

# Rehabilitation, Ageing and Independent Living (RAIL) Research Centre

## Member eBulletin #38 - June 2023

Members of RAIL are Monash education and research staff or students across a variety of disciplines within Monash Australia and Malaysia that are interested in rehabilitation, ageing and independent living.

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### A message from the Director

It's hard to believe we are starting winter, this year is flying by. RAIL continues to be very busy on a number of fronts, some of which are detailed in this e-bulletin.

RAIL is currently going through its 3 year review process as a Centre at Monash, which has taken a substantial amount of work by staff to collate a detailed report of our outcomes and achievements over this relatively short period. As I reflect on the report we have generated, I was extremely proud of the strong achievements of our small team, and want to acknowledge and thank the full team for their ongoing outstanding work to further

strengthen the Research Centre. We will be undergoing a panel review in the near future, which will finalise the review process.

We are pleased that our Friends of RAIL network (consumers, people with lived experience relating to RAIL's research, and others interested in RAIL's work who do not fit the criteria for Members (Monash University staff) or Partners (external organisations and their staff)) is steadily growing, and we now have over 21 Friends of RAIL. We have commenced an e-bulletin for Friends of RAIL, have just run our first small event for the group, and are planning a larger event for Friends of RAIL later this 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 Raphaëlle-Ashley Guerbaai is a Registered Nurse and an early career researcher. She obtained a Master of Science in the Control of Infectious Diseases from The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK, training in epidemiology and public health with research experience in developing and developed countries. Raphaëlle has spent several years in clinical practice focusing on intensive care and research related to improving clinical management of end-stage chronic heart failure before completing her PhD in Nursing Science at the Institute of Nursing Science, University of Basel, Switzerland (2022).

Her PhD focus was on the evaluation of a novel nurse-led model of care (INTERCARE) developed to reduce unplanned hospitalisations from Swiss long-term care settings. Raphaëlle's research interests lie in the development and implementation of new interventions targeting unplanned and avoidable hospital transfers, pharmacological deprescribing in community settings, Implementation Science and vulnerable populations.

Raphaëlle has recently been awarded a two-year postdoctoral mobility grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation to pursue a postdoctoral fellowship at the School of Primary and Allied Health Care, Monash University and is embedded in the Rehabilitation, Ageing and Independent Living (RAIL) research centre. The grant was awarded for her project reimaGINing post-fall managEment in nUrsing homeS (GINEUS), which is concerned with improving clinical management after a fall occurs in long-term care settings. Her project seeks to work with several long-term care facilities in and around the Peninsula, who are interested in collaborating in the development of a post-fall management toolkit.

Raphaëlle comes from a multicultural background (British mother, Italian-Algerian father) and has dual British-French nationality. She was born in Grenoble, France (capital of the Alpes) but spent a large portion of her childhood and adulthood in the UK/Switzerland. Outside of work, Raphaëlle enjoys a range of outdoor and indoor activities (hiking, snowboarding, sailing, concerts, theatre, comedy clubs, picnics...), she enjoys traveling, socializing and baking for family, friends and colleagues.

## RAIL Research Centre eForum

### Previous RAIL eForum

During our last RAIL eForum held on 26th May 2023, we had the opportunity to hear about *Social Prescribing and Older Adults* from three Canadian speakers, Professor Maureen Ashe (Department of Family Practice at The University of British Columbia, Canada Research Chair in Community Mobility), Sanya Grover (third-year medical student at the University of British Columbia) and Bobbi Symes (Assistant Director, Healthy Aging at United Way British Columbia).

The presenters provided an overview of social prescribing and discussed the current social prescribing projects underway in British Columbia and invited attendees to participate in the discussion. The event was a success with a very engaged audience who provided some Australian examples of work/resources on the topic.

Thank you to Professor Maureen Ashe, Sanya Grover and Bobbi Symes for their wonderful presentation which generated great interest.

