



**Novel Type 1
Diabetes Trial
Commences**

St Vincent's Voice

July 2024

St Vincent's Voice

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Dalarinji; Ours belonging to us

St Vincent's Hospital Sydney acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and water where we live and work. We respect their spiritual connections to country and community and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.



Message from CEO, Anna McFadgen

Recently I've been reflecting on how our strategic priorities will continue to promote and strengthen our focus on innovation to enhance impact, particularly in areas like health equity.

Many of the stories you're reading in this edition of St Vincent's Voice demonstrate the innovation and pioneering spirit synonymous with St Vincent's and the legacy of the Sisters of Charity. They are also a terrific reflection of some of the achievements and ambitions of our wonderful people, who go above and beyond to make St Vincent's the special place we all know it to be.

I hope you enjoy this edition,

Anna.

Dr Stephen Sanchez Awarded Esteemed Prize

Anaesthetics Registrar Dr Steph Sanchez has recently been awarded the Cecil Gray Prize, the most prestigious award for early career anaesthetists.

Awarded by Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA), the prize recognises the trainee who achieves the highest marks in the final ANZCA exam, and is only awarded to candidates who reach a standard considered by the examiners to be sufficiently high enough to justify it.

“Preparing for the fellowship exam was challenging. I studied for about 9 months prior, the last 6 months of which were very intense”, Stephen said.



A notoriously difficult exam to pass, it's not uncommon for trainees to have to re-sit their ANZCA exam, and sometimes the Cecil Gray Prize is not awarded at all.

Stephen says the support and mentorship he received with the St Vincent's Anaesthetics Department was pivotal. "I studied with my colleagues - my fellow Vinnies trainees, we supported each other through this long process".

All three St Vincent's trainees passed their exam this year, and despite the elite nature of this award, Stephen is now our third Cecil Gray Prize winning Anaesthetists here at St Vincent's.

"It's very rewarding. It's really something that can distinguish you in the profession", Stephen said.

NAIDOC Week 2024

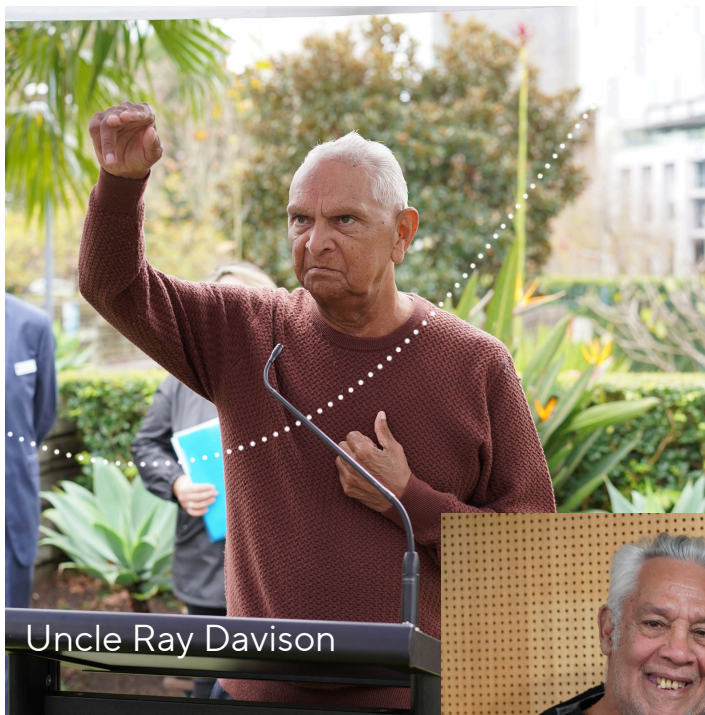
St Vincent's Darlinghurst Campus NAIDOC Week 2024 celebrations began with a traditional Smoking Ceremony, followed by the annual flag raising event, with guest speaker Uncle Ray Davison, from Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Lands Council.

The week continued with a dedicated NAIDOC Grand Rounds, a dance performance by Ngambaa Dhalaay Dance Company.

Our final celebration wrapped-up the week with one of our famous street parties with guest speaker - Aboriginal artist and LGBTQI+ and disability advocate, Daniel McDonald.

An educational session with Stolen Generation survivors from Kinchela Boys Home preceded the week - providing invaluable learning for all.

While NAIDOC Week provides us with the perfect opportunity to celebrate the oldest living culture on Earth - beyond a week, we are committed to making St Vincent's a place of understanding, recognition and respect, and celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture.



Uncle Ray Davison



Uncle Widdy and Uncle Bobby,
Kinchela Boys

St Vincent's Campus launches ground-breaking trial targeting heart disease in type 1 diabetes

Clinicians from St Vincent's Hospital have launched a novel clinical trial, which will be conducted at the Garvan Institute: the RESET1 study, which will investigate whether semaglutide, a commonly used drug for type 2 diabetes, could reduce the risk of heart disease in people with type 1 diabetes.

