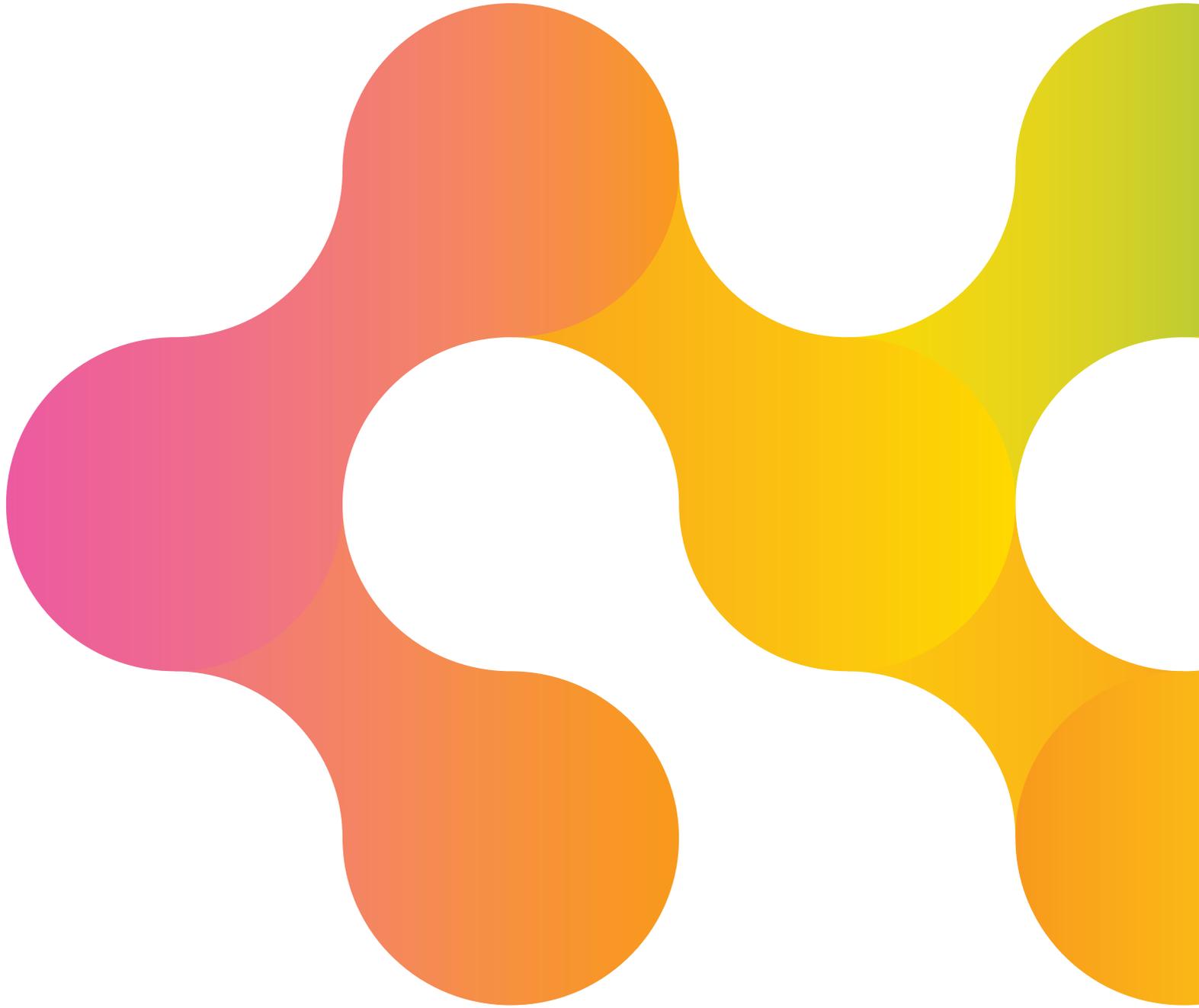


OFFICIAL RESEARCH PARTNER
OF UNITINGCARE

THE WESLEY HOSPITAL
ST ANDREW'S WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
BUDERIM PRIVATE HOSPITAL
ST STEPHEN'S HOSPITAL

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



WESLEY
RESEARCH INSTITUTE



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'Wesley
Research
Institute focuses
on immediate
improvements
in patient
outcomes'.



Who We Are

Established on 8th December 1994 by a group of dedicated doctors from the UnitingCare network, Wesley Research Institute is the second oldest medical research institute in Queensland.

Who we are

As the official research partner for UnitingCare, Wesley Research Institute is committed to delivering real impact for patients while contributing to knowledge through research worldwide.

This year we celebrate our 28th Anniversary and as we look back over what we have achieved at Wesley Research Institute we have developed research and invested in innovations that lead to faster diagnosis, better treatment options and ultimately cures for debilitating illnesses and diseases.

We strive to improve the way healthcare is delivered, providing real impact and further enhancing patient outcomes.

At our core is a strong, heartfelt culture that focuses on giving hope and changing lives of the sick and vulnerable. We strive to improve patient outcomes by linking medical research and clinical practice.

Our Vision

To be acknowledged as a world leader in health and medical research achieving excellence and innovation in health outcomes.

Our Mission

To give hope and change lives through applied health and medical research.

Governor's Message

As the official medical research institute for UnitingCare, Wesley Research Institute and its predecessor institutions have been changing the lives of sick and vulnerable Australians and giving them hope for almost 30 years.

I was very much aware of that history of compassion and care in my previous career as a doctor and Queensland's Chief Health Officer, and now, as Governor, I am proud and pleased to give Vice-Regal support to the Institute's work as its Patron-in-Chief, working alongside Associate Professor John Allan, Emeritus Professor John Pearn AO, and Mr Martin Albrecht AC as my fellow Patrons.

The results reported for 2021-2022 reflect the Institute's growing reputation for innovation and its success in developing faster patient diagnosis techniques and improved patient care for a wide range of diseases and conditions.

This report also reflects the Institute's progress towards its vision of being acknowledged as a world leader in health and medical research. This has been assisted enormously by the generosity of its corporate and individual donors and I take this opportunity, as Patron-in-Chief, to thank them for their generosity, belief and ongoing advocacy for the Institute.

Good governance, sound investment, effective fundraising, and appropriate policies and procedures are essential to the successful operation of the Institute and this year's result is evidence of excellence in all areas, despite the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As Governor, I am privileged to speak for all Queenslanders and, on their behalf, I congratulate the Board, the new CEO, Mr Andrew Barron, and former CEO, Dr Claudia Giurgiuman, on this result and thank them, and the Institute's staff and volunteers, for their contribution to that success.



GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeanette Young".

Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeanette Young AC PSM
Governor of Queensland

“Good governance, sound investment, effective fundraising, and appropriate policies and procedures are essential to the successful operation of the Institute and this year’s result is evidence of excellence in all areas...”



SCAN QR CODE
TO WATCH VIDEO

Our Patrons



Associate Professor John Allan

Patron

Associate Professor John Allan has been an obstetrician and gynaecologist VMP at The Wesley Hospital since 1984. He is the Chief Academic Medical Officer of UnitingCare Health and Former Head of the UnitingCare Health Clinical School.



Emeritus Professor John Pearn

Patron

Professor John Pearn is a senior paediatrician, academic, doctor-soldier, researcher and writer. John was awarded his higher Doctorate of Medicine and is the author of over 500 papers.



