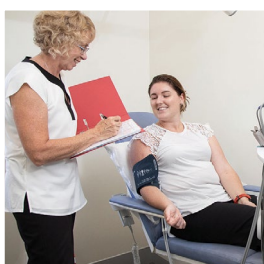
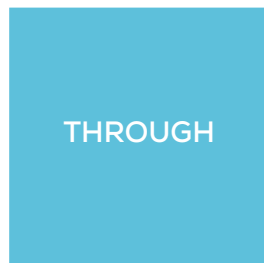
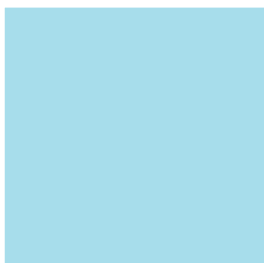


# TRIBUTE <sup>15<sup>th</sup></sup> Anniversary Edition

Newsletter of the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation

Autumn 2020



Gallipoli Medical  
Research Foundation  
is supported by

 **Greenslopes  
Private Hospital**  
Part of Ramsay Health Care

# Thank you for your support!



Director of Research Professor Darrell Crawford and CEO Miriam Dwyer, together with some of the GMRF team.

**When you reach any significant milestone it is important to take the opportunity to reflect on where you have come from, on what you have achieved... and indeed on where you are going!**

GMRF's 15th Anniversary is a huge milestone and this edition of the Tribute has allowed us to reflect on all of the research projects we have undertaken and supported over the years. We also remember and thank all of the individuals and groups that have made the wonderful work possible. In the pages that follow, we share our history and some of our plans for the future and we look forward to the positive impact we can continue to make together.

Our strength is our people, and we're only getting stronger. From eight staff in 2005, we are now a team of almost 50! We produce the research outcomes we do because of these dedicated professionals who genuinely care about improving

**"We are always coming back to the reason why we are here. It's about focusing on what matters to our veterans and their families, our patients, and our communities."**

the health of our communities.

We wouldn't be here without the community that has been backing us for the past 15 years. We are so grateful for every gift, big or small, because each contribution facilitates another step forward.

If you're supporting GMRF – thank you! Your trust in us to deliver real change drives us towards our mission of enhancing the health and wellbeing of our veterans, their families, and the wider Australian community.

My sincere thanks to the GMRF Board of Directors and dedicated Patrons who give of their time voluntarily to guide and support our Foundation.

Finally, I also want to acknowledge and thank each and every member of the GMRF Team, past and present, for their dedication, commitment and collaborative approach to medical research – you inspire me each and every day!

Thanks again and enjoy your Tribute!

**Miriam Dwyer**  
Chief Executive Officer



**As Patron of the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation I value enormously the opportunity to learn first hand about the extraordinary research undertaken by brilliant, dedicated scientists to improve key aspects of physical, mental and emotional health of our greatly admired and respected veterans. It is exhilarating to observe the commitment of the supporters of the Foundation; they share an engaging camaraderie and a sense of pride in research outcomes across a broad range of conditions to enhance day to day living for brave men and women. The Foundation signifies fine values of selflessness and accomplishment and translates these into practice to honour service to our nation."** Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO – Patron



**"Miriam and her executive team are leading a high quality team that can achieve our vision. They are delivering results on the back of community support. Big or small, it's added up to get us to where we are today, and all of us at GMRF are very grateful."**

Tom Ryan – Founding Board Member



**"GMRF has evolved into a major research institute in veteran health. Specifically, the Foundation has established unique programs to better serve veterans who suffer from the psychological toll of service. Supporters can take great pride in the Foundation's initiatives in both the research and clinical domains."**

Major General Professor John Pearn – Patron



# 15 years of innovation and impact



**2005**

GMRF opened its doors in May 2005. It's small beginnings for this research institute, with two Foundation staff and six researchers.



**2006**

Clinical Trials commenced at GMRF. One trials coordinator works across a handful of clinical trials in liver disease.



**2009**

Liver researchers Terry Tan and Amy Sobbe are the first students to join our PhD Scholarship Program.



**2011**

Our new state-of-the-art laboratories and dedicated clinical trials facilities are opened, enabling GMRF to significantly expand our research capacity.



**2011**

The Respiratory Research Unit established a dedicated non tuberculous mycobacterium facility at GMRF led by Associate Professor Rachel Thomson.



**2012**

Partnership with RSL Queensland is established and the wheels begin to turn on our world-first study into the whole-body impact of posttraumatic stress disorder.



**2012**

Our very first Innovation Grants projects are funded! Staff from the GPH Keith Payne Unit investigated a new lifestyle program for veterans with PTSD.



**2013**

GMRF establishes the Liver Cancer Unit. Made possible by the support of donors and launched to combat the increasing rate of liver cancer in Australia.



**2015**

GMRF Clinical Trials Unit was involved in the breakthrough studies leading to a new treatment for the 230,000 Australians living with chronic Hepatitis C.



**2017**

GMRF published the findings of the PTSD Initiative in the Medical Journal of Australia. The findings are used to educate GPs and other health professionals on co-morbidities of PTSD.



**2017**

The Cancer Wellness Program at GPH is launched thanks to funding from GMRF donors. The program provides practical support for cancer patients and their families.



**2018**

Following GMRF's first Experimental Liver Cancer Forum in 2017, GMRF established a national network of researchers and clinicians to combat the rise of liver cancer.



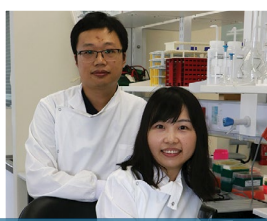
**2018**

Landmark clinical trial proves melanoma responds better to immunotherapy treatments than chemotherapy. New treatment made available on the PBS.



**2019**

The GMRF Clinical Trials Unit is recognised for the third year straight (and fourth overall) as the Favourite Investigational Site in Australia by ARCS Australia, a peak body of clinical trials.



**2020**

A new era of liver cancer research is launched! New unit leads Dr Haolu Wang and Dr Tina Liang introduce four projects to better detect and prevent liver cancer.



