

# Behavioural Sciences Unit (BSU) update

The BSU was established in 2001 by A/P Richard Cohn and is currently run by Claire Wakefield. We now have more than 20 members. Those recruiting for studies at present include Ursula Sansom-Daly, Leigh Donovan, Christina Signorelli, Alistair Lum, Brittany McGill, Eden Robertson, Lauren Touyz, and Joanna Fardell. Our research studies cover all psycho-social and nutritional aspects of the paediatric cancer journey, from diagnosis to survivorship and bereavement.

Check out our website! <http://www.behaviouralsciencesunit.org/>



Proudly supported by the Kids with Cancer Foundation

## New BSU blog...

The BSU launched a new blog this month. The aim of our blog is to keep families and other health researchers up-to-date with the work of the BSU, as it happens. Read more at: <http://www.behaviouralsciencesunit.org/blog>

## BSU annual afternoon tea...

The BSU hosted their first annual afternoon tea on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> of May, to celebrate the achievements of the Unit, and to acknowledge the contribution of staff and volunteers, past and present. The afternoon commenced with a music performance by one of our volunteers Chelsea Witham and was followed by presentations by four esteemed speakers who shared their research with us: Clinical Psychologists Dr Rose Cantali and Mr Adam Johns, adoption/orphan advocate Ms Janine Weir, and Professor of Clinical Psychology and Psychiatry, Prof Stephen Touyz. The afternoon was a great success!



Chelsea Witham

## In the Media...



Dr Ursula-Sansom Daly facilitated a symposium titled 'Promoting adaptive health behaviours in at-risk groups in paediatric/adolescent oncology' at the Australian Psychological Society (APS) College of Health Psychologists' 2015 annual conference. The symposium consisted of four BSU-led presentations and two guest speakers. Dr McLoone introduced the BSU and presented a talk on the psychosocial health and wellbeing of survivors, followed by Dr Sansom-Daly's presentation on health literacy and health-related communication in young adults with cancer. Ms McGill subsequently presented the promising results of the Cascade pilot study. Ms Signorelli concluded the BSU presentations with her presentation on the dental health behaviours of survivors and the impact of attending long term follow-up clinic for ongoing care. You can find out more about the symposium on the BSU blog.

## New study!

This study aims to examine the impact of serious illness on students' academic, social, and emotional factors within school as well as identifying school-related factors that prevent and promote student wellbeing and educational functioning. Parents of a child with any of the following serious illnesses are eligible to participate: cancer, persistent asthma, heart disease, kidney disease, cystic fibrosis, or gastrointestinal disease. To find out more please contact Alistair Lum at [a.lum@student.unsw.edu.au](mailto:a.lum@student.unsw.edu.au).



## Currently recruiting...

**Grandparents study:** We are looking for grandparents of children with cancer to evaluate a new information booklet designed specifically for grandparents. For further information, please contact Dr Joanna Fardell at [j.fardell@unsw.edu.au](mailto:j.fardell@unsw.edu.au) or on (02) 9382 3115.

**Recapture Life:** We are running a 6-week program aimed at improving quality of life, reducing distress and developing healthy coping skills in young cancer survivors aged 15-25 (who have finished treatment in the last 1-12 months). This program is led by a psychologist and delivered online. If you would like to participate, please contact Eden Robertson at [eden.robertson@unsw.edu.au](mailto:eden.robertson@unsw.edu.au) or on (02) 9382 3120.

**Cascade (Cope, Adapt, and Survive after Cancer):** The Cascade program is for parents of young cancer survivors (aged under 15, who have finished treatment in the last 1-12 months). If you would like to participate, please contact Eden Robertson at [eden.robertson@unsw.edu.au](mailto:eden.robertson@unsw.edu.au) or on (02) 9382 3120.

**Developing gold standard care for long term survivors of childhood cancer:** This study will help us improve the services provided at the long term follow-up clinic. It investigates the needs, preferences, and barriers to care among survivors. If you would like to participate, please contact Christina Signorelli at [c.signorelli@unsw.edu.au](mailto:c.signorelli@unsw.edu.au) or on (02) 9382 3115.



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