



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

WA Excellence in Allied Health Awards

**20
25**

ABOUT THE AWARDS

The WA Excellence in Allied Health Awards is a celebration of the passion, dedication, and innovation that defines Western Australia's allied health workforce. Together, these professionals deliver compassionate, high-quality, patient-centred care that changes lives every day.

As the second-largest clinical workforce group, allied health makes up more than a third of the national health workforce. Here in Western Australia, more than 30,000 allied health professionals contribute across the public, private, and non-government sectors — strengthening communities and improving health outcomes across our state.

Within WA Health alone, over 10,000 professionals, representing more than 30 allied health professions, are at the heart of our hospitals, health campuses, and community services.

The awards honour their skill, dedication, and extraordinary impact.



WELCOME NOTE



Australia.

On behalf of the Western Australian State Government, it is a privilege to support the second annual WA Excellence in Allied Health Awards, an event that highlights the exceptional contributions of allied health professionals across Western

We are honoured to support this important initiative, which recognises individuals who demonstrate excellence, dedication, and leadership in their fields. These awards are open to allied health professionals working across all sectors—public or private, government or non-government, including in health, education, or community services in Western Australia — reflecting the breadth and impact of their work.

This occasion provides a valuable opportunity to formally acknowledge those who have earned the respect of their peers, mentors, and communities through their commitment and achievements.

The Western Australian State Government commends all nominees and congratulates the award recipients. Your work continues to strengthen our health system and improve lives across the state. I look forward to celebrating your success and contributions tonight.

Hon Meredith Hammat BA MIR MLA,
Minister for Health; Mental Health

Program

6.00pm	Guest Arrival
6.20pm	Guests Seated
6.30pm	Welcome to the 2025 WA Excellence in Allied Health Awards by Master of Ceremonies (MC), Andrea Burns Welcome to country, Robyn Collard
6.45pm	Opening remarks The Hon. Minister for Health, Mental Health
6.50pm	Awards Lifetime Achievement Honour
6.55pm	Break - Entree
7.30pm	Awards Allied Health Educator of the Year Allied Health Researcher of the Year
7:40pm	Break - Mains
8:15pm	Allied Health Assistant of the Year Aboriginal Allied Health Award Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year
8:35pm	Break - Dessert
8:55pm	Awards Allied Health Leader of the Year Allied Health Professional of the Year Allied Health Team of the Year
9:10pm	Closing Remarks Chief Allied Health Officer, Department of Health
9:15pm	Close

Presenters

Awards	Presented by
Lifetime Achievement Honour	The Hon. Meredith Hammat, Minister for Health; Mental Health Kelly Worlock, Brightwater Care Group
Allied Health Educator of the Year	David Reid, Edith Cowan University
Allied Health Researcher of the Year	Rhonda Clifford, University of Western Australia
Allied Health Assistant of the Year	Jeff Moffet, WA Country Health Service
Aboriginal Allied Health Award	Simon Rosser, East Metropolitan Health Service
Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year	Renae Farmer, North Metropolitan Health Service
Allied Health Leader of the Year	Rachel Resuggan, Child and Adolescent Health Care Service
Allied Health Professional of the Year	Neil Doverty, South Metropolitan Health Service
Allied Health Team of the Year	Cheryl Hamill, Health Services Union WA

THE AWARDS & FINALISTS

Lifetime Achievement Honour

The Lifetime Achievement Honour is by third party nomination only (i.e., not self nomination) and recognises the nominee's long standing and extraordinary contribution to the Allied Health professions.

The winner of this category is highly regarded by their team, service and/or profession and their work has had a momentous and long-standing impact on Allied Health in WA.

This award is proudly supported by Brightwater Care Group.

Allied Health Educator of the Year

The Allied Health Educator of the Year applies to nominees who deliver impactful contributions to improve the practice standards of Allied Health professionals.

The winner of this category will have demonstrated a significant impact from their educational work and are recognised by Allied Health professional peers, students, other health disciplines, patients, or the general public.

This award is proudly supported by Edith Cowan University.

Kylie Hopkins

Clinical Educator (Dietetics), APD, Majarlin Kimberley Centre for Remote Health



Kylie is an allied health educator, PhD candidate, and the East Kimberley Lead for the Majarlin Centre for Remote Health. As a Clinical Educator in dietetics, Kylie fosters a positive and progressive learning culture, particularly within the unique context of rural and remote community placements. Kylie's leadership enabled the design of a sustainable, service-learning placement model that enabled 20 dietetic students to deliver 350 hours of culturally appropriate, community-led nutrition education over a 24-week period to a remote East Kimberley community. This model provided a consistent student presence, building trust and engaging over 120 community members in co-designed activities. She plays a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of dietitians by providing high-quality supervision that goes beyond technical knowledge, embedding principles of cultural safety, respect, and reflective practice. Kylie ensures that students not

only meet clinical competencies but also develop a deep understanding of the broader social, cultural, and historical factors that shape health outcomes in rural and remote Aboriginal communities.

