



The Centre for Health Economics presents:  
**Economics of Health Inequalities Workshop**

Monday 16 October, 9.15 am – 3.30 pm  
Plenary Room, Monash University, Level 7, 271 Collins St Melbourne CBD

**Organiser:** Dr Sonja Kassenboehmer

**Registration:** Click [HERE](#) to register (registrations close 11/10)

**Cost:** Early bird (before 19/9) \$350; Full \$500; Student early bird (before 19/9) \$150; Student \$200

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# Economics of Health Inequalities Workshop

Poor individuals are likely to be sicker and to die younger than rich individuals. To successfully combat such inequalities, we need to appropriately measure, compare and evaluate population health, the determinants of health and healthcare use across socioeconomic groups. The aim of the workshop is to showcase the latest evidence and methods to measure health inequalities and to model the impact of policies on inequalities. The workshop will consist of a series of lectures and discussions from international and Australian experts and will leave room for participants to interact and discuss important health inequality issues with the speakers. It provides a forum for the exchange of expertise between researchers, policy makers, students and other stakeholders. Participants will be asked to provide details of questions or topics of particular interest which may be discussed in the final session.

## Program:

### Monday 16 October 9.15 – 3.30

Plenary Room, Monash University, Level 7, 271 Collins St Melbourne CBD

#### Time

#### Speaker

9:00-9:15

**Tea and coffee on arrival, registration**

9.15-9.30

#### **Welcome and introduction**

Dr Sonja Kassenboehmer (Monash University, Australia)

9:30-11:00

#### **Measurement of health inequalities and decomposition analysis**

Prof Ulf Gerdtham (Lund University, Sweden)

11:00-11:15

**Morning tea**

11:15-12:45

#### **Equality of opportunity in health**

Prof Andrew Jones (University of York, UK)

12:45-13:30

**Lunch**

13:30-15:00

#### **Longitudinal analysis and evaluation**

A/Prof Dennis Petrie (Monash University, Australia)

15.00 – 15.30

#### **Discussion**

Dr Sonja Kassenboehmer (Monash University, Australia)

## Organiser:

### **Dr Sonja Kassenboehmer (Monash University, Australia)**

Sonja Kassenboehmer is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Health Economics at Monash University. Her research focuses on the analysis of economic decision-making and the formation of health and human capital over the life cycle. Her work contributes to a better understanding on where and when policy should intervene to reduce inequality and maximize the welfare of society. For example, her research has advanced our knowledge on the extent to which non-cognitive skills (such as perseverance, conscientiousness, emotional regulation and social skills) are important in predicting behaviour and life outcomes. Her current research investigates the mechanisms behind differential development and returns to non-cognitive skills between rich and poor. According to IDEAS/RePEc – the largest bibliographic database of economists worldwide – Sonja currently ranks in the top 9% of all economists and top 6% of female economists worldwide. She has published in journals such as the *Economic Journal*, *Industrial and Labour Relations Review*, *Journal of Banking and Finance* and *Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organization*.



*Dr Sonja  
Kassenboehmer*

## Speakers:

### **Prof Ulf Gerdtham (Lund University, Sweden)**

Ulf Gerdtham is Professor in Health Economics at the Department of Economics and at the Department of Clinical Sciences at Lund University as well as a research leader at the Swedish Institute for Health Economics (IHE). Professor Gerdtham research agenda focuses on exploring the relationship between economic factors and individuals' health-related behavior. He is particularly interested in measuring and explaining the sources of income-related inequality in health. He is also interested in the consequences of risky behavior and chronic diseases. His other research focus is on the economic evaluations of health interventions, health system effects on health care costs and productivity. He has published in journals such as: *Journal of Health Economics*, *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty*, *Health Economics*, *Economics and Human Biology*, *Social Science & Medicine*, *Journal of Population Economics*, *Journal of Human Resources* and *American Journal of Public Health*.



*Prof Ulf Gerdtham*

### **Prof Andrew Jones (University of York, UK)**

Andrew Jones, PhD (York), is Professor of Economics at the University of York, UK, where he was Head of the Department of Economics and Related Studies between January 2011 and September 2015. He was responsible for the running of the MSc in Health Economics at York between 1994 and 2011. During that time there were over 500 graduates from more than 70 different countries. He has also supervised 23 PhD students. He is a joint editor of *Health Economics*. He edited the Elgar Companion to Health Economics which was published in 2006 with 50 concise chapters that review the state-of-the-art in the field. A second edition of the Companion was published in 2012. He was elected to the executive board of the International Health Economics Association (IHEA) and was chair of their Arrow Award committee. He was president-elect of the European Health Economics Association (EuHEA) 2014-16 and is president 2016-18. Andrew is also a part-time professor at the Centre for Health Economics at Monash University.