**“Our support to veterans goes beyond the individual. The veteran is part of a family, and the family is part of a community, and that’s the level of support we are committed to delivering,”** Miriam Dwyer, GMRF CEO

## Creating brighter futures for veteran families

**Greenslopes Private Hospital has had a very proud history of treating our veterans, going right back to 1942 when it first opened its doors to the returning service men of World War II.**

GMRF joined this mission to care for veterans when it was launched in 2005 and we continue to be inspired by the dedication and commitment of our veterans to serve their community to this day. Our commitment to the veteran community took a huge leap forward in 2012 when we partnered with RSL Queensland, our academic partners UQ and QUT and key GPH clinicians to launch the PTSD Initiative;

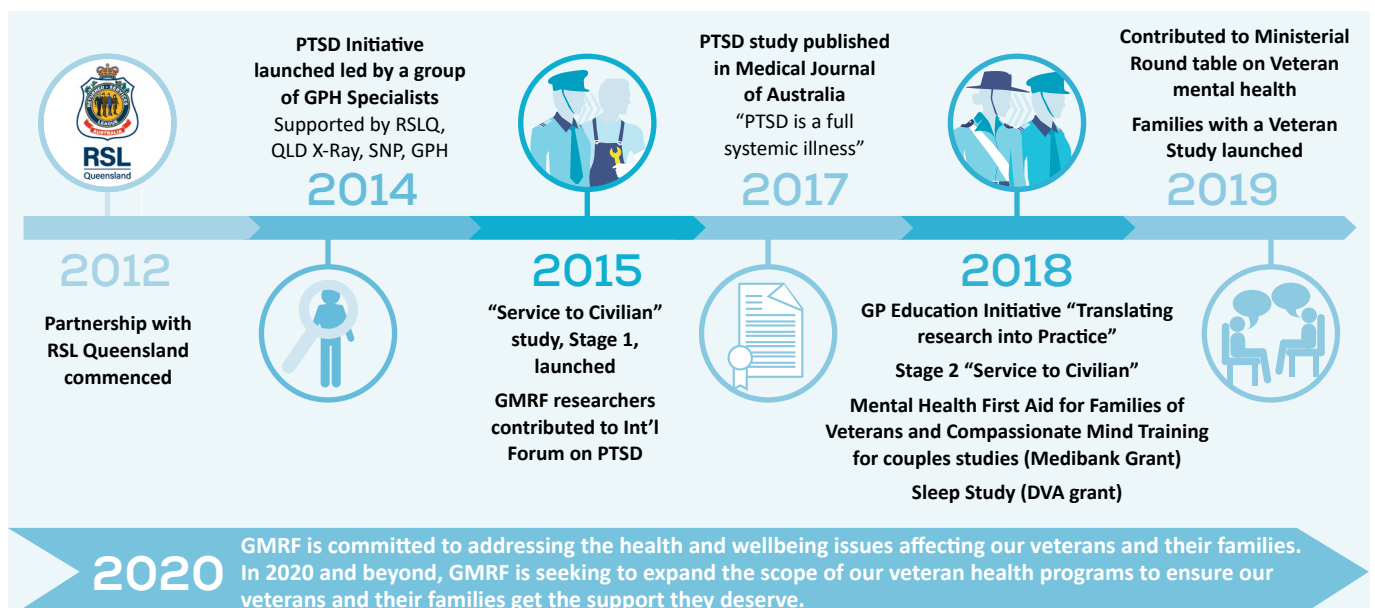
investigating the long-term impact of PTSD on Vietnam veterans. GMRF published this landmark study in the Medical Journal of Australia in 2017.

In 2015 we also launched the “Service to Civilian” research program aiming to understand and identify the factors that lead to a successful transition from a military culture to a civilian culture. This work continues to lead the way and has positioned our GMRF researchers as leaders in this space. GMRF has become a trusted voice that truly understands the contemporary issues facing veterans and their families. We are working to alleviate the psychological challenges

some veterans face on transition from the military.

Since 2005, GMRF Researchers have learned a lot about PTSD and more broadly about the issues that matter to this community. We have dedicated our collective research efforts to enhancing the health and wellbeing of all veterans and their families and we are committed to sharing our learnings.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with the veteran community to ensure we are addressing their concerns and we will continue our commitment to undertake research that makes a real difference.







90% of veterans with PTSD have **trouble sleeping**

**"I have been able to have the energy to do things that I haven't done in years."**

Veteran Sleep Therapy Study Participant



**"Our research team has a strong clinical background. We've seen the issues our veterans are facing firsthand. This is the basis of our research to address real needs with real solutions."** Dr Justine Evans



**"As our research progressed, it became clear we need to look at prevention, not just 'cure'. We want to prevent difficulties from occurring in the first place and give members the best chance to have a successful and healthy transition."** Dr Madeline Romaniuk

**78%** of veterans report a **difficult transition to civilian life.**

With RSL Queensland, we are developing innovative tools to ensure veterans and current service personnel in the process of transitioning get the support they need.



Education on managing the co-morbidities of PTSD provided to over **800 healthcare professionals.**

### COMMITTED TO RESEARCH THAT REALLY MATTERS

Our PTSD Initiative demonstrated that PTSD is a systemic illness that impacts and increases risk factors of the liver, gut health, heart, lung and quality of sleep.



**"We're working collaboratively with the Australian Defence Force, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and Ex-Service Organisations to improve care coordination for military and veteran families. Our work could make a real difference in the lives of these families by helping them to access support when they need it most."**

Dr Angela Maguire

Find out more about our veteran research at [www.gallipoliresearch.com.au/veteranhealth](http://www.gallipoliresearch.com.au/veteranhealth)



## Side by side for our veterans

**RSL Queensland is pleased to congratulate the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation on its 15th anniversary!**

We have a close and longstanding relationship with GMRF, built over the past eight years, during which we partnered with them to deliver world first studies under two key research initiatives: the PTSD Initiative and the Veteran Mental Health Initiative (VMHI).

The PTSD Initiative was a ground-breaking piece of research, which demonstrated that PTSD is a full systematic illness. It established the evidential foundations to demonstrate that integrated health care can best support those experiencing this mental health injury.

The findings of this research were subsequently used to develop a professional development module for GPs and allied health professionals. To date, more than 800 health

professionals have undertaken this training.

We are currently in the second phase of the Reintegration Study under the VMHI, but early findings have already helped shape our service offering, particularly our Employment Program, which is now being rolled out nationally.

We are eagerly awaiting the publication of the study's findings. We anticipate they will provide additional valuable insights that will enable us to collaboratively develop targeted interventions for the underlying factors that can impact transition and, in so doing, benefit both transitioning members as well as those who have separated.

Our partnership with GMRF is a key pillar in our ongoing strategy to ensure a bright future and enduring legacy for all Australian veterans and their families. We look forward to a long and fruitful relationship with GMRF.



**Melanie Wilson**  
RSL Queensland CEO



## THEN – 2007

- Focus solely on liver fibrosis
- Team of five researchers
- Small lab facilities



## NOW – 2020

- Research projects in fibrosis, fatty liver disease, liver transplant and liver cancer
- Team of 11 researchers
- State-of-the-art laboratory on-site

# Fighting the rising liver illness epidemic

**Liver disease and liver cancer are on the rise, but that certainly has not daunted our dedicated researchers. Over the past 13 years, our ‘predict and prevent’ approach to liver research has evolved to address the issue on multiple fronts.**

Driven to create real solutions to big problems, GMRF established the Liver Research Unit, with Professor Darrell Crawford leading a small team of researchers.

