

Royal  
Adelaide  
Hospital  
Research  
Fund

# RAH Researcher

Autumn 2019  
Edition

Raising funds for life-saving medical research at the  
Royal Adelaide Hospital

Innovative research into the  
impact of Acquired Brain Injury

See page 4



Dr Maggie Killington (right), Coordinator of Research at South Australia Brain Injury Rehabilitation Services meets with Dean Fyfe (left) and Cheryl Mason (middle).

# Welcome

Welcome to another action-packed edition of the **RAH Researcher**, the bi-annual newsletter of the Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH) Research Fund—the hospital's very own fundraising arm.



Each time the RAH Research Fund team put this newsletter together, it is an important reminder of your incredible support. It also offers us a chance to recognise the many individuals who are passionate about our mission to change lives and save lives.

Big-hearted people like Jodie Hartley and Jan Lamkin, who you'll read about on pages 10 and 11. Both Jodie and Jan have been personally touched by cancer and have made an immense contribution to our Fund through their tireless work. Jodie uses her business as a vehicle to direct donations to cancer research, while Jan volunteers her time and recently, as Executor, made the heartfelt decision to direct a portion of her late brother's estate to Rare Cancer Research.

And it's not just the South Australian community, but our own staff, doctors and medical specialists who provide generous financial support, as you'll discover on page 6.

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We were so delighted with the strong response we received following the release of our Donor Impact Report in February. It was an opportunity to report our activity to you with full transparency, reassuring donors that all monies received by the RAH Research Fund - your precious gifts to medical research - are protected by the highest governance.

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My sincere thanks to those donors I personally spoke with, and those who chose to respond with a donation to the area of medical research that most resonates with you. We are so very grateful.

You'll also enjoy reading our profile on researcher Dr Tarik Sammour from the Colorectal Unit, who has made some valuable advances in patient care to reduce bed stays; a follow up to our recent campaign for the IBD Service and the work of Professor Jane Andrews, and a snap shot of a collaborative research project into brain injury between the RAH and the team at Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre, led by Professor Maggie Killington. It's a project of which we can be incredibly proud and is most deserving of your support.

Thank you for being part of the RAH Research Fund family - our work would not be possible without you.

Good wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Simon Blight".

**Simon Blight**  
Fundraising Manager CALHN



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“The RAH Research Fund has a pivotal role in supporting our endeavours. Just like our research program, it has patient outcomes at heart... by the people and for the people!”

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Tarik Sammour, RAH Colorectal Surgeon and Associate Professor at the University of Adelaide

## Researcher Profile Tarik Sammour

For many colorectal cancer patients, surgery is one of the most impactful events in their treatment journey.

Tarik Sammour, RAH Colorectal Surgeon and Associate Professor at the University of Adelaide, is leading the RAH Colorectal Research Group studying patient centred outcomes in colorectal surgery.

### What is the focus of your current research?

Colorectal cancer is estimated to become the second most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia by the end of this year and is currently the second most common cause of cancer-related mortality. Despite this, the quality and extent of clinical, outcomes-based research activity in colorectal surgery has historically been

lacking. We seek to fully explore the impact of colorectal surgery on patients in an effort to improve rate of recovery and quality of life after surgery.

### What do you enjoy most about your work?

It is truly a singular pleasure to see patients have a great outcome. Surgery can be high stakes and stressful, certainly for patients, but also for the surgical team. The satisfaction of having a well and happy patient on the other side of this is its own reward.

### What are some major milestones?

We are making excellent progress, having identified several patient-centred outcomes in need of urgent investigation and have formulated short and long-term plans to address these within our unit. Last year the RAH Colorectal Research Group was able to

secure significant scholarship and competitive grant funding to support the conduct of several ongoing research studies. We have also been successful in recruiting three full-time Research Fellows, each collaborating with a medical student from the University of Adelaide, as well as a dedicated Research Officer. We have established a strong framework for international collaboration with centres of excellence in the field and plan to work together to continuously improve our research output. More details can be found here: [www.colorectalresearch.org](http://www.colorectalresearch.org)

### How important is the RAH Research Fund?

The RAH Research Fund has a pivotal role in supporting our endeavours. Just like our research program, it has patient outcomes at heart... by the people and for the people!

# Supporting families living with brain injury



Cheryl Mason and Dean Fyfe.

**Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) is a sudden, traumatic and life-altering experience - not only for the person affected, but for their entire family.**

Partners are thrown into a whole new role, caring for children and for their partner. Children are confused and grieving for the parent they have lost – and adjusting to the new parent in their lives. There are so many new emotions and situations to deal with all at once.

To help families cope with the devastation of ABI and better support children adjusting to change throughout their journey, an innovative research project is underway at the South Australia Brain Injury Rehabilitation Services (SABIRS) at Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre in collaboration with Flinders University, College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

This is an extension of a pilot study by Researcher Dr Maggie Killington (Coordinator

of Research at SABIRS) and her team, investigating the journey travelled by children and their parents after one parent has a brain injury. This study provided many insights from children and their families and a number of recommendations which the researchers hope to implement with support from Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH) and Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre (HRC) clinicians.

“We found that sadly clinicians are not well-equipped to talk to children about the injury that has been sustained, and the non-injured parent is not receiving sufficient information on how to support their children,” she said.

Maggie says that the impact on children cannot be underestimated. “It has been reported that 46% of children with parental ABI have high levels of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and 92% of families reported problematic behaviours,” she said.

Dean Fyfe and his four children were devastated when mum Cheryl suffered an ABI after a car accident 13 years ago. There were many things for Dean to consider – especially how the children would cope with their mum’s injury.

“Looking back, the one thing that stood out for me on the day of the accident, when we were in intensive care, was the language the doctors used to describe what had happened to Cheryl and the operation they had undertaken.

“I had made the decision from the very beginning that the kids – then aged 16, 14, 13, and 10 – would be part of the whole process, good or bad. After experiencing a situation as a young boy where I didn’t get ‘the full story’, I didn’t want this to happen to my kids,” said Dean.

“I remember having to ask the surgeon to draw a picture explaining the operation on Cheryl’s brain, because my youngest son just didn’t understand,” he said.

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“It has been reported that **46% of children** with parental Acquired Brain Injury have high levels of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and **92% of families** reported problematic behaviours.”

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Dr Maggie Killington  
Coordinator of Research at the  
South Australia Brain Injury  
Rehabilitation Services

A portrait of Dr Maggie Killington, a woman with shoulder-length blonde hair, smiling. She is wearing a patterned top and a necklace. The background is a blurred green outdoor setting.

Dr Maggie Killington,  
Coordinator of Research at  
South Australia Brain Injury  
Rehabilitation Services.

Dean said that while support was offered to them, it wasn't matched to their needs and when they did seek support, it was hard to access.

“The social worker team was very understaffed and by the time they got back to us, the urgent need had passed and we had worked it out ourselves.

“I actually sought my own support through our own wonderful GP, as I saw that what we needed would not be available through the larger health system.”

Dean made the point that ABI is not something that affects families for a short period of time - it's for life.

“Everyone is different and the way they deal with it is different. For example, my eldest son seemed to be dealing with it but five years later, everything fell apart

for him. If there had been more in place at the time, he might not have had to go through this,” said Dean.

The project will focus on three key outcomes; developing resources and technology by working with Flinders University, College of Nursing and Health Sciences that will provide information and support to families; to test suitability of the resources and finally, undertake an efficacy study. Throughout this process, Dr Killington will work closely with RAH and HRC staff to ensure knowledge transfer to clinicians within RAH and Central Adelaide Local Health Network (CALHN).

“Yesterday, this was a normal happy family. Today, it is fractured and vulnerable and confused,” said Maggie.

“These precious children have undergone a sudden, catastrophic and confusing trauma.

The parent who has been injured has changed, and may never be the same again. The uninjured parent is trying to manage their own grief and loss while protecting the children. Clinicians don't know how to support the spouse to support the children.

“If we can develop resources for these families and educate clinicians about how to provide the appropriate support, these children may be able to adapt better and the family may be able to remain intact. But we need money to develop this program of support.

“So many people have shown strong support for this project, including the Nursing Director of Intensive Care Services, the Medical Head for RAH ICU research and many CALHN Social Work managers. I am grateful for their willingness to work in collaboration.”

To make your own contribution towards this vital research into helping support families coping with brain injury, please support the RAH Research Fund and Maggie Killington's research. Your generosity will change lives. **Please donate today!**

# Giving back in more ways than one

“The Private Practice program is a demonstrable way I can give back to the RAH Research Fund. It’s rewarding to know that I am giving back to the hospital through this worthy program.”

