

FOUNDATION LINE

SPRING 2023

 lionsmedicalresearch
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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Greetings Fellow Lions

My, my the year flies by!

Firstly, congratulations to all recently installed District Governors, DGs Elect, Cabinet Officers and Club Officials. With a couple of months feet on the ground some of the initial nervousness (for those that felt that way) should be feeling a little less daunting. I hope so, as one of the key objectives should be to enjoy the opportunity.



A fair bit happening at LMRF that should continue to improve its financial position and interface with Clubs and members.

Your Foundation has partnered with an organisation called Safewill who provide a lawyer-backed service to prepare a legally valid will with the opportunity to include a bequest to LMRF when you go to higher service.

The cost is very reasonable and a bequest to LMRF is entirely discretionary. The service is available to all irrespective of your wishes. If your circumstances have changed, you can create a new will in less than 20 minutes, have it reviewed by an Australian lawyer, and choose to speak with a professional about estate planning if desired.

More detail will shortly be available.

Secondly, we have also partnered with an online platform entitled Doing Good Rewards. In essence it is a rewards program that provides people the opportunity to participate in a scheme that accesses discounted goods and services from a range of merchants and allows the purchaser a discretionary choice to donate a portion of the discount received to a participating charity. Again, more detail later however a great opportunity to leverage technology.

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**HAVE A STORY YOU
 WANT TO INCLUDE IN
 THE NEXT ISSUE?**

Contact us on 07 38321688 or
 email info@lmrf.org.au

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE *continued*

On the research front, in response to a request from our joint venture partner the University of Queensland, the Board has agreed to extend Dr Dominic Guanzon's fellowship for an extended term to reflect the significant advances he is making in early detection testing of ovarian cancer.

The Board also recently approved further recognition of the Phippard family's contribution to LMRF by naming the SPARQ-ed scholarships the LMRF Beryl Phippard Memorial Scholarships. This has very graciously been endorsed by the late Beryl Phippard's family to commemorate Ray Phippard's wife Beryl's very significant works in her own right during the Foundation's formative years.

SPARQ-ed has just announced some 19 new scholarships across Queensland and we will be in contact with Clubs in the recipient areas to provide an opportunity to present awards shortly.

The only negative I must report is that our inaugural Ride for Research charity bike ride has had to be postponed while we re-evaluate the concept and costings. This remains a key priority for the Foundation and will involve a mountain bike/hybrid ride over two days along sections of the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail. There are very few mountain bike, off-road charity rides in SE Queensland and this one is planned to be fun and family oriented. Keep an eye out for the new date.

Planning is underway for this year's DG Elect visit weekend including the AGM. We have several Board positions falling vacant and will shortly be casting the net widely to attract the right people.

Best Wishes

David Eades

Chair

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

By Deanne Meldon



Warm Spring greetings to all!

Just like all the gardeners who've been busy tending to their gardens in preparation for Spring's blooms, we've been busy here at LMRF working on new initiatives and tending to established ones to enable more medical research to bloom with hope.

With our major SPARQ-ed Aussie Travel Art Union closing at the end of October, don't miss out on your chance to win a \$10,000 Helloworld Gift Card! It's not too late to order books of tickets from the office to sell in your local communities or to buy tickets directly online. Proceeds from this Art Union will go toward funding Beryl Phippard Memorial Scholarships to support regional and rural STEM students with travel and accommodation costs to attend a week-long research immersion program at SPARQ-ed (Students Performing Advanced Research Queensland).

As we collate this edition of Foundation Line, we have a number of students awarded these scholarships currently attending the September SPARQ-ed Research Immersion Program. These students have travelled from Toowoomba, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, Warwick, Kooralbyn, Townsville, Ayr, Mackay, Gladstone Tannum Sands, Rockhampton and Mackay to attend the program. We are hoping to have as many of these students as possible present about the experience to their local Lions Clubs after they have completed the program. If your Club is interested please let the office know.

While the STEM students are busy in the Research Immersion labs, our Research Fellows, Dr Olivia Holland and Dr Dominic Guanzon are progressing with their research in the areas of gestational diabetes and ovarian cancer respectively while raising awareness of the impact of LMRF funding on their research. Read their latest updates in this issue.

To help to support our current Research Fellows we have also embarked on some new fundraising initiatives. We hosted a successful Circus Quirkus event in partnership with International Entertainment in July and are looking forward to hosting another event very soon.

As David indicated we also recently announced our partnership with Safewill, just in time for Free Wills Week which ran from September 4-10. If you missed the opportunity to take advantage of this offer, don't worry, we are able to offer a 50% discount off the normal price of \$160 for a legally reviewed, valid will. That's \$80 for a legally reviewed, valid will. Priceless for peace of mind!

We are also progressing with establishing our Doing Good Rewards program and will keep you posted.

Thank you to all the Lions Clubs throughout Queensland and Northern New South Wales who have supported the Foundation over the last few months with selling Art Union tickets, fundraising activities, events, and generous donations.

