ASSBI Committee Report

EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT

The 2015 Membership renewal was due on 1st July 2014. Please renew or join now.

The 2015 AGM will be held in Melbourne at 3.45pm on 15th May after the Workshop at the Adina Apartment Hotel. Drinks will be provided afterwards so please turn up and support your Association.

Cheers

Margaret Eagers-Rickit, EO

SOCIAL MEDIA

Like us on Facebook, Follow ASSBI on Twitter
Join Psychwire and follow ASSBI. Become a contact on LinkedIn

NEWS

RESEARCH PUBLISHED – Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders
Savage, S.A., Piguet, O. & Hodges, J.R.
Cognitive intervention in Semantic Dementia: maintaining words over time
What the study is about
Patients with semantic dementia (SD) experience marked difficulties in naming and understanding everyday words. These impairments impede their ability to participate in everyday household conversations, leading to frustration and social withdrawal. While there is no cure or medication available to help stop or slow the progression of this disease, research has shown that these patients can improve their naming ability through cognitive intervention. In the majority of studies, these participants demonstrate good retention one month later. Beyond this time these improvements with trained words often fade, yet no studies have investigated how to maintain performance. The aim of the current study was to investigate maintenance of words over a 6-month
period and identify how training improvements may be prolonged

**What we did**

Nine SD patients completed a 2-month online word training program to re-learn the name of familiar, household objects. Each program of words was tailored to the individual and included nouns from categories such as food, clothing, and household appliances. Participants were trained on two sets of words, where each set consisted of approximately 30 words. Words were trained using a basic “look, listen, repeat” procedure while viewing an online slide show that paired colour photographs of objects with the associated word. Following the end of the training period, naming performance was monitored over 6 months: firstly for 2 months without further training, followed by a further 4 months, where revision training was provided if required.

**What we have found**

All 9 participants improved their naming immediately post-intervention (p < 0.001). After 2 months without practice, significant declines occurred in 4 participants. To sustain at least 80% of their post intervention performance 6 months later, 4 participants required minimal revision, 2 required regular revision, with the remaining 3 participants requiring no revision. During this period, group results indicated some decline in words that were initially known, but were not trained. Thus results showed that improvements in naming can be sustained in SD patients, with the support of less intense, but ongoing revision. Training words that are still known appears to help prolong memory of these words.

**What next**

Next steps are to convert the online program into a format that is accessible and available to patients far and wide, by building an app-based version. This version would be designed to allow families to build and modify programs themselves, providing a flexible tool for use over time.

**Full Reference**


Dr Michelle Kelly

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**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

If you would like to see someone give a workshop in your State or know of anyone coming to Australia in 2015 or 2016 who would like to give a workshop or webinar for ASSBI members, please email admin@assbi.com.au and we will endeavour to organise a full/half day workshop or a one hour webinar.

**Current Webinar Series**

The 2015 Webinar series is now available and the next one will go to air on 9th June with Prof Roy Kessels. You can register for each (or all) of the webinars now.

- **9 June:** Assessment of visuospatial memory on clinical practice by Prof Roy Kessels
- **11 August:** Prospective memory by Prof David Shum
- **13 October:** Understanding self-identity change after brain injury and implications for clinical practice by A/Prof Tamara Ownsworth
- **8 December:** Cognitive Interventions for Mild Cognitive Impairment by Dr Maurice Finn

**NOW AVAILABLE ON DEMAND**

Improving first impressions: Social skills training for adults with brain injury by Prof Skye McDonald

Overview of the neuropsychology of MS: for health professionals working clinically with people with MS by Ms Wendy Longley

**IMPORTANT:** Don’t forget that the webinar is for watching only and the material is not to be used in its entirety to train staff in your organisation. The speakers put a lot of time into preparing these webinars for YOUR personal professional development

**REGISTER NOW**

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**CONFERENCES**

**INS/ASSBI 5th Pacific Rim Conference**

The ASSBI 38th Annual Brain Impairment Conference is collaborating with the International Neuropsychological Society’s mid-year Meeting on 1-4 July 2015 and will be held in Sydney at the Sofitel Sydney Wentworth and is convened by Prof Jennie Ponsford. Keynote speakers and ½ day workshop presenters are: Professors Leeanne Carew (AUS), Terrie Inder (USA), Mark Sherer (USA) and A/Prof Angelle Sander (USA).

Workshops will also be given by Profs Roy Kessels and Luciano Fasotti (NL) and Prof Jan Copeland, Prof Murat Yucel (AUS) and A/Prof Raul Gonzalez (USA).

