



Canberra
Health
Services



ACT
Government

Canberra Health Services

2025 Research Highlights



Acknowledgement of Country







Canberra Health Services acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognises any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and contribution to the life of this region.



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Foreword

Every time we walk into clinical spaces across our health service, we are reminded of the critical role that research plays in shaping the future of health care delivery.

The significant advances which have been made just in our lifetimes would have been staggering to those born even 50 years earlier. Every conversation with a passionate, dedicated or diligent researcher, or more frequently a researcher that embodies all three qualities, reminds us of how humbling it is to work with those that strive to make tomorrow's care better than that which we provide today.

“

I am proud to share the third edition of Canberra Health Services' research highlights—a snapshot of the breadth of research undertaken across our health service over the past year.

This past year has helped us to cement much of our strategic ambition for research, and we are well-positioned to further grow our research agenda. Every research participant represents an individual that has received better care and contributed to improved outcomes for future generations.

Researchers and those that work in research; pharma-funded and investigator led; international multi-centre trials and single-unit, small scale research; administrative and clinical staff,



ethics committee members and the cast of supports that drive discoveries, research succeeds because of committed team members and the patients that place their trust in those teams.

The addition of ACT Research Ethics and Governance Office into CHS will strengthen our research governance and reporting and benefit everyone involved.

This publication showcases just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to our research endeavours at CHS. It is a testament to the diversity of our research portfolio, and it represents a shared commitment to advancing knowledge, driving innovation and answering the questions that drive improvements. As we celebrate those that have contributed to these endeavours, we remain dedicated to fostering an environment of inquiry and excellence.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Janet Zagari'.

Janet Zagari
Chief Executive Officer

CHS Research at a glance

Message from Professor Imogen Mitchell, Executive Director, Education, Research and Academic Partnerships

It's been another year of growth for CHS, weaving research into the fabric of the health service.

This past year saw plenty of exciting new achievements in the research space including the establishment of a biostatistician service in collaboration with the University of Canberra, the successful launch of the Green Shoots program which supports budding clinician researchers to grow them as researchers and their research endeavours and the Office of Research and Education (ORE) partnered with Canberra Hospitals Foundation to provide additional research project grant funding.

ORE welcomed the Research Ethics and Governance Office Team into their fold and with their help achieved a 'growing systems' rating against the requirements of the National Clinical Trials Governance Framework.

All of these activities were accomplished while we continued to deliver several existing services, programs and initiatives—from research and clinical trials support, mentorship and education programs and our partnering with consumers in research initiative, to our ongoing governance, strategy and analyses work.



I'm proud of our achievements to date and seeing where we are situated with research at CHS. With our collaborative research we are pursuing with various partners, it's an exciting time to be exploring the options for research at CHS.

As for what's coming up, we're evaluating our 2021-2025 strategy and formulating the goals of CHS Research from 2026.

Thank you to everyone who is supporting and pursuing research at CHS. I am privileged to be surrounded with a dedicated and great team of research experts and I'm looking forward to 2026 and beyond.

The year in numbers



999

active research projects across CHS



281

new projects approved by ethics in 2025



251

active clinical trials



79

new clinical trials



\$94,054

donations towards research initiatives from Canberra Hospitals Foundation



Up to \$80K

available for successful ORE Green Shoots program applicants for emerging CHS researchers



500+

publications authored by CHS clinicians in 2025

Canberra Health Annual Research Meeting (CHARM) 2025



75

CHARM submissions by CHS staff



14

CHARM awards won by CHS clinicians

Office of Research and Education activities



73

research education seminars/
workshops delivered to 906 clinicians



28

activities to strengthen consumer, carer,
and community outreach partnerships
in research



457+

research navigation and/or research
support provided



46

mentees supported by 32 mentors
through the CHS Research
Mentorship Program

Library research related support



143

literature searches for CHS clients



82

training sessions for CHS clients

Research awards



CHS researchers have had a very successful year! Here are some of the awards they've taken home in 2025.