Mr Martin Albrecht

Patron

Mr Albrecht is a prominent Australian businessman, best known for his service as Chairman, previously CEO of Thiess Pty Ltd, and former Wesley Medical Research Chairman.

Chairman's Message

Mr Charlie Sartain
Board Chair



As we look towards our 30th Anniversary in 2024, I am proud that our organisation continues to contribute to advances in medical research, delivering improved health outcomes, patient care and quality of life for Australians.

This year we were delighted to welcome our new Patron-In-Chief, Her Excellency the Honorable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland and look forward to an ongoing supportive relationship with her and the Office of the Governor.

We have also recently welcomed our new CEO, Mr Andrew Barron, who commenced with us in August. Andrew is very well credentialed to take on this important leadership role, having previously been the Chief Operating Officer of the Qld Division of the Royal Flying Doctors Service of Australia for four years and prior to that having spent nine years in management roles at St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital, four of which was General Manager. He also served for more than two years as a Wesley Medical Research Board member during his tenure at St Andrew's Hospital.

I would like to take this opportunity to further acknowledge and thank our former CEO, Dr Claudia Giurgiuman, who played a leading role in developing and implementing our current strategic plan during her three-year tenure with us. Claudia also helped to forge a closer relationship with UnitingCare, enabling extended research efforts across

UCQ to be developed, which will provide further opportunities to transform health services and medical practice.

I am grateful for the ongoing support from my fellow directors, from our Patrons, management team and volunteers, all of whom play a role in helping to create positive change and improve the health of many through medical and health services research. Together with my Board colleagues I look forward to continuing to work together and further extending our partnerships beyond UnitingCare Hospitals into other areas with research needs.

We have several major, corporate and individual donors without whose generosity it would simply be impossible for our institute to function. In particular I would like to thank the tremendous enduring support of Mitsubishi Development, BHP, the Brazil Family Foundation, Wendy and Allan Grummit, the Vidyajey and Albrecht Family Foundations, Hugh Sheardown, Helen Barnard, Donald & Joan Wilson Foundation and Alex and Mary Peden. Of course, the contributions from all of our financial and in-kind sponsors are gratefully received and my thanks extend across our whole network.

A refreshed branding as Wesley Research Institute, signaling a broader remit, under a new leadership team, has invigorated our organisation in its mission as we head into 2023.

CEO'S Message

Mr Andrew Barron
Chief Executive Officer



I'm very excited to be joining the organisation at a particularly poignant moment in time, with a new executive leadership team, our name changing back to Wesley Research Institute and a new brand rollout. Not to mention the exciting future for our research programs, from 2023 we will be developing the next 3-5 year strategy.

We will be looking to the future to develop robust research, find better diagnostic techniques and treatments, incorporate new innovative technology with patients at the core of our purpose and improving health outcomes for them. We will develop a robust roadmap for all our programs that highlights growth, innovation, and further collaboration with our partners.

I'm fortunate to have worked within the UnitingCare Health network for nearly 10 years running hospitals and developing strategy. I'm proud to be leading Wesley Research Institute, the official research partner for UnitingCare, collaborating across all four hospitals as well as aged care and community services. We work closely with many universities and research institutes, and harnessing this collaboration makes our research programs even more successful and impactful.

Our new executive team includes Rod Facey, Chief Financial Officer, Sherman Leung, Head of Research Operations and Natalie Shillitto, Fundraising and Marketing Manager.

At Wesley Research Institute we want to profoundly improve people's lives. However, we can't do this without support and generous funding from our donors and corporate partners. I'm enormously grateful for the funding on which we depend overwhelmingly.

In particular I would like to thank the Brazil Family Foundation and their generous gift of \$1 million this year to support coeliac research. Your generosity is visionary and inspiring! The impact that this donation will make to the many lives affected by coeliac disease and other related autoimmune conditions cannot be underestimated. It is only through the support of dedicated individuals like yourself that we can make such a significant impact. Thank you!

SCAN QR CODE
TO WATCH
INTERVIEW



Our Board



The Wesley Research Institute Board is responsible for the overall governance of the Institute, including approving fundraising, investment and research strategies and adopting appropriate policies and procedures designed to provide corporate oversight and to deliver against our mission.

During the year we welcomed the following new Board members to the Institute: Mr Craig Wildermuth; Ms Karen Read; and Dr Shanthi Kanagarajah. We are so fortunate to be able to attract such talented people to give their time selflessly to our Board. We are also deeply appreciative of the service provided by long-serving retiring Board members Dr Ian Dickinson AM, and Board member Mr Peter Crowley, both of whom left the Board during the year. Their commitment and involvement over the years has been invaluable.

As the official research institute for UnitingCare, the Board and its committees regularly review Wesley Research Institutes governance arrangements and practices to maintain compliance with regulatory requirements and sector practice and to ensure organisational objectives are supported.

Our Board



Mr Charlie Sartain

Chairman

Mr Sartain joined the Wesley Research Institute Board in 2009, and was elected Board Chair in 2020. Mr Sartain has had more than 30 years of international mining experience as a mining engineer and senior corporate executive. Over the past seven years he has also served as an independent non-executive director on several Australian and international listed corporate boards. Mr Sartain was a two-term member of the Senate of The University of Queensland (UQ) and Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Sustainable Minerals Institute at UQ.



Mr Andrew Barron

Chief Executive Officer

Mr Barron is highly experienced and has worked as a senior executive within the UnitingCare network since 2008. With experience as COO within the Royal Flying Doctor Service (QLD) for nearly five years, he is a strong transformational executive leader. Mr. Barron has delivered sustained financial and cultural benefits across health, community services, aviation and financial services industries. Mr Barron has successfully shaped and implemented business development strategies with a patient / customer centered context.



Mr Michael Krieg

Board Member

Mr Krieg has over 30 years experience commencing his career as a nurse before embarking on executive roles in a number of hospitals across Australia. He was appointed General Manager of The Wesley Hospital in 2017 and in 2019 became the Group Executive Hospitals of UCQ.



Professor Mary-Louise Fleming

Board Member

Professor Fleming is the Head of School of Public Health and Social Work at the Queensland University of Technology. Professor Fleming has over 25 years of experience in public health and health promotion.



Ms Cheryl Clayton

Board Member

Ms Clayton is the Director of Clinical Services at The Wesley Hospital and Director of Mercy Super. Ms Clayton has worked in senior leadership roles within public and private health sectors.



Dr John Rivers

Board Member

Dr Rivers is a practicing cardiologist and founding member of the Queensland Cardiovascular Group. Dr Rivers has extensive experience in business development and governance in the healthcare industry.



Dr James Aylward

Board Member

Dr Aylward is an innovative researcher and an active mentor for tech start-ups in health sciences. Dr Aylward was awarded the 2018 Clunies Ross Innovation Award for developing Picato, and anti-skin cancer drug.



Mr David Hairsine
Board Member

Mr Hairsine is a highly experienced business leader with many years of driving growth strategy as General Manager, Finance and Treasury at mining company PanAust Limited and now works in a consultant role to the same.



Ms Karen Read
Board Member

Ms Read joined the Wesley Research Institute Board in 2021. She holds a Bachelor of Business, is an FCPA, GAICD and MAMI. Ms Read is a senior finance and commercial executive and has extensive experience within the mining and resources sector with a career spanning 30 years.



