Member survey [online](#).

Stay safe and well.

Professor Keith Hill

## Member profile



**Dr Alison Carver** is a Senior Research Fellow in the National Centre for Healthy Ageing (NCHA), Monash University, commencing in June 2022. She is working on a number of complementary projects being undertaken by the Health Ageing Data Platform in the application of linked data to health service research.

With a background in public health and behavioural epidemiology, she will apply epidemiological techniques to answer a range of research questions relevant to ageing.

Her previous research at Australian Catholic University and Deakin University examined how the built environment is related to health across the lifespan. Relevant to RAIL, she explored how views and presence of greenery are

associated with mental wellbeing among aged-care residents. Her postdoctoral research focused on how social and built environments may influence children's active transport, physical activity, and independent mobility.

Current projects include:

- creating coding algorithms to predict dementia cases among the older population using routinely collected healthcare data
- exploring associations of greenery and air pollution with diagnosed health conditions
- examining use of healthcare services by aged care residents in SE Metro region.

## Member and Partner forum

### Previous RAIL forum

In our last 2022 forum titled *'Oh When The Saints Go Marching Into Research': Building Partnerships Between St Kilda Football Club and Monash University Research Centres* that was held on 16th November, speakers delivered wonderful presentations providing a great overview of the development of the innovative research collaborations between the Saints and Monash University Research Centres, including the Turner Institute and the Rehabilitation, Ageing and Independent Living (RAIL) Research Centre. It was very impressive to hear about everything that has been achieved and how these impactful collaborations leading to the Healthy Futures Hub, and the Danny Frawley Centre, will highly benefit the community.

Thank you to Mr Simon Lethlean, Dr Elise Facer-Childs, Mr Andrew Dick and Associate Professor Libby Callaway for their great presentations!

The RAIL team is currently planning the next forum which will be held in the new year. More information will be circulated early 2023. Stay tuned!

## RAIL End of Year Rehabilitation Event 2022

The RAIL Research Centre hosted a full day rehabilitation event on the Monash University Peninsula Campus last Thursday 1st December.

The event included a half-day clinician coaching workshop titled *Improve your coaching skills: An introductory workshop for rehabilitation professionals* which was led by Dr Annie McCluskey and Mr Karl Schurr from StrokeEd and was followed but a Rehabilitation Forum with national and international speakers titled *Putting the consumer at the heart of rehabilitation*. The event concluded with the launch of the Rehabilitation, Ageing and Independent Living teaching and learning resource developed by Associate Professor Gabrielle Brand and James Bonnamy (Monash Nursing and Midwifery) in collaboration with RAIL.

The clinician workshop was engaging and very well received by the participants, and tied well with the Rehabilitation forum that followed with a true focus on consumers. The event was a success with over 60 people attending the forum!

Thank you to all our presenters who delivered wonderful presentations:

- Professor Keith Hill - Director of the RAIL Research Centre
- Professor Christina Mitchell - Academic Vice-President and Dean, Monash University Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences
- Dr Annie McCluskey - StrokeEd Collaboration
- Mr Karl Schurr - StrokeEd Collaboration
- Dr Natasha Brusco - RAIL Research Centre, Monash University
- Ms Sara Whittaker - PhD Candidate, RAIL Research Centre, Monash University
- Dr Christina Ekegren - RAIL Research Centre, Monash University
- Ms Stella Carew - Lived experience expert
- Professor Nicola Kayes - Centre for Person Centred Research (PCR), Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

- Ms Britta Morrison - Student Placements, School of Primary and Allied Health Care, Monash University, Lived experience expert
- Dr Sandy Reeder - School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine and Central Clinical School, Monash University
- Mr James Bonnamy - Nursing and Midwifery, Monash University

This was a wonderful forum showcasing some excellent research activity, and highlighting throughout the importance of consumer and community involvement, and engagement with people with lived experience relevant to research being undertaken, throughout the research journey from concept to implementation and dissemination. Special thanks to Tarsh Brusco, Christina Ekegren, Karine Fortin and Libby Callaway for organising the event.