Sarah Ellis, ANU PhD Candidate and CHS Orthopaedic Surgery Registrar

Award: John Owen PhD Scholarship Recipient, Australian Orthopaedic Association Research Foundation

Tanya Buettikofer, UC PhD Candidate and NCH Physiotherapist

Award: Elizabeth Ellis Award for best New Researcher in the Cardiorespiratory Physiotherapy group, Australian Physiotherapy Association Conference



ACT Nurses and Midwives Excellence Awards

Neonatal Skin Portfolio Nurses, Neonatal Intensive and Special Care Units, Canberra Health Services

Excellence in Quality Improvement or Research Practice



ACT Allied Health Excellence Awards

Dr Carol McCrum

Research Excellence



Canberra Health Annual Research Meeting (CHARM) 2025

Jennifer Ohlmus

Title: Empowering nurses through knowledge: A nurse-led journal club driving quality improvement

Award: Best Nursing and Midwifery Poster Presentation

Dr James Miller

Title: Multidisciplinary Care in Persistent Pelvic Pain: Consumer and expert consensus on the care-team

Award: Best 3-minute Pitch Presentation

Dr David Nwokeocha

Title: The Biopsychosocial Impact of Excessive Device Use Among School Age Children: A Systematic Review of Observational Studies

Award: Best Clinical Oral Presentation

Dr Anupam Rao

Title: Comparing Characteristics and Outcomes of Elderly Patients undergoing Coronary Intervention

Award: Best Poster Related to Ageing

Clare Stephenson

Title: Co-design workshops to inform an at-home rehabilitation intervention for people with dementia: A qualitative analysis

Award: Best Allied Health Oral Presentation

Clinical Assoc. Prof. Sumeet Rai

Award: Quality Improvement: Impact on Patient Experience and Outcome

Dr Anupam Rao

Title: 6-month outcomes following PCI for Indigenous Australians in the ACT and surrounding areas over 22 years

Award: Best Population Health Oral Presentation

Dr Darcy Row

Award: Quality Improvement: Impact on Quality and Safety in health care

CHARM Rising Star Awards 2025

The rising star awards aim to:

- recognise and showcase the achievements of developing Canberra health researchers
- contribute to a positive research culture which supports and acknowledges progress and development in research capacity and capability.

Clinical Assoc. Prof. Sumeet Rai

Rising Star Award, winner

Category: Outstanding
New Researcher

Dr Christopher Chew

**Rising Star Award,
highly commended**

Category: Clinician-Researcher

Dr Anupam Rao

Rising Star Award, winner

Category: Clinician-Researcher

CHS CEO Awards 2025

Clinical Assoc. Prof. Sumeet Rai

Researcher of the Year

Gemma Wall

Rising Star Award, winner

Category: Clinician-Researcher

**Kathleen Cook &
Clare Robertson**

Rising Star Award, winner

Category: Collaborative
Research Award



Helen Truon

**Rising Star Award,
highly commended**

Category: Outstanding
New Researcher

Our research communication



2025's collection of research stories shine a light on the incredible work being undertaken across Canberra Health Services. From groundbreaking studies to promoting grant opportunities and networking events—the articles reflect the curiosity, commitment and collaboration that drive better care and innovation across our health service every day.

The partnership between the Office of Research and Education and the Strategic Communication and Engagement team plays a key role in sharing these achievements within the organisation and our community—and helps to put Canberra Health Services on the map as a leading research agency.

At a glance



20 intranet articles



84 media mentions



32 social media posts

Intranet snapshot

Throughout the year, our intranet has showcased a range of research stories. These articles have helped put faces to the stories that otherwise may have gone unnoticed—bringing our people and their important work to life.

Below is a snapshot showing the range of intranet stories published in 2025. From clinical trials, staff profiles and big-time grant winners—we've covered it all.

Targeting the 'undruggable': Canberra Hospital to take part in world-first cancer trial

Canberra Hospital was selected as one of several national sites to participate in a world-first clinical trial targeting cancers driven by the MYC protein. The project is being led by CHS Haematologist Professor Mark Polizzotto, in collaboration with ANU and Pimera Therapeutics, and will strengthen CHS' contribution to cutting-edge cancer research and clinical learning.



Research In-depth: we're having a conversation with...

