

ASSBI Newsletter

June 2021

Issue 75

Working together to improve the lives of people with brain impairment



WORDS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



It is with great pleasure that I write my first *Words from the President* for the ASSBI newsletter. Before telling you about myself and what makes me tick, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Robyn Tate for her outstanding presidency during the past two years, steering ASSBI through turbulent waters in the past 18 months deftly and with great poise. One recognises a leader not by what they say but by how they react to the uncertainty and the unexpected; And Robyn has been, undoubtedly, a great ASSBI president and I hope to be able to follow her steps. My aim is to continue increasing ASSBI's visibility in the Australasian landscape as a strong voice for brain injury, regardless of aetiology, and as a platform to promote excellence in applied research and interventions in the field.

At a time when many professional organisations are feeling the continuing impact of the pandemic, with many conferences and meetings cancelled, ASSBI has fared comparatively well. Yes, the 2020 Perth Annual meeting, which is one of the major sources of income for the society, had to be cancelled; however, our online training program and workshops have been very successful by all accounts and minimizing the financial impact of this cancellation on the society. Undoubtedly, this is due in great part to the tireless work of our Executive Officer, Margaret Eagers, together with the Continuing Education Committee, led by Barbra Zupan, which despite these difficulties managed to put together an outstanding program. This year, I am pleased to say that the conference will happen again. Indeed, ASSBI joins forces with the International Neuropsychological Society and the APS College of Clinical Neuropsychologists for what will be a momentous 2021 Annual meeting in Melbourne, with the opportunity to meet face-to-face with your fellow colleagues and friends, as well as remotely.

So, who is our new President? I am currently appointed Professor of Clinical Neuropsychology at the University of Sydney, and director of FRONTIER, the frontotemporal dementia clinical research group based at the Brain & Mind Centre where I lead a research group of ~25 staff/clinicians/postdocs/students investigating early manifestations and progression of younger-onset dementia syndromes. As my name suggests, I am not from around here originally. Native of the land of Jean Piaget and Carl Gustav Jung and, for those following more recent history, Roger Federer. I completed my undergraduate studies in psychology at the University of Geneva. At a time where formal clinical training in neuropsychology was almost non-existent in Europe, I was accepted in the Masters program in Clinical Neuropsychology at the University of Melbourne and was lucky to train under the guidance of Michael Saling, Vicki Anderson, Steve Bowden and, on clinical placements, Anne Unkenstein. Two years of training has

turned into a 30-year love story for this country and for neuropsychology, as well as cognitive and clinical neurosciences. In the past 15 years, my focus has been on frontotemporal dementia in its many forms (behavioural variant, language variants, motor presentations). Frontotemporal dementia is a complex disease caused by multiple brain pathologies leading to, sometimes, confusing clinical presentations. Generally emerging in people in their late 50s, it is not uncommonly confused with psychiatric conditions with a long delay to diagnosis and management (Indeed, who wants to think about dementia at that age?). Currently, the major challenges in the field are to improve early and accurate diagnosis and understand disease progression so we can inform patients and families better. My work is varied: In an attempt to reach these goals, I use convergent methodologies, which include behavioural, clinical, cognitive, neuroimaging, physiological, genetics and neuropathological investigations. Obviously, the ultimate aim will be to develop disease modifying treatments and a cure, although the road ahead is still long. In the meantime, we have also been focusing on developing interventions and management programs to address some of the disabling features of these diseases, as well as providing support to carers, families, and education to various scientific organisations and bodies.

I am very excited to start my tenure as ASSBI President. All in all, the society remains very healthy, despite the turbulent recent period. In addition, with difficult times come opportunities: opportunities to reflect on the identity of the society and chances to explore novel options to develop our activities and communicate with our membership and sister societies. I truly believe that the future is bright for ASSBI and I am looking forward to being part of this journey.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Melbourne next month

Olivier Piguet, President

Executive Officer's Report



Please enjoy this newsletter and don't forget to get copy for the September Newsletter to me by 15th August 2021.

The Early Bird for attending the 6th Pacific Rim Conference Face to Face (F2F) has now closed but registration is available until 23rd June.

Livestream and On Demand has no early bird and registration will stay open until 27th June.

If you have registered to attend Livestream and wish to change to F2F email Margaret who will change it for you and charge the card you registered with for the difference in price (at the early bird rate)

ALL WORKSHOPS are available to be purchased when you register you can watch each one live or streamed or on demand

Matt is setting up a new option in the Store which will be available shortly. You will get the link to download a pdf as soon as you pay – COMING SOON

Cheers, Margaret Eagers, EO

SOCIAL MEDIA



Like us on [Facebook](#),

[Follow ASSBI](#) on Twitter

Become a contact on LinkedIn

If you have anything interesting you would like tweeted or mentioned on facebook, contact Travis via assbisocialmedia@gmail.com.

