
Supporting Innovation in Dementia Research: The Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre

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Challenges in providing services to people with dementia

- Increasing numbers of people with dementia
- Dementia is a terminal condition: unequivocally linked to high mortality rates (Mitchell et al, 2009)
- In the community: Issues with diagnosis, service fragmentation & carer burnout
- In residential care: Issues with capacity in the context of increasing demand and complexity
- Rural & regional contexts: Ageing demographic, limited service options and dispersed populations, inhibited help-seeking behaviour

We need to prepare Tasmania for a future where there will be far greater numbers of people with dementia

Need to build partnerships and pursue innovative approaches to service development & capacity building with a key focus on utilising translational research approaches

Tasmania is uniquely placed as a site for developing & trialing strategic research based dementia programs

- Island state with relatively stable population
- Highest proportion of people in 65+ and 80+ years cohorts.
- In 2051, Tasmania's 65+ group will comprise 33.8% and 80+ 14.1% of population.
- Tasmanian health indicators for 65+ are worse than national average



Wicking centre established in
June 2008

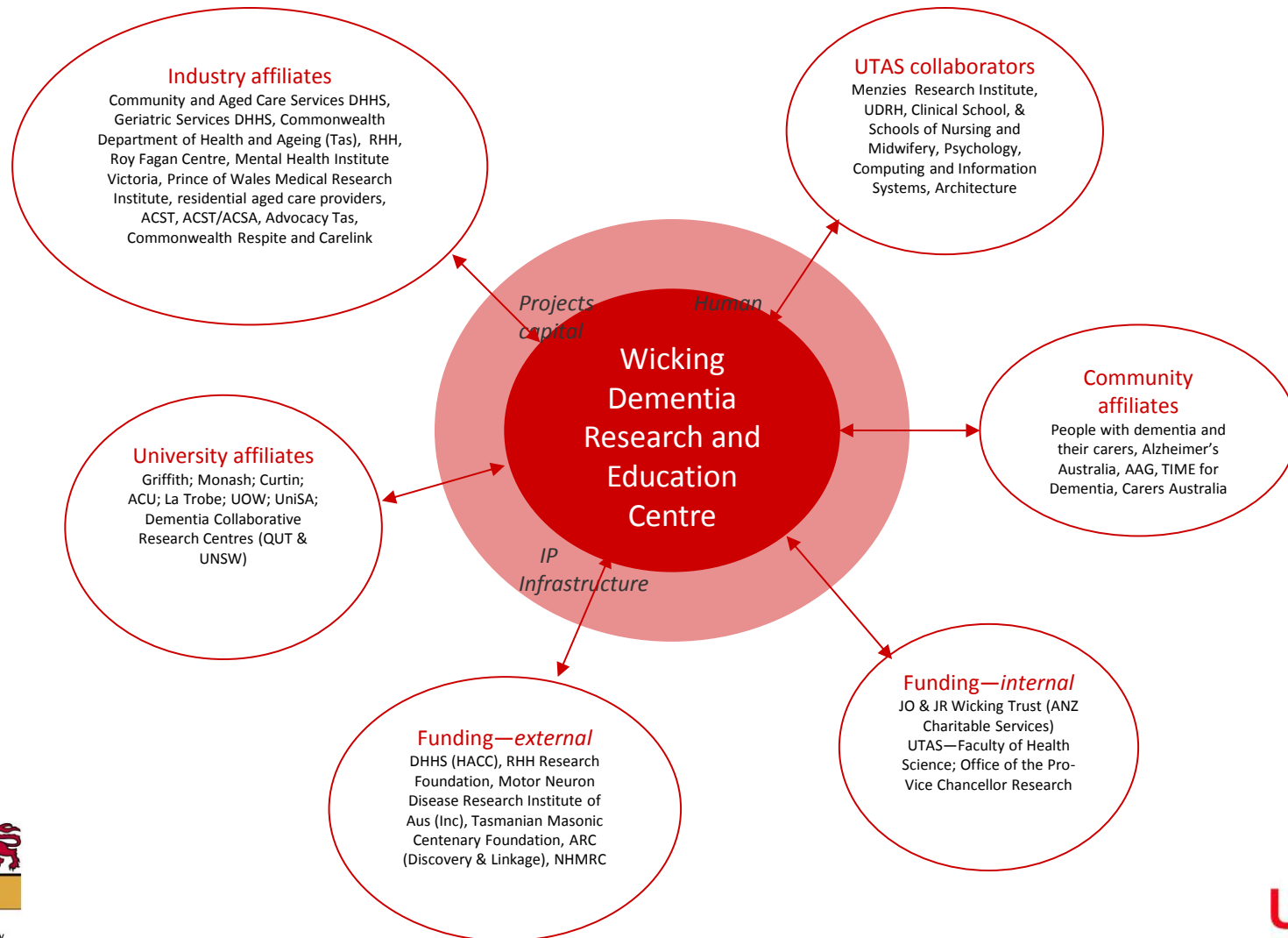
- **Major funding from JO and JR Wicking Trust (ANZ Trustees)**