The Research at CHS team launched *Research In-depth*—a new series showcasing conversations with CHS researchers and clinical academics. The first feature profiled Professor Martin Veysey, Head of ANU's Canberra Clinical School and Senior Staff Specialist at CHS Gastroenterology. The article highlighted his passion for teaching, research and mentoring for the next generation of clinicians.



Innovative kidney disease research wins \$1.5 million grant

One of CHS' own, Associate Professor Simon Jiang, received a \$1.5 million National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Ideas Grant to support his lab study into the genetic factors driving chronic kidney disease in First Nations communities.

The grant enabled Simon to further explore how and why genetic variants contribute to kidney disease.



Social media snapshot

In 2025, our research stories continued to capture the attention of the Canberra community and beyond. From clinical trials and new discoveries to heartfelt staff profiles, our #TeamCHS researchers sparked conversations across Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Across 32 research-tagged posts in 2025, Canberra Health Services achieved:

228,396 impressions

14,436 engagements

6.3% engagement rate per impression (well above industry average)

1,015 link clicks to longer-form research content and publications

These numbers reflect not just the reach of our posts—but the power of connecting complex science to real human stories.

Top three performing research social media posts



1. Canberra's leading the charge in a world-first cancer trial

- 3,600 total engagements
- 1,023 reactions
- 97 comments
- 45 shares



2. Life after Intensive Care Unit isn't just tough for patients; it can be just as hard for their families

- 2,286 total engagements
- 406 reactions
- 36 comments
- 15 shares



3. Help shape the future of women's pelvic health

- 1,547 total engagements
- 180 reactions
- 11 comments
- 7 shares

Media snapshot

Through proactive media engagement, CHS research gained steady visibility across multiple media outlets in 2025.

Stories showcased the real-world impact of research coming out of the organisation, from therapy dogs in the Intensive Care Unit, baby wipes for premature babies, and even how poetry can help patients recover.

Canberra Health Services research (including individual researchers and clinicians) made 84 appearances in the media and other niche publications—both locally and nationally. CHS research was featured across many platforms including online, print and radio.

Local media:

- 2CC Radio Canberra
- ABC News Canberra
- About Regional
- Bay Post
- Bega District News
- Braidwood Times
- Canberra Daily
- Canberra Weekly
- Hit 104.7
- Merimbula News Weekly
- Mix 106.3
- Narooma News
- Region Canberra
- Seven News Canberra
- The Canberra Times
- WIN News Canberra

National media/publications:

- ABC News
- Australasian Institute of Digital Health
- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health
- Australian National University
- Australian Physiotherapy Association
- Create Digital (Engineers Australia)
- Croakey Health Media
- InSight+ (Australasian Medical Publishing Company)
- New Atlas
- Nine News
- Pharmacy Daily
- PS News
- Ten
- University of Canberra
- WIN News
- YourLifeChoices

Canberra study reveals the pawstive effect of dogs in hospitals

This story highlights CHS' five-year study to find out the role dogs can play in patient recovery in the Intensive Care Unit.

“

The study revealed a visit with a therapy dog significantly reduced patient and family anxiety, as well as a reduction in pain levels.



How changing wipes is reducing nappy rash for NICU babies at Canberra Hospital

A trial of a new, eco-friendly baby wipe in the Canberra Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) has seen a reduction of nappy rash from 25% down to 5%.

“

The research highlights the importance of collaboration—receiving feedback along the way from both staff and families impacted by the change.

Since the positive results were revealed, the hospital has made the switch to the new baby wipe which is better for the environment. It's estimated around 450kg of plastic waste will be reduced from landfill each year.

The poetry of recovery: how Thomas reclaimed his life after a stroke

Canberra Health Services teamed up with the University of Canberra to pilot a poetry program assessing the benefits of creative writing for patients undergoing rehabilitation.

“

It's a great example of how CHS treats every patient holistically.

The research shows how the arts play a powerful role in patient recovery and overall wellbeing. Results were 'overwhelmingly positive'—helping patients to process emotions, regain a sense of control and find meaning during treatment and recovery.



CHS research stories in the media had a cumulative potential audience reach of more than **6 million in 2025.**

