

**FOCUS24** Conference  
The business of physiotherapy Crown Perth  
31 Oct-2 Nov

# FOCUS24 ABSTRACT BOOK



AUSTRALIAN  
PHYSIOTHERAPY  
ASSOCIATION

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## SECTION 1: KEYNOTE AND INVITED

### Workforce of the future

**Adjunct Associate Professor John Fitzgerald<sup>1</sup>**, Mr. Luke Fitzgerald

*<sup>1</sup>Active Rehabilitation Physiotherapy, COORPAROO, Australia*

1B - Practice - Astral 2, 31 October 2024, 3.35–4.20 pm

As generations X, Y and Z continue to face new and diverse challenges, our profession faces the challenge of retaining physiotherapists. Active Rehabilitation Physiotherapy started as a sole trader business in 1986, and has now grown to a team of 120. Active Rehab has several outpatient clinics as well as contracts with private hospitals and public/private hospital contracts. The journey to 2024 has seen a huge change in our physiotherapy workforce. This discussion will focus on lessons learned along the way and steps Active Rehab has implemented to understand the characteristics of each generation, each person, and to meld a happy and cohesive team.

Crucial for this highly intelligent cohort is extending them with an appropriate level of change to maintain their fulfilment within the physiotherapy vocation. Active's methods to meet this challenge will be discussed. These centre around building a safe and supportive culture based on a shared vision and values, individually focused mentoring sessions, a strategic orientation program, provision of clinical guidelines, and building relationships with universities and key stakeholders.

As the team grows, it is important to develop a pipeline of leaders who will continue to carry on the culture and share the vision and values. Active Rehab has developed its own leadership program and training modules to ensure this happens. To run a successful 'people' business, a range of skills beyond physiotherapy are required to nurture and retain a skilled and fulfilled team.

## Leading with courage and perseverance

**Lisa Roach**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Healthia, Brisbane, Australia*

2A Business - Astral 1, 31 October 2024, 4.25–5.10 pm

In the dynamic world of healthcare business, effective leadership is not just about strategy, budgets, and profit; it's about courageously driving meaningful change for people and communities, and about perseverance in the face of adversity. This presentation delves into the indispensable role of women in healthcare, and their inherent strengths to be business leaders who inspire change, foster collaboration, champion resilience, and drive transformative growth in their organisations.

In this session Lisa draws from real-world examples of perseverance and courage to explore how leaders harness their resilience, adaptability, and determination to navigate complex challenges, create opportunities, and lead their organisations towards growth and sustainable success.

Moreover, this presentation emphasises the critical importance of cultivating environments that foster women and support career advancement within healthcare businesses. By nurturing cultures that value grit, resilience, and continuous learning, organisations can empower women to thrive in leadership roles, and forge a path towards greater agility and sustainable growth in this ever-changing business landscape.

## Pitchfest in FOCUS – through the winners' lens

**Daniel Hug**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Summarise, Perth, Australia*

2C - Education – Botanicals 1 and 2, 31 October 2024, 4.25–5.10 pm

Concept: Daniel, as a previous winner of the APA Pitchfest has gone through the highs and lows of entrepreneurship and will share his learnings from his experience and journey. Daniel co-founded and built a falls documentation and management app and desktop software system. Daniel will talk on how to move from having an idea, finding a team, validating your idea, business model and product, developing a product, funding, marketing and growing for business

This will shine a light on the roadblocks, difficulties and learnings other people should be aware of when deciding that they want to commercialise an innovative product in the healthcare space.

This presentation will add to the current knowledge and focus of the APA to support entrepreneurial growth in the sector, particularly through its Pitchfest program. It will provide an honest reflection on the reality of the life on an entrepreneur and what is required to succeed and what we can learn from failures.

Take home messages:

- The importance of validating your idea by knowing your customer, your end user and your decision maker.
- How to validate your idea and product with limited funding.
- What steps you should take when commercialising your product/idea.

## Are we closing the gap? Ahpra interventions on racism. Impacts for physiotherapists

**Marilyn Morgan**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Langton & Partners, Pemberton, Australia*

3B - Practice - Astral 2, 1 November 2024, 10.50–11.35 am

What is the APA's contribution to CTG? Is it measurable and can we see it yet? How are we evaluating the APA contribution? Should the APA be developing a Cultural Governance Framework that is as important as the organisations' corporate and clinical governance frameworks? What are other health sector leaders like AHPRA, RACGP and Government doing in relation to CGFs, and demanding and mandating for health professionals including physios?

What were the findings of Productivity Commission Review of the National Agreement on Closing the GAP? This National Agreement is unlike other National Agreements. It is the first to include a non-Government signatory the Coalitions of Peaks (COP), it is an ambitious agreement that calls for fundamental change in the ways governments work with First Nations People.

Take home messages:

- Formal partnerships and shared decision making.
- Building the community-controlled sector.
- Transforming government organisations.
- Shared access to data and information at a regional level.

Ahpra has mandated changes under the National Scheme's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy 2020-2025 that racism is to be eliminated from professional practice. These changes are part of the registration process and will affect all 990,000 registered health professionals including physios. What is the APA doing to ensure the profession is ready?



## Cyber hour: legal obligations and cyber insurance

**Kristen Vassallo**<sup>1</sup>, **Ashlee Sherman**<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>BMS, Melbourne, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Barry Nilsson, Perth, Australia

Astral 1 – Business - 1 November 2024, 11.40 am–12.40 pm

Cyber vigilance has never been more important, especially for businesses within the healthcare sector. So how can you prepare and protect your business from a potential cyber-incident? In this session, Ashlee Sherman, Senior Associate, of Barry Nilsson, will join Kristen Vassallo, Senior Broker, Affinity – BMS, to discuss the following:

Take home messages:

- Common areas of cyber risk and claims in healthcare.
- Legal obligations.
- Tips to mitigate cyber risks for physiotherapy clinics.
- How Cyber Liability Insurance works.

## Cyber hour: IT risks and security for allied health

**Duncan Stevens**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*InterHealthcare, Gold Coast, Australia*

Astral 1- Business - 1 November 2024, 11.40 am–12.40 pm

Healthcare is a top target for cyber-attacks due to the value of health records and large amounts of personal information. Protecting patient data is crucial to avoid breaches similar to Medibank, Optus and others.

Any size businesses, small or large, are at risk and should reassess their cyber security measures. Ignoring these risks and hoping they won't affect you is no longer an option. It's not a matter of if a breach will happen, but how well you can detect, contain, and recover from it. Having strong incident response strategies and robust protection is crucial in today's cybersecurity landscape. You cannot rely on your virus protection or the security of your PMS provider. Relying solely on antivirus software is insufficient in today's cybersecurity landscape.

Most service agreements now defer liability to you should they be breached as a result of you, your staff or your systems? Do you also know that you are probably not insured to the level of cover required and that even if your PI or other associated policies cover cyber, they are unlikely to pay out if you are inadequately secure and don't have appropriate resources to meet the standards of security set out in the Service Agreements or Government legislation?

Businesses must take proactive steps to mitigate cyber risks to avoid financial losses, damage to their reputation, and legal consequences. Studies show that a significant cyber incident can be devastating, with a quarter of businesses never fully recovering.

## Optimising the transition from student to new graduate: a co-production approach

**Professor Suzanne Gough**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Bond University, Gold Coast, Australia*

5B - Education - Astral 2, 1 November 2024, 1.45–2.30 pm

**Concept:** The transition from student to new graduate marks a critical phase in an individual's professional journey, characterised by significant challenges and opportunities. Embracing a culture of continuous improvement within physiotherapy education is essential for ensuring new graduates are future ready practitioners and leaders.

**Relevance to conference themes:** This presentation will explore the benefits of adopting a co-production approach to optimise the transition period from student to new graduate. The presentation aims to stimulate ideas for delegates involved in education, clinical supervision/practice, and workforce planning.

**Background:** Careful selection of key stakeholders is essential. A successful co-production approach involves leveraging diverse perspectives and collective expertise, of students, educators, clinical mentors, and industry stakeholders throughout all stages of co-planning, co-design, co-evaluation, and co-delivery. The outcomes should target optimisation of the curriculum and ensure placements provide students with appropriate opportunities to navigate the complexities required when entering the workforce.

**Outcome:** This presentation will outline the principles, methodologies, and benefits of co-production in the context of physiotherapy education and practice; emphasising its potential to enhance the transition experience, foster competence, and confidence in new graduates, and ultimately improve patient care outcomes.

**Take home messages:**

- Embracing a continuous improvement culture is essential to ensure physiotherapy education remains current, effective, and responsive to the changing requirements of the professional landscape.
- The co-production approach involves co-planning, co-design, co-evaluation, and co-delivery.
- Careful selection of stakeholders is essential to generate diverse perspectives and experiences throughout the co-production process, ensuring relevance and effectiveness of the outcomes.

## Physical therapy in the US: obstacles and opportunities post-pandemic for our industry

**Justin Moore**

6A - Practice - Astral 1, 1 November 2024, 2.35–3.20 pm

State of Affairs for Physical Therapy in the US: Obstacles and Opportunities Post-Pandemic for Our People, Practices and Payment

On February 2, 2020, the US government declared the COVID-19 public health emergency that lasted 3 years and resulted in 6 million hospitalizations and 1.1 million deaths. This pandemic created disruption and innovation across health care including physical therapists.

Workforce health, emerging care models, and increasing economic pressures created a profession under stress but also revealed great potential. This session will outline these issues and provide a framework for advancement of physical therapy in the US with applications and strategies for physiotherapists in Australia.

## Panel – changing your ownership – before, during and after

**Greg Borman<sup>1</sup>, Jackie Robertson, Libby Soderholm**

<sup>1</sup>Biosymm, Belmont, Australia, <sup>2</sup>APM, West Perth, Australia

7A - Practice - Astral 1, 2 November 2024, 9.00–10.00 am

This panel discussion will allow us to explore the lessons learned and suggestions for people looking to change their ownership structure potentially at a future point in time.

Take home messages:

- How to best prepare your business for investment or sale?
- What changes can you make to the practice, employment agreements, accounting practices etc?
- What does a sales process look like?
- What do I need to be careful of with an exclusivity agreement? Or agreement around intended sale document?
- What should I expect from a due diligence period?
- Is an earn out a good idea?
- What is life like after a transaction occurs?

## Lean, agile quality. Establishing a successful private practice within the hospital system

**Adj Associate Professor John Fitzgerald<sup>1</sup>**, Mr. Luke Fitzgerald

<sup>1</sup>*Active Rehabilitation Physiotherapy, COORPAROO, Australia*

7A - Practice - Astral 1, 2 November 2024, 9.00–10.00 am

Active Rehabilitation Physiotherapy has provided inpatient services to several private hospitals since 1986, initially as an adjunct to their outpatient business. In 2013 they were invited to partner in 2 public hospitals as a private provider, and in 2 private hospitals as an exclusive provider with long-term contracts. The establishment and ongoing management model will be described in this talk. 8 current and former CEOs of public and private hospitals in Brisbane have been interviewed to analyse the reasons behind the existence of different models of physiotherapy provision across the city. The answers include financial, quality, workforce flexibility, governance, political, KPI and contract management, responsiveness, ease of daily management, and stakeholder engagement.

These models of care have resulted in numerous benefits to the physiotherapy team and assisted in retention and provision of career pathways. As part of a larger team, opportunities exist for exposure to more clinical areas, leadership roles, advanced scope roles, adjunct roles, clinical education, relationships with universities, continuity of care via inpatient/outpatient mixes, and telehealth options. Numerous research opportunities have been presented due to a large volume of patient numbers and close relationships with stakeholders.

These public/private care models should be considered as part of future advocacy efforts for physiotherapists to work to the full scope of our profession. They should also be seen as an option and as a partial solution to our nationwide problem of long public patient waitlists and the political pressures associated with this, and local and regional workforce shortages.

## AI in Focus: enhancing physiotherapy practice, leadership and management and education

**Dr Leo Ng<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Swinburne University Of Technology, Hawthorn, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Curtin University, Perth, Australia, <sup>3</sup>Research Screener, Perth, Australia

Plenary 4 - Astral 1, 2 November 2024, 11.55 am–12.55 pm

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in physiotherapy marks a significant shift for practitioners, educators, and leaders. This presentation aims to clarify AI technologies, highlighting their current and potential applications in physiotherapy practice, management, leadership, and education. It's crucial to acknowledge that, despite AI's extensive capabilities, the essential human element in physiotherapy remains crucial. Our discussion will focus on how AI can support, rather than replace, the expertise of physiotherapists in various aspects of the profession.

In clinical practice, AI tools offer opportunities to improve patient assessment, treatment plans, and outcome monitoring, enabling physiotherapists to offer more tailored and effective care. From a business viewpoint, AI-driven analytics and management systems can simplify operations, enhance resource use, and boost patient engagement. In leadership, AI can enhance strategic decision-making and innovation. Moreover, incorporating AI into physiotherapy education equips future professionals to utilise these technologies effectively, ensuring they are prepared for the changing demands of healthcare while improve the efficiencies of academics.

