



# NCH

## RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Northern Community Health  
and Research Foundation



# Our Mission

*Improving health in northern communities*

The Northern Community Health & Research Foundation strives to improve health in the northern communities of South Australia, particularly within the inner northern districts of the Corporations of Prospect, Walkerville and Port Adelaide (Enfield Area) by:

- Funding grants for South Australian health and medical related research
- Investing and promoting programs for better health in the northern communities
- Partnering with local communities and health groups to deliver impact into local areas

# Celebrating 25 Years



## A Message From The Chair

In 2023, the Northern Community Health & Research Foundation celebrates 25 years of supporting the delivery of positive outcomes for the communities of the inner north of Adelaide, South Australia.

The Foundation is a volunteer-led not for profit organisation and we are very proud to report far-reaching impacts over the last 25 years. Beginning with funding from the sale of assets associated with the closure of the Northern Community Hospital, and strong community support to continue programs in the area, the Foundation has raised over \$5 million and dispensed over \$1.3 million grants. This support has directly benefited researchers and the community by enabling recipients to secure in excess of \$10 million in additional funding and resulted in nationally applied research outcomes.

As we mark this important milestone of 25 years and turn our attention to the future, this focus is unchanged.

Over the last quarter of a century, the Foundation has worked tirelessly to support a wide range of programs, including community wellbeing programs, early career researchers and delivering our Visiting Professors Program which has enabled local practitioners to learn from and collaborate with some of the world's leading researchers in health, medical and community health.

Our key priorities moving forward are:

- Continue to design and/or develop projects and initiatives aimed at improving health outcomes for older South Australians living in the northern communities through community support programs
- Driving innovation
- Connecting research and practice
- Strengthen partnerships with University researchers and programs
- Strengthening partnerships with the primary health care networks and services providers in the northern communities

Finally, I would like to take this special opportunity to thank the Life Members (former Board Members) and Board of the Foundation, The University of Adelaide, and our research and funding partners, and Prospect, Port Adelaide (Enfield) and Walkerville Councils, who have been part of this important journey over the last 25 years. Your support has been invaluable, and we look forward to a continuing and productive partnership as we work together to improve health outcomes in the northern communities in years to come.

Nino Di Sisto  
Chair

**25 years improving community health**

**\$5 million grant dollars raised**

**\$1.3 million in grants awarded**

**\$10 million funding seeded, resulting in national research outcomes**

**100 programs and events supported**

**18 visiting professor programs**

# Positive Impact in the Community

## Improving Health In The Northern Communities

The Foundation was established in 1988, following the closure and sale of the assets of the Northern Community Hospital. This hospital had provided high quality facilities and services, primarily in the areas of obstetrics, gynaecology and orthopaedics since 1952, building on the area's first cottage hospital services.

The funds made available through the sale of assets were transferred to a trust fund, and the Foundation was established to grow and manage this resource to facilitate improved health outcomes for the communities of Prospect, Walkerville and Enfield. The Foundation is managed by an eight member Board, bringing together expertise and practical experience across sectors including general and specialist medical practice and research, health management, social enterprise, legal, marketing, business, and financial management.

Key to the Foundation's success has been the broad range of agencies and researchers supported through our programs. Recipients of support have included PhD candidates, renowned international experts, and organisations including The Asthma Foundation, and the Florey Medical Research Foundation, Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre, Active Ageing Australia and SAHMRI.

*“The Foundation provides a great opportunity to make a difference, to build new research grants and to support the communities in their endeavours.”*

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**Greg Crawford Chair, Grants Committee NCHRF**

## Working For The Community, With The Community

Any enterprise seeking to achieve benefits to the community must start by working with that community. There was considerable loyalty to the Northern Community Hospital and the Foundation has always respected this in developing and supporting programs and research to continue to benefit the northern communities of Adelaide.

Throughout the life of the Foundation, we have engaged with local governments and community groups to identify and resource practical needs that, although sometimes simple in execution, can have a profound impact.