Prof Barbara A Wilson (UK), A/Prof Kirrie Ballard (AUS) and Dr Hayley Bennett (AUS) will present 1 hour breakfast workshops.

Prof John Hodges (UK & AUS) will give a keynote address, A/Prof Paul McCrory will give the Opening Address, A/Prof Tamara Ownsworth (AUS) and Dr Ann Watts from South Africa will give the ASSBI and INS Presidential Addresses. Over 400 abstracts were submitted for the conference and the complete program is now available.

We have been showcasing the speakers in our newsletters. To download a flyer and to get information on the conference as it comes through go to the ASSBI website

**A/Prof Angelle Sander**

Keynote and ½ day Morning Workshop (WS3)

Ph.D., FACRM, Associate Professor of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Baylor College of Medicine and Director, Brain Injury Research Center, TIRR Memorial Hermann, Houston, Texas, USA. Angelle M. Sander, Ph.D. is Associate Professor with tenure in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Baylor College of Medicine, Director of TIRR Memorial Hermann’s Brain Injury Research Center, and Senior Scientist on the TIRR Research Council. She is the Project Director for the NIDRR-funded Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Developing Strategies to Foster Community Integration and
Professor Jan Copeland (PhD, BSc Psych (Hons)) is the founding Director of the National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre (NCPIC) at UNSW Australia since 2007. She has worked in the addictions field for 25 years and is best known for her research developing and testing brief interventions for the management of cannabis use disorder among adults and adolescents. She has around 300 publications, half of which are in international peer-reviewed journals. She has recently written a book, with her colleagues Sally Rooke and Etty Matalon, for Allen & Unwin on cannabis that is to be released in early 2015. Her research and translational work has attracted more than $38M in funding. Professor Copeland has a long standing commitment to service with community agencies and is currently Chair of the Drug and Alcohol Multicultural Education Centre and a director on the Board of Management of The McGrath Foundation’s Odyssey House. Among other editorial roles she is an Associate Editor of Drug and Alcohol Dependence. She is a member of the US College on Problems of Drug Dependence and Chairs their international research committee. Additional memberships include the Australian Psychological Society, International Cannabinoid Research Society, Australian Professional Society on Alcohol and Drugs and the International Society for Research on Internet Interventions.

Prof Jan Copeland will be giving a half day workshop entitled: O f Brains and Bongs: The Neuropsychology of Cannabis Use Disorders and their Treatment with A/Prof Raul Gonzalez and Prof Murat Yucel

A/Prof Raul Gonzalez
½ day Afternoon Workshop (WSS)

Dr. Gonzalez is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Florida International University (FIU) and Director of the Substance Use and HIV Neuropsychology (SUHN) Lab. He is a faculty member of the Department of Psychology Clinical Science Program and the Center for Children and Families. Dr. Gonzalez graduated with a degree in Clinical Psychology from the San Diego State University / University of California, San Diego Joint Doctoral Program, where he specialized in Neuropsychology and then continued to the University of Illinois at Chicago for internship, post-doc, and his first faculty position. He has approximately 15 years of experience conducting research on neurocognitive contributors and consequences of substance use and addiction among individuals with and without HIV, with a focus on cannabis. His research efforts have been generously funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse / National Institutes of Health throughout most of his career. He is Director of Continuing Education for the International Neuropsychological Society, a recent recipient of the NIDA DCNBR Outstanding Early Career Investigator Award, and serves on the editorial board of Archives of Clinical Neuropsychology and Neuropsychology.

A/Prof Raul Gonzalez will be giving a half day workshop entitled: Of Brains and Bongs: The Neuropsychology of Cannabis Use Disorders and their Treatment with Prof Jan Copeland and Prof Murat Yucel

Professor Murat Yucel
½ day Afternoon Workshop (WSS)

Monash Clinical and Imaging Neuroscience, Clayton, Victoria, Australia

Prof Yucel is a Professor and Clinical Neuropsychologist and Director of MCIN. Murat’s research has made major contributions to understanding the long-term effects of heavy substance use on the brain and behaviour (e.g., why individuals addicted to heroin find it difficult to control their impulses & repeatedly relapse), as well as the impact of drug use on mental health (e.g., links between early and heavy cannabis use & risk for psychosis). Our findings have also challenged some widespread perceptions about drug use (e.g., that cannabis has minimal effects on brain & behaviour). Our research has also made contributions to understanding the neurobiology of several psychiatric disorders including obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and major depressive disorder. His discoveries have led to increased public and professional awareness on these topics and established his group at the forefront of addiction and psychiatric neuroscience research in Australia. Prof Murat Yucel will be giving a half day workshop entitled: Of Brains and Bongs: The Neuropsychology of Cannabis Use Disorders and their Treatment with Prof Jan Copeland and A/Prof Raul Gonzalez

Embassy of the Philippines, Macau – September 2016 – the 40th Annual Brain Impairment Conference will be held in beautiful and historic Macau on Wednesday 28 to Friday 30 September 2015 and convened by Prof David Shum – more details to follow.