Dr John Lumley
Board Member

Dr Lumely is a colorectal surgeon practicing at The Wesley Hospital. Dr Lumely has served on the executives of the Gastroenterological Society of Australia, and the colorectal Society of Australia and New Zealand.



Dr Shanthi Kanagarajah
Board Member

Dr Kanagarajah joined the Wesley Research Institute Board in 2022. She is trained as a Geriatrician (Aged Care Specialist) and practices at the Wesley Hospital.



Mr Neal O'Connor
Board Member

Mr O'Connor was appointed a Non-Executive Director in 2020. He holds a Bachelor of Law degree and has extensive experience in the resource industry with experience in Corporate Governance and Risk Management.



Mr Craig Wildermuth
Board Member

Mr Wildermuth is the Chief Financial Officer for UnitingCare and is an integral member of the senior leadership team. He joined the Wesley Research Institute in 2021.



Ms Mairi McNeill
Board Member

Ms McNeill is the General Manager of St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital. Ms McNeill is an experienced healthcare executive who has worked in the private industry for over 25 years.



Mr Des Olling
Company Secretary

Mr Olling has a long history as a Company Secretary in private and multinational companies. He Joined Wesley Research Institute in May 2016 as a volunteer and was appointed Company Secretary in June 2018.

Wesley Research Institute Timeline

1994

Wesley Research Institute was formed and the inaugural board meeting with Mr Bill Brett Jnr appointed as Chair of the Board.

1996

Accredited as National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) official administrator of federal government grants.

Professor Julie Campbell AO appointed as the first Director.

1998

The first research fellowship awarded to Dr Tara Veveris-Lowe.

2004

Mr Martin Albrecht succeeds Dr Jon Douglas as Chair of the Board.

2001

Mr Peter Brand was appointed Chair of the Board.

2005

The Institute received a **\$10 million** grant from Atlantic Philanthropies.

1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 2001 2003 2004 2005 2007

1995

First research project funded.

1997

First research symposium 'Recent advances in Oncology Research'.

2003

Dr Jon Douglas appointed as the new Chair of the Board.

50th research project funded.

2007

Queensland Premier Peter Beattie opened the new Clinical Trials Centre and Tissue Bank funded through \$800,000 and \$1.42 million grants respectively from the Queensland Government's Smart State Research facilities Fund.

2009

Queensland Premier Anna Bligh opened the Health and Medical Research Centre funded by a \$10 million grant from the Queensland Government's Smart State Research Facilities Fund. 100th research project funded.

2015

Lyn and Bobbie Brazil (the Brazil Family Foundation) donated **\$5 million** to neurology research. The organization was renamed Wesley Medical Research. Professor David Paterson appointed CEO.

2022

New logo and change of name from Wesley Medical Research to the Wesley Research Institute. Mr Andrew Barron commences as CEO.

2013

Professor Christian Gericke was appointed CEO.

2020

Launch of the COVID-19 Rapid Response Research Centre. Mr. Charlie Sartain appointed as Chair of the board.

2009

2010

2013

2014

2015

2019

2020

2021

2022

2010

Obituary: Rosalie Martin. Rosalie was a Board member of Wesley Research Institute and a proud supporter of the Advocates Group and Advocates Events.

2019

The organisation's **25th Anniversary**. Dr Claudia Giurgiuman appointed CEO.

2014

The Wesley Research Institute merges with St Andrew's Research Institute (WSARI).
Mr Peter Allen was appointed the new Chair of the Board.

2021

\$4 million invested into Neurology Research Program. **\$1 million** invested into the Coeliac Disease and Immune Health Research Program. NaviCare Program (improving rural mental health) moves into its second phase.



PROJECT UPDATE

What is Isaac NaviCare?

The Isaac NaviCare service was officially launched on 9 November 2021 at the Moranbah Youth and Community Centre.

NaviCare's Care Navigation approach supports clients to access appropriate local or tele-mental health services and providers with the capacity and skills to meet their individual needs and care preferences. Isaac NaviCare consists of a Care Navigator, and a physical hub with a supported telehealth site where clients can receive psychological support from a telehealth provider in comfort, privacy, and with on-site technical support if needed.

The Isaac NaviCare service was co-designed with and has been widely accepted by service providers and the community, and its impact on improving mental health within the community is being felt. Clients have been supported to re-engage in the workforce, to manage mental health crises, and to reduce self-harm and drug use.

Following the 12-month pilot, an evaluation of the service uptake and impacts will be undertaken, and NaviCare will be adapted if needed based on the feedback from clients and community.

Why does this regional area need mental health care navigation?

Mental health disorders have been steadily on the rise across Australia, and the past five years have seen a doubling of mental health crisis calls to Queensland Police and Ambulance services, which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sadly, suicide rates are almost double in rural and remote areas as compared with the rest of Australia, according to the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare. Access to primary, acute and specialist care is limited in rural areas, and distance, cost, cultural barriers, difficulty finding qualified and experienced healthcare staff, and concerns about stigma all act as barriers to receiving good quality mental health care. Mental health services are notoriously difficult to navigate, and many have strict eligibility criteria or long waiting lists, meaning that people often fall through the cracks, unable to find a suitable provider.

However, in spite of these barriers, there is a strong commitment from community members, service providers, government and local businesses in the Bowen Basin region to improve the mental health of the community. NaviCare helps people to find the right support, at the right time, at a price they can afford.

“We were devastated when we were told my daughter had to wait for over a year to see a psychiatrist, and that there were no other mental health supports in the meantime. She didn’t cope well, her anxiety and depression deepened, and she began self-harming.

NaviCare was able to connect my daughter with an amazing telehealth psychologist and since then there have been so many positive changes in her mood and her behaviour ... Without NaviCare, we would still be waiting for my daughter to access a single mental health support ... I cannot thank NaviCare enough for helping us when no one else could.”

- Linda, parent to a 15-year-old help-seeker

“Feedback from our clients not only about their journey with NaviCare but also the support and follow up you have provided has been consistently positive. Prior to NaviCare, sourcing psychology support was extremely difficult, especially for our child and youth community.”

- Professional mental health provider

Who is NaviCare helping?

- Up to 28 new clients referred per month
- Currently case-managing 122 clients
- Clients who are between 3 – 73 years of age
- One in three of clients aged <18 years
- One in three clients report self-harm or suicidal ideation and half of those are <18 years
- One in four adult clients work in mining / construction
- One in three adult clients are unemployed and/or on a pension
- Seven out of 10 clients state the cost of psychology prevents access
- 13.1% of clients report having a disability
- 15.8% of clients are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- 16.4% of clients have complex psychiatric conditions e.g. Bipolar Disorder
- 8.% of clients have a neuropsychiatric disorder such as Autism Spectrum Disorder
- 41.7% of clients represent minority groups
- One in four clients have experienced significant delays in accessing a Mental Health Treatment Plan

What’s the next phase for this project?

NaviCare facilitates access to timely, appropriate and affordable mental health care for rural and remote Queenslanders. Already the demand for the service is at full capacity.

Additional hubs and Mental Health Care Navigators are desperately needed in other locations to further increase availability and accessibility of mental health support.

Wesley Research Institute plans to undertake robust evaluation to demonstrate uptake effectiveness and the impact of intervention as the final phase of this project which will commence in January 2023.

