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SAVE THE DATE: 2024 National Pain Week Event

Tuesday, 3 September, 10am - 4 pm
The Sibyl Centre, Women's College, Camperdown

Sydney Pain Consortium is pleased to invite you to save the date for our signature event during National Pain Week in 2024. Stay tuned for more information!

[Become a member of Sydney Pain Consortium](#)

NEWS & EVENTS

Leadership opportunity - FMH Networks EMCR Showcase 2024

Sydney Pain Consortium is seeking Working Group members to put together the SPC session program for the 2024 FMH Networks Early and Mid-Career Researcher (EMCR) Showcase, our major, multiple-day event to be held in late November 2024 (dates TBC). The Showcase will focus on the achievements and successes of our emerging researchers and will include plenty of stimulating presentations, career-building workshops and networking mixers.

The SPC EMCR Showcase Working Group (WG) supported by the FMH Networks Team and led by Dr Noemi Meylakh, will be responsible for putting together the program specifically for the SPC session. Meetings will be set by the WG as required and there will be plenty of templates and resources available to use.

This is a great leadership opportunity to get involved with our SPC community!

To express your interest please contact [Sydney Pain Consortium](#) by COB 4 April 2024.

Postgraduate Research Scholarship opportunity - Early Pain Intervention after Knee Replacement

This Scholarship has been established to provide financial assistance to a PhD student who is undertaking research in the development and adaption of a model-of-care pathway to treat pain after knee replacement within the Early Pain Intervention after Knee Replacement (EPIK) research program. It is valued at **\$55,000** per annum and is tenable for up to 3 years.

Find out more info [here](#)>

Applications open! 2024 Carer's Scholarship Round 2 and last chance for Franklin Women sponsored mentee place

This innovative and highly flexible [2024 Franklin Women Carer's Scholarship](#) aims to alleviate the financial and logistical barriers tied to primary caring responsibilities, enabling individuals working in the health and medical research ecosystem to fully participate in valuable career opportunities. Applications are open for opportunities taking place between June 1 and December 31, 2024. **The deadline for submissions is April 30, 2024.**

As you know, Franklin Women sponsors mentee places in our cross-organisational mentoring programs for mid-career women not studying or working at a current participating organisation. If this is for you, please submit your application via our [website](#) by **Thursday 28 March**.



How effective are opioid medications for cancer pain?

The world's largest review on opioid medicines for cancer pain, led by researchers in the School of Public Health and Sydney Musculoskeletal Health, has found it is unclear whether some commonly used opioid medicines are better than a placebo and suggests that non-opioid medicines, including aspirin, may be as effective as opioids. "The lack of evidence comparing opioid medicines to placebo for cancer pain probably reflects the ethical and logistical

challenges associated with carrying out such trials. Yet these trials are necessary to guide clinical decision making,” says lead researcher [Dr Christina Abdel Shaheed](#). [Read more>](#)

Implementing Early Identification and Treatment of Nerve Damage in Cancer Patients

A Sydney Health Partners-supported project has raised hopes of better outcomes for cancer patients who suffer nerve damage because of chemotherapy treatment.

The project, which was part-funded by an SHP Implementation Science pilot grant, has proven that better screening of patients for early signs of Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy (CIPN) can be routinely performed in clinical practice.

Now the researchers are investigating how to combine the early screening with better treatment for patients suffering CIPN and overcome the practical barriers to the wider implementation of the improved clinical pathway in New South Wales.

University of Sydney [Associate Professor Susanna Park](#) and medical oncologist at Chris O’Brien Lifehouse, [Associate Professor Peter Grimison](#), began the project because CIPN is under-recognised and under-treated. [Read More >](#)

Tinnitus: Overconnected Neurons?

Thursday 28 March, 11:00am – 12:00pm | Kolling Level 5 Auditorium

Chronic tinnitus is the perception of sound in the head or ears, and it is associated with hearing loss and noise exposure. Epidemiological studies have shown that tinnitus is a heritable condition, particularly bilateral tinnitus in women. Human genetic research has uncovered the changes in the DNA that increase the risk to develop tinnitus and rare mutations in some genes, including ANK2 have been associated with severe tinnitus.

This seminar is hosted by the Kolling Priority Research Area, Neuroscience and Pain co-chairs, Professors [Sarah Hilmer](#) and [Paul Glare](#) with presenter [Professor Jose Antonio Lopez Escamez](#). [For more information>](#)

- [2024 Australian Pain Society 44th Annual Scientific Meeting](#), 21-24 April 2024

PUBLICATION

Chemotherapy-induced peripheral neurotoxicity (CIPN) affects the quality of life of cancer survivors. However, the impact of pain on symptom burden remains undefined. This study aimed to define differences in the clinical symptom profile of patients with painful and nonpainful CIPN.

- Fawaz Mayez Mahfouz, Tiffany Li, Hannah C Timmins, Lisa G Horvath, Michelle Harrison, Peter Grimison, Gavin Marx, David Goldstein, Susanna B Park. Impact of Pain on Symptom Burden in Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neurotoxicity. Journal of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network. 2024 Feb 15;22(2):108-116. doi: [10.6004/jnccn.2023.7083](https://doi.org/10.6004/jnccn.2023.7083)

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

EMCR Spotlight: Dr Lewis Crawford

[Dr Lewis Crawford](#) completed his PhD in 2023 with [Professor Luke Henderson](#) investigating how the human brain can alter perceived pain through non-pharmacological mechanisms. This led to an in-depth exploration of the functional activation and connectivity of brainstem structures, which connect the spinal cord and cortex and are responsible for the release of neurochemicals necessary to modulate pain. Now 10 months into his first postdoc, his research heavily focusses on better understanding the neurobiological underpinnings of chronic neuropathic pain, and how these same brainstem structures may be targeted or better harnessed to guide optimal treatment and understanding of these debilitating disorders.



What are you working on at the moment?

Through collaboration with the University of Toronto we are commencing a multimodal investigation combining assessment of peripheral pain markers, regional blood flow, and functional brain activity to dissect the determinants of symptom severity and longevity of chronic orofacial neuropathic pain. We collect these data at Neuroscience Research Australia in Randwick, and process each data type in house at the Brain and Mind centre within Professor Luke Henderson's Neural Imaging Laboratory and alongside Professor Kevin Keay's Laboratory of Neuroimmunology and Behaviour.

You are only as good as how well you can communicate your findings to others – no matter how exciting you think it is, if you can't help others to see what excites you, they have little reason to listen.

Connect with Dr Crawford on Twitter [@LewisCrawford63](#)

Share your news!

A call-out to all Sydney Pain Consortium members! Share your research news, events and recent publications with our community. Please email pain.consortium@sydney.edu.au



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