### Upcoming RAIL eForum

Our next eForum titled *Supporting Residential Aged-Care Facilities with hospital transfers* will be held via Zoom on Thursday 15th June, 12.00 - 1.00pm EAST.

[Register here](#)

## Rehabilitation, Ageing and Independent Living (RAIL) Research Centre eForum

### Supporting Residential Aged-Care Facilities with hospital transfers

The well-being of older adults living in long-term care is adversely affected by excess hospitalisations. However, several initiatives have shown promise for reducing potentially inappropriate hospitalisations and improving the quality of care in long-term care facilities. In this one-hour, free, online forum, two presenters engaged in long-term care quality improvement, Dr. Raphaëlle Guerbaai and Dr. Janet Sluggett will provide an overview of their experiences working with long-term care facilities and will discuss opportunities to safely reduce hospitalisations with examples from Switzerland and Australia.

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**Date:** Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023

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**Time:** 12.00 – 1.00pm AEST

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**Venue:** Online Via Zoom

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**Register:** <https://forms.gle/VmDPmUytZdwkZjPo9>

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**Registration closes Wed 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

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**Dr Raphaëlle-Ashley Guerbaai** is a postdoctoral researcher at the Rehabilitation, Ageing, and Independent Living (RAIL) Research Centre, Monash University, and a registered nurse by background. Raphaëlle's research interests are focused on the development and implementation of new interventions targeting unplanned and avoidable hospital transfers from long-term care, increasing access to geriatric expertise, as well as Implementation Science methodologies and frameworks to facilitate the uptake of evidence-based practice in challenging settings.



**Dr Janet Sluggett** is an Enterprise Fellow at the University of South Australia and an affiliate postdoctoral researcher with the Registry of Senior Australians at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute. Janet is a pharmacist and an NHMRC Emerging Leader 2 Fellow. Her pharmacoepidemiology research focuses on using Big Data to optimise medicines use, safety and effectiveness among older people accessing aged care services. She has also conducted interventions to improve medicines management and health outcomes for individuals accessing aged care services.

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### Friends of RAIL morning tea

RAIL was pleased to host its first "Friends of RAIL" morning tea event on the Monash University Peninsula Campus on Thursday 1st June 2023. Friends of RAIL is a new network we have recently launched which include consumer and community members, such as people with their own lived experience across the areas of rehabilitation, ageing and/or independent living, and their families and friends.

The event was a great opportunity to meet and hear from Friends of RAIL on how RAIL should engage and collaborate with the network, how to best listen and work with our Friends across every stage of a research project to ensure RAIL's work is truly co-designed, and how we can ensure we provide accessible and inclusive knowledge sharing. If you know someone in the community who would like to be linked in with our

Friends, please share the link to our [Friends of RAIL registration form](#) or alternatively ask them to contact us at [spahc.rail@monash.edu](mailto:spahc.rail@monash.edu).



*[Image description: Images show various viewpoints of the RAIL team presenting and engaging with Friends of RAIL, as well as our 4-legged attendee 'Wag' - a guide dog in training.]*

## RAIL paper of the month

**In Australian hospitals and residential aged care facilities, how do we train nursing and direct care staff to assist patients and residents to move? A national survey**

**Brusco N**, Haines T, Taylor NF, Rawson H, Boyd L, **Ekegren C**, Kugler H, Dawes H, Radia-George C, Graven C, **Hill K**.

### Abstract

**Objective** Nursing workplace injuries related to staff-assisted patient/resident movement occur frequently, however, little is known about the programs that aim to prevent these injuries. The objectives of this study were to: (i) describe how Australian hospitals and residential aged care services provide manual handling training to staff and the impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic on training; (ii) report issues relating to manual handling; (iii) explore the inclusion of dynamic risk assessment; and (iv) describe the barriers and potential improvements.

**Method** Using a cross-sectional design, an online 20-min survey was distributed by email, social media, and snowballing to Australian hospitals and residential aged care services.

