



Life as a Clinician-Scientist

ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES
Symposium



Australian
Academy of
Health & Medical
Sciences

Online Tuesday 15 April 2025

Thank you to our sponsors

This event is part of the *Life as a Clinician-Scientist* program run by the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences. This program is unique in Australia – inspiring, encouraging and supporting individuals across the country to pursue research careers in the health and medical sciences.

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The Academy also receives funding from the Australian Government, which supports the delivery of this program. The views expressed at this event do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government.

Welcome to Life as a Clinician-Scientist

We are delighted to welcome you to our Life as a Clinician-Scientist: Across the Disciplines symposium.

Let us take you on a journey of possibilities, where clinical practice meets groundbreaking research.

Exploring pathways to a fulfilling career

Clinician-scientists are critical in advancing health care in our country, using their insights from working with patients to answer fundamental scientific questions and ultimately improve patient care. Today, you'll hear firsthand experiences showcasing the many pathways to this exciting career.

Our esteemed speakers come from diverse disciplines, specialties and backgrounds, yet they share a common commitment to bridging the gap between clinical practice and health research. Their journeys showcase the challenges, rewards, and significant impact of working in multi- and cross-discipline teams. We are honoured to have these outstanding role models share their wisdom with us.

We encourage you to approach today with curiosity and an open mind. Engage with our speakers, ask questions, and reflect on how their experiences might shape your own aspirations. This rare opportunity lets you connect with experienced individuals—take full advantage and let their stories guide your journey to becoming a clinician-scientist.

We'd also like to use this opportunity to thank our national event partners, whose generous support make these symposia possible.

We hope today inspires you – we can't wait to see what you do next.

Professor Kim Bennell AM FAHMS and Professor Cathie Sherrington FAHMS

Co-convenors of the Life as a Clinician-Scientist: Across the Disciplines symposium



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About the Academy

The Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences is the independent expert voice for health and medical sciences in Australia. We advance research and innovation in Australia to improve everyone's health.

We are the nation's Learned Academy for the health and medical sciences: an interdisciplinary body of Fellows, who are Australia's most influential researchers in health and medicine. Each Fellow is elected by their peers for their outstanding contributions to the health and medical sciences in their respective fields.

The broad experience of our Fellows ensures that our advice is independent, expert and evidence-based. We use our knowledge and networks to drive change and provide leadership to ensure the most pressing health issues facing society can be addressed for the benefit of all.

We actively engage with the community to raise awareness and ensure that everyone can participate in, and benefit from, health and medical research. Through our work, we seek to reduce health inequities in Australia.



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	EVENT OPENING
4.00pm AEST	<p><i>Welcome to the symposium</i></p> <p>Professor Cathie Sherrington FAHMS Professor and NHMRC Investigator Fellow, Institute for Musculoskeletal Health, The University of Sydney and Sydney Local Health District</p>
	MY JOURNEY TO BECOMING A CLINICIAN-SCIENTIST
4.10pm AEST	<p><i>Optimising health for people with musculoskeletal conditions</i></p> <p>Professor Rachelle Buchbinder AO FAHMS FAA Head, Musculoskeletal Health and Wiser Health Care Units, School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Monash University</p>
4.25pm AEST	<p><i>Making an impact in nutrition and dietetic research</i></p> <p>Laureate Professor Clare Collins AO FAHMS Laureate Professor in Nutrition & Dietetics and NHMRC Leadership Research Fellow, College of Health, Medicine and Wellbeing, The University of Newcastle, and Co-Director, Food and Nutrition Research Program, Hunter Medical Research Institute</p>
	PANEL DISCUSSION
4.45pm AEST	<p><i>Strategies for success: Insights from across disciplines</i></p> <p>Professor Caleb Ferguson Professor of Nursing (Chronic & Complex Care), NHMRC Emerging Leadership Fellow. and Director, Health Innovations, University of Wollongong, and Director, Centre for Chronic & Complex Care Research, Blacktown Hospital</p> <p>Professor Gemma Sharp Head, Body Image & Eating Disorders Research Program and NHMRC Investigator Fellow, The University of Queensland and Senior Clinical Psychologist</p> <p>Professor Gary Wittert FAHMS Professor of Medicine at The University of Adelaide, Director of the Freemasons Foundation Centre for Men's Health and Wellbeing, and Senior Consultant Endocrinologist at the Royal Adelaide Hospital</p> <p>Chaired by:</p> <p>Professor Kim Bennell AM FAHMS Melbourne Laureate Professor and NHMRC Investigator Fellow, Centre for Health, Exercise and Sports Medicine, Department of Physiotherapy, The University of Melbourne</p>
5.30pm AEST	SYMPOSIUM CLOSE

Speakers



Professor Cathie Sherrington
FAHMS

Professor and NHMRC Investigator Fellow, Institute for Musculoskeletal Health, The University of Sydney and Sydney Local Health District

Professor Cathie Sherrington is a Professor in the School of Public Health at The University of Sydney. She leads the 30-person Physical Activity, Ageing and Disability Research Stream within the Institute for Musculoskeletal Health (a partnership between University of Sydney and Sydney Local Health District), is Deputy Director of the Institute, and also co-chairs the Sydney Health Partners (NHMRC-accredited Advanced Health Research & Translation Centre) Musculoskeletal Clinical Academic Group.

Professor Sherrington is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences and Australian College of Physiotherapists and was awarded a 2023 NSW Premier's Prize for Science.



