



SPHERE Newsletter

NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Sexual and Reproductive Health for Women in Primary Care

SUMMER 2019

ABOUT SPHERE

SPHERE is a newly established, NHMRC-funded Centre of Research Excellence in Sexual and Reproductive Health for Women in Primary Care. This is the first dedicated Centre to lead research that is aimed at improving the quality, safety, and capacity of primary health care services to achieve better outcomes in women's sexual and reproductive health.

SPHERE supports the design and conduct of studies in preconception care, contraception, and abortion along with a strong focus on health economics. This research program is guided by a team of national and international clinician researchers and experts in women's health, general practice, pharmacy, nursing, epidemiology, knowledge translation, health economics, and policy development.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019

- Official launch of SPHERE in Melbourne by Senator the Honourable Jane Hume, which was attended by 100 guests
- Established the SPHERE Stakeholder Advisory Group with specialists in the field of women's health, general practice, nursing, obstetrics, health law, pharmacy and reproductive health
- SPHERE Seeding grants awarded to Dr Natalie Amos for her project "Patterns of contraceptive use among Australian women with mental health conditions" and Pip Buckingham for her project "Contraceptive counselling: a nationwide survey of pharmacists' knowledge, attitudes and practices"
- Jean Hailes for Women's Health Postdoctoral Travel Fellowship awarded to Dr Asvini Subasinghe
- Ten publications from SPHERE Chief Investigators (international and Australian journals in public health and primary care)
- Dissemination of SPHERE research outcomes at key international and national conferences in women's health, primary care and health services research

SPHERE LAUNCH

The RACV City Club, Melbourne

23 September 2019

SPHERE was officially launched by Senator the Honourable Jane Hume, Assistant Minister for Superannuation, Financial Services and Financial Technology, together with Professor Danielle Mazza, SPHERE Director and Head of the Department of General Practice, Monash University. They were also joined by Professor Susan Elliott AM, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice President (Education) at Monash University.

The keynote speaker for this event was SPHERE Associate Investigator Professor Sharon Cameron who is a Consultant Gynaecologist, Lead for Sexual Health Services NHS Lothian, Co-director Clinical Effectiveness Unit of Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive healthcare UK and Professor at The University of Edinburgh. She spoke about her ground-breaking research and different models of care that her team has developed to make contraception and abortion services more accessible for women.

We were also privileged to have members of the SPHERE Stakeholder Advisory Group participate in a panel discussion. Dr Michael Gannon, Professor Heather Douglas and Dr Deborah Bateson joined Professor Danielle Mazza and Professor Sharon Cameron as they discussed the current issues women face and the barriers to delivering and accessing high quality sexual and reproductive health services in primary care settings.

Presentations from the launch by Professor Danielle Mazza and Professor Sharon Cameron can be viewed at <https://www.spherecre.org/sphere-launch>.



Senator the Honourable Jane Hume with SPHERE Chief Investigators

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: DR ASVINI SUBASINGHE, RESEARCH FELLOW



**Dr Asvini Subasinghe,
SPHERE Research Fellow**

As a Research Fellow on the abortion stream of SPHERE, the aim of my research is to increase access to medical abortion through primary care, with a specific focus on increasing access for women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

In support of my research program, I was recently awarded a Jean Hailes for Women's Health Postdoctoral Travel Fellowship valued at \$10,000 AUD. This fellowship funded my travel to Los Angeles in October 2019 to attend the Society for Family Planning conference, where I participated in workshops about research-based best practices and models of care for providing medical abortion to vulnerable populations. I was also fortunate to meet international Chief and Associate Investigators on the SPHERE CRE. Additionally, the fellowship will support my travel to Dublin in May 2020, where I will attend the 16th Congress of the European Society of Contraception and Reproductive Health (ESCRH) to present three abstracts related to contraception and abortion in Australia. Following the ESCRH, I will conduct a site visit at the University of Edinburgh, under the

supervision of Professor Sharon Cameron, where I will be able to see first-hand how health system, policy and practitioners influence the provision of medical abortion in the UK. I will also learn about developing cost-effective and acceptable strategies designed to close evidence-practice gaps in the delivery of medical abortion, which will provide important context to my research program in Melbourne.

This fellowship will provide me with a once in a lifetime opportunity to learn from world-renowned experts in the field of sexual and reproductive health and explore different political and health system landscapes. These experiences will broaden my horizons profoundly, both professional and personally, and will enable me to bring a more holistic and knowledgeable perspective into the conduct of my research program at Monash University. More importantly, given the controversial nature of abortion and how central it is to women's rights globally, these study trips will strongly equip me with the arsenal required to navigate the political landscape of my work. I am very grateful for this opportunity and look forward to the year ahead!