**Results** Respondents were from 75 services across Australia, with a combined 73 000 staff who assist patients/residents to mobilise. Most services provide staff manual handling training on commencement (85%;  $n = 63/74$ ), then annually (88%  $n = 65/74$ ). Since the COVID-19 pandemic, training was less frequent, shorter in duration, and with greater online content. Respondents reported issues with staff injuries (63%  $n = 41$ ), patient/resident falls (52%  $n = 34$ ), and patient/resident inactivity (69%  $n = 45$ ). Dynamic risk assessment was missing in part or in whole from most programs (92%  $n = 67/73$ ),

despite a belief that this may reduce staff injuries (93%  $n = 68/73$ ), patient/resident falls (81%  $n = 59/73$ ) and inactivity (92%  $n = 67/73$ ). Barriers included insufficient staff and time, and improvements included giving residents a say in how they move and greater access to allied health.

**Conclusion** Most Australian health and aged care services provide clinical staff with regular manual handling training for staff-assisted patient/resident movement, however, issues with staff injuries, as well as patient/resident falls and inactivity, remain. While there was a belief that dynamic in-the-moment risk assessment during staff-assisted patient/resident movement may improve staff and resident/patient safety, it was missing from most manual handling programs.

**Brusco N**, Haines T, Taylor NF, Rawson H, Boyd L, **Ekegren C**, Kugler H, Dawes H, Radia-George C, Graven C, & **Hill K**. (2023). In Australian hospitals and residential aged care facilities, how do we train nursing and direct care staff to assist patients and residents to move? A national survey. *Aust Health Rev.* <https://doi.org/10.1071/AH22296>

## Collaborative seed grants

The Rehabilitation Ageing and Independent Living Research Centre has teamed up with the newly formed Monash Assistive Technology and Society (MATS) Centre, led through the Faculty of Information Technology (Director, Professor Kim Marriott), to co-fund two seed grants awarded in the MATS first call for seed grants. The two successful co-funded applications that include a researcher from RAIL and other researchers from the various faculties and schools aligned with MATS are:

**Project 1:** Co-Designing Digital Health Intervention for People with Hearing Impairments (PWHIs) in Bangladesh

**Lead Investigator:** Md Khalid Hossain (Faculty of IT)

**Co-Investigators:** Dr Jessica Watterson, Dr Natasha Layton, Dr Manika Saha, Dr M Tasdik Hasan

**Project 2:** Advancing the Adoption of ISO9999 for Assistive Technology via Automated Compliance Checking using Natural Language Processing

**Lead Investigator:** Dr Chetan Arora (Faculty of IT)

**Co-Investigator:** Dr Natasha Layton

We will provide further information on these projects in future e-bulletins. RAIL's Dr Natasha Layton is supporting the MATS Centre as a co-lead for the Centre's Research Pillar.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Monash Assistive Technology and Society (MATS) Centre, please contact [mats-contact@monash.edu](mailto:mats-contact@monash.edu).

## Grant Success

### Tender from the Department of Health and Aged Care

The Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS) provides auspices to recruit, train and support volunteers to provide regular visits to socially isolated older people receiving Australian Government subsidised residential aged care or home care packages, to

improve quality of life and social connections. Recently, Dr Barbara Barbosa Neves and A/Prof Narelle Warren from the School of Social Sciences (Sociology & Anthropology) at Monash University along with colleagues Dr Rosanne Freak-Poli (Medicine Monash Health/School of Clinical Sciences at Monash Health), Dr Kate Burns (Criminology/School of Social Sciences), Dr Natasha Brusco (RAIL Research Centre Rehabilitation Stream Lead/School of Primary and Allied Health Care), Prof Kyllie Cripps (Monash Indigenous Studies Centre/School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies), Dr Darshini Ayton (Evidence Synthesis Qual & Implt Methods/School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine), Dr Pei-Chun Ko (Sociology & Anthropology/School of Social Sciences) and Dr David Colón-Cabrera (Sociology & Anthropology/School of Social Sciences) were successful in securing a tender from the Department of Health and Aged Care (Australia) for a 3-year outcome evaluation of the ACVVS.