“It was in 2005 when we really started to realise what the burden of liver disease and liver cancer would become in the community.

“A diseased liver can lead to liver cancer and the prognosis for liver cancer hasn’t improved much over the past 25 years. There have been no major developments in treatment options,” Prof Crawford says.

### **Better treatments come from better understanding**

A key focus of the unit’s research has been in investigating the role excess iron plays in worsening liver injury and the impact of fatty liver disease.

Over the years, the unit has also increased its attention on therapeutic targets for liver cancer. Within this has been a focus on:

- Tumour biology — understanding how cancer cells grow and interact
- Cancer stem cells — the cells responsible for tumour growth and treatment resistance
- Immunotherapy: stimulating the immune system to attack cancer

It is research aimed at earlier diagnosis and more effective treatments.

### **A strong focus on clinical outcomes**

GMRF’s patient focus is strengthened by the close connection between its research and clinical trials teams.

“It illustrates our continuity of bench to bedside. The presence of our Clinical Trials Unit reminds us constantly that major advances are based on pain-staking clinical and biomedical research.” Prof Crawford says.

While the efforts of our researchers are inspiring and the clinical trials encouraging, we know we cannot do it alone. That’s why the team have a strong focus on collaboration.

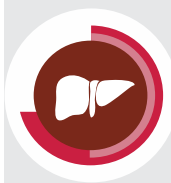
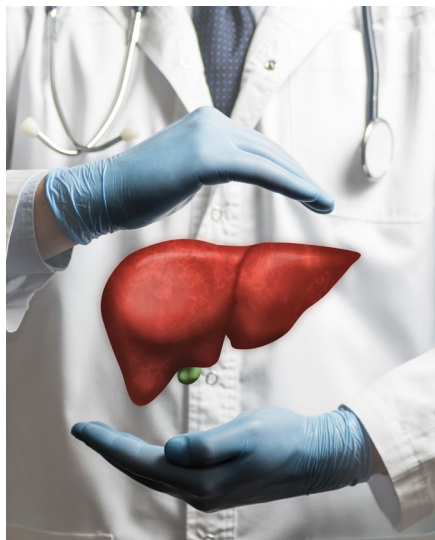
In 2017, the unit conducted their first annual Experimental Liver Cancer Research Forum, bringing together leading clinicians and researchers from across the country.

From that meeting, GMRF established the Australian Experimental Liver Cancer Research Network. The network’s focus over the past three years has been to promote and further research and raise the profile of the liver cancer crisis.



**“Liver cancer must be on the national agenda. We’re making progress in research, but it’s not as quick as what we’ve seen with other cancers. This could be the defining illness of our children and grandchildren’s lives if we don’t ramp up our efforts now,” Prof Crawford**

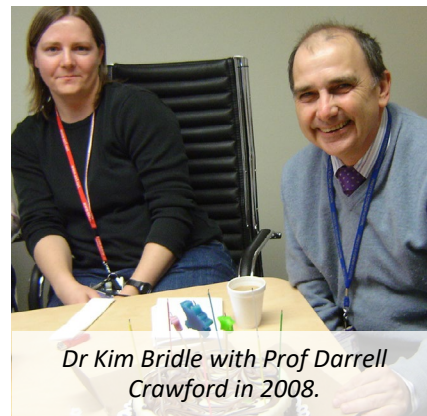




Your liver performs over 500 functions such as removing toxins and aiding in the digestion of fat.

**1 in 4**

Adult Australians has or will develop fatty liver disease. If left unchecked it can lead to liver cancer.



Dr Kim Bridle with Prof Darrell Crawford in 2008.

## Laying the foundations of breakthrough treatments

Dr Kim Bridle completed her thesis in 2000 under the supervision of Professor Darrell Crawford. It was a novel theory on iron overload in the liver and the role hepcidin (a naturally occurring molecule) plays in iron regulation.

"My research was more about fact-finding than finding a treatment, because so little was known. The medical community didn't understand the role of hepcidin in liver disease," Dr Bridle says.

Dr Bridle remembers a 'big wig' academic from America telling her she would struggle to publish her findings.

Fast forward to 2019 and Dr Bridle's research, published in the *Lancet*, formed the basis of a new treatment for haemochromatosis. The drug was recently trialed at GMRF's Clinical Trials Unit and other sites around the country.

"It's easy as a scientist to get into the tiny detail of the molecule. It's great when you get to see the bigger picture. It's a reminder that what you're doing can lead to new treatments for people who are suffering," Dr Bridle says.

Thanks to GMRF donors, Dr Bridle and the Liver Research Unit can continue progressing translational research.

"15 years ago no one had any idea how big liver disease would be. Our donors should be very proud of how they're helping build the knowledge that leads to better treatments."

## Paving the way for future leaders in liver research

"One of my proudest achievements, and something our donors can take great pride in is the PhD Scholarship Program," Prof Crawford says.

The first two students, Terry Tan and Amy Sobbe joined the unit in 2009 to investigate iron overload and liver injury. Terry's focus also extended to hepcidin, the body's 'gatekeeper' in regulating iron, and how it can serve as a marker of liver injury.

"Terry and Amy were driven scholars who worked hard and had numerous publications. I remember when Amy received her thesis corrections, she went straight to it and completed her review in 30 minutes! It is a testament to the calibre of her work."

GMRF has continued to foster a teaching environment for PhD students to excel, with 15 students representing the Foundation on a national and

international stage.

"Our scholarship program has attracted excellent scholars. Research is hard and competitive, and funding is difficult. It's a labour of love and this program is good at finding people who are ready to dedicate their entire career to solving this massive health problem!"

## Our supporters are the driving force behind our progress

While liver cancer remains a massive problem, we are making progress thanks to our generous donors. The Liver Research Unit and Liver Cancer Units receive most of their funding from you, our wonderful supporters.

"We have seen that we can shape understanding and treatment of diseases. Our supporters make it all possible," Professor Crawford says.

**So, what's next? Turn the page to read about an exciting new chapter of liver cancer research at GMRF!**

## More than academics

**Over the past 15 years, the University of Queensland hasn't just supported our research, it's been at work in our laboratory day in, day out.**

The partnership was forged from day one with GMRF and has enabled GMRF's unique collaborative approach that underpins our success.

"Research is an important pillar for a

teaching hospital," Professor Darrell Crawford says.

"We've always had a very high calibre of researchers and PhD students from UQ. More than just great scholars, they're dedicated and passionate people."



**THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND**  
AUSTRALIA

# Who will be discovering the cures of tomorrow?

Meet our newest PhD Students. They are young, brilliant and ready to take on Australia's liver health crisis.