The RESET 1 study which has commenced recruiting trial participants, is being jointly led by Professor Jerry Greenfield, Director of Diabetes and Endocrinology at St Vincent's and Head of the Clinical Diabetes and Metabolism Lab at Garvan; and Dr Jennifer Snaith, Endocrinologist at St Vincent's and Research Fellow at Garvan. Endocrinologist, Dr Ruth Frampton, is undertaking the study as her PhD project.

Affecting approximately 8.4 million people globally, type 1 diabetes is a chronic autoimmune condition where the pancreas produces little or no insulin. Those with type 1 diabetes are at a significantly higher risk of developing heart disease, which remains the leading cause of death in this group, and are up to 10 times more likely to have a heart attack than the general population.

Professor Jerry Greenfield says "This trial could transform the therapeutic landscape for type 1 diabetes management by offering a new way to

mitigate the heightened risk of heart disease found in these patients."

The RESET1 study will be the first to explore whether the cardiovascular benefits of semaglutide, which improves blood sugar levels and reduces cardiovascular risks in type 2 diabetes, extend to those with type 1 diabetes. The trial will involve 60 participants from the Sydney area, who will be given semaglutide or placebo once a week for 26 weeks. The study will include blood and urine tests, body composition and liver scans.

"Heart disease is the leading cause of premature death in type 1 diabetes. There is an urgent need to identify treatments that address this and other issues including weight, blood sugar control, and unhealthy body composition," says Dr Snaith.

The trial is being supported by JDRF, Novo Nordisk and a Medical Research Futures Fund 2023 Targeted Translation Research Accelerator – Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes Mechanisms grant.



L-R: Dr Jennifer Snaith, Prof Jerry Greenfield and Dr Ruth Frampton

St Vincent's becomes first hospital to include Correctional Health in JMO Rotation

St Vincent's Junior Medical Officer, Callum Tate has recently completed a medical rotation within a correctional setting, a first for NSW. Approved by HETI in late 2023, the new clinical placement opportunity is only available through St Vincent's.

Providing healthcare to Parklea Correctional Centre, a 1,350 bed facility, the St Vincent's medical team includes general practitioners, emergency doctors and a psychiatrist who provide primary care for Parklea custodial patients with a variety of health conditions, including substance use disorders, mental health, minor injuries, and chronic health conditions.

The new rotation aims to provide early career doctors with an insight into correctional health – a specialisation field currently missing from medical education and training.

"I chose the corrections placement to expand my experience and to try something completely new and different", Callum explained. "I felt completely safe and supported the whole time". By providing an opportunity in the foundational years of medical training, to experience and demystify this important medical field, this rotation promotes the ongoing engagement of healthcare professionals in to a traditionally under-resourced area, to support this vulnerable population.



“ It was a really unique experience and I'd really encourage any JMOs to do it. I never thought I'd be working in a correctional setting, but it has really enriched my training. Opportunities like this aren't available anywhere else, and it's one of the things that makes St Vincent's unique.”

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World-first metastatic prostate cancer trial to transform care delivery

A multi-site clinical trial led across Australia by Prof Louise Emmett from St Vincent's Hospital Sydney and published in Lancet Oncology has concluded that both duration of treatment response and pain control for men in advanced stages of prostate cancer is significantly improved by using two known treatments in tandem.

The study assessed the safety and efficacy of using both enzalutamide, a medication that blocks the male

reproductive hormone responsible for growth and spread of cancer cells; and concurrently dosed Lu-PSMA-617, a type of radiation that precisely targets PSMA prostate cancer cells sparing other cells in the body.

Two treatments could really be better than one because of the unique way the treatments work together in the cancer cell to deepen prostate cancer responses. 162 participants were studied over a period of two years.

Some were assigned the dual treatment plan, while others were assigned enzalutamide medication alone, as is current practice. The results showed that participants on the combination enzalutamide and Lu-PSMA-617 treatment plan had deeper treatment responses, took 6 months longer to progress and had significant improvements in pain compared to participants on a traditional treatment plan, with fewer adverse side-effects.

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It's about taking it from a lethal disease, where patients have severe symptoms, to a chronic disease where they can go out and live their lives with minimal symptoms.

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Professor Louise Emmett



St Vincent's awarded a \$2.6 NHMRC Grant to lead a nationwide, multi-centred world first trial

A team of clinician researchers at St Vincent's and the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre led by Prof Nadine Ezard, has been awarded \$2.2 million by the NHMRC for a multi-centred trial to help people withdrawing from methamphetamine.