**RAIL paper of the month**

**Healthy ageing through participation in community situated activities: A scoping review of assessment instruments to support occupational therapy practice**

Knightbridge L, Bourke-Taylor HM, Hill KD.

**ABSTRACT**

**Introduction:** The occupational therapy profession has an essential role to play in healthy ageing that includes enabling participation, a construct that according to The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), incorporates an environmental context. Environmental barriers and enablers of participation in community-situated activities for people over the age of 65 have been identified. To support practice, occupational therapists require assessments with demonstrated content validity including comprehensive coverage of the construct. The purpose of this scoping review study was to investigate what instruments are available to assess community participation for people over the age of 65 that included environmental factors.

**Methods:** A scoping review of the literature was conducted, utilising the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) scoping review methodology. The evidence source was review articles and inclusion criteria were that they reviewed instruments to assess participation that could be used for people over the age of 65. Items extracted from included instruments were evaluated against a preset list of community-participation and environment categories that had been developed from the ICF.

**Results:** Twenty-three review studies met inclusion criteria and from these 240 instruments were extracted. Twenty instruments were retained after exclusions and from these, 540 instrument items were extracted. Of these, 280 (47%) were coded as community-participation, and only 20 (3.4%) as environment items. Fourteen of the instruments included no environment items.

**Conclusions:** No instrument was identified that comprehensively assessed community participation including the related environmental factors. Such an instrument is required to enable occupational therapy practitioners to support healthy ageing. The development of such an instrument will strengthen the profession's capacity to develop new ways of delivering services to older adults in line with emerging ways that aged care will be delivered and to advance its essential role in healthy ageing.

Knightbridge L, Bourke-Taylor HM, Hill KD. (2022) Healthy ageing through participation in community situated activities: A scoping review of assessment

instruments to support occupational therapy practice. Aust Occup Ther J. 69(4):493-509. [doi: 10.1111/1440-1630.12802](https://doi.org/10.1111/1440-1630.12802).

## Grant Success

### Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences - Future Leader Postdoctoral Fellowships 2023

Dr Christina Ekegren, Senior Research Fellow with RAIL, was recently awarded a Monash University Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (FMNHS) Future Leader Postdoctoral Fellowship. This Fellowship will provide salary in 2023 to support Dr Ekegren to further her research project 'A new physical activity vital sign for hospital settings'. Dr Ekegren also recently received seed funding for this project from RAIL and from the School of Primary and Allied Health Care. Each Fellowship will comprise an award valued at up to \$120,000 (\$50,000 from the Faculty) for the career development of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) at academic Levels B or C, greater than 5 and less than or equal to 10 years post-PhD.

### National Centre for Healthy Ageing (NCHA) Living Labs Round 3

The NCHA recently announced 13 successful collaborative research grants as part of round 3 of its Living Labs program, that brings together multidisciplinary teams to tackle two broad thematic focus areas of:

- Optimising Health: Empowering/supporting people to optimise their functional ability, including intrinsic and extrinsic factors that enable healthy ageing.
- Health and Social Care: Understanding, developing and improving health and care environments & systems to support healthier ageing.

RAIL staff are leading three of the successful grant applications:

1. Changing the focus: Facilitating engagement in physical activity for people with dementia in a local community - A feasibility study, Hill KD, Callisaya M, Meyer C, Taylor M, Lawler K, Levinger P, Hunter S, Mackey D, Burton E, Haines T, Brusco N, Lee DCA, Ekegren C, Crabtree A.
2. New co-designed service to support health and wellbeing of older carers of older people, Lalor A, Hill KD, Slatyer S, Burton E, Bryant C, Oliveira D, Khushu A, Brusco N, Layton N, Lee DCA, Cash B, Allen J.
3. Environment and behaviour mapping in Residential Aged Care: Evidence to inform built, technology and workforce design, Callaway L, Bould E, Layton N, Gusheh M, Carnemolla P, Licciardi L, & Manser, L.

### Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Projects DP23

A team led by Professor Alex Collie (Director of the Healthy Working Lives Research Group and Co-Director of the Division of Health Services Systems and Policy, in the School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine) with colleagues from the University of Melbourne School of Design, Monash Faculty of Law, University of Waterloo School of Public Health Sciences (Canada), RAIL Independent Living Stream Lead, Associate Professor Libby Callaway, and RAIL External Advisory Committee lived experience expert member (and Friend of RAIL representative) Mrs Grainne Cruickshank, have been successful in the recent ARC Discovery Project DP23 round.

The project - titled *Redesigning workers' compensation using participatory systems modelling* - will use participatory system modelling techniques to develop and test new approaches to the design and delivery of workers' compensation in Australia. The project responds to the substantial evidence that Australia's workers' compensation systems are failing to achieve their social and economic objectives. The research team will actively engage people with lived experience of work disability to co-design an alternative workers' compensation system. The outcomes of this system will be assessed using

agent-based modelling, and compared to the current state. The study will provide a vision for an alternative approach to workers' compensation that supports the social and economic participation of Australians with work disability.

Investigators: Professor Alex Collie; Associate Professor Jason Thompson; Associate Professor Genevieve Grant; Associate Professor Libby Callaway; Professor Ellen MacEachen; Mrs Grainne Cruickshank

Congratulations to Professor Collie and the team for this success!

## **Assistive technology and international connections October 2022**

### **Dr Natasha Layton**

Building on an invitation to deliver several lectures on digital assistive technology at Orebro University, Sweden, I was fortunate to visit 6 countries across a warm and autumnal Europe.

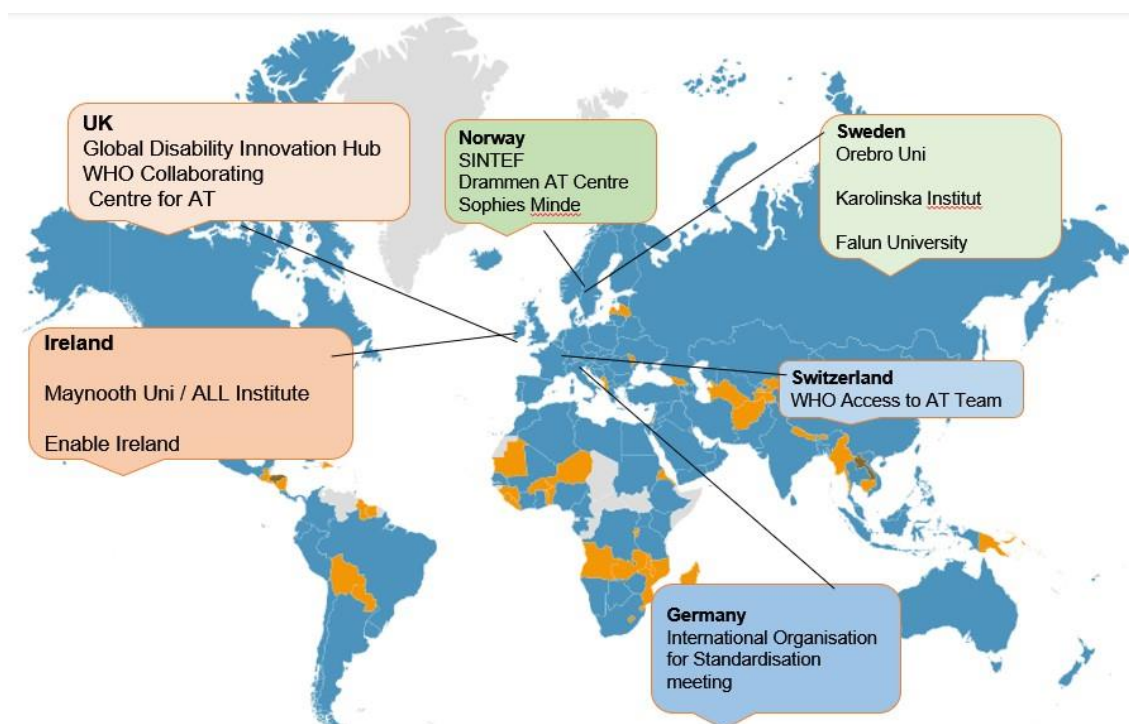
Thanks to networks within the global Assistive Technology (AT) community, it was possible to establish a month of site visits, invited talks and meetings. These included occupational therapy, nursing and AT educators across five universities and four countries; wheelchair and seating clinics in England and Ireland; the leading prosthetic service in Norway; and three innovation hubs focused on digital AT. Being in Europe and spending time with colleagues was a wonderful opportunity to observe practices and priorities. Across Europe, pressing concerns were the humanitarian response to the Ukraine, and the impact of climate change on AT users and supply networks. Meetings with WHO and with SINTEF, a key research institute in Norway, were valuable windows to see how international development bodies are addressing these challenges.

