AUSTRALIAN ROTARY HEALTH

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

45 YEARS OF YES

The research we funded and the scholars we backed in 2025-26, because of you.



WE FUND POSSIBILITY™

Rotary Districts of Australia | AUSTRALIAN ROTARY HEALTH



ABOUT THIS ANNUAL REPORT

THIS IS YOUR REPORT

Australian Rotary Health does not raise the funds behind the research, the grants and the scholarships highlighted in these pages. You do. We take what you raise and put it in the hands of some of the best researchers and health students in this country.

This report covers the financial year to 30 June 2026. The figures below span all 45 years of your giving, since 1981.

45+

Years of backing Australian health research and the people behind it, since 1981.

129,802

Times Rotary clubs and Rotarians have given to Australian Rotary Health since 1981.

1,600+

Grants and scholarships funded since 1981, in health research, rural health and Indigenous health.

$56,889,000

Raised by you over 45 years and put to work in Australian research and scholarships.

Because of you, and only because of you, we are able to fund possibility.

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CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

BECAUSE OF YOU

PDG STEPHEN HUMPHREYS
CHAIRPERSON, AUSTRALIAN ROTARY HEALTH

> Our legacy is not just what we build, but the impact of all we set in motion.

This year Australian Rotary Health marked 45 years. It was a year of honouring our legacy while setting a clear path to modernise, and I am proud of how our organisation, and the community behind it, embraced it.

After more than three decades, Joy Gillett OAM stepped down as our Chief Executive Officer. Joy led Australian Rotary Health with dedication and vision, and she leaves an organisation with a proud record and a loyal community. On behalf of every Rotarian who has worked alongside her, thank you, Joy.

In October 2025 we welcomed Yvonne Keane AM as our Chief Executive Officer. Yvonne came to us as a highly awarded and widely recognised leader, and a lifelong advocate for the most vulnerable and marginalised in our community, including children. In under a year she has led the Board and our whole network through a full strategic review, with an energy and a standard of leadership this Board holds in the highest regard.

To shape what comes next, we went to the people who know us best. Over nearly four months we sat down with Rotarians, clubs, district chairs, researchers, scholars and other supporters, and asked for the truth, including the parts that might be hard to hear, to co-design our new strategy. Above all, you told us you want more connection, between us and your clubs, and between your clubs and the people their generosity supports.

Our new strategy is built on your feedback, wisdom and care, and the Board backed it unanimously. While our public face may look a little different, the heart of us has not changed. Our new look and stronger voice are deliberate, and we are focused on getting better at telling you what your investment in us has realised. Our strategy honours all we have been while preparing us for all we can become.

I have had the privilege of serving on this Board for eight years, the last three as chair, and I step down at the AGM in December. I wish to honour a colleague whose service outstrips mine. Emeritus Professor Michael Sawyer OAM has given us thirty years: on our Research Committee from 1996, as its Chair, and as Honorary Research Advisor to the Board from 2010 until June 2026. His advice has been immeasurable. It was Michael who made the case for our focus on the mental health of children aged 0 to 12, and every child that research reaches is part of his legacy. Michael, thank you.

I leave with confidence that the organisation is in the best possible hands, with a clear direction and an incredible community behind it, as generous as it has ever been. My thanks to our hardworking staff, to everyone I have served alongside, and to my wife, Judith, for her selfless support of me and of this organisation.

To every club, district and supporter: because of you, and only because of you, Australian Rotary Health can fund new possibility. Thank you.



PDG Stephen Humphreys
CHAIRPERSON



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

WE FUND POSSIBILITY

YVONNE KEANE AM
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER SINCE OCTOBER 2025

> The next breakthrough is already out there, waiting for its first yes.

I joined Australian Rotary Health in October 2025, and from the very first week something was clear to me. Australian Rotary Health does one thing. We fund possibility.

We back the boldest ideas early, emerging researchers at the exact point in a career where support is hardest to find, and brilliant minds at the moment where promise meets possibility. Forty five years of that is a remarkable inheritance, and I thank Joy Gillett OAM and everyone who built it.

This year, Rotary clubs, districts and supporters made it possible for us to commit $2,881,228, spread across up to three years, to 11 new research grants into the mental health of children aged 0 to 12, and to back 73 scholars on their way into medicine, nursing and allied health.

What your support gives is the one thing every brilliant mind never has enough of: time to turn a question into an answer. Professor Caroline Donovan's online sleep program, Lights Out, proved it could help children sleep better, and this year we backed the next step: taking it to families across the community. Associate Professor Dave Pasalich's program for foster carers is now run by the agencies themselves. That is the lasting impact of your support.

Earlier this year we ran our own research project. Over nearly four months we listened, we co-designed and we consulted widely. Rotarians told us they want to know far more about what their support makes possible. We also heard how deeply people love and trust this organisation, and every change we make is designed to honour that trust and to keep strengthening the very reasons you choose to back us.

Your openness and courage in sharing with us shaped our new strategic plan, which the Board supported unanimously.

You may have noticed us looking and sounding a little different. A fresh look, a clearer voice and new ways of telling the stories of the people you back are how more Australians will discover what you have always known about us. Our heart is not changing, and neither is our gratitude for your support.

I have come to think of Australian Rotary Health as an undiscovered national treasure, and our job now is to share it with the nation. It has been an extraordinary first twelve months. I am fortunate to stand on such strong foundations, and I could not be more excited about what we will make possible together next.

The team at Australian Rotary Health and I are deeply proud of the science this organisation makes possible, and prouder still of the people who make it possible for us to invest in the first place: you. Thank you for your trust, your generosity and your belief in what is possible.



Yvonne Keane AM
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



1981 · WHERE IT BEGAN

ONE CLUB SAID YES

In 1981 a Rotarian named Ian Scott, from the Rotary Club of Mornington, brought a problem to his club. Babies who were perfectly well were being put down to sleep, and they were not waking up. Nobody could say why. Not the doctors, not the hospitals, not the government.

The problem was that nobody knew how to stop such a loss happening to the next family. So Mornington decided to fund research instead, and that decision is the reason Australian Rotary Health exists.



Between 1986 and 1994 Australian Rotary Health funded Professor Terry Dwyer at the University of Tasmania, $308,637 across eight grants, to follow more than 6,000 Tasmanian babies through their first year of life. Everybody in this country knows the result, even if they have never heard our name: you put a baby down to sleep on their back.

And that finding did not stay in Tasmania. It quickly rippled out across the globe. In 1991 the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) changed its advice to the whole country, and in 1992 the American Academy of Pediatrics did the same. When the NHMRC listed the organisations behind safer infant sleeping, the first name on the list was the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund.

> The best estimate is that safe sleeping now saves more than 7,000 babies a year, worldwide. Seven thousand a year. Every year. **Beginning with one club in Mornington.**

7,000+
BABIES A YEAR SAVED WORLDWIDE BY SAFE SLEEPING, BEST ESTIMATE

13,000
AUSTRALIAN BABIES ALIVE TODAY, AS ESTIMATED BY RED NOSE

522 TO 73
AUSTRALIAN SIDS DEATHS A YEAR, 1985 TO 2003

MILESTONE YESES · 1981 TO 2026

FORTY FIVE YEARS OF GOING FIRST

The organisation one club started has now funded more than 1,600 grants and scholarships. Here are a handful of those decisions, and the people they became.

1981 — **Cot death research begins**
Mornington Rotarian Ian Scott asks his club to fund research into why healthy babies were dying in their sleep, when nobody, not even the doctors, could say why. Australian Rotary Health is born.

1986 — **Safer sleep for babies**
Eight grants to Professor Terry Dwyer in Tasmania help prove babies are safer sleeping on their backs, changing the advice given to parents in Australia and worldwide.

1996 — **Rheumatic fever in the Top End**
A $70,000 grant to a young doctor, Jonathan Carapetis, shows Top End children have the highest rate of rheumatic fever ever recorded. Professor Carapetis AM now leads the national strategy to end rheumatic heart disease.

2003 — **Safer reporting of suicide**
Professor Jane Pirkis shows that how the media reports suicide changes how many people die. Her work shaped Mindframe, the guidelines Australian newsrooms follow.

2003 — **Indigenous Health Scholarships**
We begin backing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to train in health, so care can sit closer to Country. Our scholars have become doctors, nurses and dentists. We are proud to have funded 644 Indigenous Health Scholarships so far.

