



NEWSLETTER

September-November 2024

Farewell



Di, a valued member of the ESTEEM research team, has said farewell to pursue another work opportunity. Di has contributed a great deal to the ESTEEM Project since its early inception, and she will be sorely missed. We know that she will thrive in her new role and we wish her all the very best. On behalf of the team, thank-you for all your wonderful contributions! This is not goodbye, just farewell for now.



We have been lucky to have Ty working as a Allied Health Assistant for ESTEEM at Mercy Newcastle. Ty has completed his Occupational Therapy Degree (congratulations Ty!) and has left ESTEEM to start his OT career. He has been a wonderful asset to the Mercy ESTEEM team and will be greatly missed. Thank-you Ty for all the support you have provided for stroke survivors during your time with us and we wish you all the best.

Welcome *Shandelle, Project Support Officer*

Shandelle will provide project support to the team as we progress into phase 3 of the Research Project. She has worked in scientific research for 7 years as a laboratory-based research assistant, and brings her research trial expertise as well as a different perspective to the team.





*Nicole, Senior Clinical Trial Project Manager
Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI)*



Nicole has worked in clinical trials for over 20 years, previously managing clinical trials mostly in the fields of oncology, respiratory and stroke. Nicole is joining the ESTEEM After Stroke team to provide project management support while preparing for the upcoming Phase III Clinical Trial.



Simone, Site Coordinator, Maitland Region

Simone has worked in stroke research for a number of years including the Yarning up After Stroke project. She is also a speech pathologist and a proud Gomeri yinnar (woman) from Tamworth NSW. In another role as ESTEEM's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Engagement Officer, she will also be connecting with First Nation's people participating in ESTEEM.



Lyn, ESTEEM Program Assistant, Newcastle Region

Lyn will be joining the Mercy Services team to assist program participants in all elements of ESTEEM. Lyn brings a great wealth of experience and it is wonderful to have her join the team!

Research Update

Phase 2 of the research is coming to an end! The final data for those 40 participants is due to be collected mid-February and will then be analysed. Through interviewing staff involved in the delivery of ESTEEM (qualitative methods), the research team are evaluating the way ESTEEM was implemented at Mercy and Maitland Community Care organisations. This will help to guide the way ESTEEM will be implemented at a 3rd site in the Manning Region.

For phase 3, the project design will be a bit different- a randomised wait list control design. Participants will be randomly allocated to either a waiting-list control or intervention group. The waiting-list control group will wait for 10 weeks before attending the ESTEEM program. Those in the intervention group will commence the program immediately.

The primary outcomes to be collected are the Short Performance Physical Battery (SPPB) and Assessment of Quality of Life via the AQoL88D.



Creative Symposium

A group of ESTEEM researchers and Consumer Representatives attended the Ageing, Art and Creativity Symposium in September. This one-day event explored the transformative potential of the arts in enhancing the lives of older adults, bringing together organisations and individuals from both the arts and care sectors. Debra, a valued member of the ESTEEM consumer group, described it as “a great day of information and discussion, with everyone trying to break the barrier between great research and implementation to the people and services that could benefit”.



Update-Maitland Region

8 stroke survivors have now completed the full program, with a further 8 participants currently attending. The referral rate has grown with the community embracing the new service available for stroke survivors. It will be great to have Maitland participants contributing to research once phase 3 of the project begins.

The team appreciate positive feedback from participants, such as from one recent participant who mentioned that the ESTEEM program “gave me a purpose to get up out of bed each day”.

A reminder: the best way to refer any interested stroke survivor to attend ESTEEM at Kurri Kurri is to simply email their details (name, phone number and address) to esteem@mccs.org.au.

We look forward to celebrating at **Maitland ESTEEM 2024 Christmas Party** on **Tuesday the 17th of December at 10.30am at Kurri Kurri Day Centre**. All 2024 ESTEEM program participants and their carers welcome!





Update- Newcastle Region



You may have heard that the Board of Mercy Services regrettably advised that it has made the difficult decision to permanently withdraw from the Mercy Services ministry in Newcastle and Singleton. While we wait to see what evolves from this announcement, rest assured that the ESTEEM program currently continues to run as normal.

We currently have 10 people on program (with space for a couple more!) so please continue to send any referrals (name, phone number, address) through to esteem@mercyservices.org.au.



Mercy ESTEEM Christmas party will be held on **Wednesday the 18th December at 10.45am at Mercy West Wallsend**. All 2024 ESTEEM program participants and their carers welcome to attend. Don't forget to RSVP!



ESTEEM t-shirts will be available for pick up at both Maitland and Newcastle ESTEEM Christmas Party's. T-shirts are free and available for all previous ESTEEM program participants. We look forward to seeing you wearing them out and about!

Connecting after ESTEEM

A group of participants who finished ESTEEM in May still catch up regularly for lunch. We know the important role peer support plays in enhancing stroke recovery and are pleased that ESTEEM was able to contribute to people making such meaningful connections. Thank-you to Kerrie S and the rest of this group for keeping the ESTEEM connection alive!





Update- Manning Region

It was wonderful to have Valley Industries visit ESTEEM at Kurri Kurri recently, and great to hear their positive feedback. The 3 way partnership between ESTEEM, Valley Industries and Manning Support Services is looking very positive, with negotiations still underway.



A Minute in the Life of..... Jaclyn Birnie



Jaclyn Moved from Sydney to Armidale 17 years ago, where she first worked as a physiotherapist and then a Stroke Care Coordinator. Jac says she loves the size of Armidale, as it is not too big and not too small 😊. She is Passionate about rural health care and advocating for improved patient care and services in rural areas.

As part of the ESTEEM research team, Jaclyn completed a scoping review, where she looked at community programs for people after stroke and brain injury that align to the principles of environmental enrichment. This involved looking at articles from around the globe. Canada has some good programs! Jac is also doing interviews with Maitland staff to review how the process of the implementation of ESTEEM went there and if there are any changes that can be made to improve implementation at site 3 in the Manning Region.





What is your favourite part of your job?

I'm very lucky to be able to support patients after stroke face-to-face, and also to be involved in research as well.

When you're not at work, where might we find you in your free time?

Probably down at the local pool now that it's getting warmer!

Favourite book?

I joined a bookclub a few years ago to get back into reading... It's somewhat worked.

If we're coming for dinner, what will be eating?

Something very quick and easy. Steak and salad, Spag bol etc.

What is one new thing you'd like to try? Jumping off the jetty at Coffs Harbour with my daughter.

Favourite quote or joke?

I am an absolutely terrible joke teller, sorry!

If you could visit anywhere in the world, where would you choose?

Canada. I haven't been yet.

Would you survive a zombie apocalypse and why?

Zombies aren't really my thing... I would probably survive because I don't believe in them...

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