40th Conference

The 40th Annual Brain Impairment Conference will be held in Melbourne in 2016 and convened by Dr Dana Wong – more details to follow.
ASSBI’S JOURNAL

BRAIN IMPAIRMENT

The editors would like to remind you that Brain Impairment is now only available online for members. You should have received login instructions when you joined ASSBI, if you require any help with this please email Margaret at admin@assbi.com.au

Library Subscriptions - Please encourage your organisation to subscribe to the journal. It’s easy – just go to our website www.assbi.com.au and follow the links to the journal.

Jan Ewing, Chair, Publications Committee

ASSBI RESOURCES

We have a plethora of ASSBI manuals and resources available free to everyone, free to members and for sale on Treatment, Assessment and Norms. We also have Non-ASSBI books and products as well as Resource Links.

Check out the ASSBI Resources page on our website to read more about our resources and order online.

WEBSITE

The ASSBI website is a very important tool for distributing information. Please let me have your feedback at admin@assbi.com.au. Is it user friendly?

There are photos of the various committees, reports on the 2014, 2013 and previous conferences. There is also Information on the 2015 conference.

There are also links to ASSBI’s Facebook, Twitter and Psychwire pages.

Margaret Eager-Rickit
Executive Officer

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

We would like to alert you to a non-randomised controlled trial we are running this year. We aim to recruit 24 people with post-stroke aphasia and 24 significant others.

Participants will attend one of three aphasia groups in the community (2 hours once weekly for 12 weeks in Sydney).

Participants will undertake activities related to two or more of the following areas:

- Communication therapy,
- Conversation,
- Participation in the community,
- Aphasia advocacy/awareness-raising,
- Identity renegotiation and social support, and
- Aphasia education/information.

Investigators:
Michelle Attard, PhD candidate, La Trobe University
Associate Professor Miranda Rose, La Trobe University
Professor Leanne Togher, University of Sydney
Professor Jacinta Douglas, La Trobe University

For more information, contact: Michelle Attard
Email: m.attard@latrobe.edu.au
Phone: 0421 227 785

ASSBI’s Journal is now only available online.

Please find the link below and I thank you for your participation.

Roslyn Mozer
(s4396410@student.uq.edu.au)

Prof Eli Vakil, who is Professor in the Department of Psychology, and head of the Memory and Amnesia lab at the Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center at Bar Ilan University and at the Rehabilitation Center for Veterans after TBI in Jaffa, Israel, will be visiting Australia between 30/6/15 and 30/8/15. Gina Geffen is trying to organise seminars or workshops by him that would be of interest to Australian clinical psychologists and neuropsychologists. If your institution would like to host him for that purpose, could you let Gina know directly possible dates.

For further information contact: Prof Gina Geffen geffen@psy.uq.edu.au and she will provide a biography and list of possible topics.

PsycBITE™

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What is PsycBITE?
PsycBITE is a world-class, living e-resource that archives all published literature on psychological treatments for people with chronic diseases and disorders from acquired brain impairment. Launched in 2004, PsycBITE updates the literature monthly. It currently archives 4,000 empirical papers

PsycBITE

LOOKING FOR BOOKS?

Go to the ASSBI BOOKSTORE on the ASSBI website, buy all sorts of books and help out ASSBI at the same time.
We are extremely excited to welcome all students to the 5th INS/ASSBI Pacific Rim Conference in Sydney!

We have a jam-packed student program tailored for everyone’s interests across all disciplines. We are excited to announce a number of social events, including a meet and greet lunch on the first day of the conference and a social networking event at a local bar in Circular Quay on the Friday night.

Students will also be spoiled with a lunchtime workshop aimed at ‘professional issues for early career neuropsychologists’ led by an international panel of experts. A symposium and panel discussion on ‘Rehabilitation of language and communication disorders following ABI’ will be run by expert clinicians working in the areas of both Speech Pathology and Neuropsychology.

