



HEADlines

Newsletter of Monash-Epworth Rehabilitation Research Centre

OCTOBER 2019

In this issue we discuss the conferences that MERRC academics, clinicians and students have attended and presented at, celebrate our award winners, and outline recent publications.

Australasian Society for the Study of Brain Impairment (ASSBI) / New Zealand Rehabilitation Association (NZRA) Conference

On 2–4 May this year, ASSBI/NZRA held their 42nd Annual Brain Impairment Conference in Wellington, New Zealand. The theme of the conference was “A Call for Action” and brought together academics and clinicians from Australia, New Zealand and internationally.

A number of our staff presented at the conference. On day two, **Penny Analytis**

(Clinical Neuropsychologist – La Trobe University) presented on *Evaluating the impact of the BRAINSPaN clinician and researcher network on multidisciplinary collaboration and knowledge translation in the brain impairment field*. **Dr Kate Gould** (Clinical Neuropsychologist – MERRC) presented on *Hoarding and ABI: An overview and Case Study*.

On day three, **Dr Rene Stolwyk** (pictured below) presented on *Utilising telehealth to deliver neuropsychological rehabilitation services to rural patients with stroke: development and evaluation of a novel pilot program*; and **Jai Carmichael** (Honours student – Monash University) presented on *Readiness of community ABI therapists to learn and implement Positive Behaviour Support: A mixed-methods study*. Jai received the Kevin Walsh award for best presentation by an Honours/Masters student.



(Clinical Neuropsychology Doctoral student – Monash University) presented on *The Experience of Attending a Camp for Families with a Child with Acquired Brain Injury: Perspectives of Children and Young People with Acquired Brain Injury and their Siblings*. **Professor Jennie Ponsford AO** (MERRC Director) presented on *Cognitive Reserve and Age Predict Cognitive Recovery Following TBI*. **Dr Dana Wong**



Storyboard from Penny's presentation illustrated by The Visual Storytellers Group, 2019. hello@visstorytellers.com.au. Retrieved from www.assbi.com.au/ASSBI-Conferences



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Neuropsychological Rehabilitation Special Interest Group of WFNR Conference



Penny Analytis (left) and Prof Jennie Ponsford (right) at the NR-SIG-WFNR conference

The Neuropsychological Rehabilitation Special Interest Group of WFNR (NR-SIG-WFNR) held its 16th biannual conference in Granada, Spain, at the end of June. The conference is attended by internationally based researchers and clinicians from a range of fields including neuropsychology, clinical psychology, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, social work, medicine and nursing. The focus of the conference is on rehabilitation of the neuropsychological consequences of acquired brain injury.

Professor Jennie Ponsford AO presented two papers, *Factors associated with working alliance and homework compliance and their association with response to cognitive behavioural therapy for anxiety and depression following traumatic brain injury* (work conducted with Dr Leah Zelencich, Dr Nik Kazantsis and Dr Dana Wong) and *Efficacy of activities of daily living retraining during post-traumatic amnesia: A randomised controlled trial* (work conducted with Dr Jessica Trevena-Peters and Dr Adam McKay from MERRC). **Penny Analytis** presented on *The experience of the sibling relationship when one sibling has an acquired brain injury*. Penny also had a poster on *Supporting children and young people with an acquired brain injury (ABI) and their siblings: The experience of a camp for families with a child with an ABI*.

SMART STROKES Conference

The 14th annual SMART STROKES conference was held in the Hunter Valley, NSW, from 8–9 August. The conference is attended by health professionals who work with people at risk of, or directly impacted by, a stroke event, along with decision-makers allocating stroke-related services and funding. Each year, the conference attracts a range of health professionals, including Nurses, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologists, Dietitians, Social Workers, Clinical Psychologists, Doctors and those working in the field of research.

This year, **Dr Rene Stolwyk** was the keynote speaker at the conference. He presented on *Incorporating evidence-based cognitive and mood assessment and intervention into interdisciplinary stroke rehabilitation: it can be done!* In addition, he was invited to hold a workshop: *A practical guide on how to facilitate team-wide cognitive and mood assessment and intervention into stroke rehabilitation*. This was a fantastic opportunity to engage and share ideas with a broad range of individuals from multi-disciplinary backgrounds.