**Afolabi** joined the GMRF Liver Research Unit in July 2019. He's working to understand and combat the crucial role iron plays in fatty liver disease.

## Afolabi Akanbi

### What brought you to GMRF?

I finished my Masters in Biomedical Engineering last year in Sydney and was passionate about going into cancer research. The opportunity came up to research liver disease with the GMRF Team. The more I read about liver disease the more I wanted to do something to help.

### What are you working on?

My project is looking at the role excess iron plays in the progression of fatty liver disease. I'm working with a molecule called hepcidin, which plays a significant role in the control of iron in the body.

### What impact could it make?

There is really limited therapeutic

options for fatty liver disease and it can often lead to liver cancer. By managing iron levels I believe we can decrease damage to the liver and prevent the problem getting worse.

### What's your favourite thing about working at GMRF?

I love the people here. Everyone is so friendly which makes this a great place to work. I also think the equipment and the labs are world-class, which certainly helps!

### What do you do in your free time?

I love catching up with friends, playing soccer and running. I'm new to Brisbane so I've been enjoying exploring the area.



**Lucas** joined the GMRF Liver Cancer Unit in January 2020. He's taking a new approach to earlier detection of liver disease and liver cancer.

## Lucas Trevisan Franca de Lima

### What brought you to GMRF?

I've just moved from Brazil. There were limited options to work close to a clinical setting at home and I was excited for a research opportunity with translational benefit for patients.

### What are you working on?

My aim is to show that saliva can be used as a diagnostic tool. I am working to identify biomarkers in a patient's saliva to detect liver disease or liver cancer. Not all patients will develop cancer but for those who do we could follow this progression more closely and assist in earlier detection.

**What impact could it make?** We need better diagnostic tools for liver disease. Everything that can cause injury to your liver can lead you to this pathway and that's why it impacts so many people. This tool would monitor

if the treatment is working and if the disease has come back. It also decreases the risk for the patient by avoiding unnecessary biopsies.

### What's your favourite thing about working at GMRF?

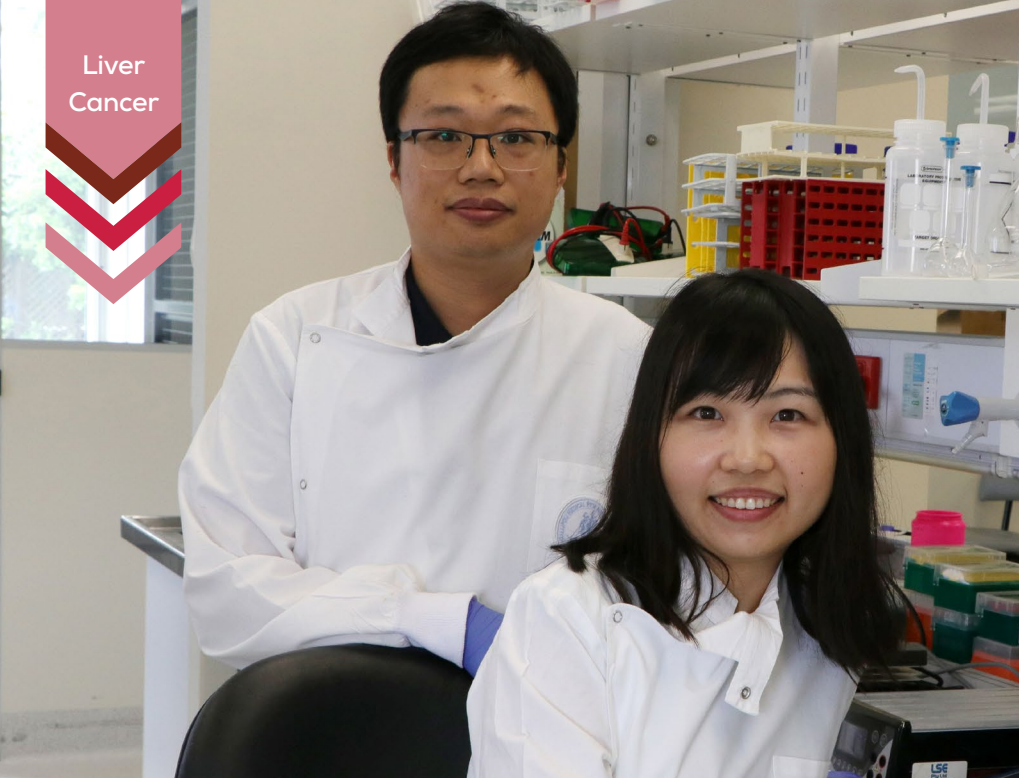
There is a real feeling of cooperation, support and unity among staff. I think that must reflect in the way patients are treated here as well.

### What do you do in your free time?

I'm an outdoors person and I love playing volleyball. Because I'm Brazilian, everyone here asks me about soccer, but I have to Google the teams just to have a conversation!

*We are incredibly grateful to the Thorsen Foundation for making Lucas's scholarship possible, and for their ongoing support of our research.*





**Meet the husband and wife team of liver cancer researchers giving new meaning to 'in sickness and in health.'**

## New era of innovation in cancer research

**Dr Haolu Wang and Dr Tina Liang joined GMRF in December 2019 as part of a partnership with the University of Queensland Diamantina Institute. Their combined research efforts could change the future of how we predict, prevent and treat liver cancer.**

From using nanotechnology for liver cancer diagnosis, to a novel vaccine to 'kill' cancer, Dr Wang and Dr Liang's arrival marks an exciting new chapter of innovative research at GMRF.

As the fastest increasing cause of cancer mortality in Australia, liver cancer is having a devastating impact on thousands of lives. Dr Wang and Dr Liang are targeting the core of the problem in two key areas.

### **Stopping the spread of liver cancer**

Dr Liang is developing a biopsy model to predict a patient's response to treatment, enabling clinicians to identify the most effective treatment for a particular patient earlier. The model would also reduce side-effects as it would help identify the smallest doses possible with maximum effect.

Dr Liang is also targeting the spreading of liver cancer known as self-seeding. The potential drug treatment would prevent detached liver cancer cells from returning to the tumour.

"The concept of 'self-seeding' has only been around for about five years, and so far no-one has worked out how to stop the cancer cells shedding and reattaching to the tumour. We believe the way we are targeting self-seeding is promising," Dr Liang says.

### **Helping the body fight cancer**

The immune system is the body's protector, but cancer can evade detection. Dr Wang is developing a therapeutic vaccine to help immune cells recognise and kill cancer cells.

"We're in the early stages of this one, but there have been encouraging results. This treatment would not only kill the cancer cells, it could help prevent a tumour coming back for a decade or beyond," Dr Wang says.

Dr Wang is also working on another novel theory – that the liver itself may be responsible for tumour growth after traditional treatments.