However, the swift increase of AI technologies requires a careful examination of their advantages, limitations, and applicability. Governance and safety are critical to ensure ethical and beneficial use. This presentation will discuss approaches for integrating AI into physiotherapy curricula, highlighting the need for continuous education, ethical considerations, and governance to responsibly leverage AI responsibly. By preparing future physiotherapists to incorporate AI into their work, we can enhance their contribution to patient care and community health, ensuring the profession remains at the cutting edge of healthcare innovation.

## Our country practice; insights, opportunities, realities. A national perspective on rural practice

**Marilyn Morgan**<sup>1</sup>, Members APA, APA Rural Group

<sup>1</sup>*Langton & Partners, Pemberton, Australia*

9A - Astral 1, 2 November 2024, 2.05–3.05 pm

Presenting a national scope of rural practice over a 50 year horizon. The presentation provides insights on the journey and the required decision making to take the brave step into Country Practice knowing you won't have family and friends or that great coffee shop round the corner and those senior colleagues on tap for conversations about challenging patients and conditions.

Country practice is the most amazing, challenging, exciting way to practice physio and to change your life and scope of your clinical practice. It takes you to the world outside your particular supported familiar bubble.

If you like adventure, if you are an innovator, or an adrenaline junkie, or just want to 'give it a crack' this is the presentation for you.

These are stories and insights from the physios who live this life and we are encouraging other physios to join us because you are needed. Why go rural? How to choose a location? Cost benefit analysis? Where do I go? Will I be safe? What are the real challenges? Are there really farmers who want wives? We will be discussing locations from coastal to the desert and in between. Stories of rural practice and in remote Aboriginal Communities.

Some great yarns, inside stories and the truth and reality of Country Practice.



## The power of building First Nations cultural capability in education

**Associate Professor Michael Reynolds<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Australian Catholic University, North Sydney, Australia*

9A - Astral 1, 2 November 2024, 2.05–3.05 pm

Understanding and drawing upon each other's strengths is fundamental to great working relationships. When the worldviews and cultures of other students, staff and patients are centered in our work we all benefit through growth in mindsets, creation of empowering environments and forging a long-lasting respect with one another.

This 'how to session will explore ways to embed culture in education from an Australian First Peoples perspective. We remain a long way from First Nations parity in education, and in the physiotherapy profession. It is our collective responsibility to ensure all Australians and their children, have fair and equitable opportunities to succeed, with their cultural identities celebrated. A shift in mindset is required from preparing First Nations people for university to preparing universities to be ready for First Nations students, and staff. This session will tease out elements that drive success in embracing First Peoples perspectives in higher education, although the powerful impact of culture can be felt in any setting.

Take home messages:

- How being culturally curious is a ticket to success for you, and Australian First Peoples.
- How to provide welcoming environments for First Peoples students and academics to flourish.
- Understand the latest directions within the physiotherapy profession and higher education to support advancement of First Peoples cultures and what this means for all Australians.

## SECTION 2: PAPERS

### Leaders on leave: making your business thrive without you

**Fiona White**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Own Body Mobile Health Services, Cheltenham, Australia*

1A - Business - Astral 1, 31 October 2024, 3.35–4.20 pm

Does your business run without it? What if it could grow without you? In this interactive session, Fiona offers actionable insights for business owners seeking balance, freedom and the tools to enable focus on business development, not operations.

Fiona White shares her transformative journey from business dependency to empowered autonomy, emphasising critical shifts in mindset and approach. Once entrenched in a co-dependent relationship with her business, Fiona's perspective evolved by prioritising strategic delegation and leadership cultivation. Through outsourcing tasks and fostering her team's growth, she gained the freedom to concentrate on high-impact endeavours while her team developed the skills, passion and accountability to focus on business performance. This evolution proved invaluable during Fiona's maternity leave in 2020/21, where Own Body achieved remarkable profitability and growth amidst pandemic challenges.

By giving her team the tools and freedom to make decisions, she and her team repeated this success (with many lessons learned) during her second maternity leave in 2022/23, taking more than 14 months away from 'being the boss'.

Now overseeing a business catering to over 150 clients daily, working part-time hours, Fiona embodies the possibility of achieving both personal fulfillment and business success. Key takeaways include practical strategies for task delegation, leadership development, setting limits, reducing liability and prioritising activities that drive substantial progress.

## Succession planning in advanced practice physiotherapy clinics and services

**Dr Caitlin Farmer**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Royal Melbourne Hospital, Parkville, Australia

1A - Business - Astral 1, 31 October 2024, 3.35–4.20 pm

**Concept:** In 2022 the Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH) received funding through the Victorian Department of Health Planned Surgery Reform and Recovery Project to increase the Advanced Practice Physiotherapist (APP) staffing, and provide a 'management arm' for patients who were unable to access appropriate conservative management. This extra staffing provided an opportunity to make the workforce more flexible, deliver services at a variety of sites and upskill clinicians from Allied Health Assistants (AHAs) to senior APPs.

**Relevance to conference themes:** This presentation will focus on Public Health Leadership and Management, particularly in relation to succession planning for senior and experienced clinicians.

**Background:** Through the project the RMH APP team staffing doubled, and a conservative management arm was developed, consisting of allied health assistants and junior and senior physiotherapy staff. This resulted in increased capacity to see patients, cover leave and provide support for more junior and credentialing APPs. Patients waited around two weeks on average to access conservative management compared with more than six months for many patients prior to the project.

**Outcome:** This project resulted in an increase in APP clinics, increased flexibility for leave cover, high staff retention and satisfaction and improved access to high quality conservative management for patients in a timely manner.

**Take home messages:**

- APPs have a central role in the management of patients referred for surgery.
- APP clinics provide opportunities for senior clinical staff to increase and diversify their skill set.
- Accessible and evidence-based conservative management is essential to successful APP clinics.

## Collaborating on the safe exercise at home website: physiotherapy leadership case study

**Dr Rik Dawson**<sup>1</sup>, Professor Cathie Sherrington<sup>1</sup>, Professor Catherine Said, Courtney West<sup>1</sup>, Associate Professor Michelle Callisaya, Associate Professor Frances Batchelor<sup>3</sup>, Professor Anne-Marie Hill, Professor Shylie Mackintosh, Dr Stephanie Fu, Professor Keith Hill  
<sup>1</sup> *Institute for Musculoskeletal Health, Sydney Local Health District, Camperdown, Australia*  
<sup>2</sup> *The University of Sydney, Camperdown, Australia*

1B - Practice - Astral 2, 31 October 2024, 3.35–4.20 pm

**Introduction:** The Safe Exercise at Home (SEAH) website, developed in 2020, assists older individuals with exercise amid and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. It addresses crucial health needs by offering online exercise guidance, fall prevention education, and physiotherapy resources. We present a case study on the impact of APA networking on innovation and research.

**Method:** COVID-19 prompted collaboration among clinician physiotherapists and researchers from multiple universities to develop SEAH, facilitated by prior APA networking. This network expedited endorsement by the APA, contributing to website trustworthiness. Post-launch meetings facilitated user feedback and refined content, monitored via Google Analytics, with team members contributing alongside their primary roles.

**Results:** SEAH attracted 31,084 users in 2020, and currently has over 55,000 users. A third are aged 55+, predominantly Australian. Recent additions included community success stories and an expanded exercise video library. Initially, translation efforts to Portuguese and Bosnian and expanding via health professional volunteers, enhanced accessibility through the website booklet (accessed 7,629 times). SEAH mentored a clinician to complete their PhD in telehealth physiotherapy in aged care in 2024 and generated 10 media opportunities promoting physiotherapy's leadership role in exercise prescription and fall prevention. Website evaluation is underway at the University of Melbourne.

**Outcome:** Professional collaboration facilitated by prior APA networking facilitated online dissemination of evidence-based exercise resources, creating cost-effective accessibility for older adults and physiotherapy providers.

**Take home messages:**

- Networking fosters clinician-research partnerships.
- Collaboration drives healthcare innovation.
- Professional partnerships create online healthcare solutions enhancing physiotherapy leadership in exercise promotion.

## Practitioner wellbeing: debunking myths and strengthening support during complaints

**Susan Biggar**<sup>1</sup>, **Kim Gibson**<sup>2,3,4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra), Australia, <sup>2</sup>Physiotherapy Board Of Australia, Australia, <sup>3</sup>South Metropolitan Health Service, Australia, <sup>4</sup>Curtin University, Australia

1C - Leadership and Management - Botanicals 1 and 2, 31 October 2024, 3.35–4.20 pm

Background: Many physiotherapists who have a notification (complaint) made about them, like all practitioners in that situation, find the experience stressful. For some, it's deeply distressing. Evidence suggests anxiety, fear and shame may prevent them reaching out for support.

We have been working to understand the contributors to distress and protective factors for practitioners going through a complaints process. We found the most consistent protective factor to be a good support network, something all practitioners can benefit from.

The aim of regulation is public protection. Looking after practitioner wellbeing at the same time is important to the Physiotherapy Board, but we cannot do it alone. Working together with employers, insurers, educators and others, we can all address fear, shame and stigma about complaints and encourage practitioners to get the support they need.

Relevance to conference theme: This presentation debunks common myths about complaints and aims to show employers and all physiotherapists the role they can play in providing/encouraging support and minimising distress for practitioners with a complaint about them.

Aims/objectives: An evidence-based understanding of notifications' outcomes and self-reported practitioner experience will help practitioners respond in a balanced way to complaints about their practice. Managers and leaders can support practitioners, ensuring access to support and de-mystifying patient complaints.

Take home messages:

- Practitioners respond to complaints with high levels of stress, often based on incomplete knowledge.
- Debunking myths can reduce practitioner distress.
- Personal and professional support helps.
- De-stigmatising complaints and mental health is essential to improve wellbeing.

## Empowering diversity: the remarkably new world of generation Z

**Shane Gunaratnam**

*<sup>1</sup>Culture of One, Ballarat, Australia*

1C - Leadership and Management - Botanicals 1 and 2, 31 October 2024, 3.35–4.20 pm

**Concept:** This presentation examines the shift towards organisational models that embody evolutionary progress—structures that are highly adaptable and thrive on diversity, equity and inclusion (DE and I). We'll explore why these models are especially effective for leading Generation Z, a cohort that values dynamic environments, resilient innovation, and purpose-driven workplaces.

**Relevance to conference themes:** Aligned with the FOCUS24 theme, 'The business of physiotherapy', this session underscores innovative Leadership and Management strategies essential for navigating the evolving demographic and technological landscapes in healthcare. It highlights how adaptable organisational models can meet and leverage the unique attributes and expectations of younger professionals.

**Background:** In the face of rapid technological advancements and shifting workforce demographics, traditional hierarchical structures are increasingly proving inadequate. This session will delve into the principles of evolutionary progress in organisational design, focusing on how such models promote self-management and leverage DE and I for resilient innovation.

**Outcome:** Organisations embracing this evolutionary approach are better positioned to attract, engage, and retain Generation Z, enhancing their competitiveness and effectiveness in a rapidly changing healthcare environment.

**Take home messages:**

- Evolutionary organisational models are crucial for engaging and retaining Generation Z in physiotherapy practices.
- Adaptable structures that promote DE and I and innovation resonate deeply with this cohort.
- Implementing resilient innovation within practices leads to enhanced operational agility and improved client experiences.
- Key strategies for transitioning from hierarchies to fluid, adaptable organisational models, whilst retaining key stakeholder oversight.
- The role of DE and I in driving organisational impact, and measures for success.

## The .physio domain names report

**Dr Glenn Ruscoe**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Phys Biz Pty Ltd, FLOREAT, Australia*

2A Business - Astral 1, 31 October 2024, 4.25–5.10 pm

Concept: The .physio domain extension was launched ten years ago and this report reviews its journey. Comparisons with other profession's top level domains will be made. A review of organisations around the world who are using the .physio domain extension will be given as a demonstration of use. This information is new.

Relevance to conference themes: Domain names are a vital component of digital marketing and the profession's own namespace is potentially a boon to the profession and the organisations and individuals within it. Leaders need to be aware of the opportunities available so they can make informed decisions.

Background: The presentation will review the use of the .physio top level domain over the first ten years by comparison with other professions and within the profession. This knowledge will significantly contribute to the digital branding and digital marketing knowledge of the leaders, in all areas, of the profession.

Outcome: The .physio top level domain has been adopted sporadically across the profession, but to a similar extent across all professions. Those early adopters have secured powerful digital brands and are benefiting significantly. The opportunities available will be reviewed. As the second tranche of top-level domains come soon, global awareness will rise and greater adoption is expected.

Take home messages:

- A .physio domain offers significant digital marketing opportunities.
- Examples of strategies by existing users will be demonstrated, showing how they have gained greatest advantage.
- The process of registering a .physio domain will be provided.