There is currently no treatment available for methamphetamine withdrawal. Withdrawal symptoms associated with stopping regular methamphetamine use can be distressing, which decreases the likelihood of people reducing or ceasing their use, and can prevent people from seeking help.

Prof Ezard, Dr Krista Siefried, Dr Brendan Clifford, Dr Liam Acheson and their team, will conduct a clinical trial using a stimulant medication; Lisdexamfetamine, currently used to treat attention deficit or hyperactivity disorder in Australia. Lisdexamfetamine has the potential to reduce withdrawal symptoms and become the first treatment for methamphetamine withdrawal in the world.

"This is an exciting step forward in the treatment of methamphetamine withdrawal," Prof Ezard said.

Australia has the highest prevalence of methamphetamine dependence globally and getting through withdrawal is an important step towards improving outcomes.

"As St Vincent's celebrates the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the country's first methadone clinic at Rankin Court, this is a terrific example of the continuation of this strong legacy in serving our Mission to respond to the needs of some of our most vulnerable, said Prof Ezard.



L-R: Prof Nadine Ezard, Dr Brendan Clifford, Dr Krista Siefried and Dr Liam Acheson

St Vincent's new Medical Staff Council Leadership Team



St Vincent's new Medical Staff Council, has been announced - led by Dr Michelle Moyle as Chair, Dr Jacqueline Huber as Deputy Chair and Dr Lisa Raven as Secretary.

This is the first time in St Vincent's Sydney history that the Medical Staff Council has been led by an all-women team, as nominated and elected by their medical peers.

The Council advocates for medical staff, improve services and care for patients, and share their expertise and advice with myself and our Senior Leadership Team so that we can make informed decisions that better serve our patients and community.

Dr Damien Stark awarded King's Birthday Honours

Congratulations Dr Damien Stark OAM, Principal Hospital Scientist, Molecular Diagnostics and Precision Medicine, for receiving a King's Birthday Honour - Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the General Division for service to medicine in the field of microbiology.

Damien has been a valued St Vincent's team member since 2000, and has led the Microbiology Laboratory within SydPath, St Vincent's Pathology Sydney since 2016.



St Vincent's Curran Foundation commences clinical exchange program

Earlier this year, St Vincent's Neurologist, Dr Joel Maamary, was named as the inaugural recipient of the JW&M Cunningham Foundation Clinical Exchange In Movement Disorders through the newly established St Vincent's Hospital Sydney - American Australian Association International Exchange Program.

As the recipient of an exchange scholarship, Dr Maamary received a grant of USD\$40,000 to support his travel to the US where he is undertaking a six month research project at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York to complete high level research examining the effect of frequency modulation on subthalamic nucleus local field potential (LFPs) in individuals with Parkinson's disease.

Dr Maamary will commence work on a multi-national multi-centre collaboration that aims to characterise LFP differences in young-onset monogenic Parkinson's disease. By learning skills in sensing modalities, Dr Maamary will return with specialised expertise to further strengthen St Vincent's role as an international leader in neuromodulation.

Established in 2023 through the St Vincent's Curran Foundation, this Program is a bi-directional (AUS-USA, USA-AUS) clinical exchange program supporting one graduate level clinician per year from St Vincent's, and one graduate level clinician per year from the US participate in immersive research in specialty clinical areas.

Funded through philanthropy by the JW&M Cunningham Foundation, the Delta Goodrem Foundation, the Late Valerie McKenzie and Nick Politis AM and the Politis Family, the Program commenced this year with three exchanges in the areas of

neurosciences, nursing in cellular therapies and stem cell transplant, and pain management.

In 2025 an additional three exchanges will be added to the program in the areas of Theranostics, Interventional Cardiology and Cardiac Research.

If you would like to know more about the exchange program please email St Vincent's Curran Foundation at supportstvincents@svha.org.au



Campus Events

Homelessness Week 2024

Street Party Friday 9 August
10am - 12pm DeLacy Forecourt

National Homelessness Week (5-11 August) raises awareness of homelessness in Australia and the importance of housing as a long-term solution.

We will be joined by Sydney Street Choir, musician Joe Trueman and other special guests.

All staff are welcome.



All-staff Town Hall

Wednesday 14 August
2-3pm Garvan Auditorium and online

All staff are encouraged to join us in person or online for a panel discussion detailing the 2024 St Vincent's Staff Survey results. It will be an opportunity to discuss how we will respond to the valuable feedback given, and what our plans are to make St Vincent's an even better place to work.

Staff Excellence Awards Ceremony

Thursday 15 August 2024
5pm - 7 pm Garvan Auditorium

The Staff Excellence Awards are a fantastic opportunity to showcase the individual and collective achievements of our people to further inspire the delivery of better and fairer care to the community we are fortunate to serve.

Join us from 5pm at the Garvan Auditorium to cheer on our colleagues.



Join the Conversation



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fairer care.
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