I was proud to conduct these visits and lectures on behalf of RAIL Research

Centre. Without exception, our European colleagues remarked on the photograph of our beautiful campus among the gum trees.

Thank you RAIL for facilitating such a valuable month of learning and connection and we look forward to progressing relationships and research ideas over the next months.

Here are a few highlights of the trip:



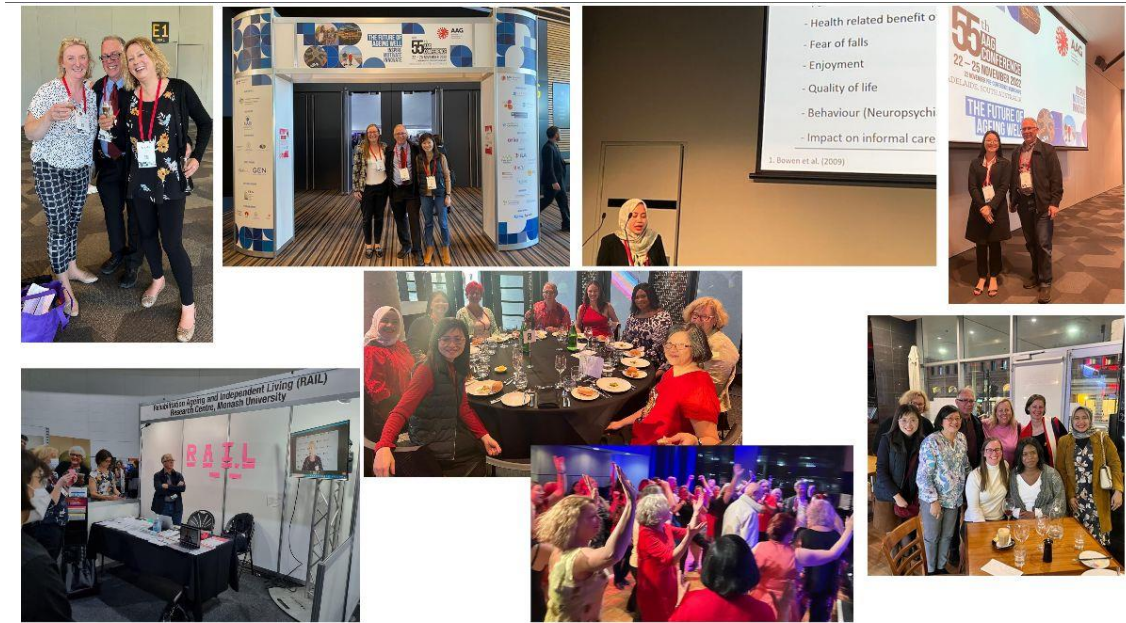
a) Europe Lecture Tour map; b) Dr Natasha Layton & Dr Katarina Baudin, Orebro University, Sweden; c) United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in Swedish, Orebro University

## Participation at the Australian Association of Gerontology Conference 2022

RAIL had a strong presence at the Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) conference in Adelaide in November. This included:

- A pre-conference workshop led by Dr Natasha Layton and Associate Professor Libby Callaway on *Bringing together practice, evidence and campaigning to influence systemic change: Learnings from the Australian Assistive Technology Equity Study*, hosted by the AAG Technology Special Interest Group (AAG TECHSIG)
- oral presentations by RAIL staff and HDR students,
- an exhibition booth promoting the research and associated activities of RAIL,
- screening the launch of the “*Why investing in falls prevention across Australia can’t wait*” report at our exhibition booth,
- Aislinn Lalor coordinating the “*Lunch with the stars*” session linking early career researchers with experienced researchers, and other early career researcher activities.

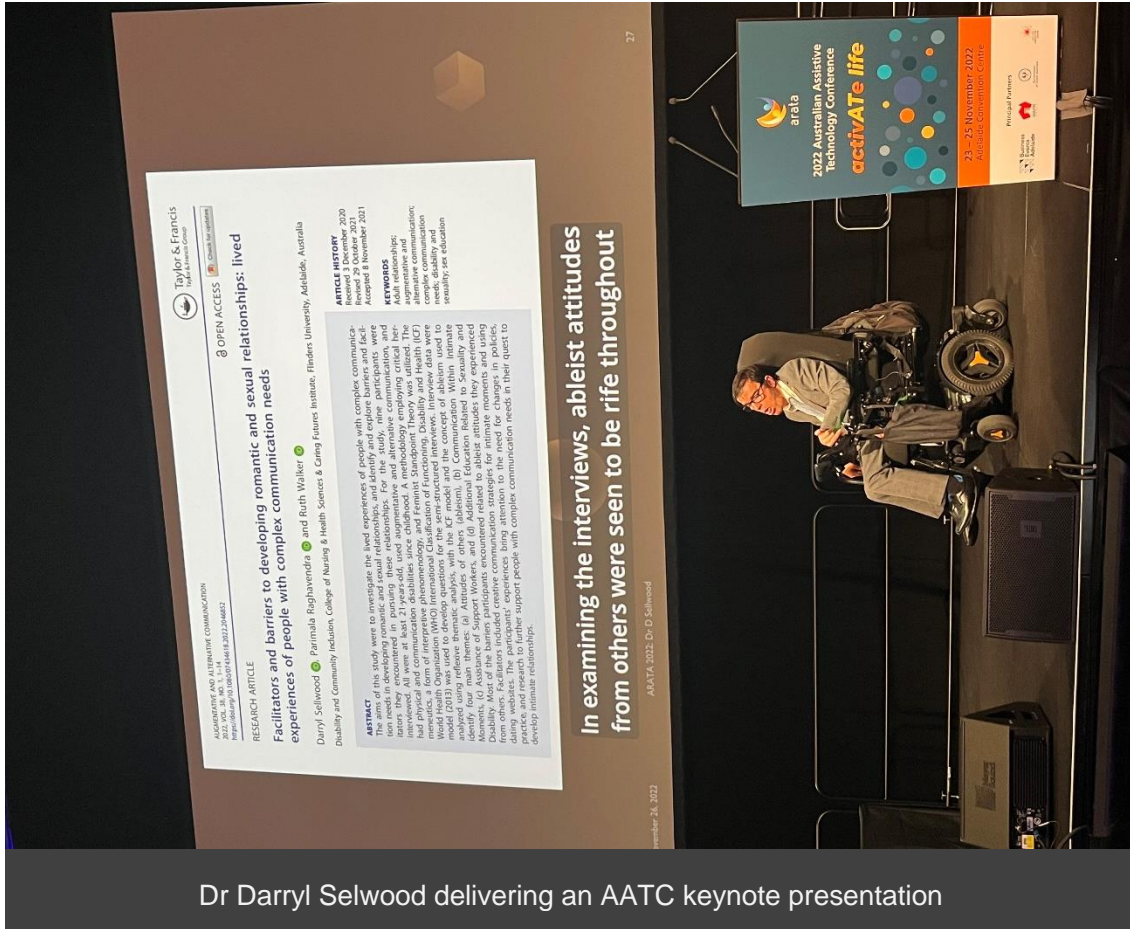
The conference also provided great opportunities for networking, meeting old and new friends, and generating ideas for future research activities.