## Where do parents seek information about their children's health?

**Dr Danica Hendry**<sup>1,2</sup>, Professor Leon Straker<sup>1,2</sup>, Ms Sarah Coshan<sup>2</sup>, Mrs Caroline McCarthy<sup>2</sup>, Mrs Ndapile Kumwembe<sup>2</sup>, Ms Brittany Bourne<sup>2</sup>, Dr Juliana Zabatiero<sup>1,2</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>ARC Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child, Bentley, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Curtin University, Bentley, Australia

2B - Practice - Astral 2, 31 October 2024, 4.25–5.10 pm

**Concept:** This work demonstrates the importance of trustworthy, credible, relatable and easily accessible health information, and the significance of this for physiotherapy practice and business outcomes.

**Relevance to conference themes:** The findings support the use of online sources in the dissemination of health information and bring focus to the valued aspects of information sources by parents. Practice outcomes across the scope of physiotherapy practice are likely to benefit from communicating with these findings in mind.

**Background:** This study qualitatively explored the practices and perspectives of 20 Australian parents accessing health related information for their children. Interactions with family and friends and the use of online sources, including social media and social media influencers, were common. Parents valued sources which they considered trustworthy, credible, relatable and easily accessible.

**Conclusion:** Findings indicate a need for a shift towards broader sources and strategies to allow effective communication by clinicians to inform perspectives and practices surrounding health behaviours. While this study focused on parents, the factors informing their practices are likely similar across different populations and health domains.

**Take home messages:**

- The use of online sources to access health information is continually growing, providing evidence to support the use of online sources, including social media, in dissemination of health information by clinicians and researchers.
- Parents value information sources which they considered trustworthy, credible, relatable and easily accessible.
- Factors informing parental practices are likely similar across different populations and health domains thus pertinent across the scope of physiotherapy practice.



## Factors associated with the retention and attrition of physiotherapists in Australia

Dr Jade Tan<sup>1</sup>, Dr Paula Harding<sup>2</sup>, Dr Sarah Anderson<sup>3</sup>, Dr Lee Barclay<sup>1</sup>, Dr Rechu Divakar<sup>1</sup>, Bronwyn Darmanin<sup>4</sup>, Lowana Williams<sup>4</sup>, Simon Tatz<sup>4</sup>, Gillian McDermott<sup>4</sup>, Professor Sheila Lennon<sup>2</sup>, Alison Abud<sup>1</sup>, Kim Gibson<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, , Australia, <sup>2</sup>Physiotherapy Board of Australia, , Australia, <sup>3</sup>School of Allied Health, Human Services and Sport, La Trobe University, La Trobe, Australia, <sup>4</sup>Australian Physiotherapy Association, , Australia

2B - Practice - Astral 2, 31 October 2024, 4.25–5.10 pm

Understanding retention and attrition of the physiotherapy workforce is critical to addressing workforce shortages. This study, a collaboration involving the Physiotherapy Board of Australia, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra), and the Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA), explores factors associated with retention and attrition of physiotherapists in Australia.

Relevance to conference themes: Leadership and management play a key role in providing a supportive workplace that encourages physiotherapists to remain working in the profession.

Background: Studies indicate maldistribution of physiotherapists to metropolitan areas, job dissatisfaction, and lack of professional support, burnout and changes to scope of practice, influence workforce attrition.

This study reports on 7,728 physiotherapists (17 per cent response rate) who volunteered to participate in the Physiotherapy Attrition and Retention Collaboration Survey. Data was combined with Ahpra Physiotherapy registration data from the last 10 years.

Conclusion: 8.5 per cent of physiotherapists who responded to the survey intend to leave the profession, with the largest proportion intending to leave within five years. Enjoyment of work was the top motivating factor to remain. Other than retirement, remuneration was the top reason for leaving the profession.

Key predictors influencing retention included gender, employment status, APA membership status, work hours, years of experience, career stage, further qualifications, and self-employment status.

Take home messages:

- Most physiotherapists surveyed intended to stay in the profession for five or more years.
- Interventions to improve remuneration, career progression opportunities, job satisfaction, and reduce burnout, may improve retention.
- Interventions need to target experienced, additionally qualified physiotherapists to ensure continued public access to physiotherapy.

## Considering the spiritual in the biopsychosocial model for culturally informed practice

**Vandana Thavare**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Life Spring Physiotherapy, Thornlie, Australia*

2B - Practice - Astral 2, 31 October 2024, 4.25–5.10 pm

Concept: Therapist's awareness of the role of spirituality and its' integration in the biopsychosocial care model may help achieve effective cross-cultural therapeutic relationship, adherence to treatment and treatment outcomes for patients from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Relevance to conference themes: Enhancement of Physiotherapy practice through successful outcomes for patients from culturally and spiritually diverse backgrounds.

Background: Australia has seen a surge in migration in the past few decades with over 30 per cent Australia's population born overseas. While Christianity remains the largest religion in Australia, there has been an increase in other religions associated with migration. Spirituality and religion are often embedded with ethnocultural beliefs and practices around health and illness. While religion and culture are inseparable for many, others may have differing spiritual beliefs within the same culture. Dissociating the spiritual aspect of an individual's culture when using the biopsychosocial model for effective physiotherapy practice may risk missing important links to holistic approach to treatment. Understanding the barriers to include spiritual discussion in history taking can bridge this gap for patients from culturally and spiritually diverse backgrounds.

Outcome: Spiritual beliefs may directly affect health outcomes. Better understanding of patient's spiritual beliefs may positively influence patient outcomes.

Take home messages:

- Be mindful of own and of patient's spiritual beliefs to avoid biases.
- Consider the relevance of including spiritual history taking in an efficient and sensitive manner.
- Develop culturally and spiritually informed practice for a holistic patient-centered care.

## Innovating physiotherapy education: embracing digital health transformation

**Dr Mark Merolli**<sup>1</sup>, Mr Aiden Smart<sup>1</sup>, A/Prof Karen Donald<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Physiotherapy - The University Of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia*

2C - Education – Botanicals 1 and 2, 31 October 2024, 4.25–5:10 pm

**Concept:** This abstract describes a novel future-focused physiotherapy subject, 'Health Leadership and Digital Innovation' at the University of Melbourne. Developed in response to stakeholder needs, the APA's 'Future of Physiotherapy' vision, and digital health's impact, the curriculum integrates non-clinical material like innovation and design-thinking into traditional physiotherapy curriculum. It fosters health leadership and innovation acumen alongside clinical capability to future-proof physiotherapy graduates.

**Relevance to conference themes:** This abstract aligns with the conference theme of "Education: Building expert skills" by showcasing a transformative approach to physiotherapy education, equipping students with innovation, leadership, entrepreneurship, and digital health skills.

**Background:** The presentation will delve into the content of the subject module, emphasising its role in shaping future physiotherapy professionals. Through case studies, seminars, practical workshop exercises, and industry partnerships, students engage with real-world trends, challenges and solutions in digital health, entrepreneurship, and leadership.

**Outcome:** 'Health Leadership and Digital Innovation' represents a significant advancement in physiotherapy education, bridging gaps between clinical practice, technology, and innovation. It fosters innovation culture, enhancing graduate preparedness for diverse healthcare settings, leadership roles, and ultimately improving patient care.

**Take home messages:**

- Incorporating innovation, entrepreneurship, and digital health education and leadership skills enhances graduate readiness.
- Learning innovation models empowers students to tackle complex healthcare challenges.
- Digital health capability helps physiotherapists navigate the evolving healthcare landscape.
- Collaboration with partners enhances educational relevance.
- Continuous adaptation and innovation in education is crucial for future-proofing the physiotherapy workforce.

## Maximising productivity and profitability: optimising technology to streamline practice management

**Alex Forde**<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>SiSU, Brisbane, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Pogozo, Brisbane, Australia

3A - Business - Astral 1, 1 November 2024, 10.50–11.35 am

Background: Successful private practice physiotherapy clinics depend on efficient practice management to maximise both productivity and profitability. Increasingly, multiple software programs are being implemented to perform the day-to-day tasks of practice management. This session addresses the optimisation of such technology to streamline operations and maximise revenue within physiotherapy practices and assumes a basic understanding of clinic management principles.

Relevance to conference themes: This ‘how to’ examines the practical aspects of utilising technology to improve practice management; offering insights relevant to business owners aiming to improve their operational efficiency and financial performance (Conference proposition FOCUS24 – Business).

Aims/objectives: This session aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to optimise the practice management software used in their physiotherapy clinics, and discusses:

- Identifying individual business needs and gaps in practice management (eg, administrative task efficiency and effective communication channels).
- Highlighting software solutions that address common business needs (eg, automating repetitive processes and streamlining communication channels).
- Evaluating the technology options available and understanding the key features and benefits of each practice management system.
- Knowledge of how to apply these concepts to improve practice efficiency and profitability.

Take home messages:

- Optimisation of practice management software offers significant benefit to increase practise productivity and profitability.
- Integration of technology enables data-driven decision-making and revenue optimisation.
- Implementing the right software can lead to tangible improvements in clinic efficiency and financial performance.
- Continued auditing of technology and your business needs are crucial for long-term success in physiotherapy practice management.

## The 'Learning-Bytes': an innovative, online professional development resource to support clinical supervision

**Dr Anna Phillips**<sup>1</sup>, Dr Helen Banwell<sup>1,2</sup>, Ms Sarah McMullen-Roach<sup>1,2</sup>, Ms Emma Hiscock<sup>1,3</sup>, Associate Professor Gisela Van Kessel<sup>1,4</sup>, Dr Caroline Fryer<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Allied Health and Human Performance, University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia,

<sup>2</sup>Innovation, Implementation And Clinical Translation in Health (IIMPACT), Adelaide,

Australia, <sup>3</sup>Department of Rural Health, University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia,

<sup>4</sup>UniSA Online, University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia

3A - Business - Astral 1, 1 November 2024, 10:50–11:35 am

**Concept:** Professional development opportunities for clinical educators are limited, despite best-evidence suggesting additional training and support are needed. Clinical educators continue to report a lack of confidence and feeling underprepared to create effective learning environments critical for work-ready graduates. The 'Learning-Bytes' - a novel, online professional development program was developed to address this gap.

**Relevance:** The creation of the 'Learning-Bytes' program provides educators with an accessible and engaging online professional development program and is a valuable first step providing a relevant and sustainable resource supporting the business of clinical educator development.

**Background:** A mixed method design was used to develop, implement, and evaluate the 'Learning-Bytes'. The development and implementation phases were guided by the Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation (ADDIE) model of instructional design. Program development included consultation and co-design with an expert Reference group, current students and educators. Program evaluation included learner engagement and analytics, pre-post surveys and focus groups.

**Outcome:** A flexible, online professional development program was created comprising five stand-alone modules, called 'Bytes', and a final capstone networking event, the 'Mega Byte'. Evaluation of the program demonstrated strong engagement and positive learning outcomes, with participants consistently rating the program as easy to use and meeting their learning needs. Many learners reported implementing their new learnings into practice.

**Take home messages:**

- 'Learning-Bytes' is a novel, online professional development program for educators
- 'Learning- Bytes' provides simple, relevant and actionable strategies for learners.
- Engagement in 'Learning-Bytes' demonstrated meaningful improvements in learner confidence, knowledge and changed practice.

## AI in clinical documentation in allied health: from promise to practice

**Dr Kerrie Evans**<sup>1,2</sup>, Ms Hayley Thomson<sup>1,2</sup>, Dr Amy Papinniemi<sup>1,3</sup>, Dr Viana Vuvan<sup>3</sup>, Dr Vaughan Nicholson<sup>4</sup>, Mr Tom Hindhaugh<sup>1</sup>, Associate Professor Amina Tariq<sup>5</sup>, Associate Professor Bernd Ploderer<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Healthia Limited, Bowen Hills, Australia, <sup>2</sup>The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia, <sup>3</sup>The University of Queensland, St Lucia, Australia, <sup>4</sup>The Australian Catholic University, Banyo, Australia, <sup>5</sup>Queensland University of Technology, Kelvin Grove, Australia

3B - Practice - Astral 2, 1 November 2024, 10.50–11.35 am

**Project:** This study investigates the impact of AI for clinical documentation in allied health private practice.

**Relevance:** Clinical documentation is an integral part of daily practice but can take >25 per cent of a clinician's time. AI is being increasingly employed with the promise of automating and enhancing various processes in healthcare, including clinical documentation.

**Background:** We are currently conducting a mixed-methods study, in which clinicians record their interactions with patients using a natural language processing (NLP) tool (Lyrebird Health) which uses AI and algorithms to extract and organise information into structured notes in real-time. Perspectives of clinicians and patients (eg, acceptance, trust, time spent) are explored. Clinician participants (n=110) attend a one-hour training session and then complete questionnaires at baseline, 6-weeks and 3-months. Clinicians are asked to invite at least 3 of their patients to share their perspectives on AI being used during their appointment. Patients that consent complete one questionnaire immediately after their appointment. A subset of clinician and patient participants will be randomly selected to take part in focus groups to explore their perspectives in greater depth.

**Outcome:** This presentation will discuss emerging findings, including, for example, where expectations of AI are met/exceeded vs not met and strategies that may improve implementation in private practice settings.

**Take home messages:**

- AI holds great potential to streamline clinical documentation processes and enhance operational efficiencies.
- It reduces time spent on notes outside of work hours.
- It is well accepted by patients.
- AI may allow greater focus on the patient during clinical interactions.