George Ntoumenopoulos

Senior Physiotherapist, Royal Perth Bentley Group



George is a physiotherapist with international experience who commenced work with Royal Perth Bentley Group (RPBG) in 2024. Since joining, George has taught 10 physiotherapists across two lung ultrasound (LUS) courses at RPBG, and trained over 200 physiotherapists across Australia and New Zealand. George has presented on LUS at the WA Ventilation and Early rehabilitation conference in March 2025 and Nationally and Internationally. He has provided supervision to the RPBG physiotherapists to achieve LUS accreditation with the Australasian Society of Ultrasound Medicine. He is also on the board of the Australasian Society of Ultrasound Medicine. He has shared his knowledge and skills within the RPBG intensive care unit medical teams to enhance patient care and has presented nationally and internationally on LUS and the challenges of translating evidence into practice. He has published widely on LUS (26 publications) to develop the evidence base and its report on its effectiveness to assist clinicians with clinical decision making. Through his leadership, George has connected clinical staff and physiotherapists across states and countries, fostering collaborative research and innovation. His mentorship has not only shaped clinical practice but also contributes to fostering professional culture not only here at RPBG but also nationally and internationally.

Lindi Pelkowitz

*Social Work
Supervisor and
Lecturer, WA Centre
for Rural Health,
University of Western
Australia*



Lindi is an experienced social worker and passionate educator who exemplifies excellence in clinical education through leadership in student supervision, cross-disciplinary training, research translation, and capacity building. In rural placements, she supports student learning in complex areas such as family violence, homelessness, child health, and Aboriginal wellbeing. Her teaching approach is grounded in cultural humility, reflective practice, and trauma-informed care—equipping students to work meaningfully in underserved communities. Lindi uses innovative strategies including photovoice, community excursions, archival research, and collaborative storytelling with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners. Her research into family and gendered violence in regional WA led to the development of UWA micro-credential courses, co-designed with people with lived experience, Aboriginal knowledge holders, and sector experts. These programs address critical training gaps across health, education, justice, and social services. Teaching for transformation is the foundation of Lindi's educational practice and enduring impact.

Stephanie Teoh

*Deputy Chief
Pharmacist (Clinical),
King Edward
Memorial Hospital*



Stephanie champions a culture of collaboration, innovation and continuous improvement in medication education. For example, Stephanie worked collaboratively with

the library to ensure up-to-date clinical decision support tools are accessible to the workforce, she also worked with the Business Information and Performance to develop a medication incident dashboard to enable the analysis of medication errors to encourage reflective learning following an incident. She led hospital-wide surveys and explored ways to support and engage the clinicians ensuring training is not only informative but also respectful of clinical time pressures. Through a secondment to Sir Charles Gairdner and Osborne Park Care Group (SCGOPHCG) this year, she shared her expertise by developing self-directed learning packages including Medication Prescribing and Medication Administration which are now published across 3 hospitals at SCGH, OPH and KEMH. These modules have improved staff efficiency, ensured consistent education standards across disciplines, saving nursing and medical practitioner time and enhancing medication safety and understanding of pharmaceutical services and legislation.

Allied Health Researcher of the Year

The Allied Health Researcher of the Year applies to nominees who hold a clinical or clinical leadership role and who may or may not have protected research time. It is open to early/mid and experienced researchers.

The winner of this category will have demonstrated the impact of their research in WA and how they are supporting clinicians to implement research in clinical practice as well as build research capacity.

This award is proudly supported by the University of Western Australia.

Kristie Harper

*Research Coordinator
and Associate
Professor, Sir Charles
Gairdner Hospital,
Curtin University*



Kristie is a passionate mentor and leader who builds research capacity across allied health by supporting clinicians, supervising students, and promoting research at national forums. Kristie's research focuses on improving care for older adults, particularly in emergency departments. Her PhD established a new evidence base for allied health-led falls management, which has been implemented locally through the Allied Health Care Coordination Falls Pathway and cited in international guidelines. She leads and supports 26 active research projects, including studies on AI-powered rehabilitation, augmented reality in home assessments, and early intervention for cancer-related lymphoedema—all with direct application in WA health services. Her work with international teams such as GEAR (Geriatric Emergency Care Applied Research) and OPERATE (Older Persons Early Recognition Access and Treatment in Emergencies) ensures WA is at the forefront of innovation in geriatric care.