These initiatives have included the purchase and installation of defibrillators for community groups and partnerships with Councils to deliver suicide prevention and mental health programs.



# Developing Knowledge

## Asking Questions Today To Find Answers For Tomorrow

The Foundation has always looked for opportunities to support research and researchers along the career continuum, seeking to identify both early career researchers investigating priority health-related topics, and to bring together practitioners and established leaders in their fields.

The Foundation provides early career researcher awards through our partnerships with Universities and student organisations.

The broad range of research topics recognised through these programs have the potential to improve both general and specific health outcomes in the community well into the future. This is a key objective of the Foundation. Across these programs, recipients have gone on to continue their research careers, and initial funding provided by the Foundation has contributed to seeding a further \$10 million to support such research.

## Derek Frewin Early Career Researcher Awards

These Awards recognise the outstanding contribution given to the Foundation and to the University of Adelaide by Emeritus Professor Derek Frewin AO.

The Award takes the form of a donation to an early career researcher working in a field related to the general public health and health care professionals.

Past recipients have included Associate Professor Rajiv Mahajan, Associate Professor Tongzke Wu, Dr Sebastian Stead, Dr Roula Ghaoui, Dr Vasilios (Bill) Panagopoulos, and Dr Ashleigh Hull.

## The NCH Research Foundation Prize

The Foundation has long supported the work of PhD candidates in conjunction with the Florey Postgraduate Research Conference. At each annual conference, the Foundation recognises and awards outstanding poster presentations from young researchers with a cash prize.

Winners of these awards have presented on diverse topics ranging from neurodevelopmental outcomes in children born to mothers following preeclampsia and preterm birth to gender differences outcomes of cardiac interventions, disruptions to the gut microbiome by low calorie sweeteners, the prevalence of uncontrolled hypertension in Australian general practice, and evidence-based antibiotic management through computer-based decision support systems.

## 3 Minute Thesis

3 Minute Thesis is an international competition challenging higher degree by research students to explain their research, why it matters and what they hope to achieve, in just three minutes, to a non-specialist audience.

The Foundation has supported this competition at the local level through the University of Adelaide since 2014. Winners have presented research findings in fields ranging from Alzheimer's Disease to kidney transplant protocols, motion adaptation, breast cancer treatment, diabetes, and lung health in babies.

*“The Foundation is helping to build a thriving research culture in South Australia.”*

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**Andrew Zannettino,  
Professor & Executive Dean, Faculty of Health and  
Medical Sciences, University of Adelaide**

## Practical Questions About End of Life Care

In 2015, the Foundation provided seed funding for Associate Professor Jaklin Elliot's team at the University of Adelaide to talk to health care professionals about the experiences of patients and families at the end of life.

"From the seed funding provided by the NCHRF, we have been able to develop sustained long term and collaborative relationships between health care, consumers, providers, policy makers and research," says Associate Professor Elliot.

"This has helped us to answer practical questions and make a difference in the delivery of palliative care to all South Australians. Building on the relationships and results from that study, we were able to successfully apply for the \$2.25 million inaugural state-wide palliative care research grant."

## Understanding How Men Use Health Services

Funding from the Foundation enabled Professor Gary Wittert of the University of Adelaide to do a second wave of recruitment for the Florey *Adelaide Male Aging Study*, which then became a bigger study when the researchers harmonised the data, allowing them to answer critical questions about men's health that subsequently informed policy.

"We've established the fact that men do use the health services," says Professor Wittert. "Some of the outputs [of this research] include a guideline for how primary care practitioners can best communicate with men.

And we're really pleased, for example, that the post-doctoral researcher who was funded by this particular grant from the Foundation is now a leader in the Australian Institute for Family Studies, running the *Tend To Men Study*, which is a very large nationwide study of men's health, now going into its fifth wave."

