

Technological innovation wins in HCF Research Foundation and RACGP Annual Research Grants

Sydney, 9 August 2016 – The HCF Research Foundation, in partnership with The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), has awarded \$120,000 in research grants to two researchers investigating innovation in primary care.

Every year, the HCF Research Foundation co-funds two research grants with The RACGP Foundation, with the aim of improving access to health services.

Out of 17 applications, from general practitioners and general practice registrars, the two successful applicants and their topics of research are:

- Dr Tejas (TJ) Kanhere and Scientia Professor Mark Harris, University of New South Wales (UNSW) - *Accelerometers in Monitoring Physical Activity in Primary Care (AMPACe)*
- Professor Moyez Jiwa, University of Notre Dame (Melbourne Clinical School), co-investigators Dr Alan Leeb, Dr Jonathan Darby - *Informing policy for patients who have been prescribed antibiotics for an upper respiratory tract infection*

Both of the winning proposals included innovative technological applications.

Dr Tejas Kanhere and Scientia Prof. Mark Harris, from UNSW, identified a practice issue in monitoring and managing physical inactivity in patients. The study aims to use the simple technology of accelerometers, or activity trackers worn on the wrist, which can provide both real-time and historical data given as a step count. In a trial of 60 patients in NSW with a BMI of 25 and above, the study hopes to demonstrate accelerometers can be a useful tool in promoting physical activity in at-risk patients.

The second grant, awarded to Prof. Jiwa, Dr Leeb and Dr Darby, will also use technology for practice monitoring and management in relation to Upper Respiratory Tract Infections (URTIs). The grant recipients identified that URTIs are a difficult condition for GPs to manage patients' correct administration of antibiotics. Their study will facilitate real-time surveillance of patients from 10 general practices who have been prescribed antibiotics for an URTI, with the ultimate aim to enhance the evidence-based policy on deferred antibiotic prescribing for self-limiting URTIs and also reduce the number of people prescribed antibiotics inappropriately.

Professor Peter Mudge, RACGP Foundation Patron, said: "The role of general practice and research is as important as ever. These grants aim to enable developments which will ultimately support general practitioners in delivering the highest level of quality health care".

HCF Research Foundation Chair Lisa McIntyre said: "With a timely focus on technological innovation, our winners this year are testament to the commitment to ongoing improvement in health care practice. The HCF Research Foundation looks forward to seeing the outcomes".

HCF's Managing Director, Shaun Larkin, added: "Digital health initiatives are a key part of HCF's vision for the future of health care, so it's exciting to see how the winning proposals will add to our current services. We're proud to see the HCF Research Foundation and RACGP grants continue to support research which will benefit not only general practice, but the health outcomes of Australians now and into the future".

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About the HCF Research Foundation

The HCF Research Foundation, now in its 16th year, was established in 2000 as the HCF Health and Medical Research Foundation to fund health and medical research for the benefit of all Australians.

In 2008, the focus was moved towards health services research, an area of research which does not receive large funding dollars from other sources. In 2013 the name was simplified to HCF Research Foundation.

The HCF Research Foundation was originally established with a donation from The Hospitals Contribution Fund of Australia Limited (HCF). While HCF has generously donated money to establish the Foundation's current corpus of \$50 million, the HCF Research Foundation operates independently and with specific focus on funding health services research that can benefit all 24 million Australians.

Visit the HCF Research Foundation website: www.hcf.com.au/about-us/hcf-foundation/

About the RACGP

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) was established in 1958 and is Australia's peak general practice representative organisation.

The RACGP has more than 32,000 members working in or towards a career in general practice across metropolitan, regional and rural areas of the country. Almost 9 in every 10 GPs are with the RACGP.

More than 134 million general practice consultations take place annually in Australia.

Visit the RACGP website: www.racgp.org.au