Sarah Hug

*Senior Physiotherapist,
Royal Perth Bentley
Group, East
Metropolitan Health
Service*



Sarah is a senior physiotherapist at Royal Perth Hospital and teaching academic at Curtin University. During her PhD candidature Sarah completed a 2-year implementation study to improve referrals to pulmonary rehabilitation for people living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in Perth WA. During this study, she coordinated a

steering committee involving 24 clinicians and researchers across WA Health and Curtin University. She followed the journey to pulmonary rehabilitation for just under 600 people with COPD known to Perth's tertiary care. Sarah also collaborated with over 50 people with COPD and healthcare professionals who deliver respiratory care to understand and co-design ways to improve referral practices. Sarah supported the translation of various co-designed strategies into clinical practice and measured their impact. Results demonstrated a two-fold increase in referrals to pulmonary rehabilitation, meaning more people had access to a high-value, evidence-based care - an important improvement for people living with lung disease in WA.

Ivan Lin

*Associate Professor,
University of Western
Australia*



Ivan is a clinician-researcher-educator who lives in Jambinu/Geraldton and is based at the WA Centre for Rural Health, University of Western Australia, and a Specialist Musculoskeletal Physiotherapist at the Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service where he established the physiotherapy service nearly 20 years ago. He is recognised nationally/internationally for his research in musculoskeletal pain, to improve pain care in Aboriginal communities, and clinical communication in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care. He has authored/co-authored more than 65 peer-reviewed publications, is ranked in the top 0.15% of musculoskeletal pain researchers globally, and co-developed the Clinical Yarning framework, which is currently being implemented in WACHS-Midwest with the support of a WA Department of Health FHRI fund grant. The Clinical Yarning eLearning program, developed with his team, has been completed by nearly 10,000

clinicians/students around Australia since mid-2022, and in-person workshops have trained more than 850 health professionals/students. His pain management research has shaped international guidelines and been translated into five languages. Ivan's work is widely disseminated through podcasts, media articles, and national radio. He has delivered 16 invited conference presentations in the past five years, most recently at the 2025 Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists Annual Scientific Meeting.

Robert Schutze

Senior Clinical Psychologist, Royal Perth Hospital, Multidisciplinary Pain Management Centre



Leveraging his 15 years of experience as a Clinical Psychologist, Robert has developed a collaborative research program in biopsychosocial pain science that has attracted \$9.6 million in competitive funding and been published in leading international journals such as the Lancet. Robert has contributed to key clinical guidelines such as the Australian Standards for Health Practitioner Pain Management Education (2025), and the National Return to Work Strategy (2020-2030). His research translation includes the co-creation of award-winning consumer resources such as painHEALTH and youngpainHEALTH, as well as Australia's first nationally coordinated pain training for health professionals (Clinical Pain Management). Robert has a strong focus on improving person-centred care for people living with pain, underpinned by a consumer co-creation approach in all his research, with all his research projects including lived experience collaborators and funding for consumer input.

Allied Health Assistant of the Year

The Allied Health Assistant of the Year applies to nominees who have a dedicated Allied Health Assistant role, which may include providing clinical as well as administrative support.

The winner of this category will have demonstrated a commitment to elevating the human experience in health care through their commitment to the Allied Health service for their organisation.

This award is proudly supported by WA Country Health Service.

Pam Boase

Allied Health Assistant, WA Country Health Service Goldfields



Pam is an Allied Health Assistant at Kalgoorlie Health Campus, where she has worked for over 20 years. Over this time Pam has developed a reputation as a reliable, compassionate and dedicated staff member within the Kalgoorlie Allied Health team. Pam demonstrates a thorough understanding of Allied Health services and the roles and responsibilities of Allied Health Assistants across the departments. Having had experience in almost every clinical area, Pam has a well-developed set of clinical skills and has driven positive change in establishing administrative processes around referral management, equipment management, and stock ordering. More recently Pam has provided invaluable support to the Telehealth Podiatry Pilot. In the absence of an onsite Podiatrist Pam worked closely with a locum Podiatrist and the Podiatry Professional Lead to set-up, upskill and deliver telehealth services to high-risk clients. Pam was confident in her scope of practice as an Allied Health Assistant, following the lead and direction of the

clinician whilst taking pride and care in delivery of the clinical care she provided. Pam is always willing to lend a hand across the region, puts patients at the centre and does anything she can to improve services for patients in the community.