Congratulations to the team for this success!

### **RAIL Early-Mid Career Researcher (EMCR) grants awarded**

We are pleased to announce that two RAIL Early - Mid Career Researcher seed grants have been awarded for the 2023 round. We will provide a profile of each of the lead researchers over coming e-bulletins – the first of these is below the two successful grants:

#### **Biopsychosocial effects of formal volunteering in older adults: What does the evidence tell us and what can we learn from the communities we work with?**

**Lead Investigator: Dr Marcelo Maghidman (Social Work Department, School of Primary and Allied Health Care, Monash University)**

**Other Investigators:** A/Prof Libby Callaway (RAIL Research Centre & Occupational Therapy Department, School of Primary and Allied Health Care, Monash University); Dr Em Bould (Occupational Therapy Department, School of Primary and Allied Health Care, Monash University); Dr Debra Mitchell (School of Primary and Allied Health Care, Monash University)

#### **Summary:**

Research questions: 1) What is the existing evidence regarding the biopsychosocial effects of formal volunteering in older adults? 2) What are the qualitative experiences of formal volunteering for this population?

Methodology: Mixed methods will be used. Q.1 will be addressed via an umbrella review (syntheses of existing systematic reviews) of evidence regarding the biopsychosocial effects of formal volunteering in older adults. Q.2 will be addressed via a qualitative investigation of the formal volunteering experiences of older adults, using semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis, with a population recruited from organisations located within or surrounding the Healthy Futures Hub in Seaford.

Significance: This project is aligned with Victorian Government and Volunteering Australia's strategic volunteering plans, and RAIL research streams of ageing and independent living. The project will investigate impacts of formal volunteering for older adults at individual, community, and organisational levels, and includes a new partnership with Peninsula Health's Community Advisory Committee and Volunteer Coordinators. A synthesis of existing research evidence will be provided. New evidence regarding local

community volunteering experiences of older adults in the City of Frankston will be gained and used to develop evidence-informed strategies to facilitate enablers and remove barriers to formal volunteering for older adults.

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## **Neurophysiological markers of balance exercise intensity**

**Lead Investigator: Dr Melanie K. Farlie (Department of Physiotherapy, School of Primary and Allied Health Care, Monash University)**

**Other investigators:** A/Prof Dawson J. Kidgell (Department of Physiotherapy, School of Primary and Allied Health Care), Professor Terry Haines (Head of School of Primary and Allied Health Care), Dr Ash Frazer (Department of Physiotherapy, School of Primary and Allied Health Care), Dr Michael Leung (Department of Physiology, School of Biomedical Science), Dr Sze Ee Soh (Department of Physiotherapy, School of Primary and Allied Health Care)

### **Summary:**

Balance control is dependent upon both central and peripheral nervous system factors. When the functioning of these contributing factors begins to decline, such as during healthy aging, the nervous system must change the way balance is controlled. Ageing is associated with a progressive shift to a greater reliance on supraspinal neural pathways (descending drive). This descending drive is associated with a decreased contribution of sensory input to control leg muscle activity during standing. These changes may reflect an age-associated shift from automatic (lower level) balance control to attentional (higher level) balance control.

This project aims to identify neurophysiological markers of balance exercise intensity. An improved understanding of these neurophysiological markers is critical to the conceptualisation of the most appropriate balance training programs for older adults. The study will be an RCT comparing the effect of a single session of low intensity balance exercise with a single session of high intensity balance exercise on plasticity of the sensorimotor system. This information is an important contribution that will expand our understanding of the basic balance control and adaptation mechanisms in older adults.

