

Ground-breaking traumatic brain injury study begins at UniSA



Traumatic brain injuries (TBI) are the leading cause of death and disability in children here in Australia. Yet there is very little knowledge about what makes them so catastrophic for paediatric sufferers, and even less investigations into why and how.

TBIs are startlingly common. They can happen to anyone, at any time, with causes including falls, car accidents, assault, sport or being struck unexpectedly by objects. Children are among the most vulnerable and so is their fragile brain tissue and overactive inflammation responses.

That's why a team of South Australian neuroscientists and neurosurgeons, including UniSA's Dr Frances Corrigan, are teaming up to improve survival and recovery for children with a traumatic brain injury.

Their new research mission, the 'Paediatric Traumatic Brain Injury Project', was made possible thanks to funding from the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation (JDRF) and support from the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation (NRF).

The three-year funded project will test a promising therapeutic agent that could drastically reduce the devastating and irreparable damage in young head injury patients.

Led by UniSA neuroscientist and lecturer in Anatomy, Dr Frances Corrigan, the research will also utilise Australia's only pre-clinical paediatric brain injury model, developed in partnership with Adelaide University.



Dr Frances Corrigan in her lab at UniSA's Cancer Research Institute

"Paediatric head injury is a leading cause of death and long-term disability in children in Australia," says Dr Frances Corrigan who will work alongside Adelaide University neuroscientist Associate Professor Renee Turner and Adelaide neurosurgeon Associate Professor Amal Abou-Hamden on the project.

Each year around 3,700 Australian children suffer a head trauma that can lead to a severe brain injury possibly causing death or resulting in long-term disability. The younger the child, the higher the risk.

"Part of the problem is that brain trauma is incredibly complex to treat," says Dr Corrigan. "Particularly in paediatric patients."

"There is a wide difference in how these injuries might present. As trauma to the brain could be caused by a fall, a motor accident or an assault.

"The body's natural response to any injury is to trigger an inflammatory response – we see this with a sprained ankle where it becomes red and swollen. Unfortunately in the brain this swelling, called cerebral oedema, can cause a second assault on delicate brain tissue.

Therefore, as the brain is housed in the rigid confines of the skull, there is no room for the brain to expand causing pressure to build that if not treated quickly and aggressively can cause further injury.

"As much as 60% of paediatric head injury patients' brains are affected by this swelling, but identifying which patients will be at risk of further injury due to this swelling is currently difficult," says Dr Corrigan.



[From left to right] NRF Secretary & Executive Officer Ginta Orchard, NRF President Professor Bob Vink, JDRF Executive Director Kerry de Lorme, Associate Professor Renee Turner, JDRF Grants Manager Kiah Elsworth, Dr Frances Corrigan, and UniSA Pro Vice Chancellor: Health Sciences Professor Roger Eston at the official project launch, 19 August

"An added difficulty in treating these children is that their brains react very differently to trauma than adult brains, so a lot of the research that has been done in this field may not apply.

"We know that a key inflammatory mediator Substance P is involved in promoting the influx of water into the brain after injury. Children naturally have higher levels of this molecule which could be why we see more swelling in child head injury patients than in adults."

"Using our pre-clinical model we will test if a highly promising therapeutic called an NK1 antagonist, which can stop substance P from binding to its receptor to stop this swelling and improve recovery outcomes."

Through this work the team will also seek molecular markers so children at higher risk of severe brain swelling can be identified for more aggressive treatment sooner in order to promote survival and recovery.

"Each year it is estimated that 10 million people suffer a traumatic brain injury," says Ginta Orchard, NRF Executive Officer. "Around 500,000 of these will be children, ranging from tiny babies to teens."

"Currently there are no therapies to salvage brain tissue and improve the odds that children with severe brain traumas will survive or go on to live without some level of cognitive impairment.

"We are extremely grateful to the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation for understanding the critical nature of this work and partnering with us to improve outcomes for these children."

UniSA Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation, Professor Simon Beecham says, "Thanks to the \$214,500 grant from the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation and the ongoing support of the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation this important work will help save young lives."

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An eye for the Hong Kong marketing business



Ken Ip

Group Head of Marketing, B.S.C. Group Limited
Masters of Business Administration (MBA), International

Ken Ip has many talents. He's an accomplished musician – playing guitar, bass drums, and even beatboxing a little – a skilled Muay Thai boxer, a Wing Chun expert and instructor, a published author and columnist. But this wunderkind's marketing career is what has truly defied the odds.