Doru Bucur

*Allied Health Assistant,
Brightwater Care Group*



Doru has been transforming lives at Brightwater as an Allied Health Assistant for the past 14 years. His colleagues describe him as someone who can walk into any room and instantly shift the mood, inspiring and motivating those around him. As an approachable and easy-going team member, Doru has been instrumental in bridging gaps. He was a driving force behind the occupational therapy and speech pathology programs, bringing isolated clients together and creating a sense of normalcy. He maintained these vital, non-written programs for as long as funding allowed, even when site-based activities dwindled. He drew in individuals who typically wouldn't engage socially, fostering connections through shared newspaper readings and radio listening, creating a calm and engaging environment. Doru gifts far more than assistance; he offers friendship and the profound value of relationships.

Michelle Gardner

*Allied Health Assistant
Coordinator, Child
Development Service,
Child and Adolescent
Health Service*



Michelle is the Allied Health Assistant Coordinator for the Child Development Service (CDS), one branch of Child and Community Health in the Child and Adolescent Health Service. Michelle is a hugely positive influence

amongst all the teams that she works with, which includes her allied health assistant (AHA) team of 16 staff, multidisciplinary CDS teams at various community sites, and within the allied health leadership group. Michelle has worked hard to establish a collaborative, supportive and open team culture in the AHA team and has an ability to anticipate what her staff or team requires in a proactive way. A significant part of Michelle's role has been to expand the scope of practice for AHAs in the Community Health setting. Michelle has been connecting with managers across disciplines and sites to ensure contemporary service delivery models are in place or being considered. She has done this in an inclusive way and has helped to inspire the development of innovative ways for AHAs to support, for example in assisting the audiologist to complete hearing assessments for complex clients.

Aboriginal Allied Health Award

The Aboriginal Allied Health Professional or Aboriginal working in Allied Health Area Award is for nominees who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

The winner of this category will have demonstrated their commitment to improving and advocating for the culturally appropriate allied health services for Aboriginal peoples and communities.

*This award is proudly supported by
East Metropolitan Health Service.*

Glenda Kickett

*Senior Lecturer,
University of Western
Australia*

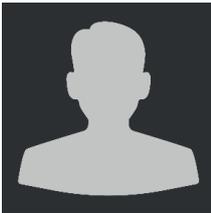


Glenda's contributions to allied health span over three decades, where her expertise in culturally

grounded social work, trauma-informed care, and Indigenous-led research has shaped policy and practice across Western Australia. As CEO of Karla Kulin Aboriginal Corporation and Senior Lecturer at UWA, she bridges allied health community practice and academia, advocating for systemic change in child protection and family support. Glenda actively fosters culturally safe spaces for Aboriginal patients, staff, and communities through her leadership, teaching, and advocacy. As a Senior Lecturer at UWA, she embeds cultural safety into curriculum and practice, mentoring students to engage with Aboriginal worldviews and facilitate culturally safe spaces. Her involvement in the Galup Name Restoration Project and the Festival of Perth's 'Galup' play highlights her commitment to truth-telling and cultural recognition. Glenda's strategic leadership roles across multiple organisations and initiatives have enabled her to influence systemic change and promote culturally safe practices across sectors.

Lennelle (Lenny) Papertalk

Social worker and lecturer, WA Centre for Rural Health, University of Western Australia



Lenny is a social worker with a big heart, extensive life experience and a passion to make a difference. Raised in Mullewa, she has deep respect for her elders who provided her with sage advice which she now passes on to others. She delivers Miwurnayimana Cultural Orientation to health students in Geraldton during their placement. As well as small group learning on Aboriginal culture, Lenny often invites students to sessions where they can meet Elders, undertake painting or carving while they yarn, and gain deep insights into Aboriginal culture and ways of interacting. Lenny was a key driver in repurposing the Mitchell Street Community Centre to serve as a centre

which offers a range of social and health programs. Lenny has been involved in research projects looking to improve cancer outcomes for Aboriginal people. She was a key driver in documenting Aboriginal people's experience of cancer and their wishes around cancer care, through videos, which were the basis for the development of an educational resource called Whisper No More, which helps health providers provide more culturally secure care.