*Prof Andrew Jones*

### **A/Prof Dennis Petrie (Monash University, Australia)**

Dennis is an Associate Professor in the Centre for Health Economics, Monash University. He has published extensively on the longitudinal measurement and evaluation of health inequalities and currently holds an Australian Research Council DECRA Fellowship looking at the dynamics of socioeconomic health inequalities. He has lead the economic evaluation of large trials of interventions targeted at risky alcohol use in disadvantaged men and smoking cessation in lower socioeconomic groups. He has published in the top health economics journals, the *Journal of Health Economics*, *Health Economics and Social Science & Medicine* and also high impact medical journals including *BMJ*, *PLOS Medicine*, *Diabetologia*, *Diabetes Care* and *Epidemiology*. He specialises in analysing large and complex data sets to improve health policy decisions with a particular focus on developing methods to evaluate and communicate their impact on health inequalities.



*A/Prof Dennis  
Petrie*

# Abstracts

## Measurement of health inequalities and decomposition analysis

*Prof Ulf Gerdtham (Lund University, Sweden)*

Inequalities of health has a long tradition in epidemiological and public health research and has been a major area in health economics over several decades. Both methodological and empirical studies have been published in high ranked economic journals and which have contributed substantially to our understanding of the health inequalities and also to the measures and analytical techniques as have been used in the inequality research. This lecture will discuss the economic methods used to measure the health inequality and explain the different health inequality measures. Focus will be on rank-dependent measures, i.e. the absolute and relative concentration index, which has attracted most of the interest in health economics. The properties and problems of the indexes will be discussed, including properties of health measures, and implications on measured inequality. The lecture will also discuss the standard Wagstaff's decomposition method of health inequality on the determinants of health which have been applied in numerous studies over many years, and also a new decomposition method based on OLS regressions on Recentered Inflation Functions (RIFs) of various concentration index measures. The methodological problems of identification of the effects of socioeconomic factors on health and socioeconomic-related health inequality will also be considered. These decomposition methods will be illustrated by individual level data on health, income and education from the Swedish Twin Registry.

## Equality of opportunity in health

*Prof Andrew Jones (University of York, UK)*

Equality of opportunity (EoP) is based on an ethic of 'responsibility-sensitive egalitarianism'. It distinguishes between circumstances, such as which kind of school someone attended, for which people are not held personally responsible, and their personal effort, which may in-part be shaped by those circumstances, for example through the attitudes and behaviours picked up at that school. Normative models for EoP in health draw out the implications of this ethical stance, by disentangling the direct and indirect (through effort) contributions of circumstances and the direct contribution of effort to the distribution of health outcomes. EoP methods will be illustrated with empirical applications that explore the role of different types of schooling as a source of inequality of opportunity in health. Members of the UK National Child Development Study (NCDS) 1958 birth cohort attended different types of secondary school, as their schooling lay within the transition period of the comprehensive education reform in England and Wales. This provides a setting to explore the impact of educational attainment and of school quality on health and health-related behaviour later in life.

## Longitudinal analysis and evaluation

*A/Prof Dennis Petrie (Monash University, Australia)*

Monitoring changes in health inequalities over time and modelling the impact of potential policies are crucial tasks for successfully combating persistent differences in health across socioeconomic groups. Often governments and researchers simply report changes or trends in the level of socioeconomic health inequality present at each point in time but this hides the complex mechanisms that lead to changes in the level of health inequality. This session focuses on understanding the reasons why the level of cross-sectional health inequality may change over time. In addition, we will consider how to evaluate the likely impact of health policies on socioeconomic health inequalities and highlight why we should not only be concerned with the mean impact on health of policies but also whom in society will benefit from particular policies.