Professor Susanna Proudman,  
Director of the RAH Rheumatology Unit



## The RAH Private Practice Donor Program

**The support of the South Australian medical community is crucial to the RAH Research Fund. Our medical professionals not only support us in their own practices, but as valued donors.**

The RAH’s leading researchers, clinicians and medical practitioners are giving back to their community through the Private Practice Donor Program. Through this initiative, the medical community is able to give back to the hospital and the Research Fund in a tangible way with regular donations.

Professor Susanna Proudman, Director of the RAH Rheumatology Unit, strongly encourages other specialists to get involved.

“The Private Practice program is a demonstrable way I can give back to the RAH Research Fund. It’s rewarding to know that I am giving back to the hospital through this worthy program,” she said.

Every day, our doctors and specialists witness firsthand the benefits of breakthrough research for their patients, delivering early diagnoses, better treatments and ultimately, cures.

To see so many members of our practicing doctors donating to our fund is a wonderful recognition of their belief in our work. Regular donors show enthusiastic support for our research projects and seek further information from researchers about their progress.

“This is a true reflection of the heartfelt dedication of this group of health professionals and a vital investment by medical specialists for a healthier future for all South Australians,” said Simon Blight, Fundraising Manager, CALHN.

Our Private Practice supporters receive regular acknowledgment of their contributions and monthly reports about how their donations are being put to work. A full breakdown of financial support is provided at the end of financial year for tax purposes.

**Would you like to find out more about the Private Practice Donor Program?**

Please contact Gabrielle, Corporate and Institutions Development Officer by calling 08 7074 1443 or email [gabrielle.cespi@sa.gov.au](mailto:gabrielle.cespi@sa.gov.au)

# Thank you for putting research into action



Psychologist  
Taryn Lores with  
Crohn's disease  
patient, Seán.

**In our Spring edition of RAH Researcher we shared news about the pioneering work of the Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology in treatment for chronic sufferers of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD).**

The work involves a 'trilogy' of medicine, surgery and a third level of care for mental health, via hospital-based psychological intervention.

"Research conducted in our service has shown that more than half of people who have IBD experience mental health issues such as anxiety and depression," said Professor Jane Andrews, Head of Inflammatory Bowel Disease Service.

The vital importance of this service resonated strongly with RAH Research Fund supporters. Thanks to your incredible and generous donations, the Department will be able to part-fund a psychologist for another year.

"Having a part-time psychologist also allows us to provide timely support to inpatients when they are at their most sick and vulnerable, and ensure continuity once they are well enough for discharge and need mental health support as an outpatient," Professor Andrews said.

The IBD Service has been offering routine mental health screening to all new patients since early 2018, with generous support from donors like you.

Professor Andrews says that at present the IBD Service is screening 1-2 new patients each week, providing an opportunity to bolster people's coping skills and ability to manage this complex, long-term disease.

"Screening at first meeting allows us to promptly identify people in need of support, educate them on the benefits of psychological care and offer them any necessary intervention on site. It has been fabulous to see psychological care accepted and normalised in the IBD Service, and to see the service become more holistic as times goes on."



**"On behalf of the entire IBD team and our patients, I would like to pass on our grateful thanks to the RAH Research Fund and the many generous donors who make their work possible."**

Professor Jane Andrews,  
Head of Inflammatory Bowel Disease Service.

# Big News from the Hub

## Newsagency



(L-R) Elide Zanardo, Cynthia Henderson and Lyn Fowler.

## Did you know you can now visit the RAH Research Fund Hub in our Newsagency?

Our Hub relocation last December has been a very positive move and an excellent way for us to make even stronger connections with the community.

**“Relocating the Hub within the Newsagency has given us the opportunity to increase Awareness of the Fund’s work – we can reach up to 800 customers a day.”**

Cynthia Henderson, Newsagency Manager.

“Our staff team love the fact that profits from all newsagency purchases benefit the RAH Research Fund, which goes directly back into OUR hospital. Customers like the fact that simply by purchasing something they need, they are making a difference with a donation,” said Newsagency Manager, Cynthia Henderson.

“I love supporting the RAH Research Fund by raising awareness for the important work of our researchers and sending the cutest bear, Scrubs home with adoptive parents!”