Ideally this model would be piloted over a three-year period, in other rural and remote areas to expand the footprint of the project and positive impact on communities.

Mitsubishi has been a generous long-term supporter of NaviCare and without funding this important mental health project would not have been realised. We are so grateful for our partnership with both Mitsubishi and BHP and look forward to their continued support.



Research Profile

Wesley Research Institute receives a high amount of research interest each year from health professionals affiliated with UnitingCare Hospitals (The Wesley Hospital, St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital, Buderim Private Hospital and St Stephen's Hospital in Hervey Bay), as well as from biotechnology, pharmaceutical and device manufacturing leaders worldwide seeking to leverage our expertise in clinical research to help bring their products to market.

With the funding from our generous donors, Wesley Research Institute selected a total of 11 research projects for funding in 2021. These projects were reviewed by the Wesley Research Institute Research Ethics Committee to ensure the high standard of research is met. These projects cover a breadth of areas including neurology, cancer, orthopaedics, mental health, rare disease and coeliac disease.

Thanks to our incredible donors we were able to fund almost \$1 million worth of research projects in 2021/22 as Wesley Research Institute continues to be the official research partner across the four UnitingCare Hospitals.



Coeliac Disease and Immune Health Research Program

Gluten Threshold Study

Lead Researcher: Dr James Daveson

Is there an amount of gluten that coeliac patients can tolerate?

Patients with coeliac disease can experience acute food poisoning symptoms related to an immune activation phenomenon within two hours after ingesting just five – 10 grams vital wheat gluten.

Currently in Australia and New Zealand, the uncertainty over the safe dose of gluten has led to a 'no detectable' gluten standard for food labelled 'gluten free'. However, throughout the rest of the world, 'gluten free' standard is 20 parts per million (which is higher than 'no detectable').

This study aims to determine if there is a threshold or a 'safe dose' for the amount of gluten ingested by patients with treated coeliac disease. Other potential outcomes of this study include:

- Non-invasive diagnostic test could be developed for 'at-risk' relatives
- Improved symptom changes for patients
- Identify a biomarker for coeliac disease onset

The impact of this study will enhance and strengthen programs being developed which are aimed at reducing gluten induced symptoms and intestinal injury, by understanding the amount of gluten that is toxic.

Coeliac Disease Microbiome Study

Lead Researcher: Dr James Daveson

Experienced Researcher: Associate Professor Severine Navarro (QIMRB)

How can gut microbes help with the diagnosis and symptom management of coeliac disease?

The microbes that live within our gut are now known to influence immune cell behaviour and have been associated with several diseases of the gut, like inflammatory bowel disease. However, their role in coeliac disease is not yet understood.

This project aims to better understand the relationship between gut microbes and the immune response to gluten that lead to changes in the clinical symptoms of coeliac disease.

Dental Enamel Effects Study (Industry Sponsored)

Lead Researcher: Dr James Daveson

Clinical Lead: Dr Daniel Ford

Early diagnosis of coeliac disease is important considering the lifelong effects of coeliac disease, such as three-fold increased risk of autoimmune disease (e.g. type 1 diabetes), osteoporosis, malignancy and a decreased quality of life. There is often a long delay between presentation with symptoms of coeliac disease and diagnosis, with the progression of unrecognised ill health. It is known that coeliac disease can cause developmental defects of tooth enamel in children.

This study aims to investigate the incidence of undiagnosed coeliac disease in children presenting with developmental defects of tooth enamel. 300 children with developmental defects of tooth enamel, presenting in a paediatric dental clinic will be invited to undergo a point of care test, which uses a pin-prick sample of blood and provides a screening result for coeliac disease in 10 minutes. This study is an opportunity to establish and validate a unique screening program that offers accurate and cost-effective testing that can be eventually applied in dental clinics across Australia.

Immunic Study (Industry Sponsored)

Lead Researcher: Dr James Daveson

This clinical trial will investigate a potential treatment option for coeliac disease. The only effective treatment currently available for coeliac disease is a strict, lifelong, gluten-free diet. With gluten being present in a variety of food and drinks this study brings hope to people suffering with this disease.

This study will assess the safety and tolerability of a potential new oral treatment (IMU-856) when given to people with coeliac disease. This treatment works by blocking a protein found in the gut, which is believed to play an important role in strengthening the delicate lining of the gut in order to prevent damage that might cause an inflammatory reaction. This could potentially improve quality of life for people with coeliac disease.

Rare Diseases Research

Potential new treatment for Erythropoietic Protoporphyrin (EPP) and X-Linked Protoporphyrin (XLP)(Industry Sponsored)

Lead Researcher: Professor David Coman

EPP or XLP are characterized by the accumulation of a molecule named protoporphyrin in the body, which leads to pain when the skin is exposed to sunlight. This study is testing a potential new treatment for EPP or XLP that increases melanin in the skin, which protects you from sunlight.

Ataxia-Telangiectasia (AT) Study (Funded by the Medical Research Future Fund)

Lead Researcher: Professor David Coman

A-T is a rare genetic disorder with an incidence of approximately three in one million births. Patients with A-T often end up in a wheelchair by the age of ten and have a life expectancy of 25 years. Approximately 40 children in Australia currently have A-T.

This genetic disorder leads to ataxia; the inability to walk, talk and use fine motor skills because of the neurological impairment. A-T patients also suffer from cystic-fibrosis-like lung disease due to immune deficiency as well as cancer accounting for a high death rate.

The symptoms of A-T are described as the 'worst parts' of cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis and muscular dystrophy with a high risk of cancer and lung disease. There is unfortunately no effective therapy for this illness.

This study will investigate the use of Triheptanoin, a dietary fat supplement which has the potential to boost energy metabolism and significantly improve neurological symptoms.

This trial has given families of patients the hope that they are able to have their children for longer by slowing down the progression of the disease.





Neurology Research

Parkinson's Disease

Lead Researcher: Associate Professor John O'Sullivan

Experienced Researcher: Dr Richard Gordon (UQ)

It's estimated that one in every 1,000 Australians have Parkinson's disease with approximately 40 people diagnosed everyday. The number of people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease has increased 17% in the last six years with costs to the community increasing by nearly 50%. It's the second most common neurodegenerative disease after dementia in Australia.

There are currently no effective biomarkers to accurately diagnose Parkinson's disease or predict disease progression. Pathological changes in the gut microbiota composition and metabolism occurs early in Parkinson's disease which drives neuropathology and disease progression.

Understanding and characterising the complex changes in gut microbiome composition will provide new opportunities for therapeutic targets and diagnostic biomarkers.

This project will develop new and highly precise predictive classifiers for early diagnosis and detection of Parkinson's disease based on complex microbial signatures which will inform diagnosis, staging and classification of Parkinson's disease patients in the clinic.

Motor Neurone Disease

Lead Researcher: Professor Pamela McCombe (UQ)

Experienced Researcher: Dr Aven Lee (UQ)

Motor neurone disease (MND) is a severe disease for which there is no successful therapy. Currently there is no cure for MND. The best approach in clinical practice is primary prevention through the modification of risk factors.

In a novel study previously funded by Wesley Research Institute, we have demonstrated that MND patients have increased levels of homocysteine sulfinic acid, an excitotoxin that can be produced by the gut microbiota.