Centre also supported by:

- UTAS School of Nursing & Midwifery,
- Menzies Research Institute,
- Utas Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor Research,
- Tas Govt Dept of Health and Human Services



Growing synergies in the dementia effort



Human capital

Wicking staff

Professor Andrew Robinson and Professor James Vickers, Co-directors
Dr Tracey Dickson, Senior Research Fellow and NHMRC Career Development Fellow
Dr Christine Stirling, Senior Research Fellow
Diana Carter, Executive Officer (Strategic Operations)
Gillian Vosper, Project Officer
Dr Jyoti Chuckowree, NHMRC CJ Martin Research Fellow
Dr Anna King, Bill Gole Research Fellow
Dr Liz Cummings, Research Fellow
Dr Mathew Summers, Research Fellow
Dr Jerome Staal, Masonic Foundation Medical Research Foundation Fellow
Dr Adele Woodhouse, NHMRC CJ Martin Fellow (Training Research Fellow, overseas)
Dr Olivier Bibari, Research Fellow
Sharon Andrews, Research Associate/RHD student
Brendan Churchill, Research Associate
Susan Leggett, Research Associate
Barbara Lloyd, Project Officer
Graeme McCormack, Drug Discovery Platform Coordinator
Patricia Clements, Research assistant
Roslyn Foskey, Research assistant

Karen Herne, Research assistant
Sharon Hetherington, Research assistant
Heather McGee, Research assistant
Michelle Oates, Research assistant
Makrina Tsinoglou, Research assistant

... and students

Cathy Blizzard, RHD student
Heather Brooks, RHD student
Sue Lawrence, RHD student
Yao Liu, RHD student
Melinda Minstrell, RHD student
Stan Mitew, RHD student
Peter Mulholland, RHD student
Kate Murray, RHD student/Research assistant
Ruth Musgrove, RHD student
Nichole Saunders, RHD student
Chris Showall, RHD student
Lorraine Smith, RHD student
Ree Van Galen, RHD student
Sam Alexander, Honours student
Katherine Hosie, Honours student
Penny Johnson, Honours student
Shannon Klekociuk, Honours student

Associates & collaborators

Wicking associates

Professor Jenny Abbey, Honorary Senior Research Fellow, MRI
Professor Michael Ashby, Director of Palliative Care Royal Hobart Hospital, and Honorary Fellow, WDREC, MRI
Dr Joanna Bkas, Roy Fagan Centre
Dr Toby Croft, DHHS
Prof Roger Fay, School of Architecture and Design, UTAS
Professor Mary Fitzgerald, School of Nursing and Midwifery, UTAS
A/Professor Richard Fleming, Director Dementia Services Development Centre, Hammond Care UNSW
Dr Emily Hansen, PHCRED Coordinator, Menzies Research Institute (MRI)
Damhnat McCann, School of Nursing and Midwifery, UTAS
A/Professor Fran McInerney, Australian Catholic University/MRI
Dr Peter Orpin, Senior Research Fellow, MRI
Dimity Pond, University of Newcastle
Frank Sainsbury, IT Project Officer, UTAS
Dr Kristy Sanderson, Research Fellow, MRI
Dr Jenn Scott, School of Psychology, UTAS
Dr Velandai Srikanth, Monash University
Professor Jeff Summers, School of Psychology, UTAS
Dr Jane Tolman, Geriatric Services, DHHS
A/Prof Chris Toye, Curtin University
A/Professor Paul Turner, Research Fellow, MRI

... and collaborators

Dr Paul Adlard, Mental Health Research Institute Victoria
A/Professor Lyn Barnes, University of South Australia
Janet Carty, Community and Aged Care Services, DHHS
A/Professor Inn Chuah, School of Medicine/Menzies Research Institute, UTAS
Dr Roger Chung, Senior Research Fellow, Menzies Research Institute, UTAS
Dr Michael Dreyer, DHHS
Professor Glenda Halliday, Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute NSW
Dr Claire Shepherd, Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute NSW
Lorraine Millar, DHHS
Professor David Small, Menzies Research Institute, UTAS
David Spence, Community and Aged Care Services, DHHS
Professor Adrian West, School of Medicine/ Menzies Research Institute, UTAS

Wicking research programs

External grant funding won during the period
November 2008 to November 2009

\$2,057,330*

in addition to the \$450,000/year
core funding

*some grants cover projects extending for more than one year

External funding sources:

- National Health and Medical Research Council
- Australian Research Council (Discovery & Linkage programs)
- Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation
- Alzheimer's Australia
- Tasmanian Masonic Centenary Medical Research Foundation
- Australian Rotary Health Research Fund
- Motor Neuron Disease Research Institute of Australia Inc.
- The Victorian and Tasmanian Dementia Training Study Centre
- Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
- Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services