WEBSITE

Signing in, as a member or associate, will give you the opportunity to update your own information **including your email address**. If you are an ASSBI member, it will also give you access to *Brain Impairment*. In addition, ASSBI members receive at least a 10% discount in the Store. If you want to change your email address login with your old email address or [email Matthew](mailto:email@assbi.com.au) to change it prior to you logging in. <https://www.assbi.com.au>

Be sure to add information about your discipline and your geographical base, as this will help us to better understand our ASSBI community.

When your membership is due you will receive a couple of reminder emails and you can renew and pay online by Visa, MasterCard or PayPal if you have an account. You can also transfer your fees via the bank – if you do this, email [Margaret](mailto:Margaret@assbi.com.au) so she can put your payment through. NO INTERNATIONAL CHEQUES PLEASE.

If you have anything you wish to post on the site or have any feedback please email me at admin@assbi.com.au.
Matthew, Webmaster's sidekick

NEWS



Congratulations go to Dr Dana Wong who, at the ASSBI AGM on 6th May, became President Elect of ASSBI. She takes up this position for 2 years which is followed by 2 years as President and then a further 2 years as Past President.



Many congratulations to Professor Skye McDonald, who became a proud grandma to a beautiful granddaughter at the end of 2020

NEW PUBLISHED ARTICLE

Characterising the impact of BRAINSPaN: a multidisciplinary community of practice for clinicians and researchers in the brain impairment field

Dana Wong, Joanne Steel, Katharine Baker, Emmah Doig

Brain Impairment

<https://doi.org/10.1017/BrImp.2021.9>

What the study is about

Communities of practice can facilitate the sharing and translation of knowledge. BRAINSPaN is a multidisciplinary community of

practice of clinicians, researchers and students in the brain impairment field that was launched in Australia in June 2017, hosted by ASSBI. We aimed to investigate the impact of BRAINSPaN on multidisciplinary collaboration, and on knowledge, skills and confidence in domains of practice of interest to members.

What we did

We surveyed BRAINSPaN members over three time points at 1-month (n=117), 7-months (n=69) and 14-months (n=46) post-launch. We also analysed posts to the BRAINSPaN listserv to identify their purpose and content.

What we found

Increasing access to new research findings and increasing interaction with others in the brain impairment field were the two main goals for survey respondents' participation in BRAINSPaN. These were also the most commonly achieved goals and most frequently cited benefits of BRAINSPaN participation. Cognitive rehabilitation and behaviour management were the most frequently reported practice domains of interest, as well as being two of the five most common topics of BRAINSPaN posts over the survey period. There was a significant increase in self-reported knowledge for participants' top two domains of interest, but no change in skills or confidence. These findings suggest that BRAINSPaN has the potential to serve as a vehicle for the sharing and translation of knowledge in the brain impairment field. Combining other forms of dissemination with communities of practice, such as workshops and clinical mentoring, may be needed to also influence the development of skills and confidence in practice areas.

BRAIN IMPAIRMENT



ASSBI's multidisciplinary Journal

Our journal *Brain Impairment* has many new 'First View' articles available and our social media editors have been sharing this new high-quality content via our Twitter account [@BrainImpairment](https://twitter.com/BrainImpairment). They are also busily preparing an #HeadsTogether2021 conference workshop on research dissemination strategy where we will provide an overview of what is possible, how to build engagement, and outline some resources to get you started thinking about how you go about it! Also, don't forget to check out the new look ASSBI journal webpages here <https://assbi.com.au/Journal-BIM> and follow the journal [@BrainImpairment](https://twitter.com/BrainImpairment) on Twitter to stay up-to-date.

To login to the Brain Impairment site of Cambridge University Press, **login** to the ASSBI website and [click on this link](#) to get directed to the Brain Impairment page of the CUP website, if you require any help with this please email [Margaret](mailto:Margaret@assbi.com.au). To read some of the articles from the author's perspective [click here](#)

Jennifer Fleming and Grahame Simpson, Co-Editors

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

If you would like to see someone give a workshop or webinar in your state or know of anyone who you would like to see give a workshop or webinar for ASSBI members, please email [Margaret](mailto:Margaret@assbi.com.au) and we will endeavour to organise a full/half day workshop or a webinar. If someone you suggest agrees to present for ASSBI you will receive a complementary registration, just like Danielle Sansonetti did when she suggested Barbara Wilson.