In this follow up study, we will investigate if the increases in these excitotoxins change during disease progression and correlate with survival. These toxins could contribute to the onset of MND. It's possible that eliminating these gut toxins could lead to better patient outcomes.

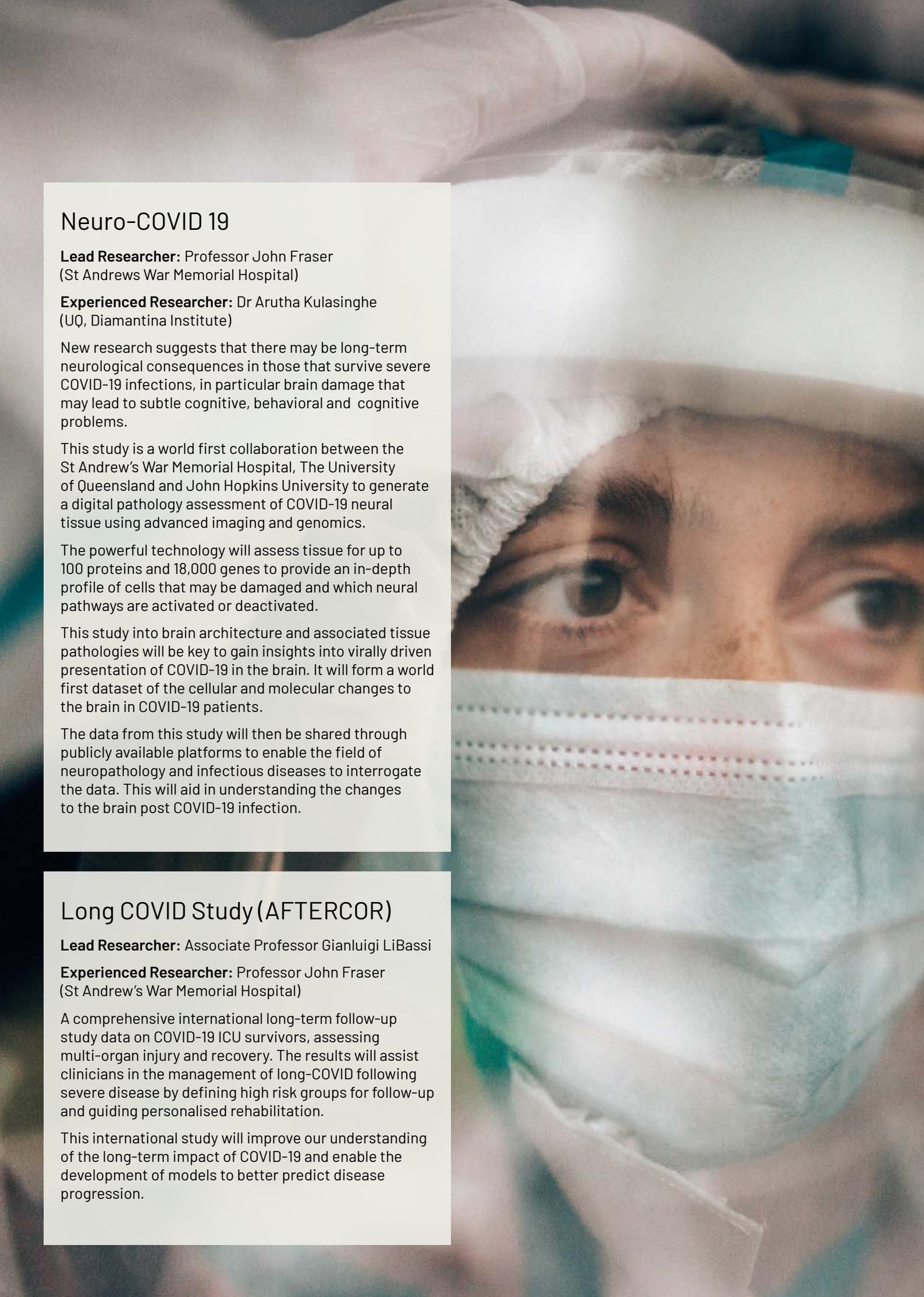
Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis or Frontotemporal Dementia (Industry Sponsored)

Lead Researcher: Dr Robert Henderson

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) and Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD) are rare and debilitating neurodegenerative diseases that have no known cure.

A specific gene expansion (C9orf72) is thought to lead to the build up of toxic molecules and proteins, decrease in the amount of normal protein, and decrease in the amount of healthy neurons in the brain and spinal cord.

This study aims to test a specific treatment developed by Wave Life Sciences that targets the molecules and protein's genetic information to reduce the creation of disease-causing factions. This may reduce the generation and build-up of those toxic molecule and proteins, which study researchers believe may help treat specific forms of ALS or FTD.



Neuro-COVID 19

Lead Researcher: Professor John Fraser
(St Andrews War Memorial Hospital)

Experienced Researcher: Dr Arutha Kulasinghe
(UQ, Diamantina Institute)

New research suggests that there may be long-term neurological consequences in those that survive severe COVID-19 infections, in particular brain damage that may lead to subtle cognitive, behavioral and cognitive problems.

This study is a world first collaboration between the St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital, The University of Queensland and John Hopkins University to generate a digital pathology assessment of COVID-19 neural tissue using advanced imaging and genomics.

The powerful technology will assess tissue for up to 100 proteins and 18,000 genes to provide an in-depth profile of cells that may be damaged and which neural pathways are activated or deactivated.

This study into brain architecture and associated tissue pathologies will be key to gain insights into virally driven presentation of COVID-19 in the brain. It will form a world first dataset of the cellular and molecular changes to the brain in COVID-19 patients.

The data from this study will then be shared through publicly available platforms to enable the field of neuropathology and infectious diseases to interrogate the data. This will aid in understanding the changes to the brain post COVID-19 infection.

Long COVID Study (AFTERCOR)

Lead Researcher: Associate Professor Gianluigi LiBassi

Experienced Researcher: Professor John Fraser
(St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital)

A comprehensive international long-term follow-up study data on COVID-19 ICU survivors, assessing multi-organ injury and recovery. The results will assist clinicians in the management of long-COVID following severe disease by defining high risk groups for follow-up and guiding personalised rehabilitation.

This international study will improve our understanding of the long-term impact of COVID-19 and enable the development of models to better predict disease progression.

Chris Barnard Memorial Cancer Program

Pancreatic Cancer

Lead Researcher: Associate Professor David Wong (I-MED)

Experienced Researcher: Dr Sepinoud Firouzmand (I-MED)

Pancreatic cancer is a very aggressive cancer, often associated with poor prognosis usually due to patients being diagnosed when the disease is advanced.

Cancer staging / re-staging is the process of determining how much cancer is in the body and where it's located. This process is critical in ensuring patients receive the most appropriate treatment for their cancer. This is done by a variety of methods including using a tracer in PET / CT imaging. However pancreatic cancer is notoriously difficult to image using this method. At this time there is no alternative tracer for sensitive and specific imaging of pancreatic cancer.

This study aims to establish a useful imaging tracer for pancreatic cancer patients. This will mean these patients will have an effective imaging option which will better inform their treatment planning, compared to current standard care.

