




The Institute

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MONTHLY BULLETIN FOR TQEH RESEARCH COMMUNITY

# WINNING NEWS

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## NHMRC Investigator Grant awarded to Professor PJ Wormald

Congratulations to Professor PJ Wormald (ENT Surgery) on being awarded one of only 12 National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Investigator Grants in South Australia. 237 Leadership and Emerging Leadership Fellows received funding in the Investigator Grant scheme, the largest NHMRC scheme. Professor Wormald's 5 year Leadership grant, valued at \$2.36M, is titled "From bench to bedside: A new treatment for Chronic Rhinosinusitis" and commences in January 2021.



With this Investigator Grant Professor Wormald will continue to provide world-class surgical sciences training and lead his innovative translational research program. His research program addresses the complex knowledge gaps and urgent clinical needs that exist in the field of otolaryngology, specifically chronic upper airway inflammation or Chronic Rhinosinusitis (CRS). CRS affects around 10% of Western populations including almost all cystic fibrosis patients and 22% of asthmatics. In this project, his team will explore the role of bacterial biofilms in shaping the microbiome and immune response. Knowledge gained through this program will support the development of individualised therapeutic protocols with the real potential for better treatment outcomes for these difficult-to-treat CRS patients.

Another focus of Professor Wormald's research team is wound healing. His continuing research activities will include translational studies aimed at (i) developing Chitogel-based products for use to improve wound healing after surgery (ii) developing a unique delivery device for optimal performance of medications in the sinus cavities.

In 1998 Professor Peter-John Wormald was appointed as the inaugural Chairman of the new Department of Otolaryngology at The University of Adelaide and continues in this role today. His high-profile clinical department, based at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, now includes a large research group that focuses on the pathophysiology of Chronic Rhinosinusitis (CRS), wound healing and the creation and validation of novel surgical techniques, instruments and therapies for sinus disease and skull base surgery (for example, over 30 surgical instrument sets bear the Wormald name). Professor Wormald's research led to the invention of Chitogel, a new surgical hydrogel, that has received FDA (and MEDSAFE) approval and is now on the US and NZ market (EMA and TGA approval imminent). The gel limits scarring and improves wound healing after sinus surgery, reducing the need for revision surgery, thereby lowering associated health care costs. An enhanced version of the gel is also in preclinical development for use in back and abdominal surgery. Research and use of Chitogel has led to the establishment of

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### BHI SEMINARS

BHI Staff/Student Seminars  
1pm Tuesdays  
recommence 9 June

BHI Invited Speaker Seminar  
currently postponed

All seminars take place in the BHI  
Ground Floor Seminar Rooms

### UPCOMING EVENTS

BHI Mindfulness Sessions  
currently postponed

BHI Off the Clock  
4pm last Wednesday of each month  
currently postponed

# BHI HUB

## Scientific Director Joy Rathjen

BHI First Floor  
Phone: 8222 6524  
[joy.rathjen@sa.gov.au](mailto:joy.rathjen@sa.gov.au)  
Work days: Monday - Wednesday



It is still hard to tune into news bulletin, or open a newspaper, without COVID-19 being reported. While the focus has been on frontline medical services and the lessons we can learn from other countries, the pandemic has required all medical service delivery to be interrogated and the development of research programs that meet new health needs posed by the virus and lockdown.

This month, I want to highlight the response of BHI researchers to the pandemic. What follows is by no means exhaustive – I am keen to know what I have missed.

- Professors Guy Maddern (Surgical Science Research Group) and Peter Hewett (Colorectal Cancer Research Group) have led the development and communication of guidelines for personal protective equipment use during surgery and the use of laproscopic vs open surgery during the pandemic. These guidelines, developed in South Australia, will be adopted nationally.
- Professor Maddern prepared a briefing paper on surgical urgency in COVID-19 for the Chief Medical Officer of Australia, Professor Brendan Murphy.
- Dr Branka Grubor-Bauk (Viral Immunology Group) has formed a coalition of scientists and clinicians to answer key scientific questions about SARS-CoV-2 and the patient response to infection, and was a peer reviewer on a Rapid Research Information Forum paper 'Reinfection with SARS-CoV-2' for the Australian Academy of Science.
- Professor Renuka Visvanathan (Adelaide G-TRAC Centre) has contributed informally to triage guidelines for COVID-19 under development for the ICU staff in NSW. (continued on page 3).