## Improving governance and teamwork through defining and tracking engagement skills

**Caroline Bills**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Healthchange Associates, Port Melbourne, Australia*

3C - Leadership and Management - Botanicals 1 and 2, 1 November 2024, 10.50–11.35 am

Background: This session is for leaders wanting to understand the behaviours that underpin engagement and how simple data can improve patient and clinician experience, demonstrate how standards are being met, and impact team culture.

Relevance to conference themes: Engagement skills refer to the abilities that help professionals connect with others in a way that encourages them to listen and respond. This skill set is fundamental at all organisational levels to the business of Physiotherapy yet there is a lack of clarity for leaders about how to define and track this activity. This situation creates an enormous lost opportunity to integrate targeted activities that impact the quality of care and contribute to a culture of excellence and accountability.

Aims: This presentation will show how Quality and Competence Frameworks can be linked to a set of foundation principles and skills that can be measured and tracked. Implementation examples and outcomes will be discussed.

Participants will leave with a greater understanding of:

- A common language that can be used to define the foundation behavioural principles and techniques required for engagement.
- The outcomes achieved by using a systematic implementation approach.

Take home messages:

- Complex core competencies can be simplified so that they are more easily understood and applied in practice.
- Regular reflective practice and team discussion support skills development.
- The systematic use of data impacts performance and can demonstrate how organisations meet national and professional standards.

## Managing the new generation: insights from the tip of an iceberg

**Toni Andary**<sup>1,2</sup>, Mr David Cross<sup>1</sup>, Dr Susan Coulson<sup>1,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*NSW Physiotherapy Council, Sydney, Australia*, <sup>2</sup>*School of Medical Sciences, UNSW, Sydney, Australia*, <sup>3</sup>*Faculty of Medicine and Health, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia*

3C - Leadership and Management - Botanicals 1 and 2, 1 November 2024, 10.50–11.35 am

Concept: The Physiotherapy Council of NSW has conducted an audit of 5 years of complaints and notifications data. An analysis of the complaints related to recently graduated physiotherapists was performed. Complaints data can be seen as the tip of the iceberg potentially exposing a broad range of professional issues within this group.

Relevance to conference themes: Managers and practice principals must be aware of the potential issues that may arise with physiotherapists they are employing. It is imperative that the leaders in our profession support and nurture the new generation and minimise the reputational risk to their organisation and the broader profession.

Background: Complaints have been received for recently graduated physiotherapists across the public and private practice settings.

The general themes related to complaints in this relatively inexperienced cohort can be sub-grouped into categories related to issues with communication, informed consent, documentation, boundaries, fraud and clinical reasoning.

Outcome: Specific education programs and professional development activities should commence as soon as a new employee begins with an organisation. In addition to clinical skills development, professional practice expectations and behaviours should be discussed as part of any plan for professional development. It is recommended that this training focus on the theme areas identified.

Take home messages:

- The Council has developed several resources to help managers provide professional development training.
- A series of videos and podcasts are available on the council website that can be used to facilitate discussions to enhance the ethical decision-making capacity of inexperienced physiotherapists.



## How to integrate Gen Z into your private practice

**Shane Gunaratnam**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Culture of One, Ballarat, Australia*

4B - Leadership and Management - Astral 2, 1 November 2024, 11.40 am–12.40 pm

Concept: Outdated hierarchical models are ineffective with Gen Z, who thrive within structures that support autonomy, diversity and innovation.

This session provides a practical framework for integrating young professionals into your practice, focusing on transitioning from traditional management into 'ethical' leadership.

Ethical leadership involves empowerment through diversity, equity and inclusion (DE and I). It is the platform for autonomy and purpose-driven work.

Essentially, it means creating cultures where individuals are accepted for who they are and what they stand. Leaders who embrace this ethos will see their people and their purpose prosper.

Relevance to conference themes: This 'how to' session aligns with the FOCUS24 theme, 'The business of physiotherapy', by offering practical strategies within Leadership and Management, essential for adapting to the shifting demographics within the workforce.

Outcome: Effective leadership of Gen Z requires a paradigm shift, from traditional management to ethical leadership promoting a culture where autonomy, DE and I and purpose matter.

Take home messages:

- Traditional top-down management models are less effective with Gen Z; embracing ethical leadership is key.
- Empowering Gen Z with autonomy and a sense of purpose leads to higher engagement and innovation in physiotherapy practices.
- Implementing inclusive practices that leverage the diverse backgrounds of Gen Z can significantly enhance patient care and clinic culture.
- Clinic leaders must be proactive in learning about and integrating new leadership models to stay relevant and competitive.
- The success of modern physiotherapy practices hinges on their ability to adapt to the changing demographics and expectations of their workforce.

## Stop managing your team like it's an assembly line

**Joel Friedlaender**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Cliniko, Healesville, Australia*

4B - Leadership and Management - Astral 2, 1 November 2024, 11.40 am–12.40 pm

Your team members aren't working on an assembly line, they are creative people doing creative roles. Physiotherapy, reception, administration: these are all creative roles. Why are we still implementing business leadership practices designed for the industrial era and expecting it to work?

Why bother hiring great people, if you're not going to support them in doing great work? At Cliniko, the team of more than 50 have no managers, no meetings, and unlimited annual leave. The team have complete autonomy and flexibility and perform better because of it.

In this talk, Joel Friedlaender, founder of Cliniko, will share his experience and insights on how to create high-performing and happy teams. With a focus on team culture, Joel will challenge traditional approaches to business management and demonstrate how embracing creativity and innovation can drive greater success.

Take home messages:

- Your team are doing creative work, use that context to drive better performance.
- Retention matters, your business will be better off if you can keep your team. There will be practical tips on how to achieve this.
- KPIs (key performance indicators) may not be doing what you think they do.

This presentation is ideal for business owners, managers, and healthcare professionals who are looking to drive change and improve the performance of their teams. Join Joel as he shares his experience and insights to help you in today's rapidly changing business environment.

## Leveraging AI for enhanced clinical note-taking and report writing in physiotherapy practice

**Darren Ross**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*PatientNotes / Physica, Ringwood, Australia*

4C - Practice - Botanicals 1 and 2, 1 November 2024, 11.40 am–12.40 pm

Background: This 'how to' session explores the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into physiotherapy to optimise clinical documentation and address common challenges such as time management and data accuracy. This session aims to help with practitioner efficiency and transform practice management.

Relevance to conference themes: Perfectly aligned with FOCUS24's focus on 'The business of physiotherapy,' this session demonstrates how AI can improve patient care and efficiency, fitting into themes of Practice, Leadership and Management, and Education, thus enhancing business and clinical outcomes in physiotherapy.

Aims/objectives:

- Demonstrate how AI can significantly enhance the accuracy and efficiency of clinical documentation.
- Provide practical training on specific AI tools developed for physiotherapy, focusing on features that streamline clinical workflows.
- Explore the integration of clinical reasoning and emotional intelligence with prompt engineering to optimise the use of AI in practice.
- Discuss the implementation of AI in secure, encrypted, HIPAA-compliant environments that also adhere to Australian Privacy laws.
- Show how effective use of AI can reduce administrative burdens, especially in preparing detailed reports like those for NDIS.

Take home messages:

- Participants will integrate clinical reasoning and emotional intelligence with AI tools to boost effectiveness in practice.
- AI enhances clinical documentation quality and efficiency, leading to more patient-centred care and reducing practitioner burnout.
- Emphasize the importance of deploying AI within secure, encrypted settings that comply with HIPAA and Australian Privacy laws, ensuring the safety of patient information.
- Understand responsible data management for Private Health Information when utilising AI.

## Mastering the clever business of communication: improving physiotherapy business and clinical outcomes

**Bill Mctigue**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*mhealth / cs4cs, Mentone, Australia*

4C - Practice - Botanicals1 and 2, 1 November 2024, 11.40 am–12.40 pm

Background: Effective communication is the key to successful client and business outcomes. While successful physiotherapists do this intuitively, another level of competence is to understand what these communication skills are so they can be taught formally. A notable education gap exists within health professions, despite the critical importance of communication skills in all career pathways. The APA 'Physiotherapy Career Pathway' details seven career roles for physiotherapists: practitioner, communicator, collaborator, leader, health advocate, scholar and professional. In all career pathways it is advantageous to be an expert communicator.

Relevance to conference themes: To improve physiotherapy outcomes, we draw on specific skills from the business, education, and psychology and health literature. A broad scoped knowledge base helps bridge the gap in formal instruction of communication skills.

Aims/objectives: Our overarching objective is to develop expert communicators as in the APA 'Physiotherapy Career Pathway'. Specific instruction develops powerful tools for increasing client compliance, reframing conversations, negotiating successfully, mentoring, conducting interviews and navigating tough or challenging professional scenarios.

This oral presentation dissects a pivotal technique: the art of listening for change language and guiding clients towards committed transformation. In short conversations physiotherapists can have instant influence to augment client and business outcomes.

Take home messages:

- Communication comprises specific tools for specific professional situations.
- Mastering specific communication skills in a professional setting is key to improving client and business outcomes.
- Formal instruction can fast track the development of communication skills that successful physiotherapists have learned intuitively over many years.
- The interaction creates the 'magic' of the intervention.

## Leadership training, bridging the gap in private practice

**Marisol Reyes Fuentes**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*SquareOne Physio, Sydney, Australia*

5A - Leadership and Management - Astral 1, 1 November 2024, 1.45–2.30 pm

Concept: Our Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) was created in 2023 with one goal in mind, to support our team members grow by bridging the gap between clinical and leadership skills. The ELP is designed to identify, develop, and nurture team members who demonstrate the potential to become future leaders at Square One.

Relevance to conference themes: This topic is of great relevance to FOCUS24 as it demonstrates how bridging the skills gap between clinicians and leaders can be done by developing an in-house leadership training. This supports business growth by upskilling mid-tenure physios which has a positive effect in job satisfaction by providing new opportunities for self-development and career progression.

Background: Personal development is the cornerstone of this program. Beyond specific leadership skills, our program focuses on instilling a leadership mindset, emphasising qualities such as self-awareness, empathy, and collaboration. This has been of great benefit to our team culture and supported business growth.

Outcome: The ELP has been a successful endeavour. We have seen positive self-awareness and communication skills improvement in last year's cohort. The program has given them a sense of belonging, the confidence to pursue leadership roles and the gift to be future ready.

Take home messages:

- Providing leadership training to clinicians is important to support personal and professional growth.
- Personal development is professional development. Providing leadership training can benefit team culture and support business growth.
- Leadership training should be delivered to clinicians prior to taking leadership positions to ensure they are future ready leaders.

## Future proofing the physiotherapy business workforce: models of private practice student placements

**Erin Elsley**<sup>1</sup>, Mrs Naomi Stewart, Mrs Kate Currie, Dr Luke Wakely, Dr Catherine Johnston, Mr Clint Newstead, Ms Rachel Wood

<sup>1</sup>University of Newcastle Department of Rural Health, Tamworth, Australia

5A - Leadership and Management - Astral 1, 1 November 2024, 1.45–2.30 pm

**Introduction:** Over half of the Australian physiotherapy workforce is employed in private healthcare settings. Thus, private practice placements provide critical experience for students before entering the workforce. We sought to explore models of student supervision applied by physiotherapists in private practice and what contributes to effective placements.

**Methods:** Qualitative interviews were conducted with private practice physiotherapists (n=7) in New South Wales, Australia with prior experience in supervising students. Data were thematically analysed, guided by qualitative content analysis.

**Outcome:** The models of placement employed by participants will be described including the spectrum of student autonomy from side-by-side teaching to increasing independent practice. Sub-themes that determined which model was employed will be explored including positives and barriers of supervising student placements. Positives included recruitment opportunities, supervisor professional development and support from universities. Placements were described as a way to “give back” to the profession. Barriers included increased supervisor workload, varied marking and feedback between supervisors and having to support students to develop some clinical skills.

The impact of supporting students as part of patient care was described including a range of fee strategies.

**Take home messages:** As a profession, it is important to offer learning experiences in private practice for physiotherapy students whilst being a positive experience for both supervisors and patients. The model and style of supervision should be considered depending on the nature of the private practice, the students’ stage of learning and competence and skills required.

## From hospital to home: an innovative student placement spanning multiple respiratory settings

**Dr Peter Beshara**<sup>1,2</sup>, Jacque North<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Prince Of Wales Hospital, Sydney, Randwick, Australia, <sup>2</sup>University of New South Wales, Sydney, Randwick, Australia

5B - Education - Astral 2, 1 November 2024, 1.45–2.30 pm

**Concept:** An innovative student placement provides students with respiratory experience across the care continuum and competencies for workplace readiness. A structured curriculum based on the 2019 European Respiratory Society's (ERS) recommendations offers student experience across inpatient, outpatient, and home-based settings, covering acute care, chronic management, pulmonary rehabilitation, and palliative care.

**Relevance to conference themes:** The immersive placements' innovative design is underpinned by the educational pedagogy of experiential learning, which offers comprehensive supervision and integrates interprofessional collaboration.

