

# 2022 Highlights

## Free Community Health Talks

In partnership with the City of Perth, we were proud to host several free Community Health Talks to share research findings and insights with our community. We organised multiple talks featuring researchers from different fields speaking on how their cutting-edge research can better improve the lives of the wider population. Highlights included a talk on World Hypertension Day with free Blood Pressure checks and a talk on “3D Food Printing for Healthy Eating” with 3D printed food to sample.



## Falls Prevention research to Improve Healthy Ageing

RPH Research Foundation awarded a Strategic Opportunities Grant to support Professor Anne-Marie Hill in the field of Healthy Ageing and Rehabilitation. Professor Anne-Marie Hill is a researcher in the School of Allied Health at UWA who leads a team working with older people to improve health as we age and has a focus on reducing falls in hospitals and the community. Team members include Dr Chiara Naseri, an early career researcher who conducts translational research to disseminate successful fall prevention programs into the community, and Ms Margaret Gidgup, a PhD student who is working with older Aboriginal people in Noongar country on falls prevention programs.

## National Funding for Hearing Loss Research

Our Innovation and Impact Researcher Dr Andrew Ford and RPH Research Foundation's Career Advancement Fellow Dr Dona Jayakody have received national NHMRC funding for their project “Hearables and behavioural activation for mental distress and social isolation in hearing-impaired older adults”.

Age-related hearing loss is common and may lead to depression, social isolation, loneliness, and reduced quality of life. Hearing aids are expensive, and simpler, cost-effective “hearables” may offer an alternative treatment strategy. This trial will test if hearables along with psychological intervention improve mood, quality of life, mental distress and social isolation in older adults with mild to moderate hearing loss. RPH Research Foundation is proud to fund Dr Andrew Ford and Dr Dona Jayakody and support them as they conduct this important research.



## Prestigious Award presented to Professor Gerald Watts

The RT Hall Prize is the most prestigious research award of Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand (CSANZ) and recognises the achievements of senior and established investigators. This year, Professor Gerald Watts was awarded the Prize at the 70th Annual Scientific Meeting of CSANZ held in August. CSANZ awarded Professor Watts the prize in recognition of his long-term commitment to research and dedication to improving patient care.

# Research Symposium and Awards Day 2022

Our Research Symposium and Awards Day 2022 celebrated the brightest minds of WA and some of the cutting-edge research being conducted with the Foundation's support. The event was opened by the Honourable Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Emergency Services; Innovation and ICT; Medical Research; Volunteering.



Some of the top medical researchers from Early, Mid, and Postgraduate researcher categories presented their research projects. The event showcased some of the up-and-coming researchers and the mentors that provide guidance. We congratulate all 2022 winners and thank the researchers who participated in the event.

The Mentorship Award this year was shared by **Associate Professor Donna Taylor and Professor Gerald Watts** for their efforts supporting early career researchers.

**Early-Career Researcher Best Presentation** was presented to Dr Lakshini Herat, who presented on *Determining the role of SGLT2 inhibition with Empagliflozin in the development of diabetic retinopathy*.

**Mid-Career Researcher Best Presentation** was awarded to Dr Adil Rajwani, for his research on *Bacterial pneumonia is associated with myocardial fibrosis and new-onset impairment*.

**Postgraduate Researcher Best Presentation** went to Dr Ashish Yadav, who presented on *Relationship between fetal growth trajectories and measures of insulin resistance and adiposity in young adults*.

**Dr Marc Sim was recognised as the inaugural winner of the Early-Career Researcher Best Publication Award** for his publication in the Lancet on "Abdominal aortic calcification on lateral spine images captured during bone density testing and late-life dementia risk in older women: A prospective cohort study".





## New Grants Awarded to Improve Health and Wellbeing of our Community

In 2022 RPH Research Foundation launched a new grant round - Springboard Plus. Springboard Plus supports Early and Mid-Career researchers who are translating their ideas into clinical practice that could lead to a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our community.

This grant round was designed to allow researchers to follow leading observations and investigation of novel ideas into healthcare research. Due to the high calibre of applications, the RPH Research Foundation funded a total of 11 projects with a total value of \$704,162 over two years.