Together we can ensure that today's medical research is tomorrow's hope.

It is the season to Spring for Research!

Kind regards
Deanne



Qld & Northern NSW
**LIONS
 MEDICAL
 RESEARCH
 FOUNDATION**



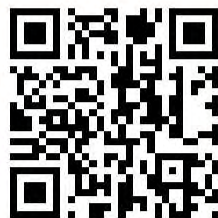
2023 SPARQ-ed AUSSIE TRAVEL ART UNION

Funds raised from this Art Union will support remote rural school students selected to attend a SPARQ-ed (Students Performing Advanced Research Queensland) program. This support assists with travel and accommodation costs.

**WIN
 \$10,000
 HELLOWORLD
 TRAVEL GIFT
 CARD**



SPARQ-ed
 Students Performing Advanced Research QLD



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Scan QR code for tickets or go to
<https://rafflelink.com.au/travel4research>

To order your book on consignment please download the order form on www.lmrf.org.au and email to info@lmrf.org.au or alternatively contact the office on (07) 3832 1688

Closing date: 31 October 2023

Date drawn: 26 November 2023



LMRF CURRENT RESEARCH FELLOWS

Dr Olivia Holland

Gestational diabetes can be devastating to a woman's health, making her pregnancy significantly more dangerous and continuing to impact her and her child's lifelong health. Gestational diabetes makes it twice as likely that a woman will experience pregnancy complications like a baby that's too large or dangerously high blood pressure, and one in two women who have gestational diabetes during their pregnancy will develop diabetes after the pregnancy. We do have ways to treat gestational diabetes, but these interventions often come too late in pregnancy to provide optimal help.

If we had a good way to predict which women are likely to develop gestational diabetes early in pregnancy we could better help the over 41,000 women diagnosed with gestational diabetes in Australia each year. Our vision is to provide the right care to the right women at the right time.

Student access

The giving and investment from LMRF and Lions supports my ability to train and guide research students, which builds the capacity of our group, the university, and the Queensland research sector as a whole. There have been a couple of major research student successes in the last few months, with Natalie Turner submitting her PhD thesis for assessment and Aaron Lorimer (Picture 1) being awarded his Masters of Medical Research. Natalie is planning to continue her research into novel biomarkers once she has graduated, and Aaron is working in teaching.

We regularly have undergraduate students carrying out projects over a few weeks or months in the lab, and in the first half of this year Katie Grey, Shimila Hartley, and Rishen Krishna were all successfully awarded Griffith Honours College Research Bursaries and completed projects that helped further develop our group's work on predictive biomarkers as well as introducing these students to the research environment.

Ongoing PhD students Hannah Han and Hasini Rathnayake have recently done a great job in presenting their research to the wider scientific community, with Hannah publishing the first research manuscript from her PhD in a leading journal and Hasini presenting in the important forum of the Stillbirth Centre for Research Excellence.

Partnership and collaboration

Partnership and collaboration allow our work to have the greatest impact. This year I was privileged to be invited to present on some of the research supported by the LMRF at the major Australian and New Zealand clinical meeting on diabetes in pregnancy in Adelaide 25th to 27th August, with the trip being supported by \$1,500 in funding awarded from the Griffith University School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences (Picture 2). The Australasian Diabetes in Pregnancy Society is the professional body that coordinates health policy regarding diabetes in pregnancy. One of the main aims of this society is to foster collaboration to improve diabetes in pregnancy research, and my attendance at the 2023 meeting has led to exciting new potential collaborations with a leading international researcher as well as local researchers.



Research is highly collaborative and cooperative, and this year I have been selected to sit on the School of Pharmacy and Medical Science Research Committee as part of the Research Partnership and Engagement portfolio. In this role I hope to leverage my experience in collaborative research and established networks to support and grow staff and students to conduct research state-wide and with a wide range of external bodies.

Prevention and early intervention have the greatest ongoing impact on health and the strongest return on investment, and we have meaningful partnerships between researchers based at universities and hospitals. In particular, our program of research at Gold Coast University Hospital has been expanding and strengthening, with a new project manager and two new research midwives appointed. We now have over 300 research participants in the study and more women are being recruited each day. This collaborative approach that integrates lab-based and clinic-based research is key to the work we are doing being both innovative and having direct applicability in healthcare. As part of these collaborations we also hosted a symposium and a workshop in August on recent advances in personalised maternity medicine that featured both local and international research leaders in this field.

Thank you to the Lions Medical Research Foundation and Lions

Backing from LMRF allows us to continue to work on ways to improve the health of women affected by gestational diabetes. Your investment makes a daily difference in our ability to find answers through supporting this research. Our impact is your impact.

Dr Olivia Holland



Picture 1 - Aaron Lorimer



Picture 2 - Dr Olivia Holland at the Australasian Diabetes in Pregnancy Society

Dr Dominic Guanzon

I want to express my gratitude to the Lions Medical Research Foundation (LMRF) and the Lions Clubs for their continuing support of our research program.