With three degrees under his belt, all before the age of 30, including the University of South Australia's 5-star MBA, Ken has ascended the Hong Kong business ranks at a remarkable pace.

The self-described storyteller became the Group Head of Marketing at the B.S.C. Group Limited, the construction and interior fittings supplier and lifestyle brand, in February of this year after holding high-powered positions in other design and architecture-focused firms as a young 30 something.

When asked about this meteoric rise, Ken remains humble and attributes it to luck, but it's clear he has a shrewd business mind and knack for the marketing industry, knowing when to strike.

"I'm not advocating that someone goes around blindly taking on risky endeavours. But there is the common saying that goes: fortune often favours the brave. It has kind of been my mantra all these years.

"It is the knowledge of calculated risk that is essential to move up in the corporate ladder.

"Challenges and pressure come as you climb the corporate ladder. It's just part of life. To me, when the tough gets going, I just go get tough.

"A lot of it would have to do with luck as well I would say," he adds.



This tenacity and ambition was clear from a young age when Ken experience some less than favourable treatment throughout his time travelling the globe as a school-aged child.

"As an Asian kid growing up overseas I got picked on quite often. So my parents decided I should learn something as self-defence," he says.

"Even still to this day, I would go play Muay Thai on a weekly basis, and often spar with pro and amateur fighters. I believe all these have keep me grounded and taught me to be respectful, to myself and others."

Ken quickly found his niche in the understanding of human behaviour and social dynamics, and though he initially studied psychology, this foundation was instrumental in his development as a marketing and business doyen.

"I always felt I had a knack of reading and empathising with people, and hoped I could save the world," he says.

"But as I got older, I realised that you needed to attain a certain kind of power and influence in order to start making a difference. Hence, I ventured into the world of business, marketing and communications."

The B.S.C. Group's goal is to 'enrich human spaces' and as a result has been instrumental in the construction in some of Hong Kong's most impressive commercial, hospitality and residential properties, including the Landmark Mall, The Murray, The Rosewood Hotel Hong Kong, The Ritz-Carlton in Hong Kong and The Four Seasons in Macau, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

They have also recently moved into the styling space with the distinctive concept lifestyle store, COLOURLIVING, in the heart of Hong Kong spread across three levels and 2,000-square-metres "to bring you the latest handpicked collectible or must-have treasure, transforming spaces into distinctive homes".

As part of Ken's role as the Group Head of Marketing, he oversees the advertising, brand building, and creative strategy of these different departments which also encompass the RocaConcepts and B&B Italia furniture brands as well.



COLOURLIVING's partnership with design and lifestyle guru, Alan Chan at their flagship Hong Kong store

"I often tell people that I do two things, and two things only. I'm a storyteller. I tell stories, to connect brands with audience, and audience with brands," he says.

"I sometimes think of it as being a celebrity agent. I help ensure my 'clients' are seen or being exposed in the right place, at the right time. Getting auditions for leading roles and opportunities to shine at the Oscars... so to speak."

When thinking back to his time studying the MBA with UniSA and he recalls very fond memories and how the experience played a big part in shaping how he now interacts and comprehends the world.

"The MBA at UniSA was probably the best thing that happened to me," he says.

"It made me into the person I am today. Surprisingly, it taught me more street smart in the business world than one would expect. It also helped me figure out what I want to do in my career, and for the rest of my life.

"I still to this day really value and appreciate the experience, support and friendships."

Ken's professional life and teachings in an industry that has shown him how to be more open-minded, less critical and more appreciative, recently culminated when he was lucky enough to be an honourable guest at the Digital Marketing Leaders Summit in Hong Kong.

"I recently had the chance to share the stage with my former boss at a Digital Marketing Summit," he says.

"He was someone I really looked up to and learnt a lot from, and we are now peers within the industry."

In such a short space of time, Ken Ip has truly come a long way, with not only his eye for design, but knack for marketing and the Hong Kong business industry.

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1834 reasons to visit South Australia



Andrew Bullock
Chief Executive Officer, 1834 Hotels - 1834 Hospitality
Chair, South Australian Tourism Commission
Bachelor