Generous donors like you have given the gift of health to enable us to support a variety of projects that will lead to better health outcomes for people in our community.

All successful recipients are also supported with access to the Foundation's Biostatistical service, including statistical analysis, assistance with the interpretation of results and preparation of a manuscript, as additional in-kind support.



**Dr Catherine Bondonno (Total \$64,499)**

**Project Title:** *Pardon the vegetables: how nitrate source determines health impact*  
**Administering Institution:** Edith Cowan University



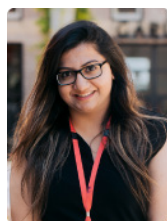
**A/Prof Therese O'Sullivan (Total \$33,660)**

**Project Title:** *Mindful mouthfuls: Developing healthy eating behaviours from infancy*  
**Administering Institution:** Edith Cowan University



**Dr Hun Chuah (Total \$71,657)**

**Project Title:** *Circulating Tumor Cells in Plasma Cell Myeloma Predict Outcome*  
**Administering Institution:** Department of Haematology, Royal Perth Hospital



**Miss Arunima Panda (Total \$35,160)**

**Project Title:** *Identification and molecular analysis of Pancreatic cancer-derived exosomes*  
**Administering Institution:** Curtin University



**Dr Jason Dyke (Total \$72,000)**

**Project Title:** *Implications of Pathological TAU Accumulation in Epilepsy*  
**Administering Institution:** PathWest LMWA



**Dr Jing Pang (Total \$71,927)**

**Project Title:** *Implementation of an optimised model of care for familial hypercholesterolaemia: role of primary care and its integration with specialist services*  
**Administering Institution:** University of Western Australia



**Professor Anne-Marie Hill (Total \$69,600)**

**Project Title:** *Promoting healthy ageing for recently hospitalised older people by implementing community health programs*  
**Administering Institution:** University of Western Australia



**A/Prof Adil Rajwani (Total \$70,200)**

**Project Title:** *Exploring the associations between bacterial pneumonia and new-onset heart failure*  
**Administering Institution:** Acute Medical Unit, Royal Perth Hospital



**Dr Kylie Hill (Total \$71,460)**

**Project Title:** *Health in a Virtual Environment – a novel approach to measure bodily movement and integrate these signals with physiological data to optimise patient outcomes.*  
**Administering Institution:** Curtin University



**Dr Natalie Ward (Total \$72,000)**

**Project Title:** *Implementation of a Statin Intolerance Registry*  
**Administering Institution:** University of Western Australia



**A/Prof Stephen Macdonald (Total \$72,000)**

**Project Title:** *Proteomic signature of adult sepsis – discovery and validation*  
**Administering Institution:** University of Western Australia

**Thank you to all our supporters who help us continue to fund medical research to improve the healthcare of tomorrow.**



## RPH Research Foundation supports Ground-Breaking New Treatment for High Blood Pressure

In November, Chair in Clinical Research at the Dobney Hypertension Centre Professor Markus Schlaich was in the USA presenting positive findings from the Phase 3 PRECISION trial, looking at a new drug targeting treatment-resistant hypertension.

"The trial tested a new drug – aprocitentan – which blocks the effects of endothelin, a very potent constrictor of blood vessels. After four weeks of treatment, we found a clinically meaningful lowering of both office and 24-hour out-of-office blood pressure in patients with treatment-resistant hypertension," Professor Schlaich says.

"For decades, healthcare providers have been challenged to help their patients with resistant hypertension achieve better blood pressure control. The Phase 3 PRECISION study is a significant breakthrough as a promising new therapeutic approach".

This game-changing clinical trial is already helping WA patients like Waikiki father of two, Mitchell Hart. Mitchell was one of the 730 patients who took part in this global trial. Since being diagnosed with high-blood pressure, medications have failed to help Mitchell lower his blood pressure and he lived knowing he was at risk of a stroke or heart attack.

"I've got a young family at home and I want to be around them for as long as I can, so anything that reduces my risk of future complications is a big thing," Mitchell shared.

Thank you to all donors who supported this life-saving research. We are proud to fund the Dobney Hypertension Centre and their work.

## Thank you for your ongoing support of medical research



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