**Background:** We present the development, implementation, and evaluation of a five-week respiratory placement that integrates assessment, treatment, and high-fidelity simulations directly into clinical practice. This placement bridges the gap between academic learning and clinical application, emphasising collaborative, patient-centred approaches. Respiratory-specific competencies allow scaffolding of learning, ensuring students are clinically competent and adept at communication, critical thinking, and ethical practice.

**Integrating inpatient, outpatient, and home-based respiratory care settings during student placement is rare.** This offers an invaluable continuum of care perspective that extends from hospital to home—a holistic view often missing in traditional student placements.

**Outcome:** Preliminary data indicates increased student confidence and satisfaction on the Physiotherapy Self-efficacy questionnaire and Clinical Placement Quality Survey, enhancing students' educational experiences, equipping them with skills to manage respiratory conditions and preparing them for clinical challenges.

**Take home messages:**

- Structured, innovative placements based on ERS recommendations enhance student competencies and workplace readiness.
- Bridging the gap between academic learning and clinical placement allows scaffolding of learning.
- Interprofessional and cross-setting exposure develops adaptable, comprehensive skills.

## Applying technology to grow your occupational health business

**Zac Lowth**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Carelever, Brisbane, Australia

5C - Business - Botanicals 1 and 2, 1 November 2024, 1.45–2.30 pm

Background: This 'how to' session explores the strategic integration of technology within physiotherapy businesses, particularly focusing on its application in occupational health settings. Assumptions include a basic understanding of physiotherapy practice and an interest in leveraging technology for business growth.

Relevance to conference themes: Aligned with the overarching theme of FOCUS24 - The Business of Physiotherapy, this session delves into the Business category, demonstrating how technology can enhance profitability, compliance, and future readiness within occupational health.

Aims/objectives: This session aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to:

- Identify key areas within their occupational health business where technology can drive efficiency and quality improvement.
- Implement practical strategies for integrating technology solutions, considering factors such as budget, staff training, and client engagement.
- Enhance their understanding of the B2B market dynamics and develop innovative technological offerings to attract and retain corporate clients.
- Acquire competencies in assessing the ROI of technology investments and navigating regulatory frameworks related to data privacy and cybersecurity.

Take home messages:

- Technology is a powerful tool for enhancing the quality, efficiency and profitability of occupational health services.
- By strategically leveraging technology, physiotherapy businesses can differentiate themselves in the competitive B2B market, offering innovative solutions tailored to corporate clients' needs.
- Success in integrating technology requires a holistic approach, encompassing staff training, stakeholder engagement, and ongoing evaluation of outcomes.
- Embracing technological innovation not only improves business performance but also enhances the overall client experience, driving long-term growth and sustainability.



## A global physiotherapy led model promoting brain health, implications for healthy aging

**Associate Professor James McLoughlin**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Your Brain Health, ROYSTON PARK, Australia*

5C - Business - Botanicals 1 and 2, 1 November 2024, 1.45–2.30 pm

Your Brain Health was developed in 2023 as a comprehensive and inclusive service that provides education, baseline brain health screening while building a global professional network. Concussion has provided a media spotlight on the growing concern of long-term brain health and the ever emerging role of baseline screening to improve informed post-concussion assessments. The blending of neurological, vestibular, musculoskeletal and sports rehabilitation skills places physiotherapy as a key multidisciplinary leader to advance this field.

Your Brain Health aims to promote this advanced practice and make it accessible to both elite sports and the community level. In addition, the concept of regular monitoring of brain health using multimodal screens including medical history, sleep, mental health, vestibular, visual, balance and cognitive domains has broad relevance to brain injury, aging, falls risk and living with neurological conditions such as stroke, Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson's Disease.

Your Brain Health has led the way in 2024 through a selection of growing online professional development courses, global webinars, and the development of a community platform to maximise support, networking and business opportunities.

Our baseline screening services links the community to local clinics within our network that supports growth for these businesses and services.

Your Brain Health software provides a selection of priority evidence based outcome measures including the use of cutting edge technology, and creates efficient multimodal reports. Our clinical data provides large scale information to inform specific research projects with many academic organisations around the globe.

## Scaling a physiotherapist's reach whilst also enhancing care

**Errol Lim**<sup>1</sup>, Miss Sarah Comensoli<sup>1</sup>, Dr Irwin Lim<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>BJC Health, Sydney, Australia

6A - Practice - Astral 1, 1 November 2024, 2.35–3.20 pm

Concept: How do you reach, educate, and reassure more patients at scale especially when they have a chronic condition? Behaviour change requires consistent support and patient engagement. BJC Connect, an online platform helps to amplify the voice of a single clinician to many, allowing for regular engagement.

Relevance: Chronic disease management requires innovation. The COVID-19 pandemic focused energies on new models. Bjcconnect.com.au gives clinicians an opportunity to embrace a hybrid model of offline and online care. These concepts are not new but the practicalities of implementation have been refined over the past 3 years. It's worked in a private rheumatology setting. Can it help with a skills shortage?

Background: BJC Connect is facilitated by experienced rheumatology health professionals.

The platform now provides:

- Free live interactive educational events, group workshops and resources.
- 18 live and guided exercise classes each week.
- A free practitioner specific portal supporting the clinical rheumatology community.
- 6680+ registered members (at Jan 2024) with 20 per cent of these members logging in to engage with the platform each month.
- Monthly Net Promoter Scores ranging from +50 to +79.

Outcome: BJC Connect will never replace face-to-face support from physiotherapists. It has been designed to enhance existing care by empowering patients through conveniently accessible education, support and engagement.

Take home messages:

- Enhancing care at scale.
- Three years of data to show it works in a private chronic musculoskeletal setting.
- A model that crosses jurisdictions and can be replicated for a clinician's specialty.

## The role of physiotherapy in ending violence against women by 2030

**Christine Waddell**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Womens Health and Newborn Service, Subiaco, Australia*

6B - Business - Astral 2, 1 November 2024, 2.35–3.20 pm

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018) one in six women have experienced physical or sexual violence since the age of 15. Violence against women and children was estimated to cost the healthcare system \$22 billion between 2025-2016, and intimate partner violence is the highest contributing factor to the burden of disease in women.

Health impacts of family and domestic violence can be both acute and chronic. Physiotherapy is likely to be involved with the many health conditions that FDV can present with. We have screening tools for biopsychosocial factors but how many of us screen for family and domestic violence?

Physiotherapists have longer appointments times, usually have a series of appointments and are good at developing a trusted relationship with our clients. We have the perfect opportunity to screen for family and domestic violence.

The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2023 includes four main domains: Prevention, Early Intervention, Response and Recovery and Healing.

Physiotherapists can have a role in in early intervention by screening, they can play a role in response by keeping the perpetrator accountable in all their documentation. And we have a role in recovery in healing by our core practice.

This presentation will provide physiotherapists with the tools to screen for FDV in all its complexities. It will provide resources for clinicians to refer clients to. It will show how strength-based documentation can assist in the legal process and keep the perpetrator accountable.

## Physiotherapy in the digital age: AI, startups, and value-based care

**Dr Kevin Wernli**<sup>1,2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Curtin University, Bentley, Perth, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Matilda Health, White Gum Valley, Australia,

<sup>3</sup>West Coast Health And High Performance, Lathlain, Perth, Australia

6B - Business - Astral 2, 1 November 2024, 2.35–3.20 pm

Concept: The speed of technology and innovation progress is exponential. Much quicker than clinical adoption and regulation.

This presentation explores the adoption and potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital health innovations in physiotherapy and health. It highlights AI tools and digital startups enhancing efficiency and care, and concludes with a summary of the most promising value-based healthcare models globally.

Relevance to conference themes: Aligned with the FOCUS24 theme 'Business', this abstract addresses how we can incorporate technological advances to stay competitive and compliant, whilst exploring the risks and rewards of doing so (and doing nothing).

Background:

The presentation will cover:

- The role of AI in enhancing care and efficiency, with an eye on future trends.
- The impact of digital health startups on the physiotherapy and health sector.
- Successful value-based healthcare models from around the world with reference to the Australian context.

Outcome: With the rapid progression of technology, physiotherapists must be aware of what's happening and equipped to make changes in order to continue to be an integral part of the healthcare system. Through a mix of literature reviews and personal experiences, this presentation aims to provide an overview of AI, digital health, and value-based care so we can enhance not only clinical outcomes and safety, but also business efficiency, hygiene, and profitability.

Take home messages:

- Leveraging AI and digital tools can boost efficiency and competitiveness (and relevance).
- Successful global value-based care models hold promise for optimising the Australian Healthcare system.

## Climate change in entry-level physiotherapy

**Dr Kerstin McPherson**<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Australian Catholic University, North Sydney, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Charles Sturt University, Orange, Australia

6C - Education - Botanicals 1 and 2, 1 November 2024, 2.35–3.20 pm

**Concept:** This project aimed to explore the opinions of entry-level students and their academic teaching staff to climate change and sustainability and their inclusion in entry-level physiotherapy programs in Australia. To my knowledge this is the first study to explore climate change in entry-level physiotherapy education in Australia

**Relevance to conference themes:** Education

**Key words:** Climate change/ Sustainability/ Environment

**Background:** Climate change is impacting human lives and health in a variety of ways. Physiotherapy practice may be influenced by the effects of climate change, including adapting to extreme weather conditions, managing increased injuries and chronic diseases within the community. The inclusion of climate change is supported in medical and nursing education. Two surveys were developed to assess physiotherapy students' and physiotherapy teaching staffs' attitudes and knowledge towards climate change and were distributed in April 2023.

**Conclusion:** This study found that not all physiotherapy students felt that climate change is happening, or that the climate is in crisis, while all the academic teaching staff felt that it is occurring and in crisis. Very few students felt it was content that should be included in physiotherapy curriculum. When seen as part of professionalism and “doing no harm”, integrating aspects of climate change should be seen as an essential component of the curriculum rather than an additional burden

**Take home messages:** There is an urgent need to integrate climate change and sustainability into physiotherapy entry-level curriculum. Shared knowledge of how to integrate content needs to be shared between entry-level physiotherapy programs.

## Promoting uptake of a long-term rural immersion (LTRI) program

**Jacqui Leys**<sup>1</sup>, Dr Luke Wakely<sup>1</sup>, Dr Catherine Johnston<sup>2</sup>, Mr Clint Newstead<sup>2</sup>, Mr Luke Wheeldon<sup>1</sup>, Mrs Kate Currie<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Newcastle Department of Rural Health, Tamworth, Australia, <sup>2</sup>University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia

6C - Education – Botanicals 1 and 2, 1 November 2024, 2.35–3.20 pm

**Concept:** This project involved an innovative strategy to promote uptake of the University of Newcastle Department of Rural Health (UONDRH) physiotherapy LTRI program via the use of short, early-year, introductory placements.

**Relevance to conference themes:** Relevant themes: 'education (placements)'; 'workforce (regional workforce)'.

**Background:** Longer-term placement experiences positively influence students' intention to work rurally. The UONDRH delivers a physiotherapy LTRI program, enabling students to complete their final year, including all placements, within the UONDRH. Previously students have been reluctant to engage due to costs and preconceptions, highlighting the need for strategies to better promote LTRI program participation. One successful strategy has been to expose early-year students to the experience of the UONDRH through short introductory placements which serve as a 'taster' for the LTRI program.

**Outcome:** Data from the introductory placements and LTRI program were reviewed. The proportion of the student cohort completing UONDRH introductory placements increased from 19 per cent (17/88) in 2012, to 65 per cent (56/86) in 2023. The number of students undertaking the LTRI program in the UONDRH has also increased from one (2012) to 22 (2024). Of those undertaking the LTRI in 2024, most (82 per cent) had completed UONDRH introductory placements. Graduate follow-up indicates that 40 per cent of those in the UONDRH LTRI program have gone on to work rurally.

**Take home messages:** Enabling more students to experience short introductory placements in rural settings is a useful strategy for increasing uptake of longer rural immersion/placements, potentially benefitting the physiotherapy rural workforce.

## New educational approaches: integrating business and clinical skills for private practice readiness

**Veronica Tziavrangos**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia*

6C - Education - Botanicals 1 and 2, 1 November 2024, 2.35–3.20 pm

**Description:** This presentation outlines a project aimed at building graduate readiness and confidence for entering the private practice physiotherapy workforce. A broad range of educational strategies integrated into the final year musculoskeletal subject, including business-specific sessions, panel discussions with practice owners, and industry-based placements, addressed barriers to student readiness.

**Relevance to conference themes:** Education – showcase of varied teaching and learning opportunities to overcome barriers and prepare students for private practice. The project leverages connections to industry to enhance student readiness.

Business – demonstration of how business owners can engage with final year physiotherapy students to assist their readiness to work in private practice.

**Background:** Research shows that employers, early career physiotherapists and academics alike feel that new graduates are unprepared for private practice. With workforce demand shifting, more than half of new graduates will be employed in these roles, so addressing this gap is crucial. Despite willingness from private practitioners to assist, barriers to hosting clinical student placements exist.

