

Successful Grant Recipients Announced

10 December 2020

The Asthma Australia Research Program is made possible by philanthropic funds, foundations and donations

.....
Grant: The Neil and Norma Hill Foundation

Funding allocation: \$50k over 1 Year

Recipient and Lead Researcher: A/Prof Paul Robinson

Supporting Institutes: Children's Hospital at Westmead and The Woolcock Medical Research Institute

Successful Research Project: Home based monitoring with the Forced Oscillation Technique (FOT) in paediatric asthma: improving our understanding of asthma control and behaviour during exacerbations.

Project overview: Maintaining good asthma control is only achieved by a minority of children with persistent asthma, and poor asthma control is a recognised risk factor for poor asthma outcomes including ongoing asthma exacerbations and mortality. A reliable sensitive tool to better monitor asthmatic children is urgently required. A/Prof Robinson's recent study showed that a novel approach looking at the day-to-day variability in the Forced Oscillation technique (FOT) could be that tool. They demonstrated high feasibility across a 4 month period in the home setting (used >80% of days) and higher variability in subjects with poor asthma control and more frequent exacerbations. Importantly it also provided clues as to how it may provide useful additional information. This current study aims to further investigate its utility by monitoring children at risk of loss of asthma control. It will determine (1) whether FOT day-to-day variability consistently (across subjects) increases with loss of asthma control, (2) whether this change occurs before asthma symptoms and/or exacerbation occurs, and (3) define the values of variability at which we should act with a treatment change in future studies.

About the Neil and Norma Hill Foundation

The Neil and Norma Hill Foundation was established in 2003 to provide medical research funding and it currently provides about \$1,000,000 annually to approximately 10 charities. Over the past 14 years, Asthma Australia has received \$750,000 to fund a variety of laboratory, clinical and other translational research projects.

Asthma Australia is extremely pleased the Neil and Norma Hill Foundation have entrusted their research program with another philanthropic investment this year, and for their continuous investment in asthma research over the years.



Grant: The Ross Trust

Funding allocation: \$100k over 2 years

Recipient and Lead Researcher: Dr Nusrat Homaira

Supporting Institutions: University of New South Wales and Sydney Children's Hospital

Successful Research Project: Integrated package of community care after discharge from ED for kids with asthma, South West Sydney

Project overview: Asthma is the most common chronic cause of hospital presentations in Australian children, resulting in >20,000 hospitalisations and costing the health system ~\$200 million annually. The vast majority of the paediatric asthma hospital presentations can be prevented through better clinical care and patient system and self-management .

The current model of care for paediatric asthma in Australia is failing to provide comprehensive care. Hospital-centred paediatric asthma care is fragmented, complex and inadequate. Therefore the team proposes to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of a comprehensive model of care that will connect all the key stakeholders involved in a child's asthma management including parents/carers, primary and acute care services, asthma nurses and schools/childcare services to provide personalised approach to asthma care **and lead 80% reduction in paediatric asthma hospital presentations** . Given the current reality, the team will implement and test a model of care that is flexible and adopts digital innovations when necessary so that care for asthma can be provided 'from home' thereby reducing the burden of potentially preventable hospital presentations and avoiding any disruption to services during health crisis.

About The Ross Trust: The Ross Trust is a Charitable Trust established to provide support and endowment of medical and scientific research in NSW with emphasis on research and elimination or reduction of the incidence of disorders and disease affecting infants and children.

Also, it supports students, scholars, artists and performers in the study, writing and performance and perfection of music and dance of all styles and varieties.