An integrated Centre: Research Streams

- Developing health services
 - Community Care
 - Acute Care
 - Residential Care
- Exploring the trajectory of dementia
 - Healthy Brain
 - MCI & trajectories
- Investigating the biological basis of dementia
 - Brain changes of Alzheimer's
 - Therapeutic drugs
 - cellular mechanisms

Health Services

Community based research

Current Projects

- Development of an innovative self help coping program for dementia care givers (Carers Care)
- Managing dementia in the rural context
- The GOLD Book project - A carer decision aide for respite care

Strategic Imperatives

- Diagnosing dementia in primary care
- ❖ PhD students X 2

Health Services

Residential aged care based research

Current Projects

- Building capacity to support a palliative approach to care provision
 - Environmental design for people with dementia
 - The teaching nursing home
- ❖ PhD students X 2

Health Services

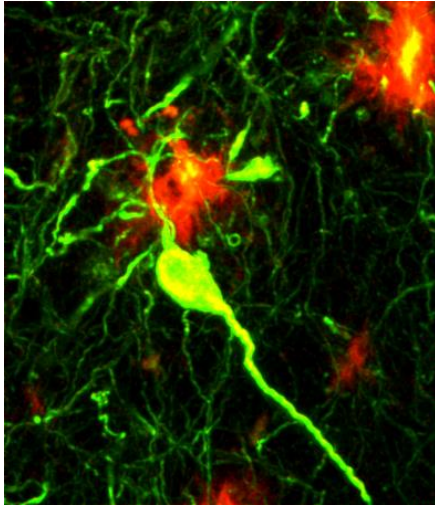
Acute care based research

Current Projects

- Best practice and the care of older persons with dementia in the Emergency Department

- ❖ PhD students X 1

Publications



- **Andrews, S., McInerney, F., & Robinson, A.** (2009). Realizing a palliative approach in dementia care: strategies to facilitate aged care staff engagement in evidence-based practice. *International Psychogeriatrics* 29(S1), S64-S68.
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- **Chung, R.S.,** Penkowa, M., Dittman, J., King, C.E., Bartlett, C., Asmussen, J.W., Hidalgo, J., Carrasco, J., Leung, Y.K., Walker, A.K., Fung, S.J., Dunlop, S.A., **Fitzgerald, M.,** Beazley, L.D., Chuah, M.I., **Vickers, J.C., & West, A.K.** (2008). Redefining the role of metallothionein with the injured brain: Extracellular metallothioneins play an important role in the astrocyte-neuron response to injury. *Journal of Biological Chemistry* 283, 15349-15358.
- **King, A.E., Dickson, T.C., Blizzard, C.A., Woodhouse, A.,** Foster, S., **Chung, R.S., & Vickers, J.C.** (2009, in press). Neuron-glia interactions underlie ALS-like axonal cytoskeletal pathology. *Neurobiology of Aging*.
- Mulholland, P.F., O'Meara, P., Walker, J.H., **Stirling, C.M., & Tourle, V.** (2009). Multidisciplinary practice in action: The rural paramedic—it's not only lights and sirens. *Journal of Emergency Primary Health Care* 7(2); EJ ISSN 1447-4999 [Refereed Article]
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- **Robinson, A.,** Elder, J., Emden, C., Lea, E.J., **Turner, P., & Vickers, J.** (2009). Information pathways into dementia care services: Family carers have their say. *Dementia: The International Journal of Social Research and Practice* 8, 17-37.



Photo courtesy of Carers Australia

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- **Robinson, A.**, Hemmings, L., Lea, E., McCann, D., Nichols, H., Rumble, R., Weeding, F., & **Vosper, G.** (2008). Issues in the transition from home to respite day care. *Australasian Journal of Ageing* 27(1), A29-A29.
- Rumble, R., **Robinson, A.**, Lea, E., Vosper, G., Hai, L., Nichols, H., Weeding, F., & McCann, D. (2008). A profile of day respite care. *Australasian Journal of Ageing* 27(1), A54-A55.
- **Saunders, N.**, & **Summers, M.J.** (2008). Deficits to attention and working memory in subtypes of MCI: The Abstracts of the College of Clinical Neuropsychologists 14th Annual Conference. *Australian Journal of Psychology* 60 (Suppl. 1), 222.
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2009 education program

Dissemination and education	Developing human services	Exploring the trajectory of dementia	Investigating the biological basis of dementia
<i>Industry training workshops</i>	13 workshops (738 attendees)	2 workshops (33 attendees)	2 workshops (115 attendees)
<i>Public seminars</i>		100 attendees	47 attendees
<i>Conference presentations</i>	6 papers 3 posters 1 videoconference	2 papers 2 posters	2 papers 1 poster
<i>Media publicity</i>	15 (magazine article, radio, television news, or online discussion item)	16 (newspaper article, radio or television or online news item)	
<i>Wicking brochure and website</i>	http://www.menzies.utas.edu.au/article.php?Doo=Redirect&id=711		