ASSBI 2021 Series of Webinars

60 minute webinars – all times mentioned are SYD/MEL time



18th June – 1pm – 2pm *Title to be confirmed*
Prof Sharon Naismith, Australia

[Register](#)



30th July – 1pm – 2pm entitled: *Better together: Enhancing family-centred care during rehabilitation for children with acquired brain injury*
Dr Sarah Knight, Australia

[Register](#)



20th August – 1pm – 2.30pm entitled: *Help Disrupt the Isolation Industry* by **Caleb Rixon and GenYus Network**
This is a free 90-minute webinar

[REGISTER HERE VIA ZOOM](#)



17th September – 1pm – 2pm entitled: *Recognising and managing mild TBIs in the community*
Dr Alice Theadom, NZ

[Register](#)



15th October – 1pm – 2pm entitled: *An occupation-based approach to facilitating self-awareness after TBI*
Prof Jennifer Fleming, Australia

[Register](#)



19th November – 1pm – 2pm entitled: *Treating social cognitive deficits after brain injury*
Ms Anneli Cassel, Australia

[Register](#)

Click on the [Home Page](#) to see abstracts, speakers bios and register <https://mers.cventevents.com/ASSBIwebinars>

Now available in the ASSBI Store



Technology to support remembering and goal management: Can an ApplTree improve my PM?
Prof Jon Evans, Glasgow, UK



Helping others: finding meaning in projects for people with brain injury
Dr Nick Behn, London, UK

ASSBI CONFERENCES

[Go to the ASSBI website to keep up to date](#)

ASSBI's 44th Conference 6th Pacific Rim Conference



#headstogether2021

The 44th Conference is being held in conjunction with INS and CCN and is the 6th Pacific Rim Conference. It is being run as a hybrid conference both in Melbourne and virtually via CVENT's Virtual Attendee Hub on 1–3 July preceded by a consumer afternoon on

29th and workshops on 30th June 2021. Home Page: <https://mers.cventevents.com/6thpacificrim>

THE CONFERENCE WILL BE A HYBRID CONFERENCE

The theme of the conference is
Putting our heads together to change lives

Co-Convenors for the conference are:

ASSBI Representative – Dana Wong
INS Representative – Travis Wearne
CCN Representative – Kerry Pike
Steering Committee: Vicki Anderson, Jacinta Douglas and Simon Crowe.

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ALL WORKSHOPS are available to be purchased when you register you can watch each one live or streamed or on demand

A NEW KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Sarah-Jayne Blakemore

Sarah-Jayne Blakemore is Professor of Psychology at the University of Cambridge, UK, and leader of the Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience Group. Her group's research focuses on the development of

social cognition and decision making in the human adolescent brain, and adolescent mental health. Her group runs behavioural studies in schools and in the lab, as well as neuroimaging studies, with adolescents and adults. You can read more about the group and their research here:

<https://sites.google.com/site/blakemorelab/>. Keynote Address is entitled: *Social risk taking in adolescents*

Presidential Addresses



INS President
Skye McDonald, UNSW
Getting Emotional



ASSBI President
Olivier Piguet, University of Sydney
Dazed and Confused!" Brain, context, and social disconnect



CCN President
Amy Scholes, Private Practice
Bringing neuropsychology to the people

Six half-day 6 Workshops on 30th June

Workshop 1 (9am) Neil H. Pliskin: *The shocking truth about electrical injuries*

Workshop 2 (9am) Kylie Radford and Terry Donovan: *Wisdom, memories and connections: Towards a more holistic approach to neuropsychology with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples*

Workshop 3 (9am) Vicki Anderson, Michael Takagi, Vanessa Rausa, Katie Davies, Gavin Davis: *Accelerating recovery from child concussion requires a collaborative multidisciplinary approach*
Workshop 4 (1pm) Rene Stolwyk and Wendy Kelso: *Zooming into the details: a practical guide to conducting assessments of cognition, language and mood using telehealth*
Workshop 5 (1pm) Sarah E. MacPherson: *Executive function assessments as cognitive markers of pathological aging: Evidence from healthy aging and dementia*
Workshop 6 (1pm) Emma Power: *Implementation of face to face and online communication partner training programs in ABI: A step by step clinical implementation workshop*

3 Mini-Masterclasses on Friday 2nd July

Masterclass 1 (7.30am) Fiona Fisher, Jen Bradshaw and James Howe - *Understanding the Victorian Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2017: Considerations and conundrums*