## BHI Facility Manager Kathryn Hudson

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## BHI Communications Officer Rebecca Anderson

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Work days: 9-3pm Tuesday - Thursday



# NEWS

## NHMRC Investigator Grant (continued)

two start-up companies, investment of more than \$10 million from venture capital funds to establish a manufacturing plant in New Zealand and securing a distribution agreement with the medical device company Medtronic. To date more than 10,000 Chitogel Endoscopic Sinus Surgery Kits have been sold in the United States.

Professor PJ Wormald's work as a rhinology and skull base surgeon and leader of a multidisciplinary translational research program has redefined the management of sinus and skull base diseases and impacts the quality and cost of healthcare globally. He was the first to introduce the revolutionary practice of endoscopic transnasal skull base surgery to Australia. This approach impacts post-surgical outcomes as it avoids brain damage, disfiguring the patient's skull and is more cost effective than the transcranial or microscopic approach. He has taught these surgical techniques to ENT surgeons and neurosurgeons around the world through numerous hands-on courses and through the sale of more than 25,000 copies of his best-selling "Endoscopic Sinus Surgery" book that also has been translated into many languages.

Professor Wormald has mentored the next generation of surgeon scientists and translational medical researchers in the field of otolaryngology, including emerging leaders in rhinology who visit from around the world to spend a year undertaking clinical fellowships and/or research with his group. He has also been the president of the Australia and New Zealand Rhinologic Society, and provides advice for various clinical and industry groups.

Over his career Professor Wormald has received numerous awards, has a research prize named after him, and was elected as a fellow to the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences in 2018.

## Scientific Director: COVID-19 (continued)

- Professor Catherine Hill (Rheumatology Research Group) has
  - co-authored an article about the issues around using hydroxychloroquine to treat Sars-CoV-2,
  - undertaken a study of the impact of COVID-19 on patients with inflammatory arthritis,
  - and is part of a multi-centre group understanding the impact of the pandemic on the mental wellbeing of South Australians (see page 4 of this edition of Winning News).
- Dr Sam Costello (Inflammatory Bowel Disease Research Group) is a member of an international panel that published recommendations for screening faecal donors during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Professor Sandra Peake (Intensive Care Medicine Research Group) has been involved in formulating advice to support the practice of intensive care specialists during the COVID-19 pandemic and to promote the development of local admission policies.

## Dean's Commendation for Doctoral Thesis Excellence awarded to Dr Stephanie Fong

Dr Stephanie Fong and Dr Mian Ooi, from ENT Surgery, had their PhDs conferred in early May while Dr Claire Stevens, from the Surgical Science Research Group, had her Master of Philosophy (Surgery) conferred.

Dr Stephanie Fong was also awarded a Dean's Commendation for Doctoral Thesis Excellence for her thesis "Bacteriophage therapy for chronic rhinosinusitis: Targeting *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* biofilms". Stephanie was supported by a joint scholarship from The Hospital Research Foundation and The University of Adelaide. Stephanie is currently in her second year of specialist training in ENT Surgery at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital. She said that she "thoroughly enjoyed my time at the BHI and would like to thank her supervisors Prof PJ Wormald, A/Prof Alkis Psaltis and A/Prof Sarah Vreugde for their expert guidance".



Dr Stephanie Fong



## New study asking how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected mental health and wellbeing

The Hospital Research Foundation are funding a new study to analyse the mental health and wellbeing of South Australians pre and post COVID-19 to gain insights into where public health support should be directed. The study is being led by Professor Robert Adams, Adelaide Institute for Sleep Health, Flinders University, with eight other investigators involved including Professor Catherine Hill, Head of Rheumatology at TQEH. Over 3,000 participants will be invited from two existing databases, the North West Adelaide Health Study (NWAHS) and the Florey Adelaide Male Ageing Study (FAMAS), that were established 20 and 14 years ago respectively. Using historical data will provide a more accurate indication of how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected participant's mental health and wellbeing.

Full story: [The Hospital Research Foundation website](#)



*Professor Catherine Hill*

## Welcome to the BHI



**Kellie Fusco**

Research Assistant, Translational Vascular Function Research Collaborative  
Level 2, Basil Hetzel Institute, TQEH. [kellie.fusco@sa.gov.au](mailto:kellie.fusco@sa.gov.au)

Kellie has joined the Translational Vascular Function Research Collaborative, working 0.5FTE on CADOSA (Coronary Angiogram Database of South Australia), bio-banking blood samples collected during angiograms at TQEH. Kellie has 20 years of experience in diagnostic pathology laboratories and is a qualified cytologist. Over the past 6 years she has been working in different roles including as a data analyst for the South Australian Clinical Cancer Registry, as the clinic co-ordinator of the Obesity Clinic at the RAH and is also currently a research officer in Diabetes and Endocrine at SALHN.