Jasmin West

Physiotherapist, Lifecare Willetton



Jasmin has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate exceptional commitment to improving healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. She is a private practice Physiotherapist working for Lifecare Willetton and teaches Indigenous health to physiotherapy students at Curtin University. She is a research assistant on a PhD that is exploring ways to improve pelvic health physiotherapy delivery to Indigenous women by yarning with these women about their women's business and listening to experienced healthcare professionals working within this space. The PhD has fostered the establishment of a women's health service at Derbarl Yerrigan in partnership with the WNHS and KEMH. Allowing Jasmin and her research lead, Emma Wise, to connect with the WA Indigenous community and deepen relationships outside research. Her continuing passion for her work is a triumph. Jasmin strives to expand understanding of what optimal culturally secure healthcare looks like and her love for pelvic health combined with her Indigenous heritage fuels the hope that future health professionals will help make cultural security a given across WA.

Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year

The Early Career Allied Health Professional of the Year applies to nominees who have shown exceptional potential during their first two years of practice.

The winner of this category will have demonstrated a passion and commitment to the provision of quality, safe and compassionate care to patients and their family/caregivers.

This award is proudly supported by North Metropolitan Health Service.

Caris Bogdanov

Audiologist, Fiona Stanley Fremantle Hospitals Group



Caris is an early-career audiologist whose work blends clinical rigour with deep compassion. In her first year, she helped create two major innovations—the Paediatric Hearing Registry and the Advanced Scope Audiology Registry—both now improving care across the South Metropolitan Health Service. The Paediatric Hearing Registry now supports tracking for over 1000 children, improving continuity of care and enabling earlier, more coordinated interventions. The Advanced Scope Registry, implemented across South, East, and North Metropolitan Health Services, features a live dashboard that tracks referral sources, clinical outcomes, and waiting times—providing real-time data to inform service planning and improve patient flow. Caris is also currently a final-year PhD student under the supervision of A/Professor Dayse Tavora-Vieira, with her most recent project exploring how structured aural rehabilitation for adult cochlear implant users can enhance not only their listening abilities using their devices, but also their confidence, social connection,

and overall quality of life. Caris collaborates across disciplines with ease, bringing people together with clarity and warmth. Her contributions to quality audits, mentoring of graduates, and support for national grant applications show a maturity and professionalism that far exceed her early career stage.

Ruby Edmeades

Dietitian, Kimberley Population Health Unit



Despite being early in her career, Ruby has shown remarkable ability to provide high quality, patient centred care to a diverse and often vulnerable population. Ruby juggles a large and complex caseload, providing dietetic services to patients of all ages in the Fitzroy Valley as a sole clinician. Ruby has gone above and beyond her job expectations to be a clinical dietitian while seeking out opportunities for public health nutrition in the remote Fitzroy Valley setting of the Kimberley. Ruby has supported a very junior allied health team in Derby, always demonstrating cultural safety principles of reflexivity and taking a strengths-based approach with a welcoming and inclusive attitude. She actively seeks out opportunities for professional development and will regularly liaise with specialist dietitians from tertiary centres for additional support on complex cases for improved patient outcomes. Ruby's proactive approach to addressing the unique challenges of this regional setting and her passion for advocating for her patients' needs exemplify outstanding clinical skills for a new career dietitian.

Amy Neville

Speech Pathologist, WA Country Health Service



Amy began her career as a speech pathologist in Northam in January 2024. As a rural Speech Pathologist Amy

is required to work across the lifespan, developing skills and delivering a broad range of services including child development, outpatient and inpatient services to Northam and surrounding communities. In 2025 Amy was provided the opportunity to act in the Senior Speech Pathologist role during a period of long service leave. In doing so, she demonstrated leadership well beyond her years of experience—providing clinical guidance to colleagues, including orienting a new graduate and commencing Employee Development goal setting, managing service demands, and ensuring continuity of high-quality care across the region. Her capacity to step confidently into this role speaks to her professionalism, initiative, and deep understanding of the needs of her community. Amy continues to mentor and provide key support for two new graduates in the team.

Natalie Pepping

*Clinical
Neuropsychologist
Registrar, Sir Charles
Gairdner Hospital*



Natalie played a pivotal role in shaping the Behaviour Evaluation and Review Team (BERT) at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. This multidisciplinary service aims to reduce workplace violence and aggression, improve safety for staff working with patients presenting with behaviours of concern, improve patient experience and outcomes, and increase staff knowledge and understanding of drivers of patient behaviour. Drawing on her neuropsychological training, Natalie contributed to the development of BERT's model of care, ensuring the service was person-centred, trauma-informed, evidence-based, and suited to the complex inpatient setting. Despite being an early career allied health professional, Natalie's initiative, clinical insight, and ability to lead across disciplines has been exceptional. She has

demonstrated how early career allied health professionals can drive systemic change that improves patient care, protects staff and fosters a safer healthcare environment. Working with complex inpatient presentations, including acquired brain injury, dementia, trauma, and significant psychiatric comorbidity, she applies a high level of neuropsychological expertise to support some of the hospital's most challenging and vulnerable patients.