Professor Kim Bennell
AM FAHMS

Melbourne Laureate Professor and NHMRC Investigator Fellow, Centre for Health, Exercise and Sports Medicine, Department of Physiotherapy, The University of Melbourne

Professor Kim Bennell is a Melbourne Laureate Professor in the Department of Physiotherapy at the University of Melbourne where she leads the Centre for Health, Exercise and Sports Medicine – a multidisciplinary research centre. She is also a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences.

Professor Bennell's research focuses on non-drug, non-surgical management of hip and knee osteoarthritis as well as ways to address evidence-practice gaps around uptake of pain management and lifestyle interventions by clinicians and patients.



Professor Rachelle Buchbinder AO FAHMS FAA

Head, Musculoskeletal Health and Wiser Health Care Units, School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Monash University

Professor Rachelle Buchbinder is a rheumatologist and clinical epidemiologist, NHMRC Investigator Fellow and Professor/Head, Musculoskeletal Health and Wiser Health Care Units, School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Monash University. She is known for her landmark studies, particularly those examining treatments accepted into practice before their proper evaluation. Her other roles include Coordinating Editor of Cochrane Musculoskeletal, Back and Neck; cofounder and lead of the NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence for the Australia and New Zealand Musculoskeletal (ANZMUSC) Clinical Trials Network (~400 members; >30 disciplines); and cofounder of Wiser Healthcare, a national collaboration that aims to reduce overdiagnosis and overtreatment.



Laureate Professor Clare Collins AO FAHMS

Laureate Professor in Nutrition & Dietetics and NHMRC Leadership Research Fellow, College of Health, Medicine and Wellbeing, The University of Newcastle, and Co-Director, Food and Nutrition Research Program, Hunter Medical Research Institute

Professor Clare Collins is a Laureate Professor and an internationally distinguished leader in nutrition and dietetics. Her research performance is in the top 1% most cited scientists globally.

She was appointed Officer of the Order of Australia in 2023 for distinguished service to health research in nutrition, scientific organisations and science communication. In 2024 she was awarded the University of Newcastle Alumni Medal for outstanding professional excellence.

Her research evaluates nutrition interventions based on life stage and chronic disease risk. The personalised nutrition eHealth tools she invented (Australian Eating Survey and Healthy Eating Quiz), have broad impact on improving eating patterns, diet-related health and wellbeing.



Professor Caleb Ferguson

Professor of Nursing (Chronic & Complex Care), NHMRC Emerging Leadership Fellow, and Director, Health Innovations, University of Wollongong, and Director, Centre for Chronic & Complex Care Research, Blacktown Hospital

Professor Caleb Ferguson is an NHMRC Emerging Leadership Fellow and Director of the Centre for Chronic & Complex Care Research at Blacktown Hospital, a collaborative research centre with the School of Nursing, University of Wollongong.

Professor Ferguson leads a research program in chronic care, focused on cardiovascular disease and frailty. He has published over 145 peer-reviewed papers and has been awarded over \$17m in competitive research funding; he is a fellow of the Australian College of Nursing, the European Society of Cardiology and the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand.

A stroke nurse by clinical background, he is committed to improving patient outcomes and developing the next generation of clinician-researchers.



Professor Gemma Sharp

Head, Body Image & Eating Disorders Research Program and NHMRC Investigator Fellow, The University of Queensland and Senior Clinical Psychologist

Professor Gemma Sharp is the Head of the Body Image & Eating Disorders Research Program at The University of Queensland and an adjunct of Monash University. She is a multidisciplinary clinician scientist having been awarded an MSc in Oncology from the University of Cambridge and a PhD in Clinical Psychology from Flinders University. She has been awarded consecutive NHMRC fellowships since 2018 to support her clinically focused and translational research. She also leads her own private psychology practice and is the Founding Director and Member of the international not-for-profit, Consortium for Research in Eating Disorders (CoRe-ED).



Professor Gary Wittert FAHMS

Professor of Medicine at The University of Adelaide, Director of the Freemasons Foundation Centre for Men's Health and Wellbeing, and Senior Consultant Endocrinologist at the Royal Adelaide Hospital

Professor Gary Wittert is Professor of Medicine and Director of the Freemasons Centre for Male Health and Wellbeing, The University of Adelaide and South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI), Senior Consultant Endocrinologist at Royal Adelaide Hospital, and Senior Principal Research Fellow at SAHMRI. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences.

Professor Wittert's research relates to obesity including appetite regulation, complications, and management. His work on associated chronic disorders focuses on their relationship to changes in testosterone, sexual function, lower urinary tract symptoms, depression, and implications for the use of health services. This work, funded by NHMRC, ARC, NHF, Diabetes Australia, MRFF, and the Freemasons Foundation, has generated has over 500 research publications. He is Editor in Chief of the Journal Obesity Research and Clinical Practice, a member of the World Obesity Clinical Committee and on the Scientific Advisory Committees of Healthy Male and the Ten to Men study.





Fostering the next generation of clinician-scientists.

The Centenary Institute is a world-leading medical research organisation committed to promoting the value of clinician-scientists and the impact they make on tackling humanity's most pressing health challenges.

At Centenary, we offer early career scientists and clinicians, postgraduates and graduates, opportunities to progress medical research careers working alongside world-leading medical researchers and clinicians supported by state-of-the-art facilities.

We are proud to partner with the AAHMS 'Life as a Clinician-Scientist Program' to foster the future generation of clinician scientists.

Are you considering a career as a clinician-scientist?

Register your interest via the QR code or at centenary.org.au/aaahms-life-as-a-clinician-scientist-program/



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Pictured: Mihiri Silva, Doctor of Clinical Dentistry Alum, Consultant Paediatric Dentist at The Royal Children's Hospital and Lecturer at The Melbourne Dental School.

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