## Discussion

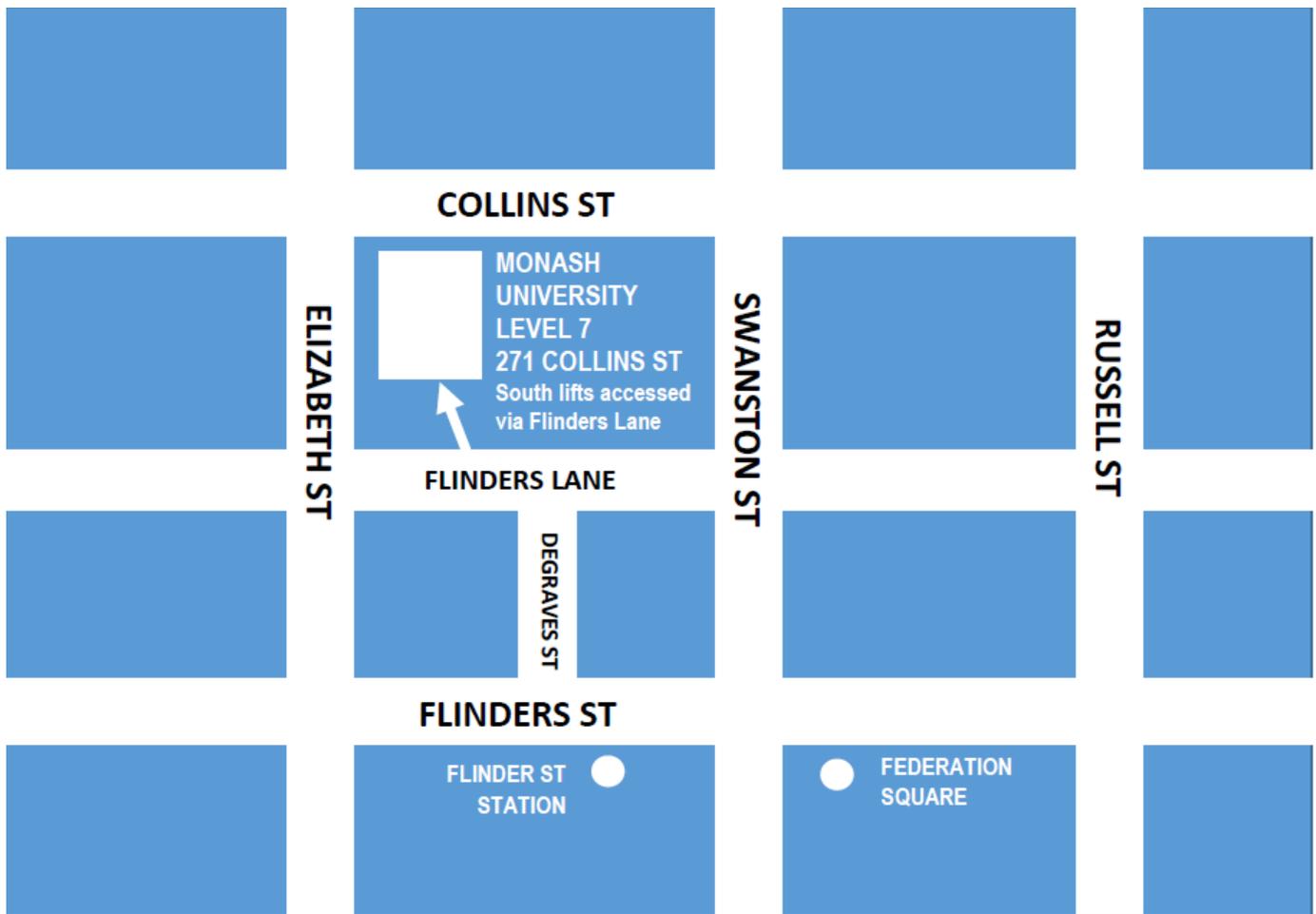
*Dr Sonja Kassenboehmer (Monash University, Australia)*

The final session of this workshop will allow participants to interact with the speakers, ask questions and discuss important health inequality policies. For example, we will ask the national and international experts along with the workshop participants what their view is on co-payments and the potential health equity impacts of these. What are the main areas where policy action is required and what are the barriers? How should we routinely monitor health inequalities and what are reasonable policy goals for addressing health inequalities? What can we learn from other countries? This session will allow participants to pick the brains of the experts and engage in meaningful discussions with the experts and other participants from a wide range of backgrounds. The discussion will be focused on issues of importance to workshop participants.

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## Public transport:

271 Collins Street is located a short walk from Flinders Street Station via Degraves. You can also take any trams along Collins or Flinders Street. Visit [Public Transport Victoria](#) for more information and to plan your journey.



## Parking:

There are many carpark close to 271 Collins Street and some have early-bird discounts of which you can take advantage.

- [Secure Parking](#), 300 Flinders Street (4 minute walk)
- [Wilson Parking](#), 333 Collins Street (2 minute walk)
- [City Square](#), 202-208 Flinders Lane (5 minute walk)

Visit the carpark website for rates and opening hours.

## Access:

Finding the right lifts can be challenging if you have not been to the venue before.  
For level 7 lift access, enter from Flinders Lane and take the **south lift**.

Please note you **cannot access level 7** from these lifts

