
MEDIA RELEASE



Helping people with chronic diseases through quality pathology testing

Over half of Australians live with at least one chronic condition, and together they are the leading cause of ill health and death. What if we could use pathology-based screening to detect chronic disease risk factors? This would allow us to identify and treat diseases early on, and improve outcomes for patients.

Dr Rae-Anne Hardie has been researching and looking at the quality use of pathology and laboratory testing in general practice. It's one of the first projects in Australia to be able to use general practice to look at this type of testing in the context of chronic diseases prevention and detection.

For her achievements, Dr Hardie has been recognised as a finalist for the Bupa Health Foundation Emerging Health Researcher Award. She was nominated by Professor Andrew Georgiou, Head of Diagnostic Informatics. He says Dr Hardie deserves to be recognised for her diverse research capability and passion to follow her research through to translation.

"The award will be recognition of an important area of work, it will give her a boost, it will give the whole team a boost, and also it will actually make it known that this is in the area that can produce results," said Professor Georgiou. Professor Georgiou said there's a lot of data in the systems from general practices, but it is not being widely used.

"Lately, there have been advances and I believe what Rae-Anne is doing is taking that forward. So that we are actually starting to use GP data to be able to monitor, and potentially identify where problems are and devise ways of improving and enhancing the care that patients get." Said Professor Georgiou.

Dr Hardie has access to data from 2 million Australian patients and has identified key pathology tests as indicators to monitor conditions, including diabetes, prostate cancer, arthritis, thyroid disease, mental illnesses, genetic conditions and cardiac diseases.

By analysing the general practice data for any indicators of chronic illness, it will benchmark pathology testing and help to measure the impact of testing on patient care.

"Quite often in Australian health research, we hear a lot about the results about hospital based studies, because they have quite a large data set. But GP's all work as small individual units, so I think it's an understudied area and one that's very important for the improvement of Australian health care," says Dr Hardie.

The Bupa Health Foundation Emerging Health Researcher Award (2017) Recipient will be announced on 16 March 2018, at a breakfast event in Sydney.

The winner will be awarded \$25,000 to help further their research career, while the other five finalists will each receive \$5,000.

ENDS

Notes for the Editor

Name/Title: Dr Rae-Anne Hardie, Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Australian Institute of Health Innovation, Macquarie University

Area of research: Enhancing quality of pathology testing in general practice

Nominator: Professor Andrew Georgiou, Head of Diagnostic Informatics, Australian Institute of Health Innovation, Macquarie University

Over half of Australians live with at least one chronic condition, and collectively they are the leading cause of illness and death. Dr Rae-Anne Hardie has been researching the use of pathology and laboratory testing in general practice. It's one of the first projects in Australia to be able to use general practice to look at this testing in the context of preventing and detecting chronic diseases early on. Dr Hardie has access to data from 2 million Australian patients and has identified key pathology tests as indicators to monitor conditions, including diabetes, prostate cancer, arthritis, thyroid disease, mental illnesses, genetic conditions, and cardiac diseases. By analysing the general practice data for any indicators of chronic illness, it will benchmark pathology testing and help to measure the impact of testing on patient care.

More information on the Bupa Health Foundation and Emerging Researcher Awards

The Bupa Health Foundation is one of Australia's leading corporate foundations dedicated to health. We are committed to improving the health of the Australian community and ensuring the sustainability of affordable healthcare through collaborative partnerships.

The Bupa Health Foundation was established in 2005 and has invested more than \$30million to support over 120 projects in real health and care improvements.

The Emerging Health Researcher Awards is celebrating its sixth anniversary after being established in 2012.

For more information please visit www.bupa.com.au/foundation

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