## SOCIAL NEWS



Dr Amy Holmes, THRF Early Career Fellow in the Therapeutics Research Centre, gave birth to Cordelia Lois on April 2nd. She weighed in at 4.18kg and was 55cm long. Amy says "She's super smiley and cuddly and has super long legs!"

# BHI STUDENT NEWS

## BHI STUDENT REPS 2019–2020



Bimala Dhakal (Level 1)  
[bimala.dhakal@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:bimala.dhakal@adelaide.edu.au)



Gohar Shaghayegh (Level 1)  
[gohar.shaghayegh@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:gohar.shaghayegh@adelaide.edu.au)



Sadik Abdella (Level 2)  
[sadikmahdi.abdella@mymail.unisa.edu.au](mailto:sadikmahdi.abdella@mymail.unisa.edu.au)



All eligible BHI, TQEH based HDR students are strongly encouraged to register for the 3MT competition. Registrations close on Friday 19 June 2020.

Due to the worldwide coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, social distancing measures and restrictions on public gatherings, The University of Queensland (founder of 3MT) has made the decision to move the 2020 Asia-Pacific Three Minute Thesis Competition to a virtual format (video submission) in the best interests of public health.

This temporary move to a virtual video submission format will continue to allow Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates to participate in 3MT, hone their communication skills, receive international peer review, and gain skills surrounding the presentation of their research to a wider audience.

### Eligibility for the Virtual 3MT Competition

In 2020, only University of Adelaide PhD candidates who have successfully passed their Major Review by the 3MT video submission deadline (17 July 2020) will be eligible to progress to the Virtual University of Adelaide Final. All active HDR students can participate and have their 3MT judged in the Virtual 3MT Faculty round.

## BHI Off the Clock

Off the Clock is on hold for the moment, but we look forward to welcoming all staff and students back in the very near future!

## Mindfulness sessions

Reverend Nicholas Rundle, a qualified secular meditation teacher, will be running these sessions for BHI and TQEH staff and students each fortnight again soon. Everyone will be welcome to attend these free sessions!

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## STATISTICIAN AT THE BHI

Please contact Suzanne via email until further notice. She is available and can be consulted by TQEH/ The University of Adelaide Faculty of Health & Medical Sciences staff and research higher degree students. Support is limited to 15 hours on a per project basis.



Tuesdays  
BHI Level 1  
Room 1E.07  
Phone: 8222 6679  
[suzanne.edwards@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:suzanne.edwards@adelaide.edu.au)

Suzanne Edwards  
Statistical Consultant  
Data, Design and Statistics  
Services  
Adelaide Health Technology  
Assessment (AHTA)  
School of Public Health  
The University of Adelaide

## TQEH Librarians

Due to COVID-19 and the advice to practice social distancing TQEH Librarian visits to the BHI have been postponed until further notice.

TQEH librarians [anna.holasek@sa.gov.au](mailto:anna.holasek@sa.gov.au) or [rachel.davey@sa.gov.au](mailto:rachel.davey@sa.gov.au) will still be available to assist with your literature searches and research requirements via email or phone (8222 7373), and the SALUS library site remains accessible 24/7 from any computer or device with internet access.

To access the Library Service's electronic resources you will need to [register online](#) for a SALUS username and password via the library homepage [<https://salus.sa.gov.au>].

TQEH library (5B Main Tower) is open Monday to Friday between 9am-4.45pm.

Thank you for your understanding.  
TQEH Library Team

## Funding Opportunities

BHI Bulletin of Funding

The [BHI Bulletin of Funding](#), which can be found on the BHI website, is updated regularly by the CALHN Research Office.



**The Institute**

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### TQEH Research Secretariat Contact Details

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Basil Hetzel Institute for Translational Health Research  
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28 Woodville Rd, WOODVILLE SOUTH 5011  
Phone: 08 8222 7836 Fax: 08 8222 7872  
Email: [gwenda.graves@sa.gov.au](mailto:gwenda.graves@sa.gov.au)

# GENERAL INFORMATION CONTINUED

## Pre-review service for clinical research grants

All research studies, including grant funded research, require appropriate ethics and governance approvals before they can commence. Unlike the NHMRC, many funding bodies do not utilise a peer-review system as part of their grant funding rounds. This can lead to delays in researchers obtaining the post-award approvals that are required before they can start their projects. The CALHN Research Office is offering pre-application scientific review of clinical human research projects by the CALHN HREC Chair, Mr Ian Tindall, with a view to facilitating efficient post-award approval processes.