SPHERE RESEARCH STREAMS - CURRENT PROJECTS

ABORTION

Improving access to medical abortion, and LARCs, in women from culturally and linguistically diverse populations in Australia

Researcher: Dr Asvini Subasinghe, Research Fellow, Department of General Practice, Monash University

Definition, measurement and the national prevalence of reproductive coercion

Researcher: Dr Georgina Sutherland, Senior Research Fellow, La Trobe University

Assessing the care trajectories of adolescent females seeking an early induced abortion in NSW: a multi-staged study

Researcher: Ms Anisa Assifi, PhD candidate, University of Technology Sydney

PRECONCEPTION CARE

Improving sexual and reproductive health care for women with chronic diseases

Researcher: Dr Karin Hammarberg, Senior Research Fellow, Monash University and Senior Research Officer at the Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority

Acceptability and usability of the "One Key Question" in Australian Primary Healthcare

Researcher: Dr Jessica Fitch, Academic registrar, University of Sydney

Online self-assessment tools to enhance preconception care

Researcher: Dr Edwina Dorney, PhD student, University of Sydney

CONTRACEPTION

LARC uptake in Australia

Researcher: Dr Natalie Amos, Research Fellow, Department of General Practice, Monash University

Pregnancy Intention, Contraception and Obstetric Outcomes in Women who Use Alcohol and Other Drugs in Pregnancy

Addressing Unmet Contraception Needs in Women Who Access Drug and Alcohol Services: A pilot study

Researcher: Dr Kelly McNamara, PhD student, University of Sydney

Contraceptive counselling: a nationwide survey of pharmacists' knowledge, attitudes and practices

Researcher: Ms Pip Buckingham, PhD student, Department of General Practice, Monash University

Contraceptive practices of women with chronic disease

Dr Melissa Harris, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Research Centre for Generational Health and Ageing, University of Newcastle

Forthcoming opportunities with SPHERE in 2020

SPHERE will be recruiting for a new Preconception Care research fellow and PhD student (medical abortion) in 2020. Please contact Dr Maria de Leon-Santiago on sphere-cre@monash.edu for more information

Congratulations



Prof Danielle Mazza
*speaking at the Churchill
Fellows dinner*

Congratulations to SPHERE Director, Professor Danielle Mazza, who was awarded a prestigious Churchill Fellowship <https://www.spherecre.org/churchill-fellowship>. Professor Mazza will be investigating how to reduce inequities in access to medical abortion through better integration into primary care.

We also congratulate SPHERE Chief Investigator, Professor Marion Haas, who was recently awarded a Distinguished Investigator Lifetime Achievement Award by the Health Services Research Association of Australia and New Zealand <http://www.hsraanz.org/professor-marion-haas-2019-distinguished-investigator-life-time-achievement/>



Prof Marion Haas recipient
*of the Lifetime
Achievement Award*

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Cost benefit analysis of enhancing the uptake of long acting reversible contraception in Australia <http://www.publish.csiro.au/ah/AH18190>

Concepcion K, Lacey S, McGeechan K, Estoesta J, Bateson D, Botfield J

Cost and effectiveness of using Facebook advertising to recruit young women for research: PREFER (Contraceptive Preferences Study) experience DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2196/15869>

McCarthy E, Mazza D

Enhancing use of emergency contraceptive pills: A systematic review of women's attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and experiences in Australia

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2018.1526286>

Mooney-Somers J, Lau A, Bateson D, Richters J, Stewart M, Black K, Nothnagle M

Interpregnancy intervals and women's knowledge of the ideal timing between birth and conception

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj-srh-2018-200277>

Yang JM, Cheney K, Taylor R, Black K

A focus on sexual and reproductive health is central to achieving RANZCOG's goal of excellence in women's health care

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajo.12949>

Black K, Paterson H

Impact of the contraceptive implant on maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality in rural Papua New Guinea: a retrospective observational cohort study

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.contraception.2019.03.042>

Gupta S, Ramsey P, Mola G, McGeechan K, Bolnga J, Kelly-Hanku A, Black K

Knowledge of current abortion law and views on abortion law reform: a community survey of NSW residents

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1753-6405.12825>

Barrett AL, McGeechan K, Black K, Hamblin J, de Costa C

The Safe Pregnancy study—promoting safety behaviours in antenatal care among Norwegian, Pakistani and Somali pregnant women: a study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-6922-y>

Henriksen L, Flaathen EM, Angelshaug J, Garnweidner-Holme L, Smastuen MC, Noll J, Taft A, Schei B, Lukasse M

SPHERE Consumer Advisory Group

SPHERE is seeking to establish a Consumer Advisory Group in early 2020. If you are a consumer with an interest in women's sexual and reproductive health and would like to become a member, please contact Dr Maria de Leon-Santiago on sphere-cre@monash.edu for more information