All profits from Newsagency purchases benefit the RAH Research Fund and you’ll find a large array of merchandise, including everyone’s favourite furry friend, Scrubs the Bear, along with handy

products like reusable coffee cups and stylish stainless steel water bottles. The popular annual Entertainment Book is now available too, packed with great savings and ideas.

Mother’s Day is not far away (mark May 12 in your diary) - and the good news is when you visit the Newsagency, you can support the RAH Research Fund and find something perfect for mum at the same time!

The Newsagency is open Monday to Friday 7.30am to 5.30pm, Saturday 9am to 4pm and closed on Sundays and Public Holidays.

If you would like to know more about the life-saving work of the RAH Research Fund, please ask one of our friendly newsagency staff.



## Go behind the microscope with our brightest minds



Dr Melissa Pitman, Head of the Drug Discovery Unit within the Centre for Cancer Biology's Molecular Signalling Laboratory.

**If you have ever wanted to take a peek inside the mind of a researcher, this is your chance!**

We are delighted to announce the arrival of *Behind the Microscope*, a series of one hour conversation events that will put our Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH) Researchers on the couch and in the spotlight.

Hear from some of the brightest research talent in South Australia and the exciting possibilities for better treatments, greater wellbeing and potential cures in a fascinating Q&A format.

Each event will be held in the RAH Lecture Theatre on Level 8 of the Hospital.

Our inaugural conversation will feature Dr Melissa Pitman, Head of the Drug

Discovery Unit within the Centre for Cancer Biology's Molecular Signalling Laboratory, on Wednesday, 5 June, 5.30-6.30pm.

We warmly invite dedicated supporters of the RAH Research Fund and interested members of the community to see how your donations are making a difference.

It is an honour to welcome Dr Melissa Pitman as our first presenter. Dr Pitman was recently awarded a RAH Research Fund Florey Fellowship to continue her work on ovarian cancer.

Dr Pitman and her team are working in close collaboration with Prof Martin Oehler, Director of Gynaecological Oncology at the RAH, to conduct research to discover better treatments for ovarian cancer.

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**“Ovarian cancer is a devastating disease that has been dubbed the “silent killer”. Due to a lack of clear symptoms, patients are often diagnosed at a late stage where the tumour has spread throughout the abdominal cavity.”** said Dr Pitman.

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“There is a clear clinical need for novel treatments for these patients. Our work is focused on targeting disease in patients that have developed chemotherapeutic resistance to give patients a better outcome,” she said.

# Every dollar counts for Jodie

Jodie Hartley may be living more than 160 kms northwest of our hospital, but she is one of the RAH Research Fund's most dedicated community fundraisers - and we are so grateful for her support.



Owner/Operator of Yorke Peninsula Natural Therapies, Beauty and Day Spa in Wallaroo, Jodie recently raised \$2,711 for investment in rare cancer research.

Jodie fundraises through her business and clients are always ready to help, from raffles to cake stalls. Jodie also donates one dollar from every client's appointment fee to the RAH Research Fund.

Her personal passion for fundraising is inspired not only by the fact that she treats cancer patients almost daily, but that her husband, John has survived both squamous cell carcinoma and lung cancer. John had his treatment with the RAH and is now in remission, having regular checks.

Jodie plays a very important role in her local community as the only Lymphoedema therapist on the Yorke Peninsula. She is specially trained in massage techniques to relieve limb swelling caused by the removal of lymph nodes.

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**"In small communities like Wallaroo, it seems everyone knows someone who has been touched by cancer. My clients are wonderful and very open to helping me with my fundraising goals,"** said Jodie.

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"I'm excited to have been invited by the RAH Research Fund to visit the Oncology Department. As fundraisers we make an impact but we don't get to experience 'behind the scenes' of research. I'm looking forward to meeting the people that are actually doing the work," she said.

This year, Jodie has more big plans for her fundraising efforts – gorgeous Scrubs the Bear will be available for purchase from Jodie's salon, wearing a specially designed T-shirt!

**If Jodie's very personal story has inspired you to get involved in fundraising for the RAH Research Fund, please contact Ketrach to discuss your ideas on 08 7074 1444.**

## From Jan and Laurie, with love

**Jan Lamkin, 87 is a passionate supporter of medical research, and a dedicated RAH Auxiliary volunteer, helping with making gifts to be sold at SARAH's Gift Shop.**

In recognition of Jan's incredible efforts she was recently acknowledged at the AGM for the RAH Auxiliary, where she had the opportunity to meet rare cancer researchers, Professors Michael Brown and Hamish Scott.