## **RAIL 2023 EMCR awardee profile**

We will profile the lead investigator of the two successful RAIL seed grants 2023 over the next e-bulletins. The first one is below:



**Dr Marcelo Maghidman** (PhD, MSW, MPhil) is a Lecturer and MSW Course Coordinator in the Department of Social Work at Monash University. Marcelo is part of the leadership team in the department, and member of the SPAHC Education Committee. He is responsible for the simulation program implemented in 2019, inspired by the Canadian model of experiential learning. An experienced educator with over two decades in academic institutions, and supervising PhD candidates, Marcelo also holds over twenty years of counselling experience in private practice and organisations such as Monash Health in the Drug & Alcohol sector, and mental health at Neami National. He is also an elected member of the Australian Friends of Tel Aviv University

since 2017. Prior to Monash University, Marcelo led programs for both the government and private sectors in Brazil as a consultant. Marcelo holds particular interest in the use of simulation-based teaching and learning, ageing and aged care, and pedagogical approaches to the development of counselling skills.

### **New article in *The Conversation* by A/Prof Libby Callaway and Dr Natasha Layton from RAIL**

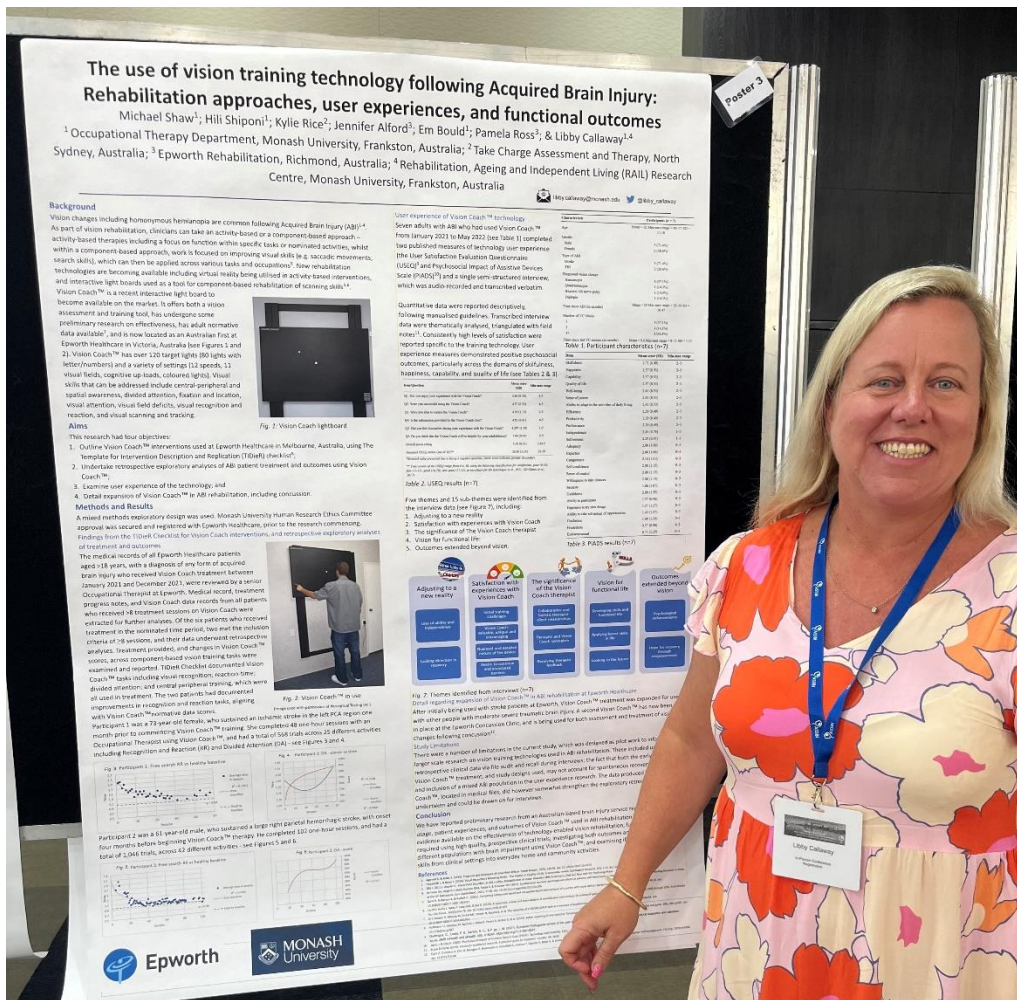


Following the Federal Government budget announcement on 9/5/23, which included various measures relating to the NDIS, A/Prof Libby Callaway and Dr Natasha Layton had an opinion piece published in *The Conversation* and Libby was interviewed on ABC Radio in NSW. The article - titled *"Government plans to use NDIS purchasing*

*power to help save billions – but they shouldn't put products before people"* - was focused on the NDIS assistive technology reforms announced, including the plan to leverage NDIS assistive technology buying power and to establish an assistive technology expert advisory panel, and can be read [here](#).