2004 — **Lungs that save lives**
With the Rotary Club of Williamstown we back Professor Greg Snell to test whether lungs from donors whose hearts have stopped can be transplanted. This method now accounts for close to a quarter of all lung transplants in Australia.

2005 — **A new field of science**
Professor Felice Jacka OAM wanted to know whether what people eat affects their mental health. She led the world's first trial showing a better diet can help treat depression, and founded nutritional psychiatry, the science of food and mood, now recognised worldwide.

2005 — **Mental Health First Aid**
We fund the research behind the guidelines that underpin Mental Health First Aid, which teaches people to help someone through a mental health crisis. 8.9 million people have now been trained, in 51 countries.

2006 — **ADHD and the brain**
Tim Silk's Ian Scott PhD Scholarship uses brain imaging to study how ADHD affects the developing brain. Professor Silk now leads research into how children's brains develop at Deakin University.

2008 — **A new schizophrenia medicine**
A Royce Abbey Fellowship backs Dr Elizabeth Scarr's research into the muscarinic receptors in schizophrenia, groundwork for Cobenfy, the first new class of schizophrenia medicine in over 30 years, approved in the United States in 2024.

2014 — **Teen Mental Health First Aid**
We fund the trial of a course that teaches high school students how to help a friend in trouble. Trained teens are far more likely to support a friend thinking about suicide.

2018 — **Screening for perinatal depression**
Dr Nicole Reilly's Geoffrey Betts Fellowship revises the Antenatal Risk Questionnaire, which identifies women at risk of perinatal depression. It is named in Australia's National Perinatal Mental Health Guideline and adapted for mothers in Japan and Turkey.

2023 — **Children first**
Our major research grants turn to children aged 0 to 12, because around half of all mental illness begins before the age of 14. Since then, 23 grants worth $5,106,430 have backed research into the mental health of Australian children.

2026 — **Eleven new studies**
$2,881,228 for eleven new studies into children's mental health, funded this year because of you. They include help for anxious children at school, support for children with a father in prison, and the first research into how AI chatbots affect preteens.

GOVERNANCE · 2025-26

OUR BOARD

Fourteen directors served across 2025-26. All Rotarians, all extraordinary, all volunteers.



PDG Stephen Humphreys
CHAIRPERSON



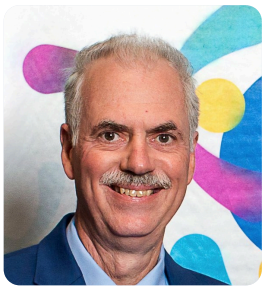
PDG Adrian Roach
CHAIR-ELECT



PDG Bernie Bott
MEMBER OF THE BOARD EXECUTIVE



PDG Bob Calvert
DIRECTOR



PDG Ron Degenhart
DIRECTOR



PDG Ian McKay
DIRECTOR



PDG Paul Mee
DIRECTOR



DGE Paul Miegel
DG 2026-27



PDG Jeff Neale
DIRECTOR



PDG Jerry Pilcher
DIRECTOR TO DEC 2025



DG Renga Rajan
DG 2025-26



PDG Patrice Robinson
DIRECTOR TO DEC 2025



PDG Patricia Schraven
DIRECTOR



DGN Rick Vosila
DG 2027-28

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

The board recognises **Emeritus Professor Michael Sawyer OAM** for his service as Honorary Research Advisor to the Board from 2010 to 2026, and for the expertise and care he brought to every decision we made.

OUR TEAM

A SMALL TEAM, A NATIONAL REACH

Our staff assess the grants, support the scholars, keep the records every club relies on, and keep you connected to the people and stories your support makes possible.



Yvonne Keane AM
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Jenny Towe
OFFICE MANAGER



Cheryl Deguara OAM
PROGRAMS COORDINATOR



Monika Pindoria
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

THANK YOU

JOY GILLETT OAM

Chief Executive Officer from 1990 to 2025, for decades of dedication to Australian Rotary Health.

WELCOME

YVONNE KEANE AM

Chief Executive Officer from October 2025, leading the next chapter of Australian Rotary Health.

2025-26

THANK YOU, DISTRICT CHAIRS

Behind every district's giving is a District Chair who champions Australian Rotary Health: carrying our stories to clubs, backing Lift the Lid walks and Hat Day, and connecting Rotarians with the researchers and scholars their generosity supports. They are volunteers, raising awareness, encouraging fundraising and representing us across their districts, and they give their time freely so more possibility can be funded. They are extraordinary, and we are grateful.

9423	**David Preece and Warwick Smith**
9510	**Barbara Wheatcroft**
9560	**Ron Degenhart**
9620	**Donelle Whiteley**
9640	**Nerida Dean**
9660	**Betty Kitchener AM**
9675	**Rae-Anne Medforth**
9685	**Bob Kaye-Smith**
9705	**John Egan**
9780	**Peter Liepins** (to 30 May 2026)
9790	**Rosemary Freeman**
9800	**Dr Suresh Marcandan**
9815	**Paul Mee**
9830	**Mellissa Harvey**

WITH SPECIAL THANKS

PDG JERRY PILCHER

Former director, Life Member and Chairperson of our Lift the Lid Organising Committee. Thank you, Jerry, for all you do for us.



CHAPTER 2

YOUR YEAR

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS · 2025-26

WHAT THE YEAR MADE POSSIBLE

It starts with you. This year 306 Rotary clubs and 1,240 individual supporters chose to back Australian Rotary Health, giving 1,806 times in all, including $311,498 for Indigenous health scholarships. Every gift, large or small, went into the research and the scholarships on these pages.

WHAT CAME IN

$1,476,622
GIVEN THIS YEAR
Including $311,498 for Indigenous health scholarships.

306
CLUBS GAVE
Rotary clubs that made at least one gift during the year.

441
GIFTS FROM CLUBS
The number of times a club gave across the year.

1,240
INDIVIDUALS
People who gave in their own name, 1,354 times.

WHAT IT MADE POSSIBLE

Every figure on this page was made possible by a decision a club, a district or a supporter made this year to back Australian Rotary Health. Behind each figure is a person: a researcher working out how to help an anxious child at school, a parent learning how to help their child through a phobia, a student on their way to a rural hospital that needs them. This is what your support made possible this year.

$2,881,228 COMMITTED TO NEW RESEARCH

11 new research grants, every one a multi-year commitment.

11 — **New children's grants**
$2,881,228 for research into the mental health of children aged 0 to 12.

73 — **Scholars backed**
13 starting their first funded year and 60 continuing, across medicine, nursing and allied health.

5 — **New PhD scholarships**
Five awarded this year and two already under way, backed by clubs and donors who chose to believe in them.

OUR STRATEGIC REVIEW

SHAPED BY YOU

For 45 years, Rotarians have backed possibility first and found the proof later. Your support has funded more than 1,600 grants and scholarships and given us thousands of stories of impact to tell: babies who now sleep safely, 8.9 million people in 51 countries trained in Mental Health First Aid, and doctors and nurses serving rural towns where health care can be hours away. So we asked you what should come next, in a variety of ways:



Individual interviews	One-on-one conversations, so priorities could surface candidly.
Survey responses	Input from across the network, at scale.
Group interviews	With the board and research committee, testing emerging themes.
Drop-in sessions	Open sessions for Rotarians, partners and researchers.
Vision workshop	Leadership and the board aligning on direction together.
Document review	Strategy, governance and funding, to see where we stand.

Over nearly four months in early 2026, we listened, we co-designed and we consulted widely, asking Rotarians and clubs, district chairs, board directors, researchers, scholars and partners to tell us the truth, including the parts that might be hard to hear.

WHAT YOU TOLD US

Our impact is remarkable, but not always well known.

Beyond Rotary, we are largely invisible to most Australians.

Clubs want to hear more about the research they fund.

WHAT YOU ASKED FOR

Shout the successes, more loudly and more often.

Clearer, simpler ways to help and support.

