

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

## Member & Partner eBulletin – October 2025

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

**Partners** of RAIL are people outside Monash University from various types of organisations/background across rehabilitation, ageing and/or independent living, including academics from other Australian and international Universities, industry leaders, clinicians and other health and care providers, service providers and those involved in policy and planning.

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## A message from the Director

I hope you are enjoying the beautiful Spring weather, and for those on campus, avoiding the swooping magpies! We have recently celebrated the appointment of Associate Professor Libby Callaway as the Deputy Director of the RAIL Research Centre, which is in addition to her current role of Stream Lead for Independent Living. Current visiting academic staff include Dr Marcus Ang who is a Senior Lecturer/Research Fellow in the School of Nursing & Midwifery at Edith Cowan University, as well as Dr Moa Jederström who is a Postdoctoral researcher from the Athletics Research Center in the Department of Health, Medicine and Caring Sciences at Linköping University (see below for more details). Finally, we welcome Emily Norman to the RAIL Research Centre as a project research assistant, bringing with her 20 years of experience as a women's health physiotherapist and health service leadership.



## Partner profile

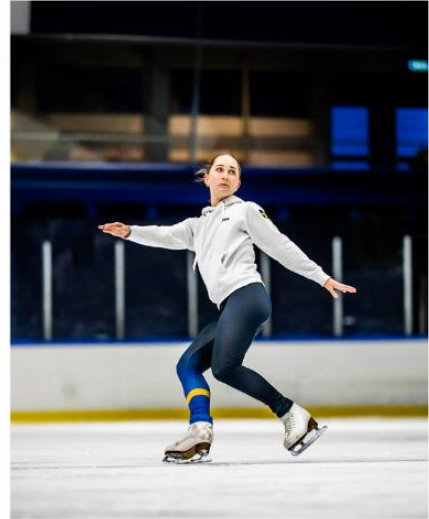
Dr Moa Jederström joined the RAIL team in September as a postdoctoral researcher. She is a Swedish resident physician in child and adolescent psychiatry who completed her PhD in May 2025. A former competitive figure skater turned coach, her dissertation *“Physical and Mental Health among Swedish Figure Skaters”* investigated the physical and mental health of young figure skaters, aiming to make the sport safer and healthier.

Moa's research interests sit at the intersection of children's health, psychiatry and sport participation. In Sweden, sports medicine spans multiple specialities and professions, making child psychiatry expertise crucial for fostering safe sporting environments. Moa's work reflects the RAIL vision of improving health, independence, and well-being through sport and physical activity.

She is currently involved in research projects on figure skating, football (soccer), sports high schools, violence against children in sport and disability inclusion. In Australia, around 1 in 20 children under 15 live with intellectual disability, often facing challenges such as obesity, diabetes, and poor mental health. Physical activity can significantly enhance their wellbeing, confidence and social inclusion.

During her time at RAIL, Moa contributes to a project evaluating George's Gymnastics Program (<https://www.monash.edu/medicine/spahc/rail/community-projects/georges-gymnastics-program>), an inclusive community-based initiative for children with disability. By involving children as active participants, the study promotes empowerment, health equity, and stronger community inclusion—outcomes that extend far beyond gymnastics.

Moa is excited to collaborate with colleagues and the community to advance research that supports the health and rights of young athletes. She welcomes contact for conversations, collaborations or sharing reflections: [moa.jederstrom@monash.edu](mailto:moa.jederstrom@monash.edu).



**Moa Jederström (photos: Thor Balkhed, Linköping University)**

### **RAIL Research Centre eForum**

On Tuesday 12th August, we had the pleasure to have three Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students co-supervised by a RAIL team member presenting on their PhD project:

- Sarra Pirmohamed - Standardising outcomes in randomised controlled trials of physical activity interventions for older adults: A Delphi study
- Zelalem Muluneh - Understanding Restrictive Practices (Restraints and Seclusion) in Mental Health Inpatients Settings: Use, Definition, and Measurement
- Matthew Ferris - Australian Paramedics perspectives of Reasonable Compulsory Overtime: A Delphi study



Thank you to Sarra, Zelalem and Matt for their excellent presentations!