"Everyone is thinking of treating the

tumour cells but not focusing on environmental changes. We think the environment of the liver is very important in tumour growth and we are looking at ways to target this."

This innovative research could change lives, and it's made possible by our wonderful supporters.

**You can find out more or donate to this vital research at [www.gallipoliresearch.com.au](http://www.gallipoliresearch.com.au)**



We are very excited to welcome Dr Wang and Dr Liang to the team. I believe they cement our position as the leading liver cancer unit in Queensland, and make us highly competitive on a national scale.

This research relies on our GMRF donors who can take tremendous pride in what they're achieving!

**Prof Darrell Crawford,**  
GMRF Director of Research.



## THEN - 2006

- Focused on liver disease studies
- 1 Clinical Trial Coordinator
- Borrowed equipment and freezer space
- 1 clinic room and 1 office

## NOW - 2020

- Over 40 active trials in cancer, liver disease and respiratory illness
- Team of 17, including 6 Clinical Trial Coordinators
- 2 clinic rooms and 3 offices
- State-of-the art clinical laboratory on-site

## Award-winning team at the forefront of new treatment options

**From one coordinator in a tiny clinic room with a borrowed freezer to an award-winning team of 17 staff conducting over 40 clinical trials at any one time. The growth of our Clinical Trials Unit has been driven by a simple goal — to provide more patients with access to potentially life-saving new treatments.**

“It’s always been about the patients. Our purpose is to facilitate new drugs being developed and becoming available to people suffering from illness or disease,” Associate Director of Clinical Trials Dr Suzanne Elliott says.

Commencing liver disease trials in 2006, the unit experienced significant growth in 2011 through the establishment of a dedicated laboratory and clinic. With the new facilities and a growing team, the unit expanded into respiratory illnesses and cancers including melanoma, prostate, lung and liver cancers.

Over the last 14 years, the Clinical Trials Unit has been involved in some ground-breaking, international trials — most notably in treating Hepatitis C and melanoma. Life-changing

treatments are now available through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), thanks to patients who took part in clinical trials.

“It is very exciting to see the progress of new treatments and what it means for patients. Off the back of our trials into melanoma treatments, which are now publicly available, the science is being transferred into other cancers,” Dr Elliott says.

Testament to the high standard of care is the Clinical Trials Unit’s growing reputation as an industry leader. The team has been awarded ‘Favourite Investigational Site in Australia’ four times by peak body Association of Regulatory and Clinical Scientists (ARCS) Australia (2014, 2017-2019). Dr Elliott says that while the team is proud of the recognition by their peers, it is the feedback from their patients that is the biggest motivator in their work.

“The team is very supportive of patients, which you can see means a lot to them. The team and patients journey together through the ups and down of the disease and the treatment,” Dr Elliott says.



**“Not every trial is going to be a success, but you have to do the research. It’s the path of discovery that produces the cure.”**

Dr Suzanne Elliott

“Even when the people have finished the trial, and might still be on treatment, they always come in to say hello and thank you.”

As well as providing excellent care to patients, we’re also expanding our reach through our involvement in the Ramsay Health Care Clinical Trials Network. With over 10 centres around Australia, the network is improving patient access to clinical trials, speeding up start-up processes for new sites and enabling trials to commence sooner.

“It’s a fantastic initiative. We give each other a helping hand and together we can increase patients’ access to new treatments with sites across Australia.”



# Behind the scenes on a clinical trial



**"It's not just about doing your job. We are the bridge between patient, doctor and trial."**

Pavithra Ilanko

**Have you ever wondered what it's really like taking part in a clinical trial? While the outcome might be focused on new treatments, for our team it is all about the patients.**

Pavithra Ilanko shares her experience as a new coordinator in the Clinical Trials Unit.

**In a snapshot, what's involved in a clinical trial for patients?**

Once the patient has been screened for eligibility, treatment commences. That can either be here at the hospital or arranged for the patient to have at home. We're then constantly checking in, monitoring patients and reporting back to the doctor. The trial might go for months or even years, then we follow-up after the trial to see how patients are going.

**What outcome are you hoping for when you commence a new trial?**

I hope our patients do well on trial, and that the results will lead to the treatment becoming registered and

then available on the Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme (PBS).

**What's the feeling like for patients undergoing treatment?**

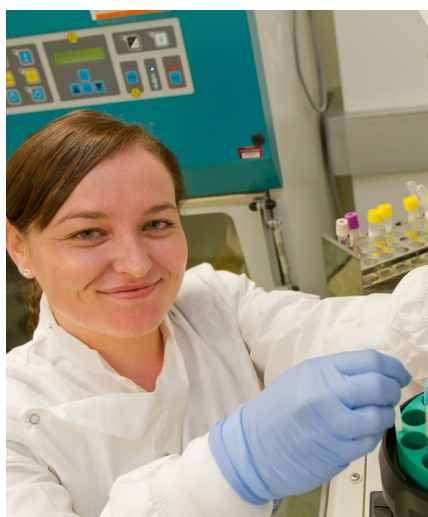
The illness and treatment can take a huge toll. I've been there when patients are being told they've got cancer and it's very emotional. But there can also be a feeling of positivity on trial. A lot of people feel good about contributing to something that could help the community.

**What makes a good clinical trials coordinator?**

It's about more than administering a drug or collecting data. We are the bridge between patient and doctor. Here at GMRF it's all about supporting the individual. We get to know patients when they're on trial and we want the best outcome for them.

**Find out more about our Clinical Trials Unit by visiting: [www.gallipoliresearch.com.au/Clinical-Trials-Unit](http://www.gallipoliresearch.com.au/Clinical-Trials-Unit)**

We don't do it for the thanks, but we do love hearing the difference a clinical trial has made to our patients. Thank you notes cover walls in the CTU to inspire the team while they work.