Skin Cancer

Lead Researcher: Dr Agnieszka Malczewski (ICON Cancer Centre)

Experienced Researcher: Associate Professor Jim Coward (ICON Cancer Centre)

Queensland has the highest incidence of melanoma worldwide, with melanoma disproportionately affecting young healthy people. 80 melanoma patients will benefit from core work identifying cancer immunotherapy failure.

Currently there are no robust biomarkers to predict who will benefit from cancer immunotherapy and there are no therapeutic options available to overcome cancer immunotherapy resistance.

This will be a longitudinal study with analysis performed at the baseline, six weeks and six months. The study will lead to developing a biomarker that aims to benefit all future patients receiving cancer immunotherapy.



Gynaecological Cancer

Lead Researcher: Dr Janine Porter-Steele (Wesley Choices Cancer Support Centre)

Experienced Researcher: Professor Sandie McCarthy (UQ)

The ACUMEN trial aims to enhance the health-related quality of life and exercise self-efficacy for Australian women treated for gynecological cancer, particularly for patients in rural and remote areas. This study will assess the feasibility of a telehealth delivered exercise intervention for women with gynecological cancer.

The cost and clinical effectiveness data from this feasibility trial and the proposed national telehealth trial will evidence that exercise mitigates the considerable personal and social costs of cancer treatment experienced by the target cohort. Armed with robust trial data and in partnership with peak cancer organisations, this trial may lead to an amendment to the Medicare Benefits Scheme to enable exercise physiology to become affordable and standard cancer recovery care.

Orthopaedics Research

SMART ankle feasibility study

Lead Researcher: Professor Michael Schuetz

Experienced Researcher: Dr Panagiotis Barlas (Jamieson Trauma Institute)

Ankle fractures are a common lower limb fracture and lead to important limitations in activities and adverse events. Available statistics for the period 2015 to 2020, show that 7,570 ankle fracture surgical repairs were performed in Queensland.

At present, there are no optimal standardised protocols for ankle fracture rehabilitation. Studies suggest that weight-bearing is a key feature of successful rehabilitation. To improve rehabilitation outcomes we aim to use a weight-bearing monitoring sensor to record patient compliance with rehabilitation protocols.

Patients will be fitted with an Aircast AirSelect standard walker boot (or similar) in the operating theatre following surgical repair of an ankle fracture.

The technology allows for these interventions to also be delivered remotely, reducing the need for clinical time and improving patient experience and adherence to rehabilitation regimes. Patients will benefit from interactive, personalised protocols, ensuring optimal rehabilitation and better long-term outcomes.

Improving Patient Outcomes Research

Improving Anaesthesia Management Strategies

Lead Researcher: Associate Professor Susan Humphreys

Experienced Researcher: Professor John Fraser (St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital)

This study aims to investigate high-flow oxygen in shared airway anaesthesia.

Patients undergoing shared airway procedures will benefit through the determination of which airway management procedure (high-flow oxygen or standard care) results in the most favourable patient outcomes.

The results of this project will highlight which management strategy is most beneficial to patients in terms of physiological response and self-perceived satisfaction which then incorporated into patient care may reduce the life-threatening hypoxemia and improve outcomes such as ICU admission or even cardiac arrest.

This research has the potential to influence best practices for airway management in shared airway procedures around the world once published in a peer-review anaesthetic journal.



Knee Arthroplasty Study

Lead Researcher: Dr Sue Clark

Experienced Researcher: Professor Robert Ware (Griffith University)

The study aims to improve clinical outcomes for all patients undergoing total knee arthroplasty. Over 65,000 surgeries are performed annually in Australia, and this is expected to increase by 270% by 2030 due to an ageing and morbidly obese population.

Proposed benefits to patients:

Orthopaedic guidelines for the use of tranexamic acid in total knee arthroplasty are not yet complete, meaning that each surgeon is currently using the drug in a different manner. As total knee arthroplasty is such a common and expensive surgery, it is important to define the optimal management in each step of the patient's clinical pathway, including the dose and duration of tranexamic acid.

Financial Summary

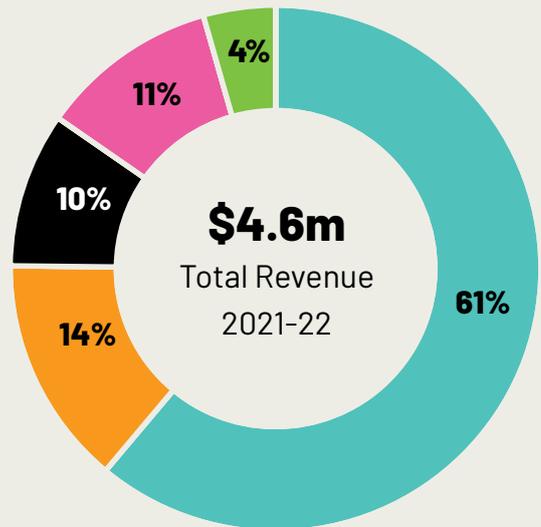
Wesley Research Institute is in the final year of its three-year strategic plan. As the organisation continues to pursue collaborative opportunities to deliver its research mission, it is taking an entrepreneurial and innovative approach to building sustainable growth.

The Institute continues to enhance the extensive risk management framework, embedding significant mitigation and governance strategies. Wesley Research Institute is committed to building highly efficient operations, ensuring the generous funds received help achieve its ultimate mission.

Income

Total revenue in 2021-22 was \$4.6 million, of which 61% came from gifts, donations and sponsorship.

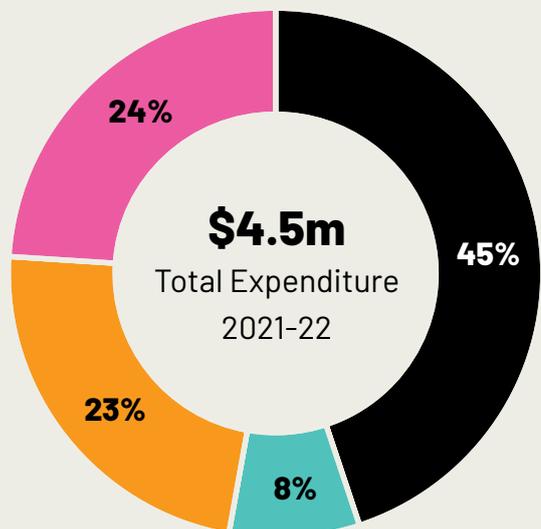
- 61% Gifts, Donations & Sponsorships
- 14% Grants
- 10% Fee for Service
- 11% Investment Income
- 4% Facilities & Other Income



Expenditure

Total expenditure for the 2021-22 year was \$4.5 million, relative to \$3.02 million in 2020-21. The total reported surplus was \$92,000 and \$2.87 million in 2020-21.

