

NEWS FROM THE JOINT

BRINGING OSTEOARTHRITIS RESEARCH TO THE COMMUNITY



KICKSTARTING *the Consumer Program*

With Covid keeping us cautious this year, we have taken the time to reflect and revamp the *Consumer and Community Involvement Program* to keep you informed on the latest research. We're building on feedback and working hard to cut through the technical jargon in our work and boil it down to the essential information that is most important to you.

In this first issue of our *News from the Joint* newsletter, we'll introduce some of the projects and researchers behind them who are working to better manage osteoarthritis care for 2.2 million Australians.

KNEED TO KNOW PODCAST

We've launched our Kneed to Know podcast, a series that explores osteoarthritis, the upcoming healthcare issues and latest innovative research. We're cutting through the technical jargon to keep you informed of the issues that matter most to you.

To start the series off, we are joined by Consumer Advocate Marion, who interviews her orthopaedic surgeon, Prof Peter Choong on knowing when to operate.

Tune in to the rest of the episodes through our OPUS website:

Listen to episodes at:
opus-tjr.org.au/programs/podcast



MEET YOUR MATCH

Clear some space in your diary in May for our **Speed Dating for Science!** Meet our researchers, vote for the smoothest talker, and if you're keen, find your matching research buddy!

Stay tuned as we bring you more details in our next edition of *News from the Joint!*

BUDDIES IN ACTION

Our first Consumer Buddy to join the CCIP is Marion Glanville Hearst, a retired occupational therapist with a keen interest in osteoarthritis (OA). Having experienced OA herself, Marion was told to undergo joint replacement surgery many years ago, but trusted her gut and opted to manage her OA until she knew she was ready to proceed with surgery 10 years later.

Marion is now a strong advocate for informed decision-making and has partnered with MD-PhD candidate, Daniel Gould.

Daniel's research project focuses on using machine learning to predict a patient's likelihood of hospital re-admission after total knee replacement surgery. By predicting hospital re-admission (which is an indicator for complications), we can take the appropriate steps to manage the patient's OA care and prevent further risk to health.

While COVID has interrupted face-to-face meetings, Dan and Marion continue to meet monthly by video conferencing over Zoom; discussing Dan's latest research findings, challenges and documents such as manuscripts which Marion reviews.

Marion is also a Consumer Advocate where she chairs the Consumer and Community Advisory Group (CCAG). The CCAG is a group that oversees the management of the Consumer and Community Involvement Program - providing guidance on procedures, activities, grievances and operations.

If being a Consumer Buddy on a research project sounds like something you're interested in, let us know!



REDUCING THE LENGTH OF STAY IN HOSPITAL WITH

enhanced recovery after surgery



IMPROVE RECOVERY

INCREASE AFFORDABILITY

REDUCE HOSPITAL COSTS

UP TO **23%**
patients report ongoing pain and poor outcomes after hip replacement surgery

1 IN 5
patients undergoing hip replacement will experience painful gluteal tendinopathy



SPOTLIGHT ON SIDDHARTH RELE

MEDICAL STUDENT AND PHD CANDIDATE

Reducing the length of time a patient stays in hospital post-surgery can be beneficial for patients and hospitals. However, cutting unnecessary time spent in hospital by accelerating a patients' recovery, while reducing the risk of complications and readmission, is a balancing act.



Sid Rele

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery strategies, called ERAS, have been developed in hospitals to help assess and streamline the pre-and peri-operative care while minimising the risks associated with the proposed changes. Importantly, reducing the length of stay has become a key performance indicator for hospitals that benefit from improved cost management without compromising on the quality of patient outcomes.

*But is this **safe** for patients and is it **effective**?*

MD-PhD candidate, Sid Rele is leading this project by evaluating the safety and efficacy of ERAS pathways. Sid has been busy preparing the pieces to the project and is ready to begin assessing how ERAS impacts:

- Patients
- Hospital health services
- Economic outcomes

Through surveys, interviews and analysing large amounts of data, Sid's work will inform how to further streamline ERAS pathways **safely** for those with severe osteoarthritis.

Get in touch if you're interested in making an impact on better health services! Sid's looking for a Consumer Buddy to provide fresh input into the study design, appropriateness of interview questioning, interpretation of findings and reviewing documents.