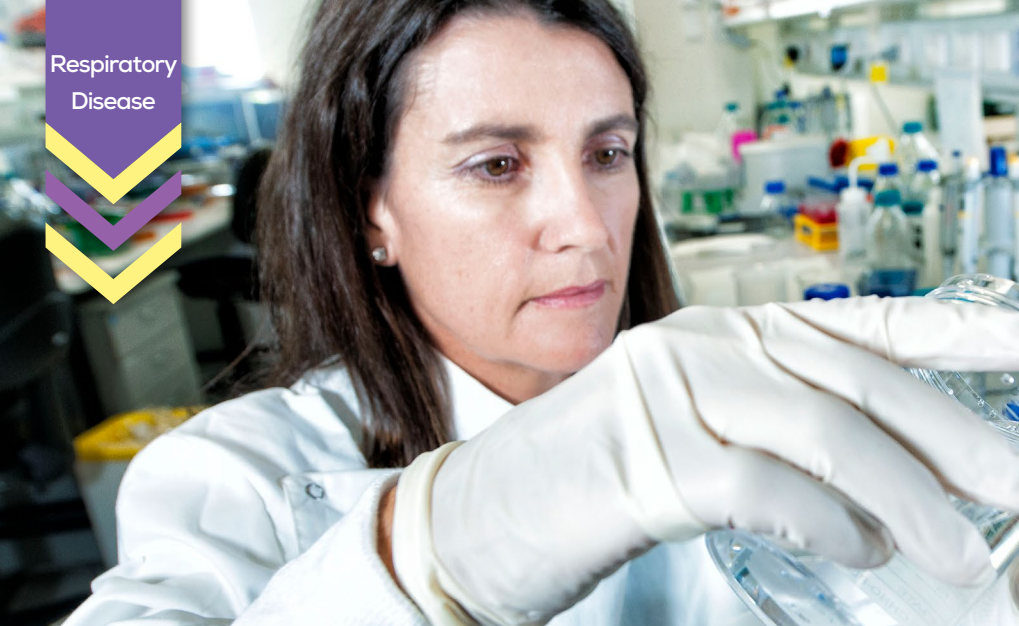
## The CTU cured over 70 patients of Hep C from 2006 - 2014.

**Part of the GMRF Clinical Trials team since 2010, Jessica Eedy has seen patients' lives transformed by clinical trials. She worked as a coordinator on some of the 20 international clinical trials in Hepatitis C conducted at GMRF.**

"It was wonderful to be involved in something that changed lives so

dramatically. Previous injection-based treatments had a lot of side-effects or they just didn't work. The new oral medication was better tolerated and more effective. All of a sudden we were able to cure people.

"It was a huge moment for our patients to be able to say, after years of suffering, 'I don't have this anymore – it's gone,'" Jessica says.



**“Without research into new treatments, vulnerable people with chronic lung diseases, or those with impaired immune systems, will continue to be infected and may pass the disease on to others.”**

## Making great strides in improving lung health

**Over the past nine years, GMRF has been working to improve Australia’s lung health by targeting two respiratory illnesses that are rising in prevalence and impacting vulnerable members of our communities.**

Following generous support of GMRF donors, leading respiratory physician, Associate Professor Rachel Thomson, established the Respiratory Research Unit in 2011. The unit’s goal was to better understand and treat bronchiectasis (lung disease caused by chronic inflammation and/or infection)

and non-tuberculous mycobacteria (organisms found in soil, dust and water that can cause lung infections and bronchiectasis).

In 2013, the unit published the first Australian study to document pathogenic mycobacteria in the Brisbane drinking water distribution system. The unit made a major breakthrough in understanding the development of these devastating infections. The unit is continuing genetic sequencing of patient samples and water sampling of distribution systems

in Brisbane and other cities.

The unit has been instrumental in the establishment of the first Australasian Bronchiectasis Registry. This will further the understanding and awareness of this condition and give patients access to new treatments.

In 2019, the unit was selected to be the first site worldwide to trial a novel intervention for refractory mycobacteria infections. This study will start recruiting in early 2020.

**Read more about this work at [www.gallipoliresearch.com.au/respiratory](http://www.gallipoliresearch.com.au/respiratory)**

## Research beyond our labs

**We have greater impact when we work together. That’s why, thanks to our generous donors, we are committed to supporting research projects beyond the GMRF laboratory.**

- In 2010, GMRF worked with the Wound Management Cooperative Research Centre and investigated skin tears and a moisturisation routine for patients. Published in 2018, the findings showed a significant reduction in skin tears.
- In 2013, GMRF funded two cancer research projects investigating diagnostic tools for earlier interventions in oral cavity cancer

and prostate cancer.

- In 2015, Dr Luke Hourigan was awarded a grant to investigate new endoscopic techniques to reduce the risk of large bowel polyps (pre-cancerous lesions) recurring. The findings showed the technique resulted in a fourfold reduction in adenoma recurrence.
- Dr Hourigan has commenced a new study into Barrett’s Oesophagus (BO), a precursor to a cancer called oesophageal adenocarcinoma (OAC). The study will help identify at-risk patients for earlier detection and identify optimal treatment



Dr Hourigan presenting his research at the GMRF Research Awards Night 2017

options for OAC.

- With the help of a GMRF research assistant, Dr Victoria Atkinson is establishing a Melanoma Database to capture information from newly diagnosed, malignant melanoma patients. The aim of this project is to identify further areas of clinical research.





**I was recently diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. The prognosis has created a lot of grief and sadness for me. I'm looking forward to the Pilot Program to see how it can help me cope, and maybe I will also be able to help someone in the same boat as me."**

Alex, Men's Cancer Wellness  
Pilot Program Participant

## A tailored approach to cancer care for men

**Cancer can affect every facet of your life — your job, mood, relationships, your mental health. With so much going on, support is critical. For a lot of men, asking for help can be difficult at the best of times, and a battle with cancer is not the best of times.**

We know treating cancer needs a holistic approach. That's why we are proud to fund the Cancer Wellness Program at Greenslopes Private Hospital, offering free advice and support to patients and their families.

Now, a whole new level of care is being offered to men with cancer, thanks to a community support initiative of the Rotary Club of Carindale who partnered with George Hartnett Metropolitan Funerals to fund a pilot program.

Launched in February, the Men's Cancer Wellness Pilot Program covers topics such as:

- Exercise (in theory and practice)
- Relaxation and yoga
- Healthy eating (complete with cooking demonstration!)
- Relationships and sexuality
- Living well and goal setting
- Visit to Men's Shed

Cancer Wellness Program Coordinator  
Amanda Lucas says the benefit of

the program will extend far beyond information and advice.

"A lot of men feel really isolated following their cancer diagnosis. This program will give men a sense of community as well as strategies to improve wellbeing and assist in their recovery," Amanda says.

Rotary Club of Carindale Community Services Chair, Marie Turner, has been championing a men's program since the Cancer Wellness Program itself was launched in 2017.

"Everyone knows someone who has gone through cancer. Our Rotarians are really proud to provide such practical support," Marie says.

George Hartnett Metropolitan Funerals representative, Toni Boydston, says their support of the program is part of a long-standing commitment to their local community.

"There can be a lack of support around grief and wellness for families battling cancer. The program resonated with us and we're delighted to help," Toni says.

**The Cancer Wellness Program is made possible by generous people like you. To find out more or to support the Program, visit [www.gallipoliresearch.com.au/cancer-wellness/](http://www.gallipoliresearch.com.au/cancer-wellness/)**

**"There aren't many programs designed for men with cancer. This program is about so much more than education. It will help men throughout their cancer journey."**

Amanda, Cancer  
Wellness Program  
Coordinator



Cancer Wellness Coordinators Amanda and Rane updating our generous donors.