## Social Isolation And Ageing

Dr Katherine Hodgetts, Social Researcher with the South Australian Council of Social Service led a team brought together by the Foundation to undertake a research program that will build up social connection and social prescribing in Adelaide's inner north.

"One of the key outcomes of our research was the understanding that social connectedness is a really key part of healthy ageing. And we also found a lot of issues around healthcare access and issues of cultural inclusion," says Dr Hodgetts.

"Building on this research, and with our collaborators, we're building a program of research to address social inclusion and ageing in the northern communities."

*"Following receiving the NCHRF Derek Frewin Early Career Researcher Award, I have received over AUD\$2m funding for my research program."*

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**Associate Professor Tongzhi Wu, University of Adelaide**

# Thinking Globally to Deliver Local Outcomes

## Visiting Professorships

Each year, the Foundation provides financial support to host a Visiting Professor who is a peer-nominated leading researcher in a related field of health or medical research. This program was first established in 2007 and has brought specialists in topics ranging from cancer, obesity, alcohol, coronary heart disease, ageing successfully, nervous system disorders, dizziness, diabetes, epigenetics, mental health, primary care, and palliative care to Adelaide to engage with students, fellow researchers, practitioners and the media.

Each Visiting Professor spends up to two weeks based in the University of Adelaide's Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, participating in relevant undergraduate teaching and primary care programs, meeting with health professionals and researchers.

In 2023, Emeritus Professor Ian Macdonald, of the University of Nottingham UK, will be the 18th Visiting Professor under the auspices of the Foundation's program. Professor Macdonald's public program will include Grand Rounds at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, Modbury Hospital and the Lyell McEwin Hospital, along with a public lecture on diet, lifestyle and health, drawing on his research expertise in the functional consequences of metabolic and nutritional disturbances in health and disease.

*"We are working to strengthen the relationship with the university sector, looking to put research and practice closer together, and also work very closely with primary health care networks and other providers of health and aged care services in the north."*

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**Nino Di Sisto, Chair  
NCH Research Foundation**

## GP Education and Networking Programs

It is well known that poor and chronic health issues are a significant burden for communities and for our nation, and that general practitioners are a cornerstone of our health system.

The Foundation has delivered a range of education and networking programs for general practitioners, including offering online events with our Visiting Professors.



# Fostering Change

Many of our grants, endowments, scholarships and bursaries have supported emerging and leading researchers.

Research topics supported through the Foundation have included:

- Treating asthma among elderly people
- Male ageing
- Advance care planning support
- Obesity
- Ageing successfully
- Managing coronary heart disease
- Testosterone and the older man
- Exercise and protein supplementation in the frail
- Community residing adults
- Palliative care
- End of life planning for the vulnerable
- Public conversations about end of life care

# Thank you

The Northern Community Health and Research Foundation would like to thank our Life Members and Board members for their continuing dedication and support.

The Foundation also thanks our partners: Agostino Group, The University of Adelaide, the Van Diemen Foundation, and Prospect, Port Adelaide Enfield, and Walkerville Councils for their generous support.

## Foundation Board Members

<b>Mr Nino Di Sisto</b>	Chair
<b>Mr David Meyer</b>	Deputy Chair
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<b>Mrs Cathy Baker</b>	Minute Secretary
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<b>Mrs Maria De Conno</b>	Marketing/Philanthropy Committee Chair
<b>Professor Suren Krishnan OAM</b>	
<b>Ms Kathryn Eaton</b>	
<b>Dr Brian Symon</b>	

## Foundation Life Members

**Mr Keith Seeary (DCD)**  
**Mr Tom Stevenson (DCD)**  
**Mr Frank Agostino**  
**Mr Kevin Lynch (DCD)**  
**Mr John White**  
**Emeritus Professor Derek Frewin AO**  
**Dr Adele Lloyd**  
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# Foundation Partners



THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* ADELAIDE



CITY OF  
Port Adelaide Enfield

Agostino  
Group





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