## Participation at the 2022 Australian Assistive Technology Conference

RAIL Independent Living Stream Lead, Associate Professor Libby Callaway is the voluntary President of the [Australian Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Association \(ARATA\)](#), and RAIL Senior Research Fellow Dr Natasha Layton is International Lead on the ARATA Board.

From 23-25 November 2022, ARATA hosted their biennial [Australian Assistive Technology Conference and Exhibition](#) in Adelaide. Over 240 people attended pre-conference workshops focused on various Assistive Technology topics, and over 370 people joined the main conference. Some incredible keynote presentations were provided, including from [Dr Darryl Selwood](#) (Associate Lecturer and Scholarly Fellow - TSA, College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Flinders University), [Dr Guiia Barbareschi](#) (JSPS Research Fellow at the Keio School of Media Design at Keio University in Tokyo) and [Dr Ross Pinder](#) (Innovation Lead with Paralympics Australia). Libby and Natasha presented a number of papers at the conference, on various Monash and external collaborative team work relating to the field of assistive technology.



Dr Darryl Selwood delivering an AATC keynote presentation

## World Health Organisation Report on Health Equity for People with Disabilities released to coincide with 2022 International Day for People with Disability (IDPwD)

The Global Report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities was released by the World Health Organisation to coincide with IDPwD2022 and "presents the evidence base for more systematic, comprehensive, and sustainable change in the health sector. It outlines key policy and programmatic actions and recommendations for Member States to strengthen and expand services for persons with disabilities". For an overview, or to download the full report, go to: <https://www.who.int/activities/global-report-on-health-equity-for-persons-with-disabilities>

## Recent launch of the Australian and New Zealand Falls Prevention Society report 'Why investing in falls prevention across Australia can't wait'

A new report titled *Why investing in falls prevention across Australia can't wait* launched on 24 November by the Australian and New Zealand Falls Prevention Society (ANZFPS) proposes a plan for urgent and coordinated action that could reduce falls by 30% and turn the tide on a \$2.3 billion healthcare burden.

The recommendations include:

1. Establish a National Falls Prevention Coordination Group, modelled on the coordinated and nationally funded action in the United States and United Kingdom, adapted for the Australian context and informed by previous initiatives in Australia and New Zealand.
2. Develop and implement a 5-year national plan for preventing falls that is funded to reach a critical mass of community-dwelling older people and those in residential care.
3. Engage all levels of government and a broad range of sectors, including health and aged care, housing, transport, and planning and development.
4. Include falls prevention strategies for people across the lifespan and in all settings to maximise benefits.
5. Greater investment in translational falls prevention research.

For more information and to access the report, please visit: <https://www.neura.edu.au/news/world-leading-falls-researchers-and-clinicians-call-for-urgent-government-action-on-the-2-3bn-health-problem-no-one-talks-about/>

To view the launch of the report online, please visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDzhmkSGGa4>

## Global Report on Ageism

Summary: The *Global report on ageism* outlines a framework for action to reduce ageism including specific recommendations for different actors (e.g. government, UN agencies, civil society organizations, private sector). It brings together the best available evidence on the nature and magnitude of ageism, its determinants and its impact. It outlines what strategies work to prevent and counter ageism, identifies gaps and proposes future lines of research to improve our understanding of ageism.

The report was developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Population Fund and other contributors.

To know more about the report and to download it, please visit: <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/demographic-change-and-healthy-ageing/combating-ageism/global-report-on-ageism>

## A New Good Practice Guide to Ensuring Occupations Are Responsive to People with Disabilities

Under Australia's Disability Strategy, in early 2022, the Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) was engaged by the Australian Government Department of Social Services to determine how to enhance the training outcomes of occupations across the education, health, justice and social services workforce, to better respond to the needs of people with disability.