For further information and submission please contact the CALHN Research Office on [Health.CALHNResearchEthics@sa.gov.au](mailto:Health.CALHNResearchEthics@sa.gov.au) or call 7117 2230

## CALHN Human Research Ethics Committee 2020 Submission and Meeting Dates for Applications

A list of all meeting dates can be found on the [BHI website](#)

HREC/IDSC Submission deadlines	CALHN HREC Meeting	IDSC Meeting
Monday 11 May 2020	Thursday 4 June 2020	
Monday 25 May 2020	Thursday 18 June 2020	Thursday 25 June 2020
Monday 8 June 2020	Thursday 2 July 2020	
Monday 22 June 2020	Thursday 16 July 2020	Thursday 23 July 2020

The Central Adelaide Local Health Network Human Research Ethics Committee (CALHN HREC) will hold two meetings and with two submission deadlines each month in 2020.

The Investigational Drug Sub-Committee (IDSC) will continue to meet monthly.

Research studies involving investigational medicinal products require review and approval from both the IDSC and CALHN HREC.

ALL HREC meetings will continue to be held on Thursdays at Roma Mitchell House, Level 3, 136 North Terrace, Adelaide.

For more information please contact:

Investigational Drugs Subcommittee (IDSC) Mr Peter Siobodian or Dr Ada Lam Executive Officer, Specialist Pharmacist Phone: (08) 7074 1430 or (08) 7074 1150 <a href="mailto:peter.siobodian@sa.gov.au">peter.siobodian@sa.gov.au</a> <a href="mailto:ada.lam@sa.gov.au">ada.lam@sa.gov.au</a>	CALHN Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Ms Lisa Barrie CALHN HREC Level 3, Roma Mitchell House Phone: (08) 7117 2229 or (08) 8222 6841 <a href="mailto:Health.CALHNResearchEthics@sa.gov.au">Health.CALHNResearchEthics@sa.gov.au</a>
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## Animal Ethics

All animal ethics applications now go through The University of Adelaide Animal Ethics Committee.

Details of meeting and submission dates: [www.adelaide.edu.au/research-services/oreci/animal/applications/](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/research-services/oreci/animal/applications/)

Contact details for this committee:

Amanda Camporeale, Animal Ethics Officer

Phone: 8313 6310

Email: [amanda.camporeale@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:amanda.camporeale@adelaide.edu.au)



# WORK, HEALTH & SAFETY

## Staff and Student Training Requirements

During the induction process that all new staff and students must undertake, your supervisor will discuss what mandatory and recommended training will be required. A brief overview is listed below:

### Chemical Management

Staff and students who store or handle chemicals are recommended to complete the Chemical Management training available via <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hr/hsw/training/general/> (Supervisor needs to request access for students). The course provides an understanding of the requirements for chemical use, storage, transportation, labelling, segregation and disposal. UniSA should review the "safety and well being calendar" for training sessions and times.

### Autoclave training

Training must be undertaken prior to use. Arrange training through the listed trainers, you must complete the training specific to the autoclave you wish to use. Training records are retained in the area of training.

### Microtome training

Paraffin sectioning is performed on a microtome. They are very hazardous due to exposure to sharp microtome blades and movable parts. Without proper training, using this piece of equipment can cause serious harm to the user. Cryosectioning is performed on a cryostat and presents the same hazards and safety procedures as for the microtome, with the addition of a very cold working environment. Consequently, the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences at The University of Adelaide has very stringent procedures in place to reduce microtome and cryostat incidents.

All users MUST complete the Level 2 proficiency training\* for the microtome and/or cryostat, receiving signed off authorisation before using either the Faculty microtomes or cryostats. Training records must be retained in the area of training.

\*Level 2 proficiency training: Demonstrate knowledge, ability or skill through training, which enables the operator to complete a high risk activity safely and without supervision.

Training can be undertaken at AHMS Histology Services, AHMS Level 7 Email: [fhs\\_histology@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:fhs_histology@adelaide.edu.au); Ph: 8313 2032

Once general training is completed you must complete a BHI specific local training session with the listed trainer, currently Leigh Hodson ([leigh.hodson@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:leigh.hodson@adelaide.edu.au)).

### Liquid Nitrogen

Training must be undertaken prior to use. Arrange training through BHI Facility Manager Kathryn Hudson ([kathryn.hudson@sa.gov.au](mailto:kathryn.hudson@sa.gov.au)).

### Other Training – as identified

This includes laboratory plant/equipment (e.g. saws and Instron's), centrifuge and hazardous chemical or radioactive isotopes where Risk Assessment has identified proficiency training.