Allied Health Leader of the Year

The Allied Health Leader of the Year applies to nominees who show exceptional skills to support, mentor, and coach Allied Health professionals. They do not have to be working in a management or senior role.

The winner of this category will have driven quality improvement in patient care, service delivery and a commitment to value-based health care; and are leaders of a positive culture across professional groups.

*This award is proudly supported by
Child and Adolescent Health Service.*

Vin Cavalheri

*Allied Health Research
Director, South
Metropolitan Health
Service and Curtin
University*



Vin has been the Allied Health Research Director at South Metropolitan Health Service since October 2019, and in this time has consistently gone above and beyond his role to build a culture of research drive, capacity and engagement. Vin developed and implemented a successful demand-driven research strategy that has become a national model for research capacity-building and is directly aligned with the WA Health and Medical Research Strategy 2023-2033. Vin is widely recognised by

peers, locally, nationally and internationally, for his visionary and collaborative leadership in health research. A highly sought-after speaker, he has delivered over 60 invited talks across local, national, and international conferences, symposia, and workshops. His leadership is evident in his active contributions to the scientific and health community, including roles on organising and scientific committees, regular reviews for national and international funding bodies and journals, and membership on editorial boards.

Elaine (Ellie) Newman

*Head of Department
Physiotherapy, and
Dementia Lead
Armadale Kalamunda
Group (AKG), East
Metropolitan Health
Service (EMHS)*



Ellie is a trailblazer in aged care and dementia support, both within Armadale Kalamunda Group and nationally. Ellie's leadership was pivotal in EMHS becoming the first health service in Australia recognised as working towards being Dementia Friendly. She combines visionary thinking with practical action, delivering initiatives like the Carers for Carers program, state-wide dementia masterclasses, and AKG's Dementia Champions committee. A leader who lifts others up, she ensures patients and staff feel truly seen, heard and supported. Ellie regularly hosts weekend training sessions, mentors graduate clinicians, and supports professional development opportunities that align with staff aspirations and patient needs. Her work has been instrumental in dementia and cognitive impairment education across the state, and she plays a key role in integrating Falls Prevention and Allied Health representation into clinical investigations. Ellie's commitment to developing others is a cornerstone of her leadership. She is deeply invested in supporting Allied Health professionals to

thrive personally, professionally and clinically.

Suzanne Spitz

*Director Allied Health,
WA Country Health
Service*



Within the rural and remote allied health setting, Suzanne has been a pioneer, creator and visionary who has inspired and advocated for hundreds of allied health professionals to deliver high quality, innovative services within their country communities. Her networks and influence are far reaching within the WA Country Health Service (WACHS), across the allied health sector in WA and nationally. She has an exceptional ability to think strategically, collaborate with, and influence others to ensure regional allied health services in WA are aligned with national and international directives. In partnership with the Disability Services Commission, Suzanne developed the WACHS Therapy Assistant Training Series which gained national profile and was distributed to health services across Australia, and partnered with South Australia Health to develop the Professional Clinical Supervision and Support for Allied Health Professional resource package. She demonstrates an unwavering commitment to supporting, empowering and upskilling allied health staff at WACHS through countless initiatives including the establishment of Professional Lead roles for six allied health disciplines at WACHS (physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology, dietetics, social work and podiatry). These roles have been integral to providing continued and advancing support for rural clinicians and providing significant education training, mentorship and supervision.

Allied Health Professional of the Year

The Allied Health Professional of the Year applies to nominees who have made an outstanding contribution to clinical excellence, leadership, education, and culture.

The winner of this category will have demonstrated commitment to supporting, empowering, and upskilling those around them. They advocate for evidence-based practice, with a focus on value-based health care, and provide safe, quality, and compassionate patient care.

This award is proudly supported by the South Metropolitan Health Service.

Fion Lau

*Senior Physiotherapist,
Royal Perth Bentley
Group*



Fion leads a large team of physiotherapists where she fosters a culture of open communication and advocates for best practice care. Fion has completed and published an international survey exploring adoption and utility of diagnostic lung ultrasound by physiotherapists in intensive care units and contributed to a systematic review and meta-analysis on the use of diaphragm and lung ultrasound in acute respiratory physiotherapy practice. Fion led her team in the development of the 'Royal Perth Bentley Group Tracheostomy Made Easy Program', the introduction of a physiotherapy assistant led exercise group on the acute geriatric ward and a project aimed at establishing a 'Physiotherapy-led Bariatric round,' focusing on preventing deconditioning and functional decline and ultimately decreasing length of stay. Fion sees some of the most complex and vulnerable patients in WA in her role and ensures that care provided is

individualised and grounded in the best available evidence, prioritising the safety and dignity of her patients.