SPOTLIGHT ON RITA KINSELLA

PHYSIOTHERAPIST AND PHD CANDIDATE

Hip replacement surgery for patients with advanced hip osteoarthritis (OA) is beneficial for improving pain and function but **not all individuals report satisfactory outcomes**. One in five of those undergoing hip replacement surgery for hip OA can have ongoing issues arising from the gluteal muscles and tendons located over the outside of the hip and thigh (termed gluteal tendinopathy).



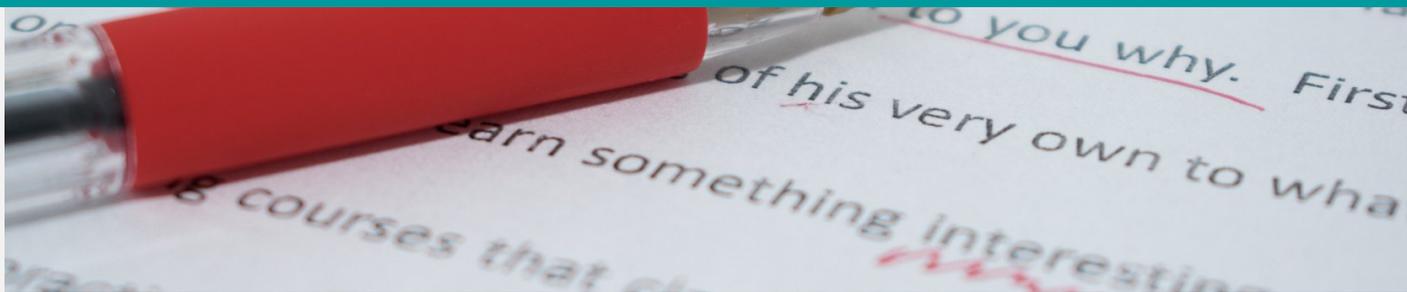
Rita Kinsella

Evidence clearly supports education and exercise in the management of gluteal tendinopathy, but there is a lack of educational material for patients with co-existing hip-related conditions including OA or previous surgery.

PhD candidate and physiotherapist, Rita Kinsella, is working on developing effective rehabilitation pathways for people experiencing ongoing pain and loss of function from gluteal tendinopathy following their hip replacement surgery.

One aspect of Rita's work is piloting a study to address this need by developing an exercise-based intervention delivered solely by telehealth. Participants will receive both written and technology-based educational materials including short videos and infographics to help participants complete exercises as safely as possible.

We're on the lookout for a Consumer Buddy to work with Rita as she develops educational material for patients ranging from information pamphlets and appropriateness of exercise videos to information via telehealth. If you're interested in this project, please get in touch with us!



TALKING ABOUT YOUR HEALTH

The way we talk about our health has a powerful influence on what we think and do about it. Myths around osteoarthritis can contribute to the disease burden by driving physical activity limitation.



Dr Samantha Bunzli

This discourse study aims to shift the focus way from what one can't do because of osteoarthritis, towards what one can do with osteoarthritis. Physicians can play an important role by using *participatory discourse* to support and encourage people to live an active and engaged life.

It's important to address common misconceptions about joint pain and keep people physically active across the lifespan which is the key to better health, productivity and relieving health system strain caused by one of our most common and costly conditions.

Led by postdoctoral fellow, Dr Sam Bunzli, this research will develop, evaluate and disseminate health messages to change the way Australians talk about joint health.

Sam's looking for a Consumer to review documents for the community with a non-scientific lens and provide input on study design, methods and interpretation of findings.

IMPROVING PATIENT SELECTION

Deciding to undergo surgery is a difficult decision. We want to prevent the patients who would not benefit from surgery, from going ahead with a costly procedure and reduce the risk of complications.



Dr Yushy Zhou

Using machine learning, orthopaedic registrar and PhD candidate, Dr Yushy Zhou, is developing a tool (the *SMART-Choice app*) to help the decision-making process for patients by predicting patient outcomes after knee replacement surgery. Yushy is using large databases of different patient profiles (in the order of thousands!) to predict what a person's likely outcome after surgery will be based off similar patient profiles.

Understanding what the potential outcomes could be after surgery helps health practitioners:

- Manage a patient's expectation prior to surgery
- Provide clarity to patients
- Improve satisfaction with the final result

You don't need to be tech-saavy to understand machine learning! Yushy is looking for a Consumer Buddy to help provide non-scientific input into the study design, appropriateness of the tool and provide feedback on the project findings.

GOT SOME TIME TO SPARE?

Got a question about one of our projects?

Are you interested in occasionally reviewing documents like surveys and publications or even partnering with us on one of our projects?

Get in touch with Michelle to find out more!



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