



HEADlines

Newsletter of Monash-Epworth Rehabilitation Research Centre

MARCH 2019

In this issue we cover the inaugural National Epworth Healthcare conference, celebrate a new scholarship, an Award of distinction and a new textbook publication within our team, as well as discussing some of the research being conducted by MERRC team members.

Epworth HealthCare Conference – MERRC Presentations



Pictured (left to right): Prof Jennie Ponsford, Dr Dana Wong, Dr Jessica Trevana-Peters, Dr Adam McKay and Dr Sylvia Nguyen

On 26-27 October 2018, Epworth HealthCare hosted their inaugural National Conference on Innovations in Rehabilitation and Mental Health.

The event brought together a host of clinical experts to showcase innovations in clinical practice across rehabilitation, pain and mental health. More than 50 clinicians, researchers, and educators from across Victoria and interstate presented on topics including medicine, nursing, and allied health disciplines. Speakers represented a range of leading organisations such as Epworth HealthCare, Alfred Health, Monash University, MERRC, Epworth Monash Rehabilitation Medicine Unit, Monash Alfred Psychiatry Research Centre, ProMotion and TAC.

The conference included streams on acquired and traumatic brain injury, concussion, amputee rehabilitation, mental health and pain management. Five of our

staff were invited to present at the conference.

Professor Jennie Ponsford (MERRC Director) presented on *The association of psychological resilience with participation outcomes following mild to severe traumatic brain injury*; **Dr Adam McKay** (Clinical Neuropsychologist – Epworth Rehabilitation) presented on *Assessing and managing agitation after traumatic brain injury*; **Dr Jessica Trevana-Peters** (Occupational Therapist and Clinical Neuropsychologist) presented on *Early rehabilitation after traumatic brain injury: retaining of activities of daily living*; **Dr Dana Wong** (Clinical Neuropsychologist – LaTrobe University) presented on *Rehabilitation of memory after acquired brain injury*; and **Dr Sylvia Nguyen** (Clinical Psychologist - MERRC) presented on *Using cognitive behaviour therapy to treat fatigue and sleep problems after ABI*.



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Protecting people with ABI from cyber scams – Allen Martin Scholarship



Pictured: Dr Kate Gould accepting the Allen Martin scholarship from the Summer Foundation

impact of cybercrime has the potential to enhance quality of life for people with ABI by maximising their safety and building confidence in accessing the internet, email, social media and other online activities. It can also help to minimise potential impact on their mental health.

We're proud to be leading the way in ABI and cybercrime research within Australia, and we congratulate Dr Gould on her Research Scholarship.

For more information on this research, contact Dr Kate Gould:
Email: Kate.Gould@monash.edu Twitter: [@THINKFULLY_](https://twitter.com/THINKFULLY_)

Clinical neuropsychologist and Monash University Research Fellow, Dr Kate Gould has been awarded the Allen Martin Scholarship from the Summer Foundation to lead an Australian-first research project to help understand, prevent and treat cybercrime after ABI.

This landmark study will examine the abilities and needs of therapists and service providers to prevent, identify and support individuals with ABI regarding scams. By surveying ABI therapists and service providers, this study will examine the types of cybercrime experienced by individuals with ABI and factors that may contribute to this vulnerability. With the support of Professor Jennie Ponsford, Dr Gould is collaborating with the Tasmania ABI Services and consumers with lived experience to build evidence-based, cost-effective and scalable training for these therapists, and ultimately help people with ABI stay safe online.

Alarming, sophisticated cybercrime is rife, with \$90.9 million stolen in Australia last year (ACCC, 2018). It can cause significant distress to those affected, and individuals with ABI may be particularly vulnerable due to neuropsychological, social and financial changes. Understanding, preventing and effectively managing the



APS CCN Award of Distinction for Professor Ponsford

The APS College of Clinical Neuropsychologists (CCN) Award of Distinction was presented to Professor Ponsford in November 2018. This award recognised the importance of Professor Ponsford's significant contributions to the College, and the field of practice of the Clinical Neuropsychology College. Specifically, this award was in recognition of Professor Ponsford's past and current activities in mentoring existing and aspiring members of the College, as well as her significant and long term contribution to the field of neuropsychology.

Pictured: Prof Jennie Ponsford with her award at the APS College of Clinical Neuropsychologists annual conference



The Aging Study

Amelia Hicks, a Doctoral student and Research Fellow at MERRC, is leading The Aging Study, which aims to examine the aging process in individuals who have sustained a TBI. Specifically, she is looking to better understand the association between TBI with dementia and diseases of aging. This is an NHMRC funded study being conducted in collaboration with experts from the Florey Institute of Neurosciences and Mental Health.

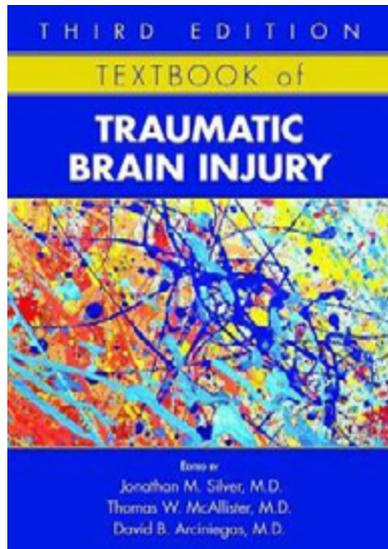
The study commenced in January 2018 and we are pleased to report we have recruited 55 individuals with a TBI and 20 healthy control participants to date.

Each participant has generously given their time to complete four study visits comprising a test of their thinking skills, an MRI brain scan and two PET brain scans. They have also provided a sample of their blood for genetic analysis. Recruitment will continue until the end of 2019.

It is hoped this study will advance our knowledge of whether a TBI can impact the aging process.

Please note to be eligible in the study, you must be 40 years and above and more than 10 years post injury. Participants are reimbursed for their time and travel costs can be covered.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Amelia Hicks: Phone: 9426 8923 or email: amelia.hicks@monash.edu



NEW PUBLICATION

Textbook of Traumatic Brain Injury Chapter

Professor Jennie Ponsford and Dr Kate Gould, in collaboration with Dr Yvette Alway, are thrilled to be published in the third edition of the Textbook of Traumatic Brain Injury (eds. JM Silver, TW McAllister & DB Arciniegas). Professor Ponsford, Dr Gould and Dr Alway have worked for ten years writing a chapter for the textbook titled "Epidemiology and Natural History of Psychiatric Disorders". The textbook is a valuable source of information for all professionals who work with individuals with brain injury.

This text can be purchased online from American Psychiatric Association Publishing:

www.appi.org/Textbook_of_Traumatic_Brain_Injury_Third_Edition



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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