**The Men's Cancer Wellness Pilot Program has been made possible by the generosity of:**

**Rotary**  **Club of Carindale**

 **George Hartnett  
Metropolitan Funerals**

# Partners in Discovery

## Research is in the DNA at Greenslopes Private Hospital

**When you make a donation to GMRF's work, 100% goes directly to research, not our administrative expenses.**

**Greenslopes Private Hospital helps us keep this promise.**

Partners from the beginning, Greenslopes Private Hospital (GPH) helped establish GMRF in 2005 from the previous research centre located at the hospital.

"The support of the hospital goes far beyond their in-kind support," GMRF CEO Miriam Dwyer says. "It really is their whole attitude to research that has shaped our progress."

GPH's commitment has been unwavering. From facilitating clinical trials, event support, IT infrastructure, to engaging staff in research through our Innovation Grants Program, and so much more."

GPH CEO Chris Went says supporting medical research is part of the hospital's DNA.

"We are really excited to be partnering with GMRF. It feels like even after 15 years we're only just getting started in the impact we can make together!"

Our partnership extends beyond the walls of GPH thanks to the support of parent company Ramsay Health Care.

Ramsay Health Care provided seed-funding to launch GMRF, and their support has only increased. Recently, the Ramsay Hospital Research Foundation confirmed funding for a new research project into medication use of veterans with PTSD.



**"We want to give hope to our patients. We do this by improving patient outcomes, advancing clinical trials, and having research on site,"**

GPH CEO Chris Went



## Committed to discovery since day one

**Our confidence in taking on some of the biggest health issues of our time is strengthened by having founding Discovery Partners like Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology by our side.**

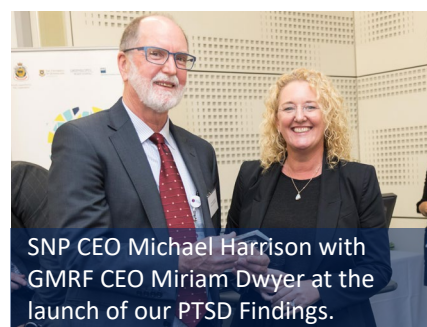
"Our research progresses because of long-term, committed partners like Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology. They've been along for the ride the whole time and they really believe in what we're doing," GMRF CEO Miriam Dwyer says.

As well as providing financial and in-kind support, Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology (SNP) works side by side with our researchers and clinicians. When we needed to test and analyse blood samples from 300 Vietnam veterans,

they were there. When we conduct clinical trials, they're there, putting their world-class innovative pathology testing to work to help our clinicians.

"SNP are integral in the clinical trials," Associate Director of Clinical Trials Dr Suzanne Elliott says. "Their fast-turn around of biopsy samples speeds up the whole clinical trials process."

Their partnership is evident in virtually every aspect of GMRF's work, and we are very grateful for their steadfast support!







### Thynne + Macartney celebrates four years of partnership with Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation.

Since 2016, Thynne + Macartney has been a proud Discovery Partner of GMRF. Commitment to the community is a part of Thynne + Macartney's DNA and by contributing to GMRF they help the Foundation to continue to progress innovative and life-changing medical research supporting veterans and the wider community.

It's more than just giving back to the community. One of Thynne + Macartney's founders, Andrew Thynne, was Chairman of the Recruiting Committee during WWI and played an instrumental role in the beginnings of Anzac Day. The partnership with GMRF furthers Thynne + Macartney's historical support of veterans.

Thynne + Macartney's Discovery Grant provides recipients with the opportunity to convert their innovative ideas to improve outcomes for patients and carers into reality. During the past four years, Thynne + Macartney have been a part of the following projects which have changed lives.

## 2016: Investigating the use of Cognitive Processing Therapy for the treatment of PTSD

Senior Occupational Therapist Karen Lochlan led a team from the Keith Payne Unit (KPU) to investigate the implementation of cognitive processing therapy for veterans with PTSD.

### IMPACT



This therapy continues to be offered at KPU to this day.

## 2017: Reducing the rate of readmission to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU)

Nurse Unit Manager Liz Lane implemented a patient liaison service to follow up patients after discharge from the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The aim was to reduce the rate of readmission and enhancing post ICU patient care and outcomes.

### IMPACT

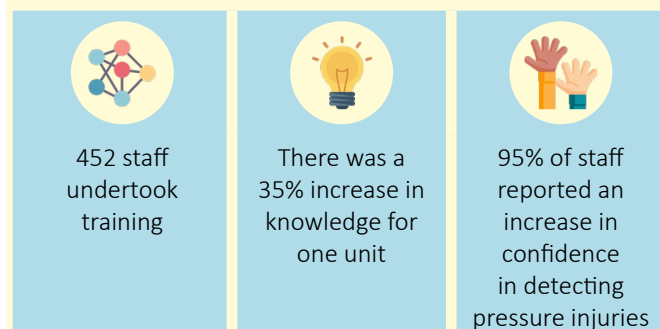


Implementation of a full-time service is under consideration.

## 2018: Pressure Injury prevention, management and education

Nurse Unit Manager Catherine Stewart launched a new education program to improve staff recognition and early intervention of hospital acquired pressure injuries.

### IMPACT



The education program has now been implemented one day a week as a hospital-wide initiative.

## 2019: Education to improve Junior Medical Officers (JMOs) communication skills with patients

Medical Education Coordinator Dr Tracey Papinczak is conducting a project to improve communication skills among JMOs as well as support an inclusive workplace. Six interactive online modules have been developed and will be released late March. Workshops will be run from March to August. A reflective session with interns was well received.

Outcomes to be presented in November 2020.

# Our community

## 5 things we've learned from our community

Our community of individuals, families, community groups and businesses are the heart of everything we do. We've achieved a lot thanks to our community, and we've also learned a lot from them along the way!



1

### Don't underestimate the power of a warm welcome!

Since 2007, Alma, affectionately known as Honey, has opened up her beautiful garden in Toowoomba and raised over \$30,000 for our cancer research.



2

### Surround yourself with people who really care.

Kedron-Wavell RSL Sub-Branch and Greenbank RSL Sub-Branch are all about veterans helping veterans. The two sub-branches have donated a combined \$80,000 since 2006.



3

### Hard times can lead to something good

The family and friends of Col Shields, who passed away from cancer in 2012, have come together every year for a round of golf in support of GMRF's cancer research.



4

### People can inspire those around them

Emma set up a fundraising page and committed to running the Dublin Mini Marathon to raise funds for the Cancer Wellness Program at Greenslopes Private Hospital which supports cancer patients like her Dad.