Sharon Roberts

*Senior Physiotherapist,
Fiona Stanley Hospital*



Sharon is a clinician and leader with over 20 years of experience, including 16 years specialising in Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) rehabilitation across acute, rehab, and community settings. Sharon coordinates four physiotherapy specialities as part of the State Rehabilitation Service, leads multidisciplinary teams, and mentors clinicians across Western Australia. Sharon consistently maximises clinical outcomes for highly complex caseloads, while fostering excellence in team-based care. In addition to her clinical and leadership roles, Sharon is a Sessional Academic at Curtin University, where she contributes to the development of future physiotherapists through university lecturing, practical labs, and performance assessments. Her input has been sought through her participation in and coordination of research, including serving as a Site Principal Investigator for an international randomized controlled trial, 'The Early & Intensive SCI-Motor Training Trial,' as well as her expertise in successfully weaning and decannulating over 70% of ventilator-dependent and tracheostomized patients admitted to the Spinal Unit at Fiona Stanley Hospital. These contributions underscore her reputation as a respected expert and role model in the SCI management.

Elizabeth Soon

*Occupational
Therapist, Armadale
Kalamunda Group,
East Metropolitan
Health Service*



Elizabeth is well respected amongst her peers and has

worked collaboratively with other allied health professionals within the Rehabilitation Unit at Armadale Hospital to build up comradery with all clinical and non-clinical staff. Elizabeth has worked hard to build a team-driven environment, from assisting fellow Seniors in creating a 'Wellness Teams Chat' on Microsoft Teams, a staff shout out wall in one of the offices for all Allied Health to give each-other compliments, to uplifting those in need with a pick-me-up coffee. During her work Elizabeth has sourced new and innovative ways to provide rehab services to patients on the ward in a more fun unique and engaging way. Elizabeth also developed charts to assist fellow occupational therapists in identifying appropriate resources for upper limb and cognitive rehabilitation, and introduced the integration of an online functional exercise program that supports prescribing and modification of functional exercises to optimize ADL retraining on the rehabilitation ward.

from 3 to 2.6 days. Thanks to her determined follow-up, LOS now averages 2 days. Meg's passion saw her small quality improvement project evolve into a large service improvement project. Meg also created a succession plan so that every clinician on the surgical ward could continue to champion the project, with the succession plan also providing guidance and tools for future projects.

Meg Stewart

*Physiotherapist,
Rockingham General
Hospital*



Meg has worked with Rockingham General Hospital since 2022 where she consistently delivers excellent patient care and mentorship to colleagues and junior physiotherapists. In 2025, Meg worked with the Clinical Service Redesign team, applying her passion for problem solving and a strategic solutions-based approach to implement impactful projects. Faced with data projecting a 276% and 208% increase in total knee replacement and total hip replacement operations by 2030, Meg explored barriers and solutions to mitigate the strain on the system and negative patient outcomes. Through her own research and data analysis, Meg identified a link between day of surgery and length of stay (LOS), then implemented a criteria-led discharge process that reduced LOS

Allied Health Team of the Year

The Allied Health Team of the Year applies to nominees demonstrating outstanding contribution as a collective team, to clinical excellence delivering high performing allied health services or outcomes in any setting.

The winner of this category will be recognised by their peers, demonstrate outstanding professionalism and actively support a positive and collaborative culture.

This award is proudly supported by the Health Services Union of WA.

Multidisciplinary Foot Ulcer Clinic Team

North Metropolitan Health Service

The Multidisciplinary Foot Ulcer (MDFU) Clinic Team is a multidisciplinary team coordinated by the SCGH Podiatry department, dedicated to meeting the needs of patients with complex and limb threatening diabetes related foot complications. The MDFU team is a highly integrated and dedicated team of experts, with a focus on limb preservation, reducing preventable amputation and hospital admission, maintaining mobility and independence, and improving health outcomes for vulnerable patients with high-risk foot complications. The outpatient MDFU clinic provides a consultant led weekly clinic, which provides expert integrated care in one clinic, including all specialties required to manage complex high risk foot disorders. This allows patient centred care by having the patient managed simultaneously by all necessary team members, reducing fragmentation of care, and improving efficiency of management planning and health care delivery.