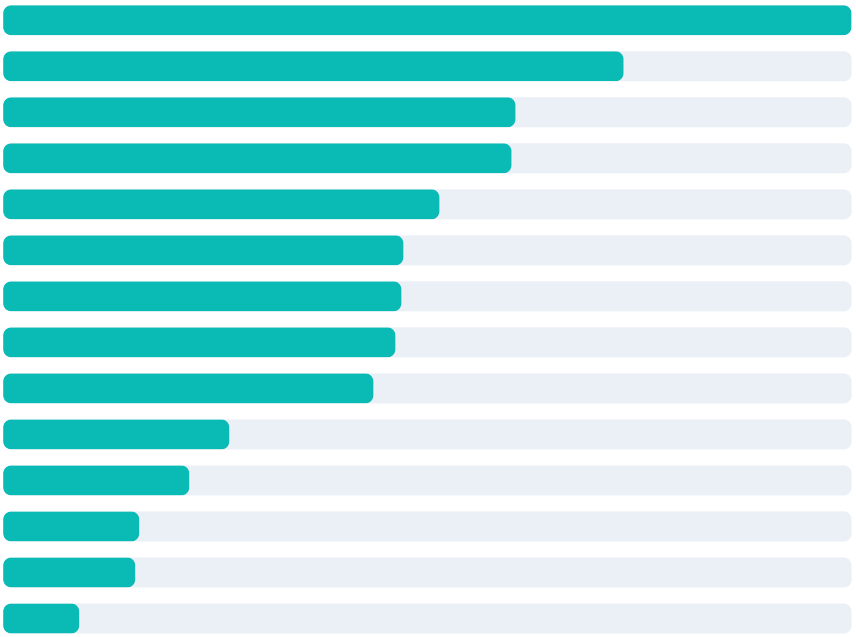
Researchers and scholars brought closer to clubs.

What you told us became the foundation of our new strategic plan, unanimously supported by the Board. Our public face is changing, with a fresh look, a clearer voice and new ways of telling the stories of the people you back. Our heart is not changing, and neither is our deep gratitude for the generosity that got us here.

YOUR YEAR · OUR DISTRICTS

HOW OUR DISTRICTS GAVE

Every one of Australia's 14 Rotary districts backed Australian Rotary Health this year, through their clubs, their members and the Rotarians who gave in their own names.



DISTRICT	2025-26	ALL TO DATE
9675	**$183,808**	$6,782,223
9620	**$134,563**	$3,518,477
9423	**$110,791**	$4,428,705
9685	**$109,985**	$5,341,254
9815	**$94,739**	$7,752,988
9560	**$86,809**	$2,888,553
9705	**$86,469**	$3,099,939
9660	**$84,852**	$4,504,187
9510	**$80,351**	$4,265,216
9800	**$49,065**	$3,854,687
9790	**$40,449**	$2,146,050
9780	**$29,615**	$1,384,767
9830	**$28,555**	$2,092,249
9640	**$16,596**	$987,600

These are not scores. Districts differ in size, in age, and in how many times they have been redrawn across forty five years. Every one of these figures is a foundation.

UP 72%
DISTRICT 9685
The largest rise of any district, from $63,898 to $109,985.

$183,808
DISTRICT 9675
The year's highest district total.

$7.8M
DISTRICT 9815
The highest lifetime giving of any district, all to date.

WITH GRATITUDE

Behind every bar on this page is a story. A raffle drawn at the Christmas meeting. A trivia night in a country hall. A Lift the Lid walk that has grown, year on year, into a fixture on the town calendar. Money counted on a kitchen table late at night, then used to support the work of a researcher the club may never meet.

Some clubs have been with us for decades: 17 have given since our records began in 1985, and every one is still giving. Others join forces to do together what none could do alone. This year seven clusters of clubs and three districts each came together to back a scholar. We can only do what we do because of our districts. Thank you, every one of you.

LIFT THE LID · 2025-26

WALK AND TALK

Lift the Lid brings communities outside to walk and talk about mental health, at every age and every pace, with 100 per cent of funds raised going to research. This year Rotary clubs staged 19 Lift the Lid walks across six states and territories, most of them in spring around Mental Health Month.

$156,545 raised through Lift the Lid walks, up 30 per cent on last year.

THIS YEAR'S STANDOUTS

Mooloolaba, ten years on
The walk that started it all marked its 10th anniversary with around 600 walkers, and Triple P founder Professor Matthew Sanders as ambassador.

Darwin, a first for the Top End
The Rotary clubs of Darwin came together to stage the city's inaugural walk on The Esplanade.

A new campus walk in Perth
The Rotary Club of Dalkeith and the University of Western Australia held their first walk together, on campus.

Clubs walking together
The Southern and Eastern Rotary Clubs of Adelaide joined forces, and Mont Albert and Surrey Hills walked with North Balwyn across two districts.

EVERY WALK, 2025-26

21 SEP	**Maroondah** · RC Maroondah
21 SEP	**Brisbane**
4 OCT	**Busselton** · RC Busselton-Geographe Bay
12 OCT	**Townsville** · RC Townsville Saints
12 OCT	**Moreland** · RC Moreland
12 OCT	**Coral Coast, Bargara** · RC Bargara
12 OCT	**Cairns** · RC Cairns
19 OCT	**Darwin** · Rotary clubs of Darwin
19 OCT	**Mooloolaba** · RC Mooloolaba
26 OCT	**Karawatha East**
9 NOV	**Southern and Eastern Adelaide** · Adelaide clubs
16 NOV	**Kinglake Ranges** · RC Kinglake Ranges
28 FEB	**Sunbury** · RC Sunbury
1 MAR	**Macarthur** · RC Macarthur Sunrise
15 MAR	**Maitland Park** · RC Maitland
22 MAR	**Mont Albert, Surrey Hills and North Balwyn** · Three clubs together
18 APR	**University of WA** · RC Dalkeith
3 MAY	**Scarborough** · RC Scarborough
17 MAY	**Maylands** · RC Maylands

Lift the Lid is guided by our Organising Committee, chaired by PDG Jerry Pilcher, and brought to life by the clubs and volunteers who stage every walk. Thank you.

Total Lift the Lid giving was **$295,125**. On top of the walks, clubs and individuals gave a further $138,580 through additional Lift the Lid fundraising and donations.





CHILDREN FIRST · RESEARCH

ELEVEN QUESTIONS WORTH BACKING

Around half of all lifelong mental health difficulties begin before a child turns 14. This year every one of our 11 new research grants went to the mental health of children aged 0 to 12: how to help an anxious child at school without a waiting list, how to reach a parent before a problem sets in, and how to protect babies from postnatal depression and children with a father in prison.

Childhood is where the greatest difference can be made. One in seven Australian children lives with a mental health disorder, and help that arrives early can change the course of a life. Yet the earliest ideas, before there is any evidence, are the hardest to fund. That is exactly where we stand.

> **$2,881,228** committed to 11 children's mental health research grants, running over up to three years.

Backing a question early works. Cool Kids was untested when we first funded it in 1997. We backed it again and again over fifteen years, and it is now used in 24 countries and 15 languages.

The questions run from the very start of life to the edge of the teenage years: birth trauma and attachment, phobias, perfectionism, school avoidance, screen time in the preschool years, and what children need to understand about their own mental health.

Each one began with a decision by a club, a district or a supporter to back a question nobody had yet answered. Two of them are here. All eleven are on the next page.



NOBODY HAS ASKED THE CHILDREN YET

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AMY DAWEL
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Associate Professor Amy Dawel and her team will talk with children under 13 about their relationships with AI chatbots, and follow how use and mental health move together over time. There is no evidence yet, because nobody has asked.



HELP AT SCHOOL, NO WAITING LIST

DR LAUREN MCLELLAN
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

Dr Lauren McLellan is taking Cool Kids Online into primary schools, with staff trained to run it, so a child with anxiety can get help where they already are. Cool Kids grew from research we backed eight times over fifteen years.