It was a personal connection that led to her directing a bequest to the Rare Cancer Research Project, as Executor for the Will of her much-loved late brother, Laurie.

Jan has a very personal commitment to finding a cancer cure. Jan lost her mum and brother to cancer; another brother

has advanced cancer, while Jan herself is unwell with lymphoma.

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**“Research is the key to finding a cure for cancer – it’s that simple. Anything I can do to raise funds and support research I will do. I have also added a bequest to the RAH Research Fund in my own will,”** said Jan.

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“Volunteering keeps me active and I am helping people with cancer by selling my goodies. I get tremendous satisfaction when my items sell and I know the money goes to research.”

Jan encourages everyone who is able, to support medical research. She knows that

the RAH Research Fund can direct Laurie's bequest in full towards the area of research that means so much to her and her family.

Jan said she found great comfort knowing that even after Laurie and she have passed away, their contribution to curing cancer through medical research lives on.

“The key to being a great community citizen is helping others. My family is passionate both in life and after they pass to make a contribution toward medical research into cancer, as it has been such a major part of our family's life journey.”

**Would you like to find out more about how to include the RAH Research Fund in your Will? Please contact Julie Raynes on 08 7074 1442.**



Scrubs riding on Jeff 'Longy' Long's bike at the annual CRAB Roll the Dice Run.



Scrubs at the RAH P.A.R.T.Y Program



Scrubs hiking through Petra, Jordan.



Scrubs playing in the snow in Helsinki, Finland.

## Where's Scrubs?

**He may be small, but Scrubs has a big heart and even bigger adventures! Have you been following his antics on our Facebook page? Here are a few of the latest 'Scrubs snaps'.**

Scrubs had the best seat in the house riding on Jeff 'Longy' Long's bike at the annual CRAB (Cancer Research Advocate Bikers) Roll the Dice Run on 27 October 2018. President Longy said Scrubs loved the wind in his fur!

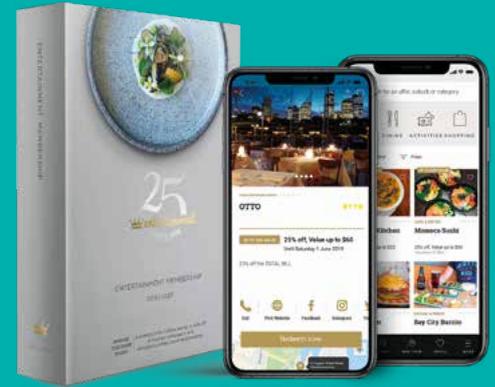
Then it was time for a couple of overseas adventures. Firstly he tagged along with RAH Research Fund volunteer, Isobelle on a hike through Petra, Jordan, before deciding it was time for fun in a cooler climate - a trip to Helsinki, Finland! As you can see, Scrubs really loved playing in the snow.

Back home again, Scrubs was spotted exploring the hospital, making a guest appearance at the RAH P.A.R.T.Y Program (Prevent Alcohol and Risk Related Trauma in Youth). He really enjoyed learning about this important educational program and felt better after a thorough check up!

Scrubs is a very dedicated mascot, raising awareness about the important work of the RAH Research Fund everywhere he goes. He'd love to keep you company at your next fundraising event or come along on a trip interstate or overseas!

**Pop into the RAH Newsagency and you can take your very own cuddly Scrubs home for \$30. Remember to tag us with your photos of Scrubs so we can share on Facebook or email photos to [Ketra.parsonage@sa.gov.au](mailto:Ketra.parsonage@sa.gov.au)**

## Help raise funds while having fun



Here's an easy way to support the RAH Research Fund - purchase the Entertainment Book or a Digital Membership. Your \$70 investment will quickly pay for itself and you will help fundraise at the same time - \$14 from every membership sold goes to life-saving medical research at the RAH. Last year we raised \$3094 and this year we are aiming to raise \$5000!

### How to buy your Entertainment Membership:

**Visit:** RAH Research Fund Newsagency Level 3

**Online:** [www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/160x892](http://www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/160x892)

**Phone:** (08) 7074 1445

**Email:** [contactus@rahresearchfund.com.au](mailto:contactus@rahresearchfund.com.au)