Join us for our next and last 2025 eForum titled "Connected Ageing: Innovation, Inclusion, and Wellbeing" which will be held on Thursday 23rd October 2025, 1.00-2.00pm AEDT.

[Select here to register for this RAIL eForum](#)

## Rehabilitation, Ageing, and Independent Living (RAIL) Research Centre eForum Connected Ageing: Innovation, Inclusion, and Wellbeing

Join us for our last  
2025 eForum  
organised by the  
RAIL Ageing Stream  
as part of the  
seniors month!

### Event details

<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2025
<b>Time:</b>	1.00pm – 2.00pm AEDT
<b>Venue:</b>	Online Via Zoom
<b>Register:</b>	<a href="#">Select here to register</a> Or scan the QR code



### Innovative solutions to improve mental health and wellbeing of in-home aged care clients

This presentation describes two interventions designed to improve the mental health and wellbeing of older adults accessing in-home aged care. The first is EMBED, a brief, tailored psychological intervention to reduce depression symptoms. The second is a "Virtual Lunch Club" to improve social isolation and loneliness through online social groups.

Dr Marissa Dickins is a Senior Research Fellow at Silverchain, a large national provider of in-home health and aged care. She has worked for 10 years conducting research from within the aged care sector, and has a particular interest in the mental and social health of older persons.



### Innovations in Life Storytelling with Older Adults

This talk will share initial findings from the TALES project – Technology, Ageing, Life Experiences and Stories. Drawing on insights from a survey and interviews with storytelling service providers and older adult storytellers, the talk will discuss opportunities and risks of integrating emerging technologies, including artificial technology, into life storytelling for older adults.

Jenny Waycott is a Professor in the School of Computing and Information Systems, Faculty of Engineering and IT at The University of Melbourne, where she leads the Design for Ageing research theme in the Human-Computer Interaction research group. Her research examines how technologies can be designed and used for social connection and emotional wellbeing in later life.



### Ciao! Connecting older adults virtually in aged care

Discover how the Ciao! Program is enhancing social connection in aged care through virtual, interactive activities. This talk will present preliminary findings regarding engagement and satisfaction among residents and staff and how Ciao! is making a meaningful impact in residential aged care homes.

Dr Aislinn Lalor is a Senior Research Fellow and the Ageing Stream Lead in the Rehabilitation, Ageing, and Independent Living (RAIL) Research Centre, as well as a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Occupational Therapy at Monash University. Her research is predominantly focused on healthy ageing as well as older carers of older people.



### Contact us

Rehabilitation, Ageing and Independent Living (RAIL) Research Centre

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## RAIL short courses 2025

The RAIL team has been busy in the education space and successfully hosted four short courses in 2025, including “Exercise to optimise balance, mobility and fall outcomes for older people” (with interstate participation); “Designing Health Economic Evaluations” (on the Peninsula Campus as well as in Bendigo); and “Designing accessible research, education and services (DARES)”.

Below are some photos of the different 2025 RAIL short courses. Thank you to all the course speakers/collaborators for their contribution as well as the participants who attended the courses.

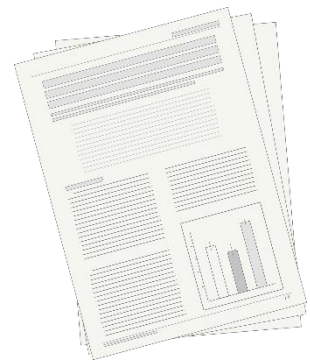
To learn more about the courses offered by the RAIL Research Centre team and to express your interest for the 2026 edition of one of these courses, please [select here to visit our short course web page](#).