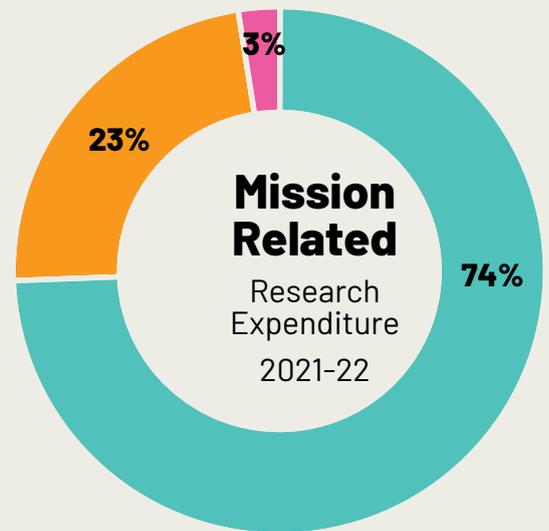
- 45% Research
- 8% Fundraising & Marketing
- 23% Investment Activity
- 24% Corporate Services



Financial Summary

Research Expenditure

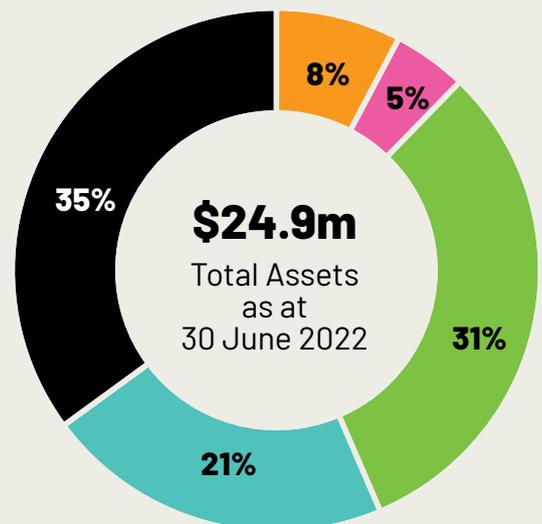
\$1,554,352	Investigator Initiated Research
\$483,068	Sponsored Clinical Trials
\$52,812	Biobank



Assets

Total assets as of 30 June 2022 were \$24.9 million, relative to \$25.3 million in 2020-21. Total liabilities were \$537,000, with net assets totalling \$24.4 million as of 30 June 2022.

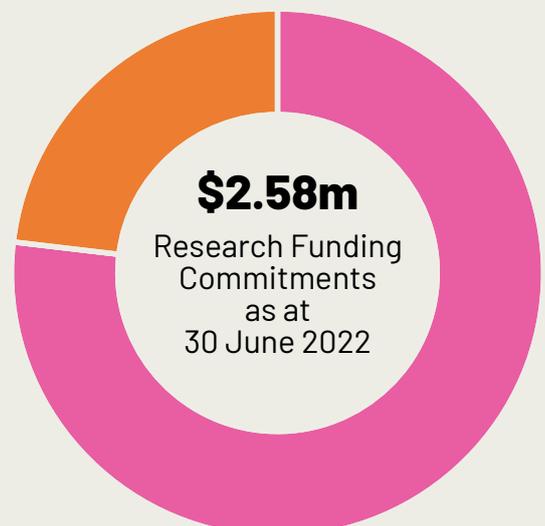
35%	Investments
8%	Cash
5%	Trade Receivables & Other Assets
31%	Property, Plant & Equipment
21%	Term Deposits



Research Funding Commitments

Wesley Research institute has \$2.58 million in research funding commitments to Board-approved research projects.

\$1,982,643	2022-23
\$596,281	2023-24



Donor Profiles

Brazil Family Foundation

Southern Queensland mixed farmer, investor and philanthropist, Franklin 'Lyn' Brazil said he never thought of himself as the kind of bloke to become a Member of the Order of Australia (AM). He received the title as part of the 2022 Queens Birthday Honours list for his service to medical research and agriculture. Through hard work, good planning and decision making Mr Brazil progressed from a small poultry farm to four cropping properties and two cattle operations.

Alongside Mr Brazil during his grains industry work was his wife Bobbie, herself an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) medal recipient. In addition to serving as the University of Southern Queensland Chancellor from 2006 to 2014, Mrs Brazil was the chair of the Australian Landcare Council, and a director of the Condamine Catchment Management Association.

The Brazil Family Foundation contributes to many medical and scientific research organisations, including our own Wesley Research Institute and we were fortunate to receive from it a very generous \$1 million donation this year towards the Coeliac Disease and Immune Health Research Program.

Helen Barnard

Helen's husband Chris, was a leader and a friend, a mentor and always curious to know more. Chris' generous spirit, diligent focus and persistence helped to support Wesley Research Institute to where we are today. We remember the tremendous impact Chris Barnard had on so many boards, community groups and the people of Queensland.

Wesley Research Institute benefitted from Chris Barnard's active service as a board member from 2009 to 2017. He was a dynamic and valued member of a number of committees. He was passionate about the impact that medical research can have, which was inspiring.

As a leading financial advisor and stockbroker in Brisbane, Chris introduced potential donors to Wesley Research Institute whose support has been absolutely crucial in funding vital clinical research. His contribution to the Institute was far wider, in governance and financial oversight.

Most recently we thank Helen for her generous contribution towards the Chris Barnard Cancer Research Memorial Fund, which is supporting some impactful research projects across breast, gynaecological, skin and pancreatic cancers.

"Chris' professional acumen and strong community spirit was recognised by all who had the privilege of working with him."

- Anne Cross, Former CEO of UnitingCare.

Albrecht Family Foundation

Martin and Fran Albrecht have been long term supporters of Wesley Research Institute. Not only was Martin former Chairman of the Board, but he was also awarded Companion in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AC) in 2002, and the Centenary Medal in 2003. Martin is also a recipient of Honorary Doctorates from University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology, University of South Australia and Griffith University.

We are so honoured to have the Albrechts as donors and Martin as Patron, not only for their generous philanthropic support but for their tireless advocacy for Wesley Research Institute across government, industries and with corporate partners.

Vidyajey Family Foundation

Wesley Research Institute is very grateful to the Vidyajey Foundation for the ongoing and generous support they have provided since 2016. We would like to thank the family, JeyJey, Vidya and Sandra for your commitment to the work we do and the research that they enable.

Throughout the pandemic they have remained steadfast supporters and allowed important research projects to progress. We are so grateful for generous donors who continue to enable research and provide positive impact for patients through medical research.

Hugh Sheardown AM

Diagnosed as a coeliac himself nearly 20 years ago, Mr Sheardown has always strived to help others with the condition. For his commitment to the cause, he was recognised with a Member of the Order of Australia in the 2017 Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Mr Sheardown has spent much of his retirement in various roles with Coeliac Queensland and Coeliac Australia, including stints as president of both organisations.

"I was in a fortunate position to be able to retire and wanted to use my management and financial expertise to assist the organisation and other coeliac members," he said.

We would like to thank Hugh and Bev Sheardown for their generous ongoing support of Wesley Research Institute, particularly for coeliac research.



Photo: The University of Queensland

Get Involved



We would love to hear from you

Now that the pandemic is (almost) behind us we can welcome back our volunteers to Wesley Research Institute.

Please reach out and tell us if you are interested in volunteering, or if you would like to share your story. Your experience may help others whether you have participated in a clinical trial or have been treated by one of our doctors. We'd love to hear from you!

Email: enquiries@wesleyresearch.org.au



Donor Honor Roll



Bequest

Estate of the Late Betty Davies

Over \$50,000

Mitsubishi Development

BHP

Helen Barnard

Brazil Family Foundation

The Donald and Joan Wilson
Foundation

Hugh Sheardown, AM

Albrecht Family Foundation

Vidyajey Family Foundation

Over \$10,000

The Sartain Family Foundation

JJ Richards & Sons P/L

The Edward Bullock Endowment

Catalano Family Foundation

John A. Allan

"I give regularly through Wesley Research Institute to drive positive research based changes in patient care. As a cancer survivor, I want to help support research for this terrible disease. Investing in patient oriented medical research has proved to be great value for money and the best way to witness the impact of my donations during my lifetime."