Oats St Rehabilitation Team

Brightwater Care Group Oats St

The Brightwater Oats St Rehabilitation Team is committed to supporting people with acquired brain injuries (ABI). Oats St is a unique purpose-built residential rehabilitation facility delivering goal-focused, outcome-driven programs. The team recognises the vital role that relationships, culture, and community play in recovery and long-term emotional wellbeing. Their culturally safe, person-centred care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients includes involving extended families and respecting connection to land and sea, improving transition and continuity of care. The interdisciplinary team of occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech pathologists, social workers, exercise physiologists, and allied health assistants works collaboratively to help clients stay connected with social and family networks while they receive onsite intensive daily rehabilitation. Social leave is prioritised as a core therapeutic intervention, helping to restore the personal identity and relationships often disrupted by ABI. Clients consistently share that reconnecting with family, friends, and familiar places provides purpose, motivation, and a sense of normalcy during recovery.



Weekend Feeding Team

Perth Children's Hospital

The weekend feeding service at Perth Children's Hospital is a national first admission avoidance and patient flow initiative pioneered by the innovative thinking and a dedicated feeding team. The specialist trio of speech pathologists, dietitians, and occupational therapists are committed to clinical excellence and patient outcomes. Previously patients would be waiting >52hrs for a feeding team assessment over a weekend, but now a wait in ED will be max 12-14hrs. This responsive patient centred model of care provides patients, caregivers, nursing and medical staff access to 7-day multidisciplinary specialist feeding assessment and intervention. The team have led positive organisational culture change with their consistent presence, compassion, and drive for continuous service improvement.



SMHS-Curtin Allied Health Research Unit

South Metropolitan Health Service (SMHS) and Curtin University

The SMHS-Curtin Allied Health Research Unit is focussed on addressing the research demands of the SMHS community. The unit has provided opportunities for over 150 SMHS Allied Health staff (across 9 professions and all SMHS sites) to engage in research, mentored by over 50 academics from Curtin University and other WA and Australian Universities. It has become a model locally, nationally and internationally for building Allied Health research capacity and culture. Allied Health professionals at SMHS, under the guidance of the unit's Research Director, profession-specific Research Coordinators, Honorary Research Consultants and academic mentors have received 28 research grants, 11 research awards, and published 380 research papers and in the past five years. The SMHS-Curtin Allied Health Research Unit exemplifies the power of collaborative, values-driven teamwork in achieving exceptional outcomes for both person-centred care and the allied health professions. Since its establishment in 2020, the unit has united clinicians, academics, health leaders, and consumers through a shared mission: to embed research into practice, build capacity, and improve outcomes across the health system.

SMHS-Curtin Allied Health Research Unit

<p>Allied Health Research Director</p>  <p>Vin Cavalheri</p>	<p>Allied Health Research Coordinators</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dr Emily Calton Dietetics FSFHG </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dr Helen DeJong Occupational Therapy FSFHG </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dr Michelle Kendall Physiotherapy FSFHG </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dr Emily Brogan Speech Pathology FSFHG </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dr Naomi Chapman Allied Health BITH </div> </div>					<p>Allied Health Postdoctoral Research Fellows - FSFHG</p> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>2022-23</td> <td>2023-24</td> <td>2024-25</td> <td>2025-26</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dr Lisa van der Lee Physiotherapy</td> <td>Dr Helen DeJong Occupational Therapy</td> <td>Dr Pamela Chen Podiatry</td> <td>Dr Dale Edwick Physiotherapy</td> </tr> </table>				2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26					Dr Lisa van der Lee Physiotherapy	Dr Helen DeJong Occupational Therapy	Dr Pamela Chen Podiatry	Dr Dale Edwick Physiotherapy
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<p>Raine Fellowship</p> <p>2024-26</p>  <p>Dr Lisa van der Lee Physiotherapy FSFHG</p>	<p>AH Research Consultants</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dr Christina Fernandes Social Work FSFHG </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dr Bingyan Pang Podiatry FSFHG </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dr Brooke Ryan Speech Pathology FSFHG </div> </div>			<p>Established Researchers</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Prof Andrew Malorana Exercise Physiology </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  A/Prof Dayse Tavora-Vieira Audiology </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dr Piers Truter Physiotherapy </div> </div>			<p>HDR Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cobie Starcevich (Physiotherapy) Aska Yang (Dietetics) Pippa Flanagan (Physiotherapy) Melissa Thorne (Occupational Therapy) Barry Moore (Physiotherapy) Lucy Bolam (Ex Physiology) Katherine Wright (Physiotherapy) 														



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Commission**





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