Masterclass 2 (7.30am) Natasha Lannin and Sophie O'Keefe - *State of the Evidence Masterclass on Effective Vocational Rehabilitation after Brain Impairment*

Masterclass 3 (7.30am) Katie Douglas and Richard Porter - *Interventions for Cognitive Impairment in Mood Disorders*

PUT THESE DATES INTO YOUR DIARY

Consumer Focused Afternoon:

Tuesday 29th June 2021

Conference Workshops:

Wednesday 30th June 2021

Conference:

Thursday 1st – Saturday 3rd July 2021

If you are already on any of MERS Events' distribution lists or the ASSBI list (run by Margaret Eagers) you need do nothing as you will be notified as usual. If you are not and want to be then drop an email to mers@exemail.com.au

ASSBI's 45th Conference

#assbi2022

The 45th Conference will be held in Perth on 5th – 7th May 2022. Dr Mathilde Chevignard, Prof Lynne Turner-Stokes and Prof Bronwyn Hemsley, Prof Beth Armstrong and Prof Juli Coffin are keynote speakers.

Past Workshops and Webinars are available for download #assbiworkshops

[CLICK HERE](#) to see more and order.

Jessica Trevena-Peters, Jennie Ponsford, Adam McKay, Dana Wong and Alinka Fisher have all presented full day training workshops and Neera Kapoor and Caroline van Heugten 90 min webinars over the last 2 years. If you missed this Continuing Education the first time around and would like to access it now please go to the [ASSBI ONLINE STORE](#)

WORLD EVENTS

ASSBI is happy to advertise your Workshop, Webinar, Conference on this page. If you want to advertise here email Margaret. The only cost is that you advertise our conference on your page – EASY!

Events being held in Australia and around the world streamed or live by INS, BIA, NR-SIG-WFNR and other organisations can be found by clicking on the undernoted link <https://www.assbi.com.au/World-Events>

ASSBI EVENTS

[2021 LIVE Webinars](#)

[FREE LIVE Webinar](#)

[FREE Pre-Recorded Webinars](#)

[2021 CONFERENCE](#)

WORLD EVENTS

This page is for Australian based non-ASSBI events as well as World Events

18th NR-SIG-WFNR Conference



And lots more.....

ASSBI RESOURCES

You do NOT need to be a member of ASSBI to order anything from ASSBI

Our online store has been very busy with over 300 orders being placed since last year. We now have a shopping cart which makes it super easy to buy our resources on-line for members and non-members alike.

We now have an option that Matt is setting up in the Store and will be available shortly. You will get the link to download a pdf as soon as you pay – COMING SOON.

You can pay online by PayPal OR Debit/Credit card Visa or MasterCard.

To get members price (10% discount) login to the ASSBI website first. Also, if you want to purchase the pdf or the UK version tick that option please. If you go to the resources page you will find a great range of evidence-based resources for assessing, managing and/or treating many different kinds of disorders arising from brain impairment. We have professionally produced manuals and kits that we can post to you (if in Australia) or, if you prefer, you can receive a PDF of the resource with any accompanying files if required. You can also find recordings of some of our most popular webinars. This year, to date we have sold over 100 items. Check it out!

Non-members have access to some free downloads too – [click here](#) to see the full list of manuals and free to downloads on offer

There are now some FREE webinars which showcase some of our kits [CLICK HERE](#)
Skye McDonald, Resources Manager

STUDENT INFORMATION

The three student representatives on the 6th Pacific Rim Conference committee are putting together two events during the programme – a lunchtime workshop of one hour and a 90-minute symposium. There will also be a complementary networking event on the Thursday evening for all attending students and early career delegates.

<https://mers.cventevents.com/6thpacificrim>

ASSBI STUDENT AMBASSADORS

ASSBI Newcastle held their first student event of 2021 on the 24th of May. For this event, they ran a free BBQ at the University of Newcastle's Callaghan Campus.

The day involved free food, a jellybean guessing competition, the distribution of ASSBI merch, discussions around their work, and giant Jenga games. Games of Jenga were adapted to involve trivia around brain impairment, psychology and general knowledge.

A day of free food, fun and friendships.

A special congratulations to Martha H. for winning our jelly bean guessing competition (only 5 off)!

Thank you to the Newcastle team for putting this together; Adam Currell, Kimberley Jo, Tegan Stettaford and Tan Li Yan

Opportunities for Involvement

There are a lot of colleagues out there wanting your help, have a look and see if you can help out

[CLICK HERE TO SEE ALL REQUESTS FOR HELP](#)

Do you ever provide counselling, psychological support, supportive care or rehabilitation to adults with brain tumour?