### **Presentations at the 2023 Australasian Study for the Society of Brain Impairment (ASSBI) Conference in Darwin**

Last month, RAIL Independent Living Stream Lead A/Prof Libby Callaway travelled to Darwin to attend the 2023 [ASSBI](#) Conference. The conference theme was "Moving Forward Together" and Libby presented on the first phase of work that was delivered through a [National Disability Research Partnership Project](#) titled *"Bringing It Home: The exploration and co-design of consumer-led methodologies to understand lived experience of home and living within a National Disability Research Partnership"*. Libby also represented team research she supervised, which was delivered by Monash Occupational Therapy Honours Research Students Michael Shaw and Hili Shiponi in collaboration with the Epworth Healthcare ABI team and community-based occupational therapist, Kylie Rice (see photo below). The two research projects detailed in this poster presentation explored the use of a vision training technology, called [Vision Coach](#), in ABI rehabilitation programs at Epworth.



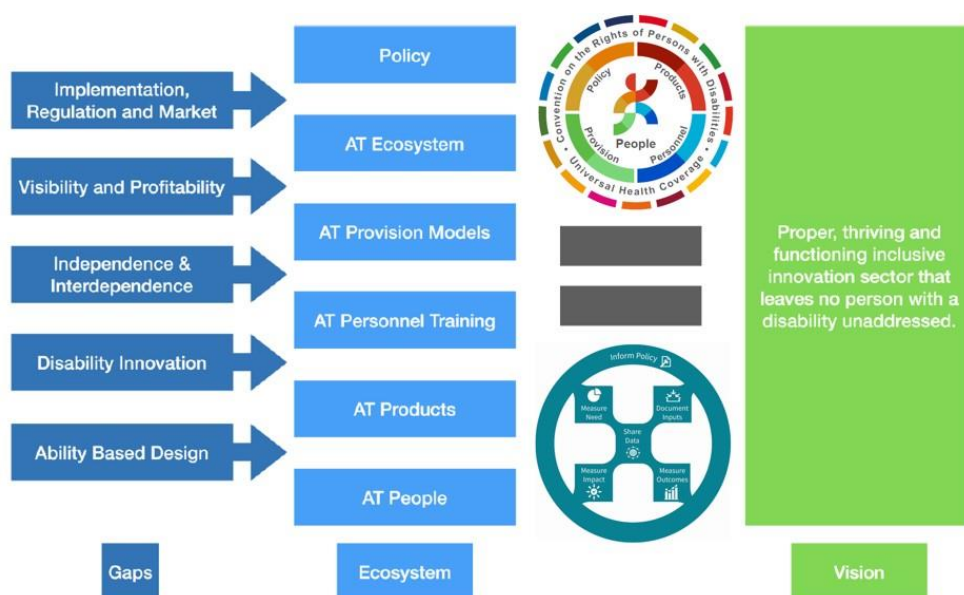
## Report on Monash involvement in the G20 Startup 20 Dialogue on Assistive Technology Innovation 30 May 2023



[Image description: Zoom screen snip with Professor Rao, India; Mr Khasnabis, WHO, and Dr Natasha Layton, Monash university with a chat box containing AT related questions]

Dr Natasha Layton was an invited speaker in a virtual global dialogue of G20 countries held 30 May 2023. Building Global Report on Assistive Technology, launched in May 2022 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the dialogue focused on innovation and the startup ecosystem related to assistive technologies.