5

**Think big!** The NFIA Patrons Walk for Charity set a big goal to support GMRF and UQ's Queensland Brain Institute in 2019. Through the efforts of 10 trekkers, they raised their fundraising target four times, eventually raising over \$255,000! They're set to do it again this year, with 20 trekkers walking for charity through the Bay of Fires in Tasmania.





People-powered medical research: Discovery Partners at the 2018 Honour Board Event

Over the past 15 years, our growing list of Discovery Partners has inspired our progress. These generous individuals, community groups and organisations have made significant contributions to medical research and support initiatives. When we discover future treatments

we will remember our Discovery Partners as the ones who helped make it all possible!

**"We gave in memory of my son, David, to honour his interest in research and to do something to help other families."**

Gwen, Discovery Partner

## Remembering one of our greats

**When we think about our supporters, a lot of very special people come to mind, but there is perhaps no bigger character than World War I widow and GMRF Founding Board Member, Jean Pockett. She passed away in 2018, but her legacy is indelible.**

Jean left a lasting gift to research in her Will, but that is only one aspect of why she will be so fondly remembered.

"Jean made a real mark on GMRF.

**"What you learn from people like Jean, it's what you bring to research. An eyes on the prize attitude and a real commitment to the cause."**

GMRF CEO Miriam Dwyer

I'll remember Jean for her wit, her fierce independence, and her love of bubbles and orange juice at board meetings!" CEO Miriam Dwyer says.



Miriam and Jean in Gallipoli, 2015



## The voice of GMRF

**Channel 7 Sports Reporter Pat Welsh has been a trusted and recognised voice of GMRF from day one. When he heard about a new research centre seeking directors for the board, he didn't hesitate to get involved.**

"Dad served in New Guinea, and Greenslopes Private Hospital has been good to our family, so it wasn't a hard ask!" Pat says.

"I was a bit nervous at first. You don't get many sports reporters on boards. GMRF have assembled a group of

brilliant and intimidating minds!"

Retired from the Board in 2014, Pat continues to champion the cause as an Ambassador. Through his media support, he was integral to the success of delivering our PTSD Initiative, which required over 300 Vietnam veterans.

Given his father's service, the veteran research struck a chord with Pat.

"Dad saw a lot of action and he lived in tough conditions over there, but he wouldn't talk about it. As a youngster growing up in Bundaberg, I wasn't really au fait with PTSD. I've got a better understanding now and I think it's wonderful how GMRF are working



Pat at the 2019 Research Awards Night

for veterans."

"The passion of all GMRF's supporters really stands out. The level of support really touches me and because they put their trust in us I know the team are keen to repay that faith."

## Celebrating 30 years of caring



The Diggers' Dozen presenting a donation to GMRF CEO Miriam Dwyer.

**If you have been to Greenslopes Private Hospital, chances are you've met the Diggers' Dozen. For 30 years, these wonderful volunteers have been**

**providing care for current patients and working tirelessly to help patients of the future.**

President Betty Jennings says that over the two decades she's served as a volunteer she's made a lot of good friends and fond memories.

"It's always been about the care. I've met some beautiful people here. You sit and talk to patients. Often they have come from out of town and they have no visitors. Just having a chat or giving someone a hug could make a huge difference to them," Betty says.

The Diggers' Dozen aren't just caring for patients now, they are looking after patients of the future through a staggering contribution to our medical research.

Since 2005, the Diggers' Dozen have donated over \$304,000! From bake sales, bookfests, raffles and other fundraising, the care of the Diggers' Dozen has shone through.

"I think it's incredible what our volunteers have achieved over the last 30 years," Betty says.

## Hope for the future

**Amanda Mason knows the power of medical research to change lives. She worked in the GMRF Clinical Trials Unit for over 10 years until 2019. She remains an important part of our community as a regular giver.**

"Donating to GMRF is very personal for me. My Nan passed away in January 2007. I started working at GMRF later that year. Nan had heard about GMRF and was interested as she had a granddaughter with stage 4 melanoma. To honour Nan, I started

donating to GMRF when I began working there.

I became a regular giver after a very dear friend was diagnosed with liver cancer. With GMRF having a Liver Research Unit, I saw how hard they worked and how dedicated the team were to fighting liver cancer. Though I no longer work at GMRF, I continue my donations because it gives me hope.

I knew my donations could not save my friend, so I hope for the future. I hope that one day we can improve the lives of those who are battling illnesses. I hope that one day we can find a cure. I know with each regular fortnightly



Amanda (centre top) with her Nan

donation I am helping to achieve this."

**Regular givers are vital to the progress of our research. Call Lisa Clifford, Foundation Administrator, on 07 3394 7284 to find out more.**



## Made to last

**Dennis knows about making things last. At 98 years old, he's testament to it himself. But more than his number of years, it's his attitude to work and the legacy he will leave behind that's going to really stand the test of time.**

Dennis grew up in an immigrant family during the Great Depression. At 20 years of age, he was called up to the Civilian Defence Force during World War II where he served in New Guinea, fighting in the Battle of Milne Bay.

After the war, Dennis started his own upholstery business from his parents' garage. Specialising in antiques restoration, the work he has done is fit for royalty and made to last.

"Problem was my work was too good so I didn't get repair jobs! But that's the beauty of a job well done. You do something you love and create something beautiful," Dennis says.

Naturally, Dennis wanted to put the fruits of his labour to good use. He has supported GMRF since 2005, inspired

by the excellent care he received at Greenslopes Private Hospital.

"I've had some battles with cancer, plus I'm a veteran. Supporting GMRF made sense to me," Dennis says.

Dennis has also made a special decision that, like the work of his craftsmanship, will last for future generations.

"I have left a gift in my Will because I wanted to make these decisions for myself. Once I ensured my family are supported, I know what I leave behind will really help people."

**To find out about leaving a lasting gift for future generations, contact Tracey Lowe, Community Engagement Coordinator, on 07 3394 7284.**



# Thanks to our community – changing lives for 15 years!







## You can change lives by supporting innovative research

### Make a donation

Every donation we receive helps us progress innovative medical research and life-changing support initiatives.

**You can help change lives by donating today.**



**Donate online at**  
[www.  
gallipoliresearch.  
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**Call us on**  
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QLD 4120



**Become a  
Regular Giver**  
A regular gift enables  
us to plan for the future  
and further progress  
our work.



**Hold a Fundraiser**  
A great way to bring  
friends and family  
together for a  
good cause.  
Ask us about ideas!



**Leave a  
Gift in your Will**  
Ask us about how you  
can leave a lasting gift  
for the health of future  
generations.

**100%**

**Our promise to you... 100% of your donation is used to change lives.**

The in-kind support we receive from Greenslopes Private Hospital, together with the income generated from our Clinical Trials Unit, covers our administration costs.

**Every cent you give goes to our medical research and support initiatives.**