We welcome all students to attend these events and we are looking forward to seeing you in July!

If you have registered for the conference but not ticked to attend any of the events don’t worry just come to the Canberra Room and put your name down.

For all questions, contact Student Coordinator, Nicci Grace at nicci.grace@monash.edu or Coco Bernard coco.bernard@monash.edu
ASSBI MEMBERSHIPS
ARE NOW ANNIVERSARY
which means that your membership lasts for a full 12 or 24 months

- Full member cost
- $150 for 1 year
- $257 for 2 years
- Student Cost
- $80 for 1 year
- $144 for 2 years

(students please email id proof to admin@assbi.com.au)

Advantages of being an ASSBI member include:

- Substantial discount off registration fees for the 2015 INS/ASSBI conference in Sydney
- Discounted registration to all ASSBI workshops and the webinar series
- Access to Brain Impairment online
- 4 Newsletters per annum
- Access to previously published papers with normative data on tests for children, adults and older adults.
- If you refer someone to ASSBI and they join you will receive a 10% discount on any ASSBI run workshop or webinar

Information on Membership can be found at www.assbi.com.au
Not sure if you are financial? go to the website to find out.

MEMBERS please go to the members page to update your profile, you can also add a photo, you are also able to contact other members via email.

Margaret Eagers-Rickit
Executive Officer

ASSBI EVENTS
ASSBI Conferences/Workshops

2015
WEBINAR SERIES
1 hour 12.30-1.30
Cost varies go here to find out
Register here for 1 or more

Webinar: Assessment of visuospatial memory on clinical practice
Date: 9 June 2015
Speaker: Prof Roy Kessels

Webinar: Prospective Memory
Date: 1 August 2015
Speaker: Prof David Shum

Webinar: Understanding self-identity change after brain injury and implications for clinical practice
Date: 13 October 2015
Speaker: A/Prof Tamara Ownsworth

Webinar: Cognitive Interventions for Mild Cognitive Impairment
Date: 8 December 2015
Speaker: Dr Maurice Finn

WEBINARS AVAILABLE ON DEMAND

Webinar: Improving first impressions: Social skills training for adults with brain injury
Speaker: Prof Skye McDonald

Webinar: Overview of the neuropsychology of MS: for health professionals working clinically with people with MS
Speaker: Ms Wendy Longley

2015 - July 1-4
INS/ASSBI 5th Pacific Rim Conference. 38th Annual Brain Impairment Conference in conjunction with INS mid-year meeting
Venue: Sofitel Wentworth Hotel, Sydney,
Convenor: Prof Jennie Ponsford
Register Now

2016 - May
39th Annual Brain Impairment Conference
Date: 28-30 September 2016
Venue: Macau
Convenor: Prof David Shum

OUTSIDE EVENTS

2015

The 12th Conference of the Neuropsychological Rehabilitation Special Interest Group of the WFNR (NF-SIG-WFNR)
Venue: Daydream Island, Whitsundays, Australia
Date: 6th and 7th July 2015
Contact: Margaret Eagers-Rickit
REGISTER NOW

16th International Mental Health Conference
Venue: Gold Coast, QLD, Australia
Date: 12-14 August 2015
Contact: http://www.anzmh.asn.au/conference/

25th ISN-APSN Joint Biennial Meeting in conjunction with ANS (ISN 2015)
Venue: Cairns, QLD, Australia
Date: 23-27 August 2015
Contact: http://neurochemistry.org/biennial-meeting/ins-2015-biennial-meeting.html

National Dementia Research & Knowledge Translation Forum 2015
Venue: Sydney, Australia
Date: 7-8 September 2015

Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) Conference
Venue: Alice Springs, NT, Australia
Date: 4-6 November 2015
Contact: http://aagconference.asn.au/

2016

Eleventh IBIA World Congress on Brain Injury
Date: 2-March to 5-March, 2016
Venue: World Forum Conference Center
Location: The Hague, The Netherlands

9th World Congress for NeuroRehabilitation
Venue: Philadelphia, USA
Date: 10-13 May 2016
Contact: http://wcnr2016.org/?mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9w
sKovwz82KXnqihf6sX74%2BspUK6wIMfZEOER3fOyrPuQi4ATz2g%2BSLDSwEYGIIv65gPg5bDMbF1
0bgWhg%3D#.VV1kzGM8_Kc

13th NR-SIG-WFNR Conference
Date: 11-12 July 2016
Venue: Hilton Grosvenor, Glasgow, Scotland
Contact: mers@exemail.com.au