Recently, I was fortunate to secure a seed grant known as the 2023 UQCCR Early Career Researcher Enabler Scheme. This funding will play a vital role in advancing an ongoing project in collaboration with the Children's Health Research Centre. The project's goal is to enhance our ability to diagnose musculoskeletal complications in children with blood cancer. Additionally, I've applied for the Tour de Cure grant, which the University of Queensland has recognized as one of the top five in the pioneering scheme. This grant is currently in phase 2, where the Tour de Cure grant committee evaluates candidates for full applications. If funded, this grant will build upon our prior research in ovarian cancer chemoresistance and musculoskeletal complications in children with blood cancer.

Furthermore, I'm delighted to be supervising two new international master's students from India; Vidya Gummagatta and Rakesh Sankar (see picture 1). Vidya will be an integral part of our lab until the end of the year, investigating extracellular vesicle RNA in ovarian cancer. Rakesh, on the other hand, will be delving into extracellular vesicle DNA in ovarian cancer chemoresistance and will be working with us until the end of the following year. The work carried out by Vidya and Rakesh will significantly contribute to the advancement of our diagnostic capabilities involving nucleic acids (DNA / RNA). Furthermore, it's quite exciting that the sequencing of extracellular vesicle DNA, a world first, is currently underway.



Picture 1 - Master's students Vidya Gummagatta (left), Rakesh Sankar (right) and supervisor Dr. Dominic Guanzon (middle).

Lastly, I had the privilege of presenting at the Brookside Ladies Tuesday Club, with introductions made by Paul Ryan (LMRF – Director Q3). During the presentation, I shared the latest accomplishments of our ovarian cancer research program achieved through the support of LMRF. I'm especially grateful to the Brookside Ladies Tuesday Club for their generous donation to LMRF. This valuable donation significantly enhances our efforts in ovarian cancer research and paves the way for future advancements in medical research.

I extend my appreciation to LMRF for their continued support of our research mission, aimed at the early detection of ovarian cancer and addressing chemoresistance in women facing ovarian cancer recurrence.



Research is, tomorrow's Hope

LMRF is pleased to announce our continuing partnership with Safewill.

To thank you for your ongoing support of our life-changing medical researchers, we are providing our supporters with the opportunity to write your Will for 50% off (normally \$160).

Safewill is Australia's highest rated Will writing platform, making it easy and affordable for all Australians to write their Will - with just a few clicks.

Head to www.safewill.com/lmrf to learn more.

Write your Will for \$80



Is it legal? Yes. Safewill's Will was created by lawyers and meets all the legal requirements for a valid Will.

On top of this, each Will submission is individually reviewed by an Australian lawyer to make sure it has been completed correctly, as an added layer of peace of mind.

You can create your valid Will in just 20 minutes by logging on to the Safewill platform and answering a few simple questions, with useful tips and guidance provided along the way. Throughout the entire process, Safewill's support team is available to help with whatever queries you might have, making the Will writing a breeze.

The difference between going to a solicitor and using Safewill is that Safewill uses technology to provide a simple, cheaper and more accessible means of writing your Will than has ever been available.

Once you're all done, you'll be sent your Will to print, sign and store. You can log back into your account and make unlimited updates to your Will completely free of charge for 12 months (or at any time with Safewill's optional subscription service).

Is it secure? Absolutely. Data security is Safewill's highest priority, with numerous backups and failsafe measures. Everything is password protected and encrypted for your safety.

Visit safewill.com/lmrf and write your own bespoke Will today.



Safewill is most suitable for those with simple estates. If you have a complex estate and are looking for legal advice, Safewill can provide this for an additional fee. LMRF always recommends seeking advice when assessing if this offer is right for you.



Spring for Research 2023

SPRING

New beginnings, new life, hope, and optimism

LMRF

Supporting aspiring and emerging world class
medical researchers in their quest for life-
enhancing health outcomes for all

SPRING IS OUR SEASON!

Please give generously this Spring

Research is tomorrow's *hope*



LIONS
MEDICAL
RESEARCH
FOUNDATION

PLEASE DONATE TO SPRING FOR RESEARCH 2023



- We would like to donate \$ 5.00 per club member - TOTAL \$
- We would like to register a fundraiser.
- We would like to donate \$.00. This amount will be used as credit towards purchase of an award

I would like to make a tax-deductible donation to Lions Medical Research Foundation's SPRING FOR RESEARCH campaign.

Name of Club Donation \$

CONTACT DETAILS

Title First name Surname

Address

Postcode.....

Telephone..... Email

PAYMENT DETAILS

Please debit credit card for the full amount. VISA MASTERCARD

Credit Card Number ---

Expiry Date /

Name on card.....Signature

Direct deposit \$ to BSB 484 799 Acc No. 45094 1646

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