

# Behavioural Sciences Unit (BSU) update

The BSU was established at the CCCBD in 2001. We look after research studies that cover all the psychosocial aspects of the paediatric cancer journey, from diagnosis to survivorship and bereavement. Current members include: Assoc Prof Richard Cohn, Claire Wakefield, Jennifer Cohen, Kate Lenthen, Catharine Fleming, Jordana McLoone, Ursula Sansom-Daly, Gunar Daniel and Su Lynn Yoong.

## Achievements

### Supportive Care in Cancer

Jennifer Cohen published an article looking at which oral nutrition supplements patients prefer when having chemotherapy. She found that children prefer fresh-milk supplements over UHT ones. The brand of the supplement is also important though, because when they knew the brand they were trying, kids preferred the ones you can buy in the supermarket, rather than hospital-made ones!



### Sydney Cancer Conference

Claire presented early results about how satisfied families are after treatment. She reported that

- Families are very appreciative of the support they receive after treatment, but some 'suffer in silence' because they don't want to burden staff.
- Many families are happy with their medical care, but would have liked more 'informal' support.
- Just a phone call to check how they are going would be much appreciated!
- Some families would like more warning about what it is like after treatment, and more information about fertility, signs of recurrence & late effects.

We are using this information to improve care for our next generation of families. **Thank you!**

Ursula presented her new project, called 'ReCaPTure LiFe: Skills for Survivorship', which will develop a new online support program for young people with cancer and their families after treatment finishes. We hope to invite families to participate in the program next year.



## Currently recruiting....

We have 3 studies looking for participants....

1. The nutrition study is looking at children's nutrition after cancer (contact: Jennifer Cohen, (02)9382 1372, [jennifer.cohen@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jennifer.cohen@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au)).
2. The psychosocial study is looking at the psychological impact of finishing treatment (contact: Dr Claire Wakefield, (02)9382 1444, [c.wakefield@unsw.edu.au](mailto:c.wakefield@unsw.edu.au)).
3. Siblings study: CanTeen is still looking for young people (aged 12-24) who have a brother or sister (of any age) who has been diagnosed with or treated for cancer in the last 5 years. If you would like to participate, please call Pandora Patterson on (02) 9262 1431, or email [research@canteen.org.au](mailto:research@canteen.org.au).



## Coming soon....

1. The sleep study will be commencing soon. This will be asking parents about their sleep experiences on the ward. Please contact Dr Jordana McLoone if you have any questions



about this study:  
(02) 9382 3423,  
[jordana.mcloone@unsw.edu.au](mailto:jordana.mcloone@unsw.edu.au)

2. Long term survivors: We will be surveying our long-term survivors (aged over 18) soon, asking them about their preferences for follow up care (contact: Dr Claire Wakefield, (02) 9382 1444, [c.wakefield@unsw.edu.au](mailto:c.wakefield@unsw.edu.au)).

**Thank you to all the families who participate in our projects, as we couldn't do our work without you!**