Dr Rene Stolwyk presents at the SMART STROKES conference in August

Australian Paediatric Neuropsychology Research Network (APNRN) Meeting

The inaugural meeting for the APNRN was held in Sydney on 15–16 August. This was attended by paediatric specialists in fields of neuropsychology, clinical psychology and allied health from Australia and New Zealand. The event showcased the latest trends in neuropsychology research and practice, and provided an opportunity for collaboration and new research directions, with a strong focus on early career research.

Dr Cathy Willmott presented during the Traumatic Brain Injury symposium on *Sports concussion and headgear use in paediatric populations*. **Jen Makovec-Knight** (Clinical Neuropsychology Doctoral student – Monash University) *Soft-shell headgear as injury prevention in youth team collision sports: A systematic review*.



Dr Cathy Willmott (left) and Jen Makovec-Knight (right) with her award at the APNRN meeting



Prizes and Awards

MAY

Jai Carmichael (Honours student – Monash University) received the Kevin Walsh award for best presentation by an Honours/Masters student following his presentation at ASSBI on *Readiness of community ABI therapists to learn and implement Positive Behaviour Support: A mixed-methods study*.

AUGUST

Jen Makovec-Knight (Clinical Neuropsychology Doctoral student – Monash University) was awarded the student prize for her presentation on *Soft-shell headgear as injury prevention in youth team collision sports: A systematic review* at the inaugural APNRN meeting in Sydney.

SEPTEMBER

Professor Jennie Ponsford AO was awarded an Investigator Grant by the NHMRC to continue her research into developing and implementing evidence-based treatments to improve outcome following brain injury. This grant will provide funding over the next 5 years to progress research into a wide range of interventions for individuals following brain injury.

New publications from MERRC

- Cameron, KV, Ponsford, JL, Stolwyk, RJ. (2019). Do stroke survivors agree with their clinicians on the extent of their post-stroke activity limitation and participation restriction? *Neuropsychological Rehabilitation*. DOI: 10.1080/09602011.2019.1586734
- Gould, KR, Ponsford, JL, Hicks, AJ, Hopwood, M, Renison, B, Feeney, TJ. (2019). Positive behaviour support for challenging behaviour after acquired brain injury: An introduction to PBS + PLUS and three case studies. *Neuropsychological Rehabilitation*, published online 25 August 2019. DOI: 10.1080/09602011.2019.1656647
- Lam, K, Lee, D-C.A, Lalor, AF, Stolwyk, RJ, Russell, G, Brown, T, McDermott, F, Haines, TP. (2019). The relationship between discharge medications and falls in post hospitalised older adults: A 6-month follow-up. *Australian Journal of Ageing*. DOI: 10.1111/ajag.12628.
- Lawson, DW, Stolwyk, RJ, Ponsford, JL, McKenzie, DP, Downing, MG, Wong, D. (in press). Telehealth delivery of memory rehabilitation following stroke. *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society*, Accepted 13 May 2019.
- Nguyen, JVK, Brennan, JH, Mitra, B, Willmott, C. (2019). Frequency and magnitude of game-related head impacts in male contact sports athletes: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Sports Medicine*. DOI: 10.1007/s40279-019-01135-4
- O'Connell, EL, Lawson, DW, New, PW, Stolwyk, RJ. (2019). Agreement between patients and nurses of neurobehavioral disability following stroke in an inpatient rehabilitation setting. *Disability and Rehabilitation*. DOI: 10.1080/09638288.2019.1572792
- Withiel, TD, Stolwyk, RJ, Ponsford, JL, Cadilhac, DA, Wong, D. (2019) Effectiveness of a manualised group training intervention for memory dysfunction following stroke: A series of single case studies, *Disability and Rehabilitation*. DOI: 10.1080/09638288.2019.1579260
- Withiel, TD, Wong, D, Ponsford, JL, Cadilhac, D., New, P, Mihaljcic, T, Stolwyk, RJ. (2019). Comparing memory group training and computerized cognitive training for improving memory function following stroke: A phase II randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine*. DOI: 10.2340/16501977-2540
- Zelencich, LM, Kazantzis, N, Wong, D, McKenzie, DP, Downing, M, Ponsford, JL. (2019). Predictors of homework engagement in CBT adapted for traumatic brain injury: Pre/post-injury and therapy process factors. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*. DOI:10.1007/s10608-019-10036-9



For current/past participants who are involved in our research studies, contact details can be updated via our website
<http://www.med.monash.edu.au/psych/research/centres/merrc/participants.html>



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