NEW GRANTS 2026-28

Lauren McLellan · Macquarie University, NSW · 2026-2028 Responding to rising child anxiety in schools: a scalable implementation of Cool Kids Online @ School	**$299,108**
Marie Yap OAM · Monash University, VIC · 2026-2028 Co-designing a coach-supported online parenting intervention for parents of children with emotionally-based school avoidance	**$299,695**
Lara Farrell · Griffith University, QLD · 2026-2028 Treating Childhood Specific Phobias FAST: a nationwide trial of Families Accessing CBT Skills Training in exposure therapy	**$298,915**
Amy Dawel · Australian National University, ACT · 2026-2028 Developing evidence-based interventions to prevent AI chatbot harms to preteen mental health	**$297,060**
Charlene Holt · Austin Hospital Medical Research Foundation, VIC · 2026-2028 e-Intervention to mitigate the impact of postnatal depression on infant mental health	**$296,576**
Caroline Donovan · Griffith University, QLD · 2026-2028 Meeting an urgent community need: getting Lights Out out there	**$295,892**
Alice Norton · University of Sydney, NSW · 2026-2028 Mental health begins at birth: addressing birth trauma and attachment to improve child mental health trajectories	**$293,902**
Alison Calear · Australian National University, ACT · 2026-2028 Co-design and trial of a mental health literacy program for upper primary school aged children	**$291,165**
Philip Morgan · University of Newcastle, NSW · 2026-2028 Improving the mental health of children with incarcerated fathers: the Healthy Dads Healthy Kids, Prison program	**$205,639**
Lucy Tully · University of Sydney, NSW · 2026-2027 ParentWorks-Unplugged: a brief parenting intervention for technoference and child mental health in preschoolers	**$190,176**
Tracey Wade · Flinders University, SA · 2026-2028 Growing Strong Minds: a parent-guided cognitive behaviour therapy intervention targeting childhood perfectionism	**$113,100**
TOTAL COMMITTED	**$2,881,228**

THANK YOU, RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Every application is assessed by our extraordinary Research Committee, led by our Chair, **Professor Philip Batterham**. Our thanks to Dr Louise Birrell, Professor Valsamma Eapen, Associate Professor Divna Haslam, Professor Anthony Jorm, Professor Justin Kenardy, Professor David Lawrence, Associate Professor Amanda Neil, Associate Professor Jon Quach, Professor Ronald Rapee AM, Associate Professor Rachel Roberts and Professor Helen Skouteris.





MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH GRANTS · 2023-2025

GRANTS COMPLETED

Jennifer Hudson · University of New South Wales, NSW · 2023-2025 Optimising exposure treatment for children with anxiety	**$209,754**
Caroline Donovan · Griffith University, QLD · 2023-2025 Setting kids up for life: a digital program to improve the sleep and mental health of children aged 3 to 12	**$209,472**
Sonja March · University of Southern Queensland, QLD · 2023-2025 A staged mental health care plan for children, integrating child and parent assessment in education settings	**$208,912**
Lara Farrell · Griffith University, QLD · 2023-2025 FAST (Families Accessing online Skills Training) CBT for paediatric OCD: a nationwide trial	**$207,270**
Lucy Tully · University of Sydney, NSW · 2023-2025 A model of improved care for child mental health problems using measurement-based care	**$206,566**
Sophie Li · University of New South Wales, NSW · 2023-2025 Improving childhood sleep: the bedrock of depression prevention	**$204,804**
Talia Carl · University of Sydney, NSW · 2023-2025 Growing Minds Check In: evidence-based mental health support for carers of Aboriginal children	**$203,482**
Marie Yap OAM · Monash University, VIC · 2023-2025 A coach-supported online parenting intervention for parents of autistic children, to reduce internalising problems	**$174,991**
Alison Calear · Australian National University, ACT · 2023-2025 A cluster randomised controlled trial of a mental health education program in ACT primary schools	**$172,886**
Dave Pasalich · Australian National University, ACT · 2023-2025 Improving child mental health in foster care: a pilot trial of an attachment and trauma-informed intervention	**$164,950**
Govind Krishnamoorthy · University of Southern Queensland, QLD · 2023-2024 Trauma-informed behaviour supports for early intervention in child mental health, with regional schools	**$140,000**
Amy Finlay-Jones · University of Western Australia, WA · 2023-2024 Supporting Toddlers, Engaging Parents (STEPs): addressing early regulatory difficulties	**$122,115**
TOTAL INVESTED	**$2,225,202**

THE WORK GOES ON

Twelve projects reached their finish line in 2025. Five of these teams, led by **Alison Calear**, **Caroline Donovan**, **Lara Farrell**, **Lucy Tully** and **Marie Yap OAM**, have won new grants for 2026-28 to keep building on what they found.

RESEARCH FUNDED · 2023-2025

BETTER NIGHTS

When a child can't sleep, the whole family feels it. In 2023 you backed Professor Caroline Donovan and her team at Griffith University to find out whether a simple online program could help parents turn bedtime around, without ever stepping into a clinic.



Many children struggle with sleep, and it touches everyone at home. Yet most families never seek or receive help.

So the team tested the Lights Out Online Program, known as LOOP, which parents work through at home, at their own pace, with no therapist required. 166 parents of children aged 3 to 12 took part. Half started straight away and half waited, so the two groups could be fairly compared.

> "Parents who completed the program reported feeling more confident in their ability to manage their child's sleep."

THE PROJECT

Setting kids up for life: a digital program for improving the sleep and mental health of children aged 3 to 12. Centre for Mental Health and School of Applied Psychology, Griffith University, Queensland. Mental Health Research Grant, 2023-2025. With Professor Sonja March, Professor Lisa Meltzer, Professor Laurie McLay, Professor Lara Farrell, Professor Allison Waters and Professor Robert Ware.

WHAT IT FOUND

Children whose parents used LOOP slept better and showed fewer behavioural problems, such as acting out or struggling to follow rules. Parents who finished the program felt more confident managing their child's sleep, and that confidence is what makes change last.

Not everything shifted. The program didn't clearly change children's anxiety, or parents' own sleep and mental health. And while most parents found it helpful, many didn't finish every session, a reminder of how stretched busy families are.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR FAMILIES

Online programs like LOOP give families an accessible way to improve children's sleep and behaviour, especially families who might otherwise go without support.

166 FAMILIES TOOK PART

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The work continues. In 2026 Australian Rotary Health awarded Professor Donovan a new Mental Health Research Grant, running to 2028, to get Lights Out out there to families across the community.



RESEARCHER SPOTLIGHT

Professor Caroline Donovan is a clinical psychologist and Professor in the School of Applied Psychology and the Centre for Mental Health at Griffith University. She has attracted more than $9 million in research funding, published 95 peer-reviewed journal articles and 13 book chapters, and supervised 74 research students through to completion. She still keeps a small private practice.

RESEARCH FUNDED · 2023-2025

BONDS THAT HEAL

Around 17,000 Australian children live in foster care. In 2023 you backed Associate Professor Dave Pasalich and his team at the Australian National University to test a program that helps foster carers build the steady, trusting bond those children need to heal.



Many of these children have lived through trauma and painful separation from their birth families, and as a group they face very high rates of mental health problems. A secure relationship with a carer is vital to their recovery, yet very few programs built to strengthen it had been tailored for foster carers and properly tested in Australia.

The team tested eConnect for Foster Parents, an online group program. Over nine weeks, two trained facilitators help carers strengthen their relationship with the children in their care. The team asked two questions: could foster care agencies run it themselves, and did it help families? The answer to both was yes.

> "Its potential to make a lasting difference in children's lives."

THE PROJECT

Improving child mental health in foster care: a pilot trial of an attachment and trauma-informed intervention. Research School of Psychology, Australian National University, ACT. Mental Health Research Grant, 2023-2025. With Professor Marlene Moretti, Professor Amy Conley Wright, Professor Catherine Chamberlain, Dr Aino Suomi, Dr Stewart Sutherland and Dr Angela Curio.

WHAT IT FOUND

1. **It lasts beyond the research.** Two NSW foster care agencies now run eConnect-FP themselves. Ten of their staff were trained and five earned certification, and both agencies want to keep running it.

2. **Carers are better equipped.** Joining online from home, carers felt safe, respected and comfortable. They came away understanding the children in their care better, with new ways to support them.

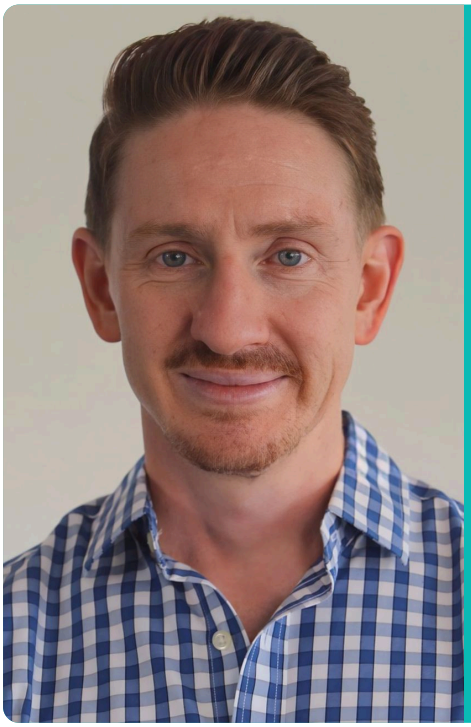
3. **Children feel the difference.** The study found meaningful benefits for foster carers and the children they care for.