- Maureen Stevenson

Over \$1,000

Ian Dickinson, AM

Wal W Edgar

John Foote

Russell W Stitz, AM

Cathryn Mittelheuser, AM

Maureen Stevenson

Louise Etlin

Daphne D. Dunn

Troy Gianduzzo

Peter J. Allen

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Stack Family Foundation

Viti M Packer

Tony Hogg

Arnold Dodd

Rosemount Retirement Community

APS Foundation

Borgert Family Endowment CEF

Management Account

Mick Cranny

James C Blackburne

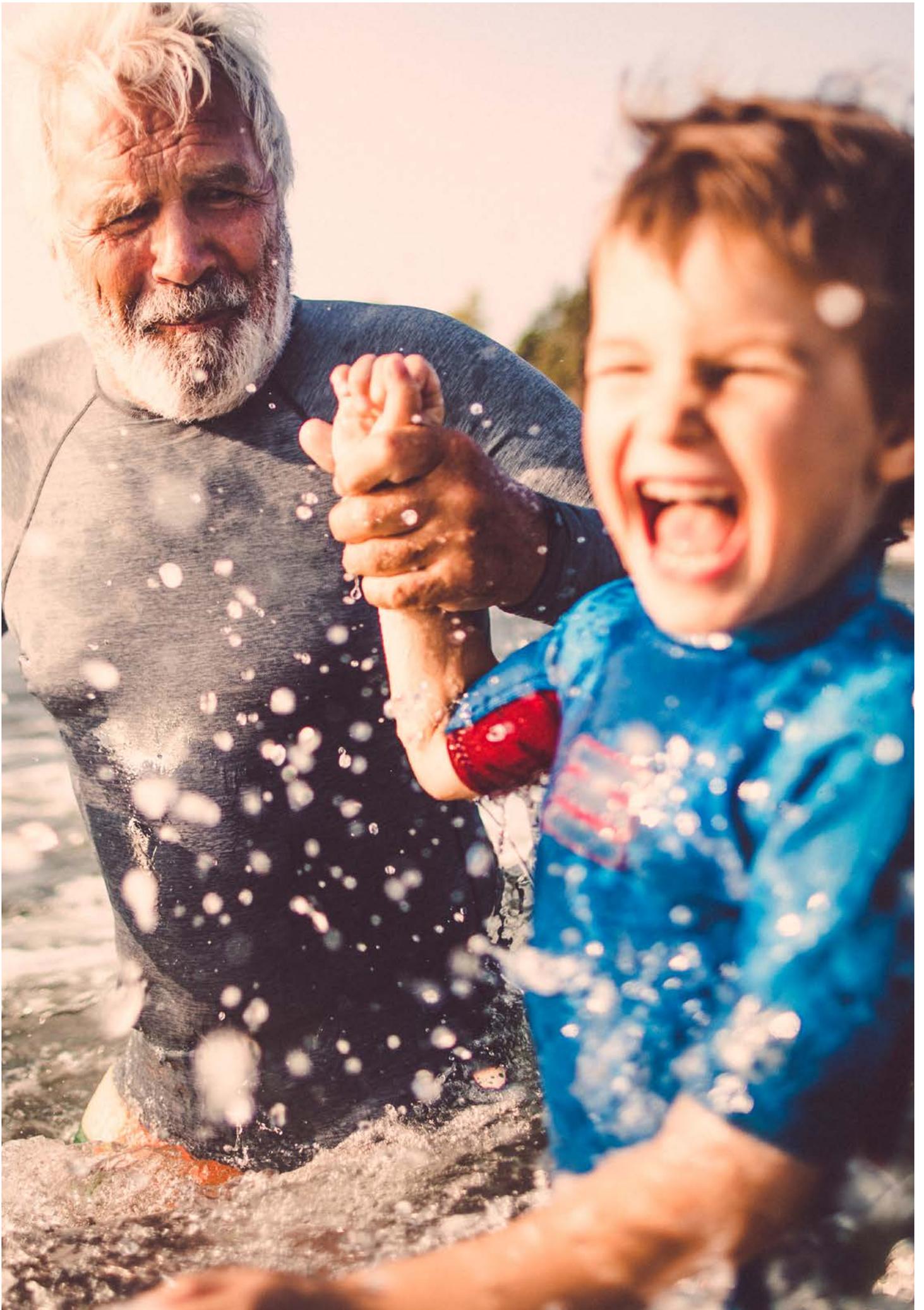
James Nicklin

Grants

Coeliac Australia

Gambling Community Benefit Fund

Cancer Council Qld – Clinical Trial
Support Scheme



A Legacy of Hope. A gift in your Will can save lives.

Help ensure that groundbreaking medical research is translated to into real and valuable treatments.



Your gift is precious. We will make it count.

Wesley Research Institute was established 28 years ago and continues to be the official research organisation of UnitingCare. We only invest in research that has been rigorously assessed for scientific merit by an Independent Research Committee. Studies have shown that every dollar invested in research returns \$3.90 in benefits to the population.

We support research initiated by people on the frontline who really know the value of clinical research – the doctors, nurses and allied health professionals in our hospitals. They are driven by a desire to give patients better treatment options and improved quality of life for a range of diseases and health issues.

If you're already thinking about your personal legacy and the possibility of including Wesley Research Institute in your Will, we can't thank you enough for considering us. Naturally, looking after your family and friends comes first. All we ask is that after remembering them you would consider leaving a gift in your Will to Wesley Research Institute.

Most gifts in Wills (or bequests) are made by ordinary, hard working people who want to make a positive difference to their community. A gift in your Will to Wesley Research Institute will help ensure that groundbreaking medical research is translated to into real and valuable treatments.

How to leave a gift in your Will

A gift in your Will to Wesley Research Institute will fund critical research that achieves a lasting impact for generations to come. There are different ways you can leave a gift in your Will:

Percentage share gift

This is the most flexible option, and you do not need to know how much your estate will be worth just the share you'd like to leave to each beneficiary.

Residual gift

Another way to contribute is to leave a percentage of what is left after you have provided for your loved ones.

Pecuniary gift

You may wish to leave a fixed sum of money (known as a pecuniary bequest).

Specific Purpose gift

You may wish to leave a gift for a specific type of research or program.

For more information or to discuss leaving a gift in your Will please contact:

Call Natalie Shillitto on (07) 3721 1500 or email natalie.shillitto@wesleyresearch.org.au

Support Research



YES, I'll support vital medical research

Please accept a donation of:

\$100 \$250 \$500 Other \$_____

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible

Please find enclosed

Cheque Money Order (payable to Wesley Research Institute)

Please debit my:

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Card Number _____ Expiry Date _____ / _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

Alternatively you can donate **online via bank transfer:**

Bank: ANZ Bank BSB: 014 272 Account: 8365 649 65 Ref: Surname

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Name _____

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smart phone!

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Wesley Research Institute
PO BOX 499 Toowong QLD 4066

Please call (07) 3721 1500 with any queries or
visit www.wesleyresearch.org.au





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RESEARCH INSTITUTE



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