**Outcome:** The addition of new curriculum components resulted in final year students exhibiting greater understanding and confidence to work in private practice. Exposure to business aspects and observational visits to private practices provided valuable real-world learning experiences. Many students expressed a newfound preference for private practice employment based on these opportunities, equipped with pre-planned strategies to address self-identified challenges.

**Take home messages:**

- usefulness of business-specific course content in physiotherapy education
- strategies for enhancing graduate readiness in private practice
- positive outcomes from integrating business-focused content and industry visits into traditional clinical placements.

## Let's get real! Incorporating authenticity and technology into physiotherapy education

**Jacqueline North**<sup>1</sup>, Dr Serena Hong<sup>1</sup>, Associate Professor Michael Lee<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

7B - Education - Astral 2, 2 November 2024, 9.00–10.00 am

Background: Authentic pedagogy that focuses on the integration of knowledge into realistic educational environments, combined with novel technology, can boost learners' interest and facilitate development of skills to tackle complex health issues<sup>1, 2</sup>. Examples of effective authentic learning strategies commonly used in health education are simulation, virtual reality, case-based learning, blended learning and flipped learning<sup>2</sup>. In an authentic learning environment, self-directed learning is key to improving students' self-efficacy and clinical reasoning skills<sup>3</sup> whilst real-life e-learning cases can improve student engagement<sup>4</sup>. Engagement of external stakeholders, including patients and physiotherapy industry, in the design and development of physiotherapy curriculum, ensures authenticity and better prepares students for the workforce<sup>5</sup>.

Relevance to conference themes: Exploring innovative ways of incorporating authentic learning links closely to the 'Education' theme and will encourage educators to develop methods of teaching to improve the future readiness of physiotherapy students.

Aims/objectives: We will describe multiple ways that physiotherapy education can incorporate authentic learning from our experiences in developing an innovative new physiotherapy undergraduate program.

Participants will learn to:

- Integrate a blended learning framework of case-based learning including the development of 'patient journey' videos, podcasts exploring physiotherapists' experiences and authentic treatment videos.
- Reflect on methods to bridge the gap between education providers and physiotherapy industry.
- Implement educational technologies to develop virtual reality experiences, simulation and e-learning modules.

Take home messages:

- Authentic learning methods can bridge the gap between knowledge and practice.
- Incorporating technology can enhance learners' engagement and experience.
- Input from external stakeholders improves curriculum authenticity.



## Planetary health education: co-designing a toolkit for allied health students and clinicians

**Associate Professor Selina Parry**<sup>1</sup>, Ms Zoe Calulo Rivera<sup>1</sup>, Ms Maddi Cavallaro<sup>1</sup>, Associate Professor Fiona Dobson<sup>1</sup>, Ms Jessica Lees<sup>1</sup>, Ms Jessica Clarke<sup>2</sup>, Dr Sonia Chanchlani<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Physiotherapy, The University of Melbourne, Parkville, Australia,*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Critical Care, Melbourne Medical School, The University of Melbourne, Parkville, Australia*

7B - Education - Astral 2, 2 November 2024, 9.00–10.00 am

**Project description:** Healthcare professionals (HCPs) are well-placed given their roles as educators and health advocates to spearhead environmental changes and planetary health (PH) efforts. Yet current curricula lack education pertaining to climate change, sustainability issues and how HCPs can champion change. This project aims to co-design a PH toolkit for allied health students and clinicians.

**Relevance to conference themes:** Principles of sustainable clinical practice consist of four domains: prevention, patient empowerment and self-care, lean systems and low carbon alternatives. Physiotherapists are well-placed to address these domains and be leaders in making a difference in PH efforts.

**Background:** The Australian healthcare sector produces 7 per cent of our total national carbon emissions. A mixed methods approach will be used to develop the PH toolkit. Part 1) National survey of HCPs (students/clinicians) on barriers/enablers of current PH and sustainability behaviours; and Part 2) co-design and usability test with students/clinicians a PH / sustainability toolkit. The toolkit will incorporate the United Kingdom Sustainable Health Quality Improvement (SusQI) framework, which is about setting goals, studying the system, designing the improvement effort, and measuring the overall impact (eg, carbon footprint).

**Outcome:** A PH toolkit will be co-designed with the aim of empowering physiotherapists to embed sustainable practices and ultimately reduce our carbon footprint.

**Take home messages:**

- Australian healthcare sector produces 7 per cent of our total national carbon emissions.
- We need to empower and build the capabilities of physiotherapy students/clinicians to implement sustainable healthcare practices
- Co-design methods will enhance engagement and implementability of PH toolkit.

## Introducing LGBTQIA+ content into an entry-level physiotherapy subject

**Dr Kerstin McPherson**<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Australian Catholic University, North Sydney, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Charles Sturt University, Orange, Australia

7B - Education - Astral 2, 2 November 2024, 9.00–10.00 am

Introducing LGBTQIA+ content into an entry-level physiotherapy subject

Concept: This presentation will describe the outcome of a 3rd year physiotherapy module on Gender Health incorporating LGBTQIA+ content for the first time.

Relevance to conference themes: Education

Key word Diversity and inclusion

Background: Research shows that LGBTQIA+ people may experience discomfort, fear or discrimination related to their sexuality and/or gender identity when engaging with physiotherapy services. Without the inclusion of specific LGBTQIA+ content into entry-level physiotherapy curriculum, university programs are encouraging the pervasive heteronormativity of the physiotherapy profession and are complicit in the ongoing health disparities between the LGBTQIA+ and heteronormative communities (Ross et al, 2023).

Conclusion: As part of an assessment for a subject asking students to create a business case some students focused their case on the LGBTQIA+ community for example: Inclusive post-natal pelvic physiotherapy for same sex couples and transgender people, and Physiotherapy group-based exercise classes for Transgender Women Pre and Post Prostatectomy. In a post Module survey 80 per cent (24/30) agreed that physiotherapy students should learn about the LGBTQIA+ community. 60 per cent (18/30) felt confident in clarifying unfamiliar sexual or gender terms used by patients, and 56 per cent (17/30) comfortable asking a patient about their gender identity or sexual orientation if it was relevant or necessary.

Take home messages: Including LGBTQIA+ content into a physiotherapy curriculum is essential, students are supportive of the inclusion of content, examples of how to include content in physiotherapy curriculum needs to be shared.

## Scale your practice and improve client outcomes using a collaborative marketing approach

**Sian Burton**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Sian Burton, Semaphore Park, Australia*

7C - Business - Botanicals 1 and 2, 2 November 2024, 9.00–10.00 am

There is a prevailing myth in the field of physiotherapy that being a great treating clinician will automatically lead to a fully booked caseload. Whilst this may be true for some, the reality is many skilled clinicians, whether solo practitioners or owners of larger practices, start their week with a calendar of unfilled appointment slots.

Leveraging 20 years of marketing expertise, five of which have been spent focused on developing marketing strategies for private practices, Sian challenges the commonly held assumptions about what constitutes successful marketing in a private practice.

Drawing on her vast experience, Sian will dissect and address the root causes of why conventional marketing tactics fail to leverage the unique nuances of the healthcare sector and why adopting these generic marketing approaches actually hinders a practice's growth.

Through a compelling blend of case studies and robust research, Sian invites attendees to embark on a transformative journey, demonstrating how a marketing approach that is structured, systematic, and free to implement can allow practice owners to use these nuances to their advantage to double the number of new client referrals coming into their practice.

Backed by the successful adoption of her proprietary Collaborative Marketing™ approach by over 250 private practices, Sian shares actionable insights and empowers attendees with the provision of a comprehensive blueprint. Attendees will leave the session confident in their ability to market their practice and team in a way that aligns with their values and creates a more profitable and sustainable future for their physiotherapy practice.

## Leveraging ethical Google ads strategies to attract ideal clients to physiotherapy clinics

**Peter Flynn**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Clinic Mastery, Surfers Paradise, Australia*

7C - Business - Botanicals 1 and 2, 2 November 2024, 9.00–10.00 am

**Background:** This presentation examines the transformative potential of Google Ads in ethically enhancing the visibility and attractiveness of physiotherapy clinics to ideal clients. With increasing competition in healthcare, physiotherapy practices must innovate their marketing strategies to not only remain viable and successful, but to improve the collective health of their communities. This underscores the significance of ethical physiotherapy marketing, focusing on responsible implementation of Google Ads.

**Relevance to conference themes:** The integration of Google Ads aligns with the business theme by addressing practical applications of digital marketing strategies. It provides insights into crafting campaigns that resonate with potential clients, thereby fostering a sustainable, profitable physiotherapy business model.

**Aims/objectives:** Digital marketing offers unique opportunities for physiotherapy clinics to present their services to a targeted audience. However, ethical implications of marketing in healthcare necessitates a considered approach. This presentation outlines the process of building, managing, and optimising campaigns that adhere to ethical standards, ensuring marketing enhances the clinic's reputation and client trust.

The adoption of ethical Google Ads strategies has demonstrated significant improvements in client acquisition rates for physiotherapy clinics. This presentation shares success stories, key metrics, and the ethical considerations that have guided the implementation of Google Ads campaigns, providing a model for other clinics to replicate.

**Take home messages:**

- Google Ads can be a powerful tool for physiotherapy clinics to attract more ideal clients.
- Successful Google Ads campaigns combine strategic targeting with patient-centred language.
- Ethical considerations in digital marketing are essential for maintaining trust and credibility as a physiotherapy practice.

## Preparedness of physiotherapy students to work with First Nations Australians

**Blayne Arnold**<sup>1</sup>, A/Prof Benjamin Weeks<sup>1</sup>, Dr Sean Horan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*School of Health Sciences and Social Work, Griffith University, Gold Coast, Australia,*

<sup>2</sup>*Indigenous Research Unit, Griffith University, Nathan, Australia*

8A - Education - Astral 1, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

**Concept:** Physiotherapists play a critical role in closing the health gap experienced by First Nations Australians. Ensuring physiotherapy students are equipped with the appropriate skills and capabilities to facilitate and advocate for closing of this gap is an important consideration in their training, however, student perceptions of their preparedness to is largely unknown.

**Background:** This project aimed to determine physiotherapy students' preparedness to work with First Nations Australians and their perception of gaps in their training. A mixed-methods approach was taken. Students completed the Preparedness to Practise Questionnaire, and the Cultural Capability Measurement Tool. Students were invited to attend semi-structured interviews to better understand their perceived preparedness to work with First Nations Australians.

**Relevance:** This project is strongly aligned with the education theme for the conference and the APA's vision for reconciliation. The project promotes the education of physiotherapists in an inclusive way, creating a culturally safe profession.

**Outcome:** Three-hundred and twenty-six students completed the surveys, with scores indicating students perceived limitations in their current cultural capability. Second-year students scored lowest in both surveys and were significantly lower than third- and fourth-year students. Fifty-two students participated in semi-structured interviews.

**Key themes included** 1. Feeling unprepared, 2. Acknowledging diverse cultural differences, 3. Feeling they would benefit from real-life experiences.

**Take home messages:**

- Students perceive gaps in their preparedness to work with First Nations Australians.
- Students would benefit from interacting with First Nations Australians.
- Education providers should look for culturally safe opportunities for practical/clinical interactions with First Nations Australians.

## Development of a trauma-informed approach to learning physical examination in physiotherapy curriculum

Dr Free Coulston<sup>1</sup>, **Jess Lees**<sup>1</sup>, Dr Kim Allison<sup>1</sup>, Dr Kath Sellick<sup>1</sup>, Prof Selina Parry<sup>1</sup>, Prof Catherine Granger<sup>1</sup>, Felix Clayton<sup>1</sup>, Nim Johnson<sup>1</sup>, Dr Rachel Toovey<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The University of Melbourne, Parkville, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Parkville, Australia

8A - Education - Astral 1, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

**Concept:** Although trauma-informed curricula for teaching physical examination in other health disciplines is documented, no such program exists for physiotherapy. This project aimed to develop and implement such a program (Safer Spaces) in physiotherapy.

**Relevance to themes:** By targeting physiotherapy educators and students, Safer Spaces works to change the culture of physical examination practices. As students move into the workforce, they are well-placed to establish contemporary trauma-informed practices with clients and colleagues.

**Background:** Safer Spaces responds to student concerns (specifically those identifying as LGBTQI+ or from diverse cultural backgrounds), and the growing literature supporting a trauma-informed approach to teaching physical examination. A mixed-methods approach was used to develop Safer Spaces, with surveys (n=28) and focus groups (n=9) being held with physiotherapy students to understand their perspectives and priorities. The research team (a mix of staff and alumni mostly identifying as LGBTQI+, and some with trauma experience) refined and developed Safer Spaces. Safer Spaces for Staff was implemented in 2023 (n=6) and Safer Spaces for Students implemented in 2024 (n=145).

**Conclusion:** The inclusion of students and educators (with lived experience) in the development of a program to enhance safety within physical examination curricula, in addition to the dual-focused application targeting both educators and students, is novel and may result in improved student experiences and subsequently patient outcomes.