As part of the Brain cancer Rehabilitation, Assessment, Intervention of Survivor Needs (BRAINS) program funded by a Medical Research Future Fund: Brain Cancer Survivorship Grant, we are scoping the current practices of health professionals involved in providing psychological support and supportive care to adults with brain tumour.

We are seeking health professionals who provide any form of psychological support to adults with primary brain tumour to participate in a brief survey (~ 10 minutes).

This survey will help us to understand variations in support across Australia and guide the focus of rehabilitation and supportive care interventions developed and trialed within the BRAINS program.

The study has received ethical clearance from Griffith University's Human Research Ethics Committee (GU HREC Ref No: 2021/163).

Participation is voluntary and your responses will be anonymous.

If you are interested in learning more and taking part, please click on the weblink below:

<https://prodsurvey.rcs.griffith.edu.au/prodls200/index.php/912578?lang=en>

Please also consider forwarding this email to any colleagues who provide counselling, psychological support, or cognitive rehabilitation to adults with brain tumour and may be interested in participating.

Thank you for your time. I apologise for any cross-posting.

Yours sincerely, Professor Tamara Ownsworth

Survey of rehabilitation professionals' experiences of social media use after acquired brain injury (ABI)

Dr Melissa Brunner and Prof Leanne Togher are conducting a survey and are interested in hearing from health professionals who work with people in rehabilitation after ABI, who are willing to take part in research about the use of social media.

This survey specifically aims to determine:

- How social media is used during rehabilitation after ABI;
- Any problems people with ABI experience in using social media;
- Barriers and facilitators to using social media in ABI rehabilitation; and
- The role of health professionals in supporting the use of social media in ABI rehabilitation.

The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and will provide information about the current and future scope of practice with regards to using social media after an ABI, as well as the enablers and barriers to supporting people in its use.

Findings from this research will further inform rehabilitation pathways, including the design and development of online tools and resources, to support people with ABI in their use of social media as a form of communication, and to provide guidance for rehabilitation professionals in clinical practice.

The participant information statement and consent form are available via the survey link:

<https://redcap.sydney.edu.au/surveys/?s=8PMLKJ8MYH>

Please contact Melissa if you have any questions about the study.

Ethics Approval/Reference Number: 2020/510

Contact Name: Melissa Brunner

Email: melissa.brunner@sydney.edu.au

Light Therapy for ABI Study

We are currently seeking referrals for a randomised controlled trial evaluating the impact of in-home light therapy on post-brain injury fatigue, as well as daytime sleepiness, sleep quality and mood. The study entails 7 study visits over a 5-6 month period in the participant's home and exposure to a tailored light therapy program. Ceiling lights and lamps are installed by a certified electrician, using participant's pre-existing fixtures.

It is for adults aged 18+ who:

- Have had a TBI (mild, moderate or severe) OR
- Stroke
- Reports experiencing significant fatigue
- Is 3+ months post-injury (participants may also be many years post-injury eg. 20-30 years).
- Lives within the greater Melbourne area (up to 2 hr drive).

The study has been developed at Monash University in conjunction with the Monash-Epworth Rehabilitation Research Centre (MERRC) by Professors Jennie Ponsford, Shantha Rajaratnam, Steven Lockley and myself. The project has been approved by the Epworth HealthCare Human Research Ethics Committee.

If you would like any further information or would like to refer a potential participant, please don't hesitate to contact me at laura.connolly@monash.edu or

CyberAbility Training and Workshops

While cyberscams can happen to anyone, people with ABI may be more at risk, particularly of romance scams. From the stories of people with ABI, their family members and clinicians, the need for tailored cyber safety training was strongly endorsed.

The CyberABILITY team (Monash University, Li-Ve Tasmania) has been developing an online cybersafety program tailored for people with ABI, funded by the TAC. Eight self-directed online modules and workbook activities explore the most important aspects of recognising scams and staying safe online. This training program has been co-designed with the active collaboration of people with lived experience of scams after brain injury.

Upon launch of our CyberABILITY web-based training, a series of 3 free, interactive and co-delivered training workshops will be provided to Victorians with ABI to increase online safety. Attendees will learn how to access the web platform, be supported using the learning modules, engage in interactive group activities, complete their workbooks, and self-evaluate their online safety skills at the start and end of the training. These workshops will not only increase independent and safe online use, but will further allow us to evaluate the effectiveness of the training program.

We invite expressions of interest from people with ABI in attending training workshops and staying up to date with our project. Please register your interest at www.cyberability.org.au. Promoting this to your networks would also be appreciated.

Dr Kate Gould, Monash University, and the CyberABILITY team