4. **It is building the evidence.** This is one of Australia's first randomised evaluations of a parent program designed to strengthen the bond between carer and child in foster care.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

What this study learns can guide support for children in care across the country, and the program no longer depends on the research team to keep running.

If this story raises concerns for you or a child in your care, support is available 24 hours a day: Lifeline 13 11 14 and Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800.



RESEARCHER SPOTLIGHT

Associate Professor Dave Pasalich is a clinical psychologist in the Research School of Psychology at the Australian National University. He partners with child welfare services to develop and test parenting programs for families in out-of-home care, whom he describes as some of our most under-served. His work has been recognised with the ACT Young Tall Poppy Scientist of the Year Award and an ARC Discovery Early Career Researcher Award.



STORIES OF POSSIBILITY · CHILDREN FIRST

HELP WHERE FAMILIES ARE

Some of the most effective mental health care does not need a waiting list or a clinic at all. It needs a parent given the right tools at the right time, and that is exactly where much of the research you back now begins.

At Monash University, Professor Marie Yap OAM's team built Partners in Parenting, personalised online programs that help mums and dads support their children's mental health, reaching families who could never make it to a clinic. This year we backed the next step: a coach-supported program for parents of children whose anxiety keeps them from school.

At Griffith University, Professor Lara Farrell is testing a program that trains parents to help their own children overcome intense phobias, at home, at low cost and as early as possible. Around one in ten children live with a phobia serious enough to affect their daily life.

And at Macquarie University, Dr Lauren McLellan is taking Cool Kids Online into Australian primary schools, with school staff trained to run it. Cool Kids grew from research we first backed in 1997 and backed again and again over fifteen years. It is now used in 24 countries and translated into 15 languages.

> That is research becoming real help, exactly where families actually are.

STORIES OF POSSIBILITY · RURAL AUSTRALIA

WHERE IT IS HARDEST

Some of the most important work we back is not glamorous. It is work in the places everyone else finds hardest to reach, and that is exactly why it matters most.

Maree McDonald trained as a nurse with a Rural Nursing Scholarship backed by the Rotary Club of Sale. Today she is a rural nurse in East Gippsland, in a community where the nearest specialist care might be hours away, and where her presence alone changes what is possible for the people around her.

In Tasmania, the Rotary Club of Deloraine funded a PhD scholarship at the University of Tasmania. The scholar, Dr Laura Grattidge, asked what actually works to prevent youth suicide in regional and rural Tasmania, where a young person can be a very long way from help.

She found something hopeful: the strongest prevention does not come from services alone. It comes from connected communities, schools, families, health workers and even farmers, equipped to notice and step in early. Her work is finished, published, and in use in the communities it was written for.

> Sometimes the most powerful thing you can fund is not a new service. It is a person, in the right place, with the chance to stay.

Support is available 24 hours a day: Lifeline 13 11 14 and Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800.



THE PEOPLE WE BACKED · SCHOLARSHIPS

73 SCHOLARS, ONE TOWN AT A TIME

Behind every scholarship is a student, and behind every student is a club or supporter who decided they were worth backing. In 2025-26 we backed 73 scholars in medicine, nursing and allied health, 13 in their first funded year. Here are four of their stories.



KALEISHA COWAN-ROBERTS

INDIGENOUS HEALTH SCHOLARSHIP
UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

A proud Yuin and Bundjalung woman, Kaleisha is in her final year of medicine and heading towards internship, committed to rural and remote communities. Sponsored by the late Keith Henning OAM and PDG Mina Howard, through the Rotary Club of Greater Blue Mountains. In her own words, her mission is "to heal our People and transform pain into belonging."



MAREE MCDONALD

RURAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIP
FEDERATION UNIVERSITY

After 12 years volunteering with the ski patrol near Mt Hotham, Maree trained as a nurse with the backing of the Rotary Club of Sale. She has finished her degree and her graduate year at Bairnsdale Regional Hospital, caring for people across East Gippsland, where the nearest specialist care can be hours away. She is exactly the kind of health worker rural Australia needs.



CONSTANCE MCINTOSH

RURAL MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIP
UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

A farm kid from the Yorke Peninsula, Constance is studying medicine and trains through the Rural Clinical School at Port Pirie and Crystal Brook, backed by the Rotary Club of St Peters. As a student on a rural placement, she has already helped bring five babies into the world, a glimpse of what one rural doctor can mean to a whole community.



PIPER STEWART

INDIGENOUS HEALTH SCHOLARSHIP
WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

A proud Gulidjan woman from Griffith, Piper founded the charity Bambigi at the age of 12 to fund swimming lessons for First Nations kids, and has since helped more than 300 children learn to swim, work that made her a National NAIDOC Youth Award finalist. Now studying paramedicine, she is backed by the Rotary Club of Camden and NSW Health (HETI).

WHO BACKS OUR SCHOLARS

IN THEIR CORNER

Every one of the 73 scholars we supported this year has a backer, and most often it is a Rotary club. A scholarship is not an anonymous grant. It is a generous decision by people to believe in one student, and to stay with them.

> 644 Indigenous Health Scholarships since 2003. Every one of them began with somebody deciding a student was worth backing.

Forty-eight of this year's scholars were backed by Rotary. Twenty-six of them by a single club, often one close to home, choosing a student from its own region who hopes to serve that region as a doctor, nurse or health worker. Some clubs have done this year after year for decades, and can now count the careers they helped begin.

Where one club cannot carry a scholarship alone, clubs join forces. Seven were backed by clusters of clubs pooling their giving, and three by districts.

Twelve more were backed by a club and a named supporter together. Fifteen were backed by individuals and families, some in memory of someone they loved, and ten by foundations and trusts.

For a student, that backing is more than money. It eases the cost of study, placements and travel far from home, and it tells them a community believes in them. Many stay in touch with the people who backed them, and some go on to become the very health workers those communities hoped for.

48

ROTARY CLUBS OR GROUPS OF CLUBS

Backed by a club, a cluster of clubs or a district, some with a named supporter.

15

INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

Backed by a person or a family, often in memory of someone they loved.

10

FOUNDATIONS AND TRUSTS

Backed by a charitable foundation or trust investing in future health workers.



STORIES OF POSSIBILITY · OUR CLUBS

THE CLUBS BEHIND THE CAREERS

A gift is not a line in a ledger. It is a treasurer, a president and a room full of members deciding, again, that their money should go to research and to the people who will carry it forward. Here are three clubs that have done exactly that, year after year.

The Rotary Club of Campbelltown in South Australia has given to Australian Rotary Health 312 times across 41 years, 37 of them without a single break. Along the way it has put nine South Australians through university, in nursing, midwifery, psychology, health science and more.

The Rotary Club of Ascot has given 48 times, beginning in 1986. In the last six years alone it has backed three people into careers in health: Kelly Reynolds in medicine, Shanaz Rind in optometry, and Kirby Hobbs in medicine, who Ascot is funding right now.

And the Rotary Club of Morisset, with 58 gifts since 1986, put Kerri Hine through nursing, then joined four other clubs right across the country to put Courtney Thompson through biomedical technology. Five clubs who have probably never met, funding one woman between them.

> Every one of those people is out in the world tonight, working. That is the quiet gift of backing a person.

STORIES OF POSSIBILITY · 1981 TO 2026

RIPPLES OF POSSIBILITY

In 1981 a Rotarian named Ian Scott asked his club in Mornington to fund the pursuit of an answer. In 2003 the fund he began put a young woman through her doctorate on an Ian Scott scholarship. Her name was Melanie Porter.

Melanie Porter is now an Associate Professor at Macquarie University and a director of ADHD Australia. This year she accepted her one hundredth research student.