**Take home messages:**

- Safer Spaces was developed by physiotherapy students and educators, most identifying as LGBTQI+, and some with trauma experiences.
- Optimising safe learning of physical examination recognises and supports diversity and inclusion.

## How do we ensure tomorrow's physiotherapy workforce is high-quality and employable?

**Dr Tamsin Garrod**<sup>1</sup>, Mr Darren Lee<sup>1</sup>, Mr Anton Barnett-Harris<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Australian Physiotherapy Council, Richmond, Australia*

8A - Education - Astral 1, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

Concept: The Council's commitment to a forward-thinking and innovative approach underpins efforts to meet our vision: "Ensure tomorrow's physiotherapy workforce."

In 2023, a qualitative research study provided critical insights into challenges facing the physiotherapy workforce. These findings have served as a catalyst for innovative changes currently being implemented and considered by the Council, with significant implications for the future of physiotherapy education and accreditation.

Conference themes: Education of future physiotherapists

Background: Twelve semi-structured, one-on-one virtual interviews were conducted with physiotherapists representative of geographical locations and practice settings. Thematic analysis identified several key themes: workforce shortages, the scarcity of physiotherapists in regional areas, competition from other healthcare professions, and the need for enhanced referral rights.

A number of Council initiatives address these findings, including outcomes-focused accreditation, reducing barriers to entry by increasing expedited and alternative pathways for overseas qualified physiotherapists, and retaining physiotherapists by developing standards and clear pathways for career progression.

Outcome: The qualitative research and subsequent accreditation initiatives have resulted in growing the workforce pipeline into the Australian physiotherapy profession.

Take home messages:

- Our work ensures new entrants into the physiotherapy profession are safe and effective.
- We listen to the profession to ensure our work remains relevant.
- We are well positioned to influence workforce supply and support the profession to address workforce challenges.

## Enhancing science media communication in allied health: building confidence and skills

**Associate Professor Selina Parry**<sup>1</sup>, Ms Zoe Calulo Rivera<sup>1</sup>, Ms Maddi Cavallaro<sup>1</sup>, Dr Flora Hui<sup>2,3</sup>, Prof Laura E Downie<sup>2</sup>, Prof Catherine L Granger<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Physiotherapy, The University Of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia,*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Optometry and Vision Sciences, School of Health Sciences, The University of Melbourne, Parkville, Australia,* <sup>3</sup>*Centre for Eye Research Australia, Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, Melbourne, Australia*

8A - Education - Astral 1, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

Concept: Research is incomplete until it is communicated. This project aimed to develop and implement a bespoke science media communication training program for emerging researchers (graduate researchers (GRs) and early career academics (ECAs <5 years post PhD)).

Relevance to conference themes: Increasingly the public access health information online. By targeting GR and ECA cohorts we sought to build their knowledge, skills, and self-confidence to communicate via multiple mediums including social media.

Background: An 8-month intensive science media communication program was launched in April 2024 – which involves practical workshops covering television, print, radio, podcasting, and social media. Institutional ethical approval was granted for the pre/post program evaluation. At baseline 28 GRs/ECAs enrolled with 24 completing the pre-program survey (86 per cent response rate). 38 per cent of the cohort were physiotherapists. Results demonstrated respondents at baseline had low self-reported confidence with presenting, communicating to the public in non-technical terms, but also a desire to upskill and learn, and identifying it was within their scope of practice.

Outcome: The media communication program aims to enhance skills and confidence of participants to share their research with the wider community via various media platforms.

Take home messages:

- Effective communication is essential to ensure accurate research translation to a breadth of audiences.
- Limited opportunities exist to build confidence, skills, and knowledge of emerging researchers in engagement with media.
- In an era where the general public is increasingly turning to social media physiotherapists are well positioned to be a trusted resource for health information online.



## Enhancing annual leave management in physiotherapy departments: a quality improvement activity

**Elissa Jones**<sup>1</sup>, Penelope Schofield<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Logan-Beaudesert Health Service, Metro South Health, Queensland Health, Meadowbrook, Australia

8B - Business - Astral 2, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

**Concept:** This review assesses access to annual leave processes within Logan-Beaudesert Health Service (LBHS), focusing on challenges faced by management staff in providing clinical coverage while facilitating staff leave and maintaining service standards.

**Relevance to conference themes:** Effective management of annual leave is pivotal in public hospital settings to prevent staff burnout and foster a positive workplace culture. This aligns with the conference theme of Management and Leadership in healthcare.

**Background:** LBHS Physiotherapy Department's Internal Relief service, with one full-time equivalent (FTE) for every 17.33 FTE staff, lacked future leave access for at least 18 months, leading to staff dissatisfaction. A working group explored innovative solutions, considering award requirements and formal anonymous staff feedback.

**Outcome:** Multiple solutions were generated, with two solutions selected for implementation: a four-month and two-year booking process and a 'Plan B' for clinical areas to go uncovered (considering factors not limited to waiting lists, other staff on leave and skill mix). These measures enhance fairness and operational efficiency in leave coverage, addressing staff concerns and improving workplace dynamics.

**Take home messages:**

- A staff-led review process generated innovative workforce planning solutions, addressing long-standing challenges in leave management.
- Offering short-term and long-term booking options provides flexibility for staff in annual leave planning, which may facilitate equitable access and operational efficiency.
- Tailoring leave management strategies to individual clinical areas' needs may assist with maintaining service coverage and enhancing staff satisfaction.

## A novel care pathway expanding the role of physiotherapy in workers compensation

**Stephen Ranford**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Pain Options, South Perth, Australia*

8B - Business - Astral 2, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

Concept: Pain Options is a private clinic delivering specialist-level and titled-level physiotherapy services for people with work-related pain. The Recovery Options Review (ROR) service utilises APA Musculoskeletal and Pain Physiotherapists to guide early care for injured workers. The service is a leading example of how physiotherapists can adapt to the current health landscape and deliver guideline-based care that is well received by both patients and insurer funding bodies, is supported by good evidence, and is financially rewarding for the clinic.

Relevance to conference themes: Good clinical practice can be good business. However, in the workers' compensation system, guideline discordant care coupled with broader system related barriers ensures poorer outcomes. Protracted recovery timeframes and prolonged absence from work results in significant individual and business impact. This project demonstrates the power of collaborating with scheme stakeholders to remove barriers and enable good clinical practice.

Background: We have previously identified gaps in the management of workers with hip and shoulder compensation claims where care does not align to guideline-based recommendations. Use of physiotherapy can be sub-optimal. Lack of adherence to guideline-based care recommendations and care pathways is associated with poorer claim outcomes.

Outcome: Over 1000 workers have now accessed the ROR service across Australia. Questionnaire data from this group demonstrated significant positive shift in worker's recovery expectations and risk profile associated with the ROR service. Real world insurance data also demonstrated significant improvements in claims expenditure and claim outcomes.

Take home messages: Worker empowerment and facilitation of guideline-based care does improve outcomes.

## From vision to reality: two physiotherapists build a digital health startup

**Joanna Morris**<sup>1,3</sup>, Miss Anna Fischer<sup>1</sup>, Miss Alyssa Mills<sup>1</sup>, Dr Kevin Wernli<sup>1,2,4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Matilda Health, White Gum Valley, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Curtin University, Bentley, Perth, Australia,

<sup>3</sup>Body Logic Pelvic Health, Subiaco, Australia, <sup>4</sup>West Coast Health And High Performance, Lathlain, Perth, Australia

8B - Business - Astral 2, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

Concept: Building a startup is hard. Building a healthtech startup is harder. And being a female founder in the healthtech sector is even more challenging.

This presentation examines the development journey of Matilda Health, a digital health startup from Perth focused on providing affordable and accessible holistic care for individuals with confirmed or suspected endometriosis, as well as other chronic conditions. It explores the challenges and milestones in creating a tech platform with no prior tech experience and discusses crucial lessons learned on the whirlwind path from idea to reality.

Relevance to conference themes: Aligned with the FOCUS24 'Business' theme, this abstract highlights the entrepreneurial journey in digital health, emphasising adaptability, co-design, shortening feedback-iteration loops, and a healthy dose of blind optimism and perseverance.

Background:

The presentation will cover:

- The founding, vision, developmental milestones, and pivots of Matilda Health.
- Key strategic decisions impacting growth, including choices of technology and team dynamics.
- Collaborations with healthcare professionals to offer a holistic care approach while maintaining affordability and scalability.

Outcome: The development of Matilda Health highlights the complexities and rewards of launching a digital health startup. These insights demonstrate the transformative potential of startups in enhancing healthcare delivery through innovation.

Take home messages:

- Successful digital health startups hinge on elements like clear vision, resilience, the right team, timing, and luck.
- Digital platforms can provide tools to make healthcare more affordable and accessible.
- Frontline experiences from startup development offer critical lessons for future healthcare innovations.

## Stop giving, start living. Quit needing to be everything to your team

**Suzanne Rath**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Wellness Embodied, Cairns, Australia*

8B - Business - Astral 2, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

This proposal is for a 15-minute oral presentation with Q and A.

Concept: We're all investing in leadership training- but do WE really need to be the only leaders in our businesses?

Relevance to themes: Keywords – burnout, mental health, retention, private practice, culture.

Background: 'We can't be everything to everyone'. We accept this with patients, friends and the community – but our team? It's debatable...

After 7 years in business and multiple coaching programs and leadership courses, I've finally come to terms with the fact that my zone of genius is NOT in making everyone happy, hitting everyone's motivators, or having the perfect leadership style for all – and other practice owners should too! Preferably before burnout kicks in.

Through introducing tools such as the Working Genius, developing a leadership team and setting up a clear position description for myself, I'm transforming myself from being the 'helper' of all things, to the true visionary within the business – while working more in my specific areas of genius. I want to share these steps with other practice owners too, giving them permission to live the lives of their dreams.

Outcome: Whether your skillset is as an expert clinician, a business owner, mentor or visionary leader, it's important to recognise that and play to your strengths. Stop burning yourself out, trying to parent your team.

Take home messages:

- Tools to identify your own specific areas of genius- and those of your team.
- Delegating responsibility to others.
- Growing a leadership team in your practice.

## 5 steps to building a clinic that is less reliant on the owner

**Daniel Gibbs**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Clinic Mastery, Highgate, Australia*

8C - Business - Botanicals 1 and 2, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

Background: Many clinic owners find themselves caught between the demands of clinical practice and the responsibilities of running a business, often leading to burnout and limiting growth potential. The journey to creating a sustainable and scalable business begins with empowering your team and establishing good systems. This session offers practical strategies for clinic owners to step back from day-to-day operations, providing a roadmap for transitioning from owner reliance to clinic independence.

Relevance to conference themes: Aligned with the business theme of FOCUS24, this session addresses the need for clinics to reduce reliance on individual owners and build a culture of autonomy and innovation.

Aims/objectives: The aim of this session is to equip clinic owners with the knowledge and tools to build practices that are less reliant on individual ownership.

Objectives include:

- Recognising the value of transitioning from practitioner to business owner.
- Mentoring and empowering team members to take on greater responsibilities.
- Implementing efficient systems and processes to streamline clinic operations.
- Setting boundaries and reducing owner reliance on day-to-day tasks.
- Embracing a business owner mindset and focusing on strategic growth initiatives.

Take home messages:

- Success in clinics depends on empowered teams and streamlined operations, not just individual ownership.
- By following the practical strategies outlined in this session, clinic owners can transition from owner reliance to clinic independence.
- Building a clinic that is less reliant on the owner requires a combination of mindset shifts, leadership development, and strategic planning.

## Navigating ethical dilemmas in the NDIS: balancing profit, wellbeing and outcomes

**Sneha Rajagopalan**<sup>1,2,3</sup>, Miss Clare Andrews<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Healthspan Wellness Collective Pty Ltd, Joondalup, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Embark Physio, Myaree, Australia, <sup>3</sup>Edith Cowan University, Joondalup, Australia, <sup>4</sup>Share, Empower, Connect, Bedford, Australia

8C - Business - Botanicals 1 and 2, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

Concept: Eleven years post its inception, the NDIS in Australia lacks substantial feedback on its efficacy as a sustainable employment avenue for physiotherapists. The prevalent revolving door phenomenon within NDIS businesses underscores the need to scrutinise existing operational structures and their impacts on stakeholders.

Relevance to conference theme: This presentation addresses the need for a comprehensive review of NDIS business models, particularly concerning their effect on physiotherapists' wellbeing. It emphasises the importance of integrating ethical leadership and compassionate management to cultivate a work environment that prioritises both employee welfare and quality service provision.

Background: The NDIS, designed to improve outcomes for Australians with disabilities, operates on a market-based system that prioritises billable hours, leading to ethical dilemmas for service providers. This study investigates the impact of profit-driven practices on therapist wellbeing, rates of burnout, and service quality, highlighting critical ethical considerations.

Outcome: The research underscores the need to re-evaluate NDIS business paradigms, shifting focus from short-term profit to long-term clinical outcomes and participant-centered care. It advocates for supportive workplace cultures, and policies aimed at reducing burnout to ensure sustainable service provision.