1) Designing health economic evaluations 2025 course speakers and participants; 2) Exercise to optimise balance, mobility and fall outcomes for older people 2025 course speakers; 3) Practical session during the Exercise to optimise balance, mobility and fall outcomes for older people short course; 4) Room set-up for the Designing accessible research, education and services (DARES) short course hosted at the Healthy Futures Hub in Seaford (<https://www.healthyfutureshub.com.au/>)

## Highlighted publication

**Brusco NK, Whittaker SL, Ekegren CL, Morris ME, Taylor NF, Lee AL, Somerville L, Lannin NA, Abdelmotaleb R, Callaway L, Hill KD; My Therapy Consortium.** Cost-effectiveness of the My Therapy self-directed therapy program for rehabilitation patients: A stepped wedge cluster randomised trial. *Clin Rehabil.* 2025 Jul;39(7):890-901. doi: 10.1177/02692155251347756



My Therapy is a self-directed rehabilitation program that can be completed outside of supervised therapy sessions. Individual My Therapy programs are based on patient goals co-created by the patient, occupational therapist and physiotherapist. The original focus of My Therapy was to effectively increase the dose of inpatient rehabilitation, and this study subsequently focused on the cost impact of the program.

The My Therapy project was supported by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) (Grant APP1191881).

The aim of the economic evaluation reported in this publication was to establish if the My Therapy self-directed rehabilitation program could be implemented without increasing the cost of a rehabilitation admission, and if it was cost-effective for gains in function, and quality of life from a health service perspective. The results reported in this publication were mixed. My Therapy was successfully implemented without increasing the cost of a rehabilitation admission, and in fact reduced the cost per minute of rehabilitation participation, however, gains in function and quality of life were not observed.

[Select here to visit the journal page and to read the abstract](#)

## Award



Independent Living Stream Lead and Deputy Director of the RAIL Research Centre, Associate Professor Libby Callaway, was recently welcomed as a Fellow of the Occupational Therapy Australia (OTA) Research Academy ([select here](#) to view the OTA social media announcement). This award recognises individuals who have made significant contributions to the development of occupational therapy knowledge in Australia.

Congratulations to Libby for this fantastic recognition of her work.

### Grant success



### NHMRC Partnership Project: RAISE

The RAIL Research Centre Director, A/Prof Tarsh Brusco, and her team of investigators along with four health service partner organisations were recently awarded a \$1.44M partnership grant from the NHMRC for the "Risk Assessment for moving Individuals Safely (RAISE)" project to optimise staff and patient safety.

The health and aged care workforce are at risk of workplace injuries during staff-assisted patient or resident movement, and manual handling training alone does not reduce the risk. The new co-designed RAISE program is different, as RAISE also upskills staff in Dynamic Risk Assessment, which integrates with organisational systems to reduce or eliminate risks.

During this 4-year project, the team will test the RAISE program across four Victorian health/aged care partners, Eastern Health, Monash Health, Cabrini Health and St Vincent's Health, as well as La Trobe University, using a randomised stepped wedge design.

Congratulations to all the investigators and organisations involved for their success!

## RAIL Team member appointed to NDIS Evidence Advisory Committee

Independent Living Stream Lead and Deputy Director of RAIL, [A/Prof Libby Callaway](#), was recently appointed by the Department of Health Disability and Ageing, to the NDIS Evidence Advisory Committee (EAC) Assistive Technology and Capital subcommittee, whilst [Professor Helen Bourke-Taylor](#) from the Monash University Department of Occupational Therapy was appointed to the Capacity Building and Therapies subcommittee of the EAC.

The EAC is an outcome of the NDIS review and both committee and subcommittee members will review and assess evidence about disability supports. The EAC will make recommendations to the Minister of the NDIS on the safety, suitability and value of supports for NDIS funding.

[Select here](#) to read more on the NDIS Evidence Advisory Committee, sub-committees and for a full member list.