That student is Flynn Vamos. Diagnosed with ADHD as an adult, with three children who have it too, Flynn is about to begin building Australia's first wellbeing guide for primary school children with ADHD, written by and with those children rather than for them. We will be funding Flynn, and Melanie will supervise her.

The same ripple runs through our scholars. Between 2006 and 2008 four clubs, Lower Blue Mountains, Rockdale, Burwood and Rose Bay, together backed Peter Hawkins through social work. What was beyond any one club was well within reach of four. Peter has been a social worker for close to twenty years, and every family he has helped hold together traces back to that decision.

> A scholarship becomes a career, and then it becomes everybody that career touches.




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POSSIBILITY IN PEOPLE · 2025-26

EVERYONE YOU FUNDED

Every name on the pages that follow is a person you backed this year. A researcher at the start of their career. A PhD student chasing an answer nobody has found yet. A young doctor or nurse training in the country towns that need them most. A First Nations student on the way to caring for their own community.

We name every one of them because every one of them matters, and because behind each name is a club, a district or a supporter who said yes. This year that is 100 people, and this is the full record of every one of them, program by program. Our eleven new children's mental health research grants are featured earlier in this report.

100
PEOPLE BACKED BY YOU

25+
UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH INSTITUTES

8
RURAL CLINICAL SCHOOLS

2	**Postdoctoral Fellowships** Early-career researchers in mental health, funded by Australian Rotary Health
1	**Ian Scott PhD Scholarship** A PhD scholar named for the Rotarian who started it all in 1981
24	**Funding Partner PhD Scholarships** Research students working on questions that matter
16	**Rural Medical Scholarships** Medical students training in rural clinical schools
7	**Rural Nursing Scholarships** Nursing students on rural placements
50	**Indigenous Health Scholarships** First Nations students in health, across every state and the Northern Territory

WHAT THEY ARE WORKING ON

Our PhD scholars are chasing answers that touch almost every Australian family: ADHD, dementia, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, childhood and bowel cancer, suicide prevention for young people in Tasmania, and the mental health of emergency service workers, athletes and rural men.

WHERE THEY TRAIN

They study in every state and the ACT, and our rural medical scholars train through eight rural clinical schools, from Lismore and Bega to Port Lincoln and the Yorke Peninsula.

EVERYONE YOU FUNDED · 2025-26

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

Fellowships that back early-career researchers in mental health.

Melissa Aji
A Digital Intervention for Night-time Fears and Sleep Disturbances for Children
University of New South Wales, NSW
The Colin Dodds Postdoctoral Fellowship, 2024-2026

Shurong Lu
Empowering culturally and linguistically diverse parents to support primary school-aged children: an evaluation of Mental Health First Aid for Supporting Children
University of Melbourne, VIC
The Royce Abbey Postdoctoral Fellowship, 2024-2026

IAN SCOTT PHD SCHOLARSHIPS

A PhD scholarship named for Ian Scott, the Rotarian who started it all in 1981.

James Martin
Exploring neurophenomenological signatures of Self-Disorder in young people with first episode psychosis.
University of Adelaide, SA
Ian Scott PhD Scholarship, Self-Disorder Research

FUNDING PARTNER PHD SCHOLARSHIPS

Each scholar's research topic and university, and the scholarship that funds it.

Farjana Islam Aovi
ADHD, Western Sydney University, NSW
SCHOLARSHIP Kaiyu Enterprise PhD Scholarship

Alysa Bachmann
Mental Health Emergency Services Personnel, Central Queensland University, QLD
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary NSW & ACT Emergency Services Community Awards PhD Scholarship

Jordan Clarke
Schizophrenia, University of Melbourne, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Jonathan Ceddia Memorial PhD Scholarship

Hanna Corre
Bipolar, University of Melbourne, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Ian Parker Bipolar Research PhD Scholarship

Harry Dempsey
Mental Health, University of Melbourne, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Rob Henry Memorial PhD Scholarship

Stella-Maris Egboh
Gastroparesis, University of Newcastle, NSW
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Club of Devonport, TAS

Dagmawi Haile
Multiple Sclerosis, University of Melbourne, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Passport Club of Sylvania Waters, NSW

Phillipa Huynh
Rural Men's Mental Health, Swinburne University of Technology, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Club of Victor Harbor, SA

Ariel Kim
Mental Health, University of Melbourne, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Kaiyu Enterprise PhD Scholarship

Ajay Konuri
Parkinson's Disease, University of Sydney, NSW
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Club of Belconnen, ACT 50th Anniversary

Chow Lai
Childhood Cancer, Walter & Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Club of Murrumbidgee Canberra, ACT

Nicholas Leidig
Chronic Disease within Aboriginal Communities, University of Adelaide, SA
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Club of Adelaide, SA Centennial Project

Jingjing Lin
Parkinson's Disease, University of Melbourne, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Clubs of District 9800 and Members Parkinson's Disease Research PhD, VIC

Emily Major
PKD Research, La Trobe University, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Pamela Maud Ratcliff PKD Scholarship

Aisling McEvoy
Dementia, Monash University, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Bartolina Peluso PhD Scholarship (RC of Camden Supported)

Joanna New
Concussion Disease, University of Sydney, NSW
SCHOLARSHIP The Dan Vickerman Research Scholarship

Ivan Nugraha
Suicide Prevention for Young People in Tasmania, University of Tasmania, TAS
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Club of Deloraine, TAS PhD Scholarship

Jeanti Profaca
Mental Health, University of New South Wales, NSW
SCHOLARSHIP Josephine Margaret Redfern & Ross Edward Redfern (RC of Granville)

Zhe (Darren) Qiang
Progressive Multiple Sclerosis, University of Melbourne, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Club of Gisborne, VIC/Rotary Action Group Against MS 'Jacob Taurins Memorial'

Georgina Rawson
Dementia, Monash University, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Bartolina Peluso PhD Scholarship

EVERYONE YOU FUNDED · 2025-26

Sandra Sursock
Bowel Cancer, University of Melbourne, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary District 9650 Bowelscan

Simon Tria
Bowel Cancer, University of Queensland, QLD
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary District 9650 Bowelscan

Jordan Vella
Athlete Mental Health, Monash University, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Club of Mont Albert & Surrey Hills, VIC 'Danny Frawley Centre' PhD Scholarship

Zoe Whitehouse
Parkinson's Disease, La Trobe University, VIC
SCHOLARSHIP Rotary Clubs of Wahroonga and Turramurra, NSW PhD Scholarship

RURAL MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Each scholar's university, rural clinical school and sponsor.

Vincent Batchelor 2025
Australian National University, ACT
Bega Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY The Late PDG Joe Scorer

Hazel Carson 2026
Western Sydney University, NSW
Lismore Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Inspirational Women's Award/District 9675

Phoebe Doohan 2026
Australian National University, ACT
Gundagai Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY The Late PDG Joe Scorer

Piyumi Ekanayake 2026
Western Sydney University, NSW
Lismore Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY The Harris Estate

Tatum Faber 2025
Western Sydney University, NSW
Lismore Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY Harris Scholarship

Anishka Fernandopulle 2025
Australian National University, ACT
Bega Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Clubs of Murrumbidgee/Deniliquin, NSW

Jake Goggi 2026
Western Sydney University, NSW
Lismore Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY The Harris Estate

Loren Hughes 2025
Australian National University, ACT
Cowra Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Wagga Wagga Sunrise, NSW

Constance McIntosh 2025
University of Adelaide, SA
Port Pirie/Crystal Brook Rural Clinical School, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of St Peters, SA

Lauren Moloney 2026
Australian National University, ACT
Bega Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY The Late PDG Joe Scorer

Isabella Murray 2026
University of Adelaide, SA
Yorke Peninsula (Kadina/Wallaroo) Rural Clinical School, SA
SPONSORED BY John and Jennifer Henshall

Sabrina Peng 2025
Western Sydney University, NSW
Lismore Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY Raya Scholarship

Rashmi Perera 2025
Western Sydney University, NSW
Bathurst Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Inspirational Women's Award/District 9675

Oscar Power 2026
Australian National University, ACT
Bega Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY The Late PDG Joe Scorer

Eman Tahir 2025
Western Sydney University, NSW
Bathurst Rural Clinical School, NSW
SPONSORED BY Lechner Scholarship

Isaac Trethewey 2026
University of Adelaide, SA
Port Lincoln/Ceduna Rural Clinical School, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of St Peters, SA

RURAL NURSING SCHOLARSHIPS

Each scholar's university, rural placement and sponsor.