# UPCOMING EVENTS



## The Institute

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**SAVE THE DATES**

## TQEH Research Expo

**Thursday 15 & Friday 16 October 2020**

**Basil Hetzel Institute, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woodville South**



*2019 Award Presentation*

TQEH Research Expo is for researchers in training and is open to:

- Honours, Masters and PhD candidates based at the BHI, TQEH, and
- Clinical Trainees at TQEH

Abstract submissions will open on 1 July. Following initial judging, speakers will either present a mini-oral (Thursday 15th) or an oral presentation (Friday 16th).

**Enquiries to: A/Prof Joy Rathjen**

Chair, TQEH Research Expo

Organising Committee

(08) 8222 6524

[joy.rathjen@sa.gov.au](mailto:joy.rathjen@sa.gov.au)

[www.basilhetzelinstitute.com.au](http://www.basilhetzelinstitute.com.au)

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# PUBLICATIONS

If you wish to have a recent publication included, please send details to the BHI Communications Officer  
[rebecca.anderson@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:rebecca.anderson@adelaide.edu.au)

Atashgaran V, Dasari P, Hodson L, Evdokiou A, Barry S, Ingman W. Foxp3 heterozygosity does not overtly affect mammary gland development during puberty or the oestrous cycle in mice. *Reproduction, Fertility and Development*. 2020. doi.org/10.1071/RD19378.

Carson-Chahhoud K, Smith B, Peters M, Brinn M, Ameer F, Singh K, Fitridge R, Koblar S, Jannes J, Veale A, Goldsworthy S, Hnin K, Esterman A. Two-year efficacy of varenicline tartrate and counselling for inpatient smoking cessation (STOP study): A randomized controlled clinical trial. *PLoS ONE*. 15(4):e0231095, 2020. doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0231095.

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# PUBLICATIONS CONTINUED

If you wish to have a recent publication included, please send details to the BHI Communications Officer  
[rebecca.anderson@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:rebecca.anderson@adelaide.edu.au)

Isoardi K, Page C, Roberts M, Isbister G. Life-threatening triclopyr poisoning due to diethylene glycol monoethyl ether solvent. *Clinical Toxicology*. 1-4, 2020 Apr. doi.org/10.1080/15563650.2020.1757103.

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## Experience a ride like no other, for the last time!



*Experience a ride like no other with Mercer SuperCycle!*

THRF is thrilled to announce Early Bird Registrations are now open for Mercer SuperCycle 2021.

Join us for our 10th anniversary ride and final Mercer SuperCycle from March 20 and choose to ride with us for 2,3 or 7 days as we cycle through the best of South Australia.

Mercer SuperCycle is a five star, fully supported cycling tour which offers you the opportunity to visit some of our most loved South Australian towns like Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale.

Since inception in 2011, SuperCycle has raised over \$2.6 million to provide regional cancer patients a home away from home when in Adelaide receiving treatment through THRF's [Under Our Roof](#) project.

Our aim for our last ever SuperCycle is to raise enough funds to provide a fourth place of comfort for regional cancer patients – and you can help!

To register or find out more, visit [www.supercycle.org.au](http://www.supercycle.org.au) or call 08 8244 1100.

## \$130,000 raised to Fund the Fight

Thanks to the incredible support of the community, our [Fund The Fight](#) campaign against COVID-19, we have raised an amazing \$130,000!

The BHI's student researcher Ryan said: "Thank you for your generous support, I'm proud to be a part of this fight."

A special thanks to Dr Branka Grubor-Bauk who has not only been working tirelessly towards a vaccine for COVID-19, she has also volunteered her time and participated in our campaign activities for Fund the Fight.

*Ryan Santos, University of  
Adelaide Honours student with  
the Viral Immunology Group at  
the Basil Hetzel Institute*





## Palliative Care at the heart of THRF Group



*Paul Flynn with LPCF  
CEO Tony Lawson*

Palliative care will become another important focus area for The Hospital Research Foundation (THRF) Group this year as it officially welcomes South Australian charity Laurel Palliative Care Foundation (LPCF) into its Group.

The move paves the way for more funds to be directed into research and patient care for families and their loved ones who have been diagnosed with a life-limiting illness.

THRF CEO Paul Flynn said he was pleased to welcome LPCF as the eighth charity in THRF's Group, emphasising the importance of the charitable sector working together to provide outcomes to the community.

"Our aim is to increase support for palliative care services further in South Australia across all public health networks and raise awareness about the support patients and families need when a loved one is diagnosed with a life-limiting illness," Paul said.

Read more here: <https://bit.ly/36qw482>