Congratulations to Libby, Helen and all other members who have been appointed to the EAC.

Note that Monash University is proud to be one of the expert research teams contracted to conduct assessment reports for review by the NDIS' Evidence Advisory Committee. This work will include a systematic review of the effectiveness, safety and economic evaluation of capacity building disability supports.

## Mornington Peninsula Shire Get Active Expo 2025

For the third consecutive year, the RAIL Research Centre was proud to participate in the Mornington Peninsula Shire's Get Active Expo at Camp Manyung on Wednesday 1st October 2025.

This event, designed for those aged 55 and over, offered attendees the chance to explore a variety of local activity groups and organisations, all while learning how to stay active in Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula.

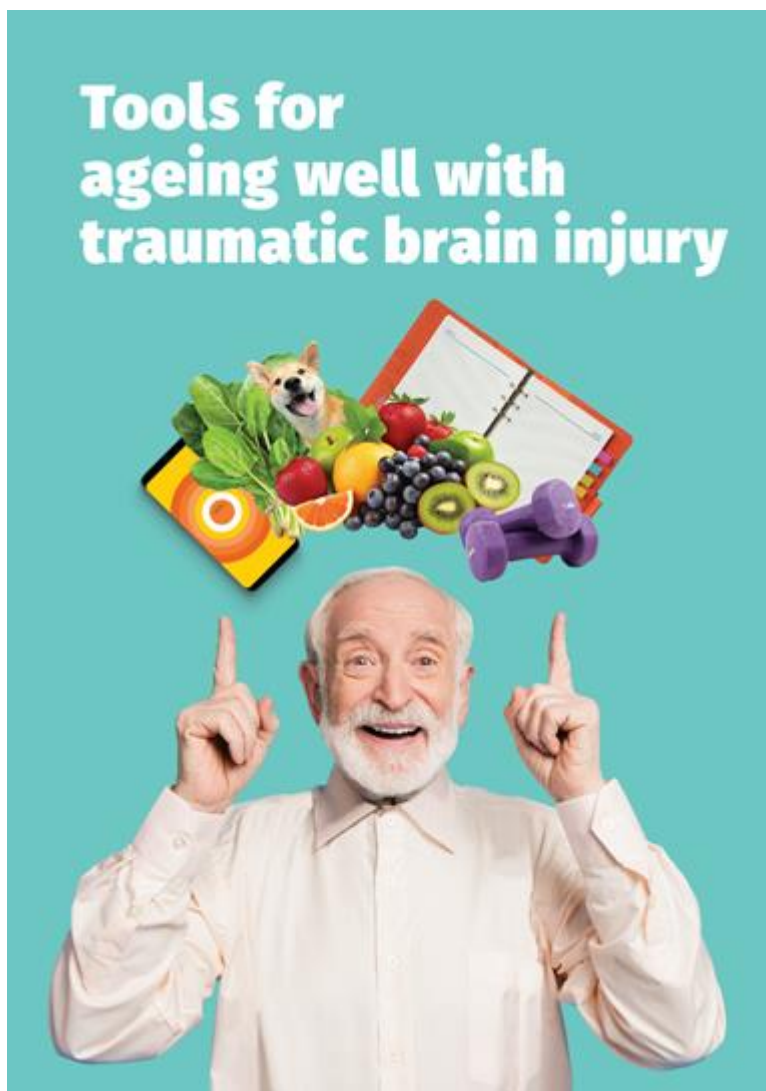
The RAIL team shared valuable information on physical activity and fall prevention for older adults, promoted our current projects, and offered popular balance testing sessions!



## Brain Injury Matters webinar - Tools for ageing well with traumatic brain injury

On 28<sup>th</sup> August, Associate Professor Christina Ekegren presented a webinar for Brain Injury Matters on [Tools for ageing well with traumatic brain injury](#). [Brain Injury Matters](#) is a not-for-profit self-advocacy organisation that aims to empower people living with an acquired brain injury. The webinar was attended by around 25 people from across Australia living with an acquired brain injury. It provided Christina with an important opportunity to present this new resource to the people for whom it was created.