Jayna Dickinson 2025-26
University of Wollongong, NSW
South East Regional Hospital (Bega), NSW
SPONSORED BY The Late PDG Joe Scorer

Maree McDonald 2025-26
Federation University, VIC
Bairnsdale Regional Hospital, VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Sale, VIC

Amy Monahan 2025-26
University of Wollongong, NSW
Final rural placement: Nowra Private Hospital, NSW
Post-graduate placement: Wagga Wagga Base Hospital, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Balwyn, VIC

Pooja Patel 2025-26
Federation University, VIC
Central Gippsland Health Service (Sale), VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Sale, VIC

Jayne Pini 2025-26
Federation University, VIC
Bairnsdale Regional Hospital, VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Sale, VIC

EVERYONE YOU FUNDED · 2025-26

Rosalie Rothnie 2025-26
Federation University, VIC
Central Gippsland Health Service (Sale), VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Sale, VIC

Nwanyibuaku Ubochi-Njoku 2025-26
University of Wollongong, NSW
South East Regional Hospital (Bega), NSW
SPONSORED BY The Late PDG Joe Scorer

2025 INDIGENOUS HEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS

Grouped by state, with each scholar's course, university and sponsor.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Jesse Aldridge
Vision Science/Optometry, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Botany Randwick, NSW

Steven Cable
Medicine, University of Sydney, NSW
SPONSORED BY PDG Stephen & Judith Humphreys / HETI (NSW Health Education and Training Institute)

Laura Cauchi
Medicine, Western Sydney University, NSW
SPONSORED BY PDG Paul and Julia Reid/Rotary Club of Pambula, NSW / HETI (NSW Health Education and Training Institute)

Kaleisha Cowan-Roberts
Medicine, University of New South Wales, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Greater Blue Mountains, NSW / HETI (NSW Health Education and Training Institute)

Milani DaSilva
Mental Health, Charles Sturt University, NSW
SPONSORED BY The David Henning Foundation / HETI (NSW Health Education and Training Institute)

Bianca Knight
Medicine, University of Sydney, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Upper Northern Beaches, NSW / HETI (NSW Health Education and Training Institute)

Lesley McKenzie
Medicine, University of Sydney, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Orange, NSW / HETI (NSW Health Education and Training Institute)

Eden Slicer
Medicine, University of New South Wales, NSW
SPONSORED BY The David Henning Foundation / HETI (NSW Health Education and Training Institute)

Zoe Smart
Social Work, Griffith University, QLD
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Parramatta, NSW / The David Henning Foundation

Piper Stewart
Paramedicine, Western Sydney University, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Camden, NSW / HETI (NSW Health Education and Training Institute)

Nicholas Tedim
Paramedicine, Charles Sturt University, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Junee, NSW / HETI (NSW Health Education and Training Institute)

Tameeka Tighe
Nursing, University of Southern Queensland, QLD
SPONSORED BY The David Henning Foundation / Rotary Club of Lower Blue Mountains, NSW

Megan Torpey
Medicine, University of New South Wales, NSW
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Wagga Wagga, NSW

Miranda Wallace
Medicine, University of New South Wales, NSW
SPONSORED BY Learnmed / HETI (NSW Health Education and Training Institute)

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Ebony Hill
Medicine, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Darwin, NT / The Late PDG Joe Scorer

Tiana James
Medicine, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Litchfield/Palmerston, NT / The Late PDG Joe Scorer

Sophie L'Estrange
Medicine, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Darwin North, NT / The Late PDG Joe Scorer

Emily Post
Medicine, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Darwin South, NT / The Late PDG Joe Scorer

QUEENSLAND

Diane Brookes
Nursing, Central Queensland University, QLD
SPONSORED BY Sam Storey Memorial Scholarship / The Late PDG Joe Scorer

Sophie Butcher
Oral Health, Central Queensland University, QLD
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Cairns, QLD / Rotary Club of Cairns Trinity, QLD

Miah Hickman
Medicine/Nursing, University of Queensland, QLD
SPONSORED BY Lyndal Brown (Harris Estate)

Shannon Peckham
Master of Clinical Audiology, University of Melbourne, VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Mt Morgan, QLD / Rotary Club of Mundingburra, QLD

EVERYONE YOU FUNDED · 2025-26

Bradley Smith
Medicine, University of Queensland, QLD
SPONSORED BY Dr King Gan / Rotary Club of Toowong, QLD

Sarah Ulloa
Occupational Therapy, Griffith University, QLD
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Broadbeach, Hope Island and Ashmore, QLD

Logan Walsh
Physiotherapy, Australian Catholic University, QLD
SPONSORED BY Dennis O'Brien

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Sarah Browne
Paramedicine, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Dr Helen Sage / SA Government

Ky Burgoyne
Medical Radiation Science, University of South Australia, SA
SPONSORED BY Margaret Mayo / SA Government

Nathan Hartman
Medicine, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Mitcham, SA / SA Government

Hannah Hughes
Medicine, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of West Beach, SA / SA Government

Jasmyn Lloyd
Medicine/Surgery, University of Adelaide, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Morialta, SA / SA Government

India Shackleford
Medicine, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Somerton Park, SA / SA Government

Mahlee Sinkinson
Midwifery, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Port Lincoln, SA / SA Government

Krystal Smith
Nursing, University of South Australia, SA
SPONSORED BY PDG Marie Louise Lees / SA Government

Kayla Vitale
Medicine, Flinders University, SA
SPONSORED BY Prof Michael Sage / SA Government

TASMANIA

Jackson Corona
Medicine, University of Tasmania, TAS
SPONSORED BY Dr King Gan / The Late PDG Joe Scorer

VICTORIA

Maya Benvenga
Medicine, Monash University, VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Rosebud-Rye, VIC

Susan Chambers
Medicine, Monash University, VIC
SPONSORED BY Dr King Gan

Talia Cooke
Medicine, Monash University, VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Mornington, VIC

Jayde Couzens
Nursing, La Trobe University, VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Bright, VIC / Rotary Club of Swan Hill, VIC & Rotary Club of Bendigo Sandhurst, VIC

Dane Greenfield
Medicine, Deakin University, VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Kardinia, VIC

Myles McKenzie
Medicine, James Cook University, QLD
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Essendon, VIC

Ryan Di Pietro
Medicine, Monash University, VIC
SPONSORED BY Ride to Conference District 9790 Group

Chloe Rawson-Harris
Medicine, Monash University, VIC
SPONSORED BY Peter Lewis / Rotary Club of Bentleigh Moorabbin Central, VIC

Casey Slade
Medicine, Monash University, VIC
SPONSORED BY Rosemary Freeman & Group / Rotary Club of Ivanhoe, VIC

Paige Stalker-Grigg
Occupational Therapy, Monash University, VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Monash Glen Waverley, VIC

Leilia Thurling
Medicine, Monash University, VIC
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Geelong Central, VIC / Rotary Club of Bentleigh Moorabbin Central, VIC

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Keisha Calyun
Medicine/Surgery, Curtin University, WA
SPONSORED BY Lee Tyrrell / Rotary Club of Mundaring, WA

Sofie Gilmartin
Medicine, University of Western Australia, WA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Clubs of Baldivis, Kwinana, Rockingham & Palm Beach, WA

Kirby Hobbs
Medicine, University of Western Australia, WA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Matilda Bay, WA / Rotary Club of Ascot, WA

Jasmine John
Occupational Therapy, Curtin University, WA
SPONSORED BY Rotary Club of Geelong East, VIC / The Late PDG Joe Scorer



CHAPTER 5

WITH THANKS

HONOURS

LIFE MEMBERS AND THE ARH MEDAL

Life Membership is the highest honour Australian Rotary Health can bestow. It recognises people whose service has shaped this organisation over many years, often decades, and whose belief in what Rotary-funded research can do never wavered. Only seventeen names sit on the roll today.