Hosted by the G20 Startup 20 group in India, invited presentations from across the globe are intended to inform the G20 focus on AT and innovation. Speakers were invited to share their countries' experiences in terms of ecosystem supports and gaps.



*[Image description: Figure listing gaps within the AT ecosystem, containing the WHO 5 P model and the GAATO AT outcomes and impacts model]*

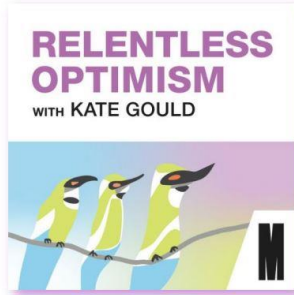
Opening remarks were made by Mr Rajesh Aggarwal the Secretary of the Empowerment Ministry of the Government of India. Chapal Khasnabis followed as immediate past lead of the WHO AT team. Thanks to the timezones, Australia was then first among the countries to present, and I spoke about Australia's experiences of AT provision, policy, products, personnel and people in the context of innovation. was able to showcase Monash Research, Ageing and Independent Living Research Centre as well as the Monash Assistive Technology and Societies Centre, as well as many of the civil society actions and actors in Australia that contribute to our AT ecosystem.

The intent of the G20 Startup 20 is to foster global connection, and I am happy to pass on contact details or share aspects of the presentation with anyone interested.

For further details, please contact Dr Natasha Layton at [spahc.rail@monash.edu](mailto:spahc.rail@monash.edu).

## The Relentless Optimism podcast

### NEW PODCAST



LEARN ABOUT PBS+PLUS  
Helping people build meaningful lives & self-regulate behaviour after brain injury

HOSTED BY DR KATE GOULD  
Clinical Neuropsychologist &  
Senior Researcher, Monash University  
[relentless-optimism.simplecast.com](https://relentless-optimism.simplecast.com)

Weekly Episodes  
Interviews with  
people & families  
with living expertise,  
clinicians &  
researchers

Hosted by Dr Kate Gould, Clinical Neuropsychologist and Senior Research Fellow at the Monash-Epworth Rehabilitation Centre, the Relentless Optimism podcast delves into the history, research and helpful strategies from a TAC-funded randomised controlled trial of the PBS+PLUS intervention. PBS+PLUS is a framework to help people design individualised positive behaviour support interventions for people with brain injury.

The podcast aims to showcase the real life stories of people living with a brain injury while providing education on the PBS+PLUS intervention from these first-hand perspectives.

For more information about the Relentless Optimism podcast, please visit: <https://www.monash.edu/medicine/pbsplus/podcast>

Podcast: <https://relentless-optimism.simplecast.com/>

## New Self-advocacy toolkit booklet

The [Older Persons Advocacy Network](https://www.opan.org.au/) (OPAN) comprises [nine state and territory members organisations](https://www.opan.org.au/members-organisations/) which offer free, independent and confidential support and information to older people seeking or already using Australian Government-funded aged care services across the nation, along with their families and carers.

OPAN has developed a self-advocacy toolkit to equip people with the skills, information and resources they need to speak up for better aged care.

To know more about this Self-advocacy toolkit and to access it, please visit the [OPAN's website/toolkit page](#).

### 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).

RAIL aims to provide an accessible ebulletin for all. Image descriptions are available for images appearing in the ebulletin, with the use of a screen reader. If you have any issues with accessing any part of the ebulletin, please let us know at [spahc.rail@monash.edu](mailto:spahc.rail@monash.edu).

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

**Our mailing address is:**

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