The Tools for ageing well with traumatic brain injury project, jointly funded by the TAC and icare NSW, was led by Associate Professor Ekegren and Professor Ian Cameron from the University of Sydney, with team members including RAIL's Associate Professor Libby Callaway and consumer lead, Grainne Cruickshank, with input from occupational therapist Lisa Licciardi. The project included extensive stakeholder consultation and consumer co-design workshops with older adults with brain injury, their families and expert clinicians. If you are interested in learning more, please email [christina.ekegren@monash.edu](mailto:christina.ekegren@monash.edu) or go to [Tools for ageing well with traumatic brain injury](#).



## R U Ok Day

For the 7th year, RAIL Ageing Stream Lead, Dr Aislinn Lalor, coordinated a Monash University R U Ok Day activity on the Peninsula Campus on 11th September, as part of the University's broader offerings of activities for R U Ok Day. The R U Ok Day is a

national reminder to check in, every day (not just on that specific day), with those around us and start meaningful conversations that could make a real difference.

This year, Aislinn, along with the Monash University Wellbeing Team at the Peninsula campus Library, was joined by 10 dogs from [Guide Dogs Victoria](#) (in training or retired) and the [Unconditional Love Foundation](#) (therapy dogs) with their handlers or raisers to offer a warm and calming presence to help us reflect on wellbeing and connection.

Aislinn has been volunteering for over a decade with Guide Dogs Victoria and contributing to making a significant impact on people's lives. Thank you to Aislinn and all the volunteers and dogs for their time and dedication!



**Online Webinar - Regulation under pressure: tensions in regulating care in England and Australia**



The School of Social Policy & Society, Uni of Bham (UK), is hosting a free online webinar titled 'Regulation under pressure: tensions in regulating care in England-Australia' on 14th October 2025 (8.00-9.30 UK time / 18:00 - 19:30 AEDT).

The webinar will explore current insights from practice and research about the challenges of regulating care and how it can be improved.

Independent Living Stream Lead of the Monash University RAIL Research Centre, [A/Prof Libby Callaway](#), will be presenting alongside Professor Catherine Needham (University of Birmingham, UK) and Professor Graeme Betts CBE.

For more information and to register for the event, please [select here](#) to visit the registration page.

## Help Shape the Future of the Assistive Technology Workforce

We're inviting expressions of interest to join a global research study exploring the competencies needed to deliver safe, person-centred mobility assistive product services (e.g. wheelchairs, prostheses, orthoses, walking aids).

### Who can apply?

We welcome participants from around the world, including:

- ✓ Users of mobility assistive products (or carers of people who use mobility assistive products)
- ✓ Providers (e.g. clinicians, technicians, rehab professionals)
- ✓ Educators, researchers, policymakers, and advocates

### What's involved?

A 2-hour online focus group held in English (with Arabic and Spanish support available), where you will be invited to:

- Share your lived or professional experience
- Contribute to global standards for training, service delivery, and policy

Captioning will be provided, and participation is voluntary.

### Interested?

Read more information about this research, and submit your Expression of Interest to participate by scanning the QR code. **Questions?** Contact Louise Puli:

[louise.puli@monash.edu](mailto:louise.puli@monash.edu)

Ethics approval ID: 48602



Image credit: Disabled and Here

## Are you involved in mobility assistive products?

Consider participating in this Monash University research!

Scan the QR code for more information or to express your interest.



## Member and Partner contributions

We would love to showcase current research from our members and partners. 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).

We acknowledge and pay respects to the Elders and Traditional Owners of the land on which our four Australian campuses stand. Information for [Indigenous Australians](#)

We're committed to [diversity and inclusion](#)

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

**Our mailing address is:**

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