LIFE MEMBERS

PDG Jeff Crofts
PDG Terry Edwards AM
PP David Finn
PP Joy Gillett OAM
PDG Alan Grady
PDG Terry Grant
PDG Denis Green
PDG Terry Lees OAM
PDG Fred Marsh
PDG Ian Oliver OAM
PDG Gregory Ross OAM
PDG Jerry Pilcher
Emeritus Professor Michael Sawyer OAM
PDG Kevin Shadbolt OAM
PRID Noel Trevaskis OAM
PDG Don Whatham
PDG Dick White OAM

The Australian Rotary Health Medal is the next highest honour. Each year the board may award it to one person whose service has been outstanding, and in some years it is not awarded at all. Fewer than thirty people have received it since it was first presented in 2003. To every name on this page, thank you. You are the reason we can fund possibility.

THE ARH MEDAL

RECIPIENTS SINCE 2003

2025	Professor Jane Pirkis
2024	Betty Kitchener AM
2022	Vicki Stewart
2021	Lyn Jones
2019	Phil Lacey
2018	Lindsay Morgan OAM
2017	Melvin Gray OAM
2016	The late Keith Henning OAM
2015	David and Karen Brown
2014	Dean Brown AO
2014	The late Robert Aitken AM
2013	The late Geoff Bailey OAM
2013	Joy Gillett OAM
2012	The late Rob Henry
2011	The late Peter Lean
2010	The late Ron Beslich OAM
2009	The late Geoff Kennedy
2008	Dick White OAM
2007	Emeritus Professor Tony Jorm
2006	The late Paul Henningham OAM
2005	Philip Francis
2004	Noel Trevaskis OAM
2003	Emeritus Professor Michael Sawyer OAM
2003	Fay Jackson
2003	The late Fred Hay
2003	The late Loch Adams OAM

HONOURS

OUR COMPANIONS

Companions are the supporters whose giving to Australian Rotary Health has reached $5,000 or more. Every gift counts towards the total, so a Companion grows with each contribution, from Companion ($5,000) and Gold Companion ($10,000) through to the three levels honoured here. Many have given across decades. All of them have backed research and scholarships that would not exist without them.

DIAMOND COMPANIONS

GIVING OF $100,000 AND ABOVE

Alan Grady
Beverley and Graham Webb
Dan Crisp
Emil Weber
Garry Fenner
Geoff Kellerman AO
Michael Wright
Rotary Club of Geraldton
Greenough, WA
Rotary Club of Greater Bunbury, WA
Rotary Club of Salisbury, SA
Rotary Club of South Bunbury, WA
The Beslich Family
The Henning Family
The Koo Family
The McDonald Family

EMERALD COMPANIONS

GIVING OF $50,000 AND ABOVE

Ann and John Odlum
Carol Coffey
Cliff Hoare
Craig Alford
Dr King Gan
Garry Browne AM and Robyn Browne
John and Jennifer Henshall
Mark and Karen Hancock
Peter M Lewis OAM
Ron and Glenys Geary
Sally Fletcher
Sharon Green and Marcel Skjald

RUBY COMPANIONS

GIVING OF $20,000 AND ABOVE

Athalie Lucas
Ben Beresford
Bev and Bill Richardson
Brian Condon OAM
Brian Goldstraw
Brian Lanyon
Colin Roy Acton
David Motteram OAM
David Reed OAM
Diane Fisher
Dr David Squirrell
Elgin Brown
Ernst Hug
Gail Keeler
Garnet Wood
George Dee
Gregory Ross OAM
Gwen Fisher
Heather, Brian and Graham Beesley
Ian Graham
James Castley OAM
Janice Reid
Jeff Crofts
Jennifer Thomas AM
Joan Skews
John Boundy
John Ellis
John Keating
John King OAM
Kevin Shadbolt OAM and Anne Shadbolt
Kevin Sharp
Les Rae
Margaret and Peter Waite
Margaret Dean
Nola Blair
Paul Ying
Peter Hall
Phil Asker
Rob McDougall
Robert Gardiner
Stephen Fisher
Stephen and Judith Humphreys
The Whykes Family
Val Henry

HONOURS

PATRONS AND AMBASSADORS

We are honoured to have the Governor-General of Australia as our General Patron, and a past President of Rotary International as our Rotary Patron. Their support speaks to how far the work of Rotary clubs, and the research they fund, reaches across the nation.

GENERAL PATRON

Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

ROTARY PATRON

Ian Riseley AM, Rotary International President 2017 to 2018

ROTARY AMBASSADORS

Our Rotary Ambassadors are experienced Rotarians who champion Australian Rotary Health across their regions. They share our research and scholarships with clubs and districts, help Rotarians see what their giving makes possible, and keep the bond between Rotary and the work it funds strong. We thank each of them for giving their time, their voice and their trust.

CENTRAL REGION

PDG Allan Wilson
PDG Barbara Wheatcroft
PDG Dick Wilson
PDG Ian Oliver OAM
PDG John Campbell
PDG Terry Edwards AM

NORTHERN REGION

PDG Des Lawson OAM
PDG Jeff Crofts
PDG John Gough
PDG Peter Kaye
PDG Mark Lean
PDG Mel Langley
PDG Michael Buckeridge
PDG Rob Wylie
PP Roger Crawfoot
PDG Terry Lees OAM

SOUTHERN REGION

PDG Gregory Ross OAM
PDG Graeme Woolcott OAM
PDG Judy Nettleton
PDG Patrick Hartley
PDG Ron Pickford AM
PDG Terry Grant

EASTERN REGION

PDG Alan Grady
PDG Barney Koo
PDG Brian Beesley
PDG Denis Green
PDG Dick White OAM
PDG Don Whatham
PDG Graeme Davies
PDG Harold Sharp OAM
PDG John Egan
PP Melvin Gray OAM
PRID Noel Trevaskis OAM
PDG Peter Williams
PDG Phil Armstrong
PDG Phil Lacey
PDG Tony Hennessy

WESTERN REGION

PDG Colin Thornley
PDG Fred Marsh
PDG Phil Cordery
PDG Jerry Pilcher



2025-26

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

FINANCIAL REPORT 2025-26

A YEAR OF TRANSITION

Every dollar you give is a promise we take seriously. This year we kept backing research and scholars through a once-in-a-generation change of leadership.

$1.48M

Given by clubs, districts and supporters, including $311,498 for Indigenous health scholarships

$1.89M

Invested this year in research grants, and in Indigenous health scholarships for First Nations students

$2.88M

Committed to 11 new research grants into children's mental health

$15.5M

Held in our funds, the base behind long-term research

Australian Rotary Health has always been ambitious for research, and this year that ambition was tested. We funded our largest round of mental health research grants ever. Giving softened, and we farewelled a Chief Executive after more than 30 years of service, honouring the entitlements that come with a career of that length and dedication.

Together, these produced an operating deficit of $861,073. Investment gains reduced the overall result to a deficit of $362,831.

We're now building the next chapter on firm ground. Every new commitment is matched to funds we hold or can confidently raise, and the Board reviews our grant pipeline against a clear funding plan. Our funds remain strong, and our focus is on growth that lasts, so the research you back today is still there for the children who need it tomorrow.

The full audited financial report for the year ended 30 June 2026 is available on request and on the ACNC Charity Register.

BACK THE NEXT QUESTION

SAY YES TODAY

Every grant and scholarship in this report began with a club, a district or a supporter deciding a person was worth backing. For 45 years, that first yes has turned bold ideas into real answers for Australian families. Here is how you can back the next one.

WHAT YOUR GIFT MAKES POSSIBLE

$500

Two weeks of a researcher's time chasing an unanswered question that matters.

$5,000

A full year of support for an Indigenous Health or Rural Medical scholar while they study.

$12,000

A year as a funding partner on a breakthrough research idea that could change lives.

$36,000

About a third of a three-year PhD scholarship, shared with a university and ARH, with naming rights.

FOUR WAYS TO BACK THE NEXT QUESTION

Give the gift of time	Every gift buys a brilliant mind the time to chase a question nobody else will back.
Back generations to come	A gift in your will keeps funding brilliant minds long after today. It costs nothing now.
Put your name to it	Put your club's, district's or family's name to a researcher and the question they are chasing.
Make it your own	Host your own event, join a Lift the Lid walk or rally your club behind the cause.

DONATE NOW

Give today and back the next brilliant mind, and the next breakthrough for Australian children.

australianrotaryhealth.org.au/donate-now

Scan the code or visit the link. All gifts of $2 or more are tax deductible.



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Rotary Districts of Australia

AUSTRALIAN ROTARY HEALTH