The project, *Ensuring occupations are responsive to people with disability*, explored the context and adequacy of training about disability in Australia and, through this work, ACOLA developed a Good Practice Guide and Action Plan that identified areas for action by all stakeholders, including all

levels of government, professional bodies, employers, training bodies (i.e. VET and universities), and individuals.

The guide that was produced outlines objectives and principles for good practice in training development, delivery and evaluation. It also provides a practical Education and Training Analysis Tool to ensure education and training align with the knowledge and practice associated with better responsiveness towards people with disability.

To access the guide and project reporting, go to <https://apo.org.au/node/320494>

## **The Hon Amanda Rishworth MP Media Release - Allowing pensioners to work and keep more of their money**

On 7th November 2022, The Hon Amanda Rishworth MP announced that the Age and Veterans Pensioners will be supported to work and keep more of their government payments for a full year, after amendments moved in the House of Representatives.

Following consultation with the community – and importantly seniors – the Albanese Labor Government will now seek to extend the \$4000 income bank boost through to December 31, 2023.

This will, following passage of the legislation, give an additional six months for all Australians over Age Pension age and Veterans Pensioners to take up the income bank boost and allow for a thorough assessment to determine if it is working to help older Australians who want to work more to do so.

For more information about this media release, please visit: <https://ministers.dss.gov.au/media-releases/9636>

## **Preferences and User Experiences of Wearable Devices in Epilepsy**

Australian researchers from Alfred Health and other networks have recently published a [systematic review](#) on Preferences and User Experiences of Wearable Devices in Epilepsy which has been nicely summarised by Steven Karceski [in this article](#).

The systematic review revealed that about 80% of participants were accepting of wearable technology. Sixty-nine percent preferred a wristwatch-like device that could be connected to a smartphone. Thirteen of the studies used new study instruments to collect and analyze data. These were not uniform across the studies, making analysis challenging.

For a summary of the systematic review findings, please refer to the [summary article](#) as well as original systematic review:

Preferences and User Experiences of Wearable Devices in Epilepsy, A Systematic Review and Mixed-Methods Synthesis (2022) Shobi Sivathamboo, Duong Nhu, Loretta Piccenna, Anthony Yang, Ana Antonic-Baker, Swarna Vishwanath, Marian Todaro, Lim Wei Yap, Levin Kuhlmann, Wenlong Cheng, Terence J. O'Brien, Natasha A. Lannin, Patrick Kwan, *Neurology*, 99 (13) e1380-e1392; DOI: [10.1212/WNL.000000000200794](https://doi.org/10.1212/WNL.000000000200794)

## **RAIL Early / mid-career researcher grant 2023 - new process**

The RAIL Team is currently working on the guidelines of the RAIL Early to Mid Career Researcher (EMCR) Grant Round 2023 which will open March-April 2023. A total of \$30,000 will be available for the 2023 round, with individual applications able to apply for up to \$15,000.

Please note that for the upcoming round, applicants will be encouraged to 'pitch' their project idea during one of the School of Primary and Allied Health Care / School of Nursing and Midwifery / School of Rural Health / Department of Nutrition, Dietetics and Food, *Applying for Large Research Grants* pitching sessions. The new process will offer applicants the opportunity to receive

constructive feedback and potential suggestions on areas of improvement.

The first 2023 pitching session is scheduled for Tuesday 17 Jan 2023, 11 am to 12:30 pm (to be held both via Zoom and F2F, [Building G, Peninsula Campus, Room 311]). If you would like to put your brief project pitch to an experienced researcher panel at this January meeting (or there is likely to be others in February and later in the year), please contact Justin Tan - [justin.tan@monash.edu](mailto:justin.tan@monash.edu) (Justin is also happy for you to touch base in person to discuss the pitching session if you wish).

More information about the RAIL EMCR grant 2023 round and application process will be provided early in the new year.

### **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](mailto: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](mailto:spahc.rail@monash.edu).