Take home messages:

- NDIS physiotherapy businesses must align with the scheme's commitment to participant wellbeing over profit motives.
- Thorough therapist selection is crucial to mitigate turnover, ensuring stability in care provision.
- Profit-driven models risk therapist burnout, emphasising the need for culture shifts towards clinical outcomes.
- Prioritising supportive workplace cultures fosters sustainable, high-quality services aligned with NDIS goals.

## Working together to address risks for persistent pain utilising digital outcome measurement

**Mariana Cassini**<sup>1</sup>, Dr Anne Daly<sup>1</sup>, Ms Tegan Kohler<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Transport Accident Commission, Geelong, Australia*

8C - Business - Botanicals 1 and 2, 2 November 2024, 10.50–11.50 am

Concept: Co-design with patients and clinicians led to the development of the Transport Accident Commission (TAC)'s 'Enhanced Recovery Program', an early-intervention pathway tailored for patients with soft tissue injuries at risk of persistent pain. TAC partnered with nine physiotherapy clinics to trial the program. A key component was to enhance physiotherapy practice using digital collection and analytics of outcome measurement.

Relevance: Enhancing practice towards Value Based Healthcare (VBHC) through the innovative use of data analytics.

Background: The TAC is strategically focused on delivering VBHC, with patient and clinician experience at the core. While leveraging outcome and experience data is crucial for understanding value, TAC's clinicians have highlighted that existing practices can be time-intensive and may not effectively detect early recovery risks. This can hinder optimal care for a significant portion of TAC's patients and result in poor recovery outcomes.

Outcome: 87 patients participated in a 12-week physiotherapy program, completing outcome measures at baseline, week six, and discharge. Preliminary insights suggest the program has positively influenced physiotherapy practice, enabling earlier identification and management of risks to persistent pain, while also enhancing the experiences of patients and clinicians. Evaluation of the pilot will be crucial in shaping TAC's future endeavours towards delivering value-based care, in collaboration with clinicians.

Take home messages:

- Effective outcome measurement is key to delivering value for patients and clinicians
- Digitising measurement can increase its efficiency and usefulness for clinicians.
- The TAC is committed to working with clinicians to build on the program's learnings to drive value and best-practice.

## How to use AI tools to streamline clinic operations and patient care

**Daniel Gibbs**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Clinic Mastery, Highgate, Australia*

9B - Practice - Astral 2, 2 November 2024, 2.05–3.05 pm

Background: In today's fast-paced healthcare environment, clinic owners and managers are increasingly turning to artificial intelligence (AI) tools to stay ahead of the curve. With AI's potential to streamline operations and enhance patient care, clinics have an excellent opportunity to innovate and streamline a number of clinic operations. This session explores practical insights and strategies for participants to effectively integrate AI into their clinics, helping them to drive efficiency and deliver exceptional care in an ever-evolving industry.

Relevance to conference themes: This abstract aligns closely with FOCUS24's business theme. By exploring the application of AI tools in clinic operations, the session addresses key concerns of clinic owners and managers, including efficiency, innovation, and future readiness.

Aims/objectives: The aim of this session is to equip participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively utilise AI tools in clinic settings.

Objectives include:

- Understanding the benefits of AI in streamlining clinic operations and improving patient care.
- Learning how to integrate AI solutions into existing clinic workflows.
- Developing competencies in selecting AI tools tailored to specific clinic needs.
- Improving participants' ability to lead and manage AI-driven initiatives within their clinics.

Take home messages:

- AI tools offer opportunities for clinics to enhance clinic efficiency and patient care.
- Successful implementation of AI requires a strategic approach, tailored to the unique needs and goals of each clinic.
- Clinic owners and managers play a crucial role in building a culture of innovation and continuous improvement within their businesses.



## Incorporating mindfulness practices in physiotherapy: enhancing patient outcomes and therapist wellbeing

**Cameron Watkins**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Darch Physio, Perth, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Cntrespace Yoga Studio, Perth, Australia*

9B - Practice - Astral 2, 2 November 2024, 2.05–3.05 pm

Background: It is well-known that one's pain experience and injury prognosis is greatly affected by non - physical factors including mental health issues as well as negative mindset.

Mindfulness has been shown to offer profound benefits in physiotherapy by helping manage pain, improving injury prognosis, and promoting overall health and wellbeing.

However, it is seen that physiotherapists are not commonly utilising mindfulness techniques in clinical practice. This is potentially due to a lack of understanding of what mindfulness is and/ or being inexperienced or lacking confidence in incorporating mindfulness strategies in clinical practice.

Relevance to conference themes: Through case studies, evidence-based research, and practical strategies, this presentation will demonstrate the transformative potential of mindfulness in physiotherapy practice, emphasising its role in cultivating holistic care and professional success and fulfilment.

Aims/objectives: This 30-minute presentation explores the significance of integrating mindfulness practices into physiotherapy to optimise patient outcomes and enhance therapist wellbeing.

Following completion of this presentation, participants will gain the knowledge and understanding required to incorporate mindfulness practices such as breath-work, visualisation and mindful movement into treatment protocols.

Furthermore, attendees will learn to cultivate mindfulness themselves to enhance therapeutic presence, manage one's own physical and emotional burden and mitigate burnout.

Take home messages:

- Mindfulness emphasises being fully present, non-judgmental, and compassionate towards one's experiences.
- Mindfulness enhances patient outcomes by addressing nonphysical factors such as low mood and stress.
- Mindfulness empowers both patients and therapists.
- Mindfulness strategies such as breath-work and visualisation can be easily implemented by physiotherapists in clinical practice.

## Empowering the workforce: optimising the investment in CPD hours

**Emily Riglar**

9C - Education - Botanicals 1 and 2, 2 November 2024, 2.05–3.05 pm

Concept: A common strategy to mitigate readiness to practise issues in new graduate practitioners is to encourage, or mandate, completion of a number of face-to-face short courses. The investment cost of this strategy is large, regardless of who is paying the bills.

However, exposure to new information and true learning, are not the same. There is a significant risk that a large volume of content is not retained. This presentation will outline how knowledge of learning theory can optimise the integration of short course content into long-term practise change.

Relevance to conference themes: Education: skills in education for physiotherapists supporting new graduates promotes a supportive culture, enhances readiness to practice, and has the capacity to improve career retention.

Background: Learning is complex, differs for every individual. There are many modifiable factors that can influence the success of any learning opportunity. Very clearly however, true learning requires repeated learning opportunities, with integration of feedback. This cannot occur in short courses.

Outcome: Professional development is a significant investment, regardless of who funds it. Using education theory, it is possible to develop systems to support the integration of knowledge from short courses into long-term practise.

Take home messages:

- Attending courses alone is unlikely to change practise significantly.
- Clinicians need individualised strategies to support learning integration.
- Fewer, well-selected courses with supported integration are likely to have more benefit than attending more courses.

## Anatomy education - creating a 3D digital library with photogrammetry

Petra Helmholz, Hannah Radley, Morgan Titmus, Gary Whittaker, **Dr Beatriz IR de Oliveira**<sup>1,2</sup>, Dr Leo Ng

<sup>1</sup>Curtin University, Perth, Australia, <sup>2</sup>Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn, Australia

9C - Education - Botanicals 1 and 2, 2 November 2024, 2.05–3.05 pm

Anatomy education is essential for medical and health sciences, requiring precise understanding of the human body. Traditional methods, such as cadaver dissection, often face limitations in access and preservation. Digital technology enhances anatomy education by providing flexible, interactive ways to explore anatomical structures. Photogrammetry, specifically, creates detailed three-dimensional (3D) models that can be accessed remotely.

Design thinking (DT), a five-stage process (empathise, define, ideate, prototype, and test), was used to address the need for flexible access to anatomical specimens beyond the anatomy lab. This approach led to the creation of the 3D Anatomy Viewer, a digital library of 3D anatomical specimens created with photogrammetry.

To assess the educational effectiveness of this resource, a mixed-methods student evaluation was conducted. Surveys of 46 students, using the system usability scale (SUS) and an acceptability questionnaire, showed that the 3D Anatomy Viewer was usable (SUS score of 72 per cent) and acceptable (agreement range of 77–93 per cent on all Likert-type survey statements, Cronbach's alpha = 0.929). Content analysis of interviews with five students revealed three key themes: the credibility of the 3D Anatomy Viewer as a supplementary learning tool; the enhancement of anatomy learning through 3D realism and interactivity; and user recommendations for expanding anatomical models, test questions, and incorporating gamification elements.

By leveraging digital technology and photogrammetry, educators can create innovative tools that enhance the anatomy learning experience. These findings also demonstrate that a DT framework can effectively be applied to anatomical education to develop practical, user-centred learning resources.

Keywords: 3D visualization; anatomy visualisation; cadaver; design thinking; digital technology; learning resource; photogrammetry; student-centred.

Reference: Titmus M, de Oliveira BI, Ellery P, Whittaker G, Radley H, Radunski M, Ng L, Helmholz P, Sun Z. Using design thinking to create and implement a 3D digital library of anatomical specimens. *Clin Anat.* 2024 Jun 28. doi: 10.1002/ca.24198. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 38938222.

## Moving urgent care from the emergency department to a physiotherapy clinic

**Mr Piers Truter**<sup>1,2</sup>, Ms Pippa Flanagan<sup>2,3</sup>, Mr Luke Bongiascia<sup>2</sup>, Dr Rob Waller<sup>3</sup> <sup>1</sup>University Of Notre Dame Australia, Fremantle, Australia, <sup>2</sup>South Metropolitan Health Service, Murdoch, Australia, <sup>3</sup>Curtin University, Bentley, Australia

9C - Education - Botanicals 1 and 2, 2 November 2024, 2.05–3.05 pm

**Concept:** A new pathway was piloted (2022) to divert patients with musculoskeletal conditions from the emergency department (ED) to a physiotherapy outpatient clinic to receive care. The pathway was permanently funded (2023) at Rockingham Hospital (WA).

**Relevance to conference themes:**

This presentation explores this next logical extension of advanced practice physiotherapy in the ED. That is autonomous practice in a physiotherapy led outpatient setting.

**Background:** How the pathway is staffed, the pathway workflow and how the outpatient clinic was adapted to accommodate walk-in patients from the ED will be described. Clinician's training needs will be explored, particularly in ordering and interpreting medical imaging and clinical decision making, including selection of suitable ED patients.

The pathway has safely provided care to over 5,000 patients, including 40 per cent paediatric patients, mostly with peripheral limb trauma. The clinic provides plasters, thermoplastic splinting and a wide range of off the shelf orthopaedic supports. A second distinct cohort of more complex middle-aged patients presenting with atraumatic pain, is identified.

**Outcome:** The diversion pathway demonstrates that physiotherapists can autonomously and comprehensively manage urgent care patients, in an outpatient setting, including fracture care and hand therapy in addition a familiar caseload of soft tissue injuries and musculoskeletal pain conditions. The pathway adds significant additional capacity to the hospital emergency department.

**Take home messages:**

- Comprehensive urgent care can be provided from a physiotherapy clinic.
- Very specific medical imaging skills are required.
- Comprehensive, low resource, fracture care can be provided by physiotherapists in a clinic setting.

## Motivations and career aspirations of physiotherapy graduate researchers

**Professor Catherine Granger**<sup>1</sup>, Ms Georgina Whish-Wilson<sup>1</sup>, Professor Alicia Spittle<sup>1</sup>, Dr Lyndal Hickey<sup>1</sup>, Professor Sarah Wise<sup>1</sup>, Professor Kim Bennell<sup>1</sup>, Ms Nicole Pope<sup>1</sup>, Mr Peter Blight<sup>1</sup>, Associate Professor Selina Parry<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*The University Of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia*

9C - Education - Botanicals 1 and 2, 2 November 2024, 2.05–3.05 pm

**Concept:** Physiotherapists often undertake a graduate research degree (PhD, MPhil, Research Masters) after their entry-to-practice degree. There is significant diversity in the cohort of physiotherapists who pursue such post-graduate education, and diversity in the careers available for them upon completion. Universities have historically performed poorly when it comes to preparing graduate researchers (GRs) for diverse career pathways.

**Relevance to conference themes:** This project relates to education of physiotherapists. It seeks to understand the motivations of physiotherapists to undertake graduate research. Findings provide insights into how to support their educational needs with a view to improve career pathway planning, preparedness, and employability.

**Background:** An online cross-sectional 42-item survey was administered to all GRs in health sciences (n=145). Institutional ethical approval was granted, and consent implied by survey completion. 41 GRs completed the survey (28 per cent response rate); 10 (24 per cent) from physiotherapy. Results demonstrated most GRs were studying part-time alongside clinical work. Most GRs were undertaking a PhD/MPhil in preparation for careers outside of academia, but few felt they were being sufficiently prepared for such careers.

**Outcome:** Our findings provide insights and actionable recommendations for universities to consider in terms of how to support GRs for employability across diverse career pathways.

**Take home messages:**

- Most GRs were studying part-time alongside external clinical employment.
- Less than half aspired for a career in academia after their PhD/MPhil.
- Universities should seek to incorporate the needs of GRs when developing career readiness support programs including catering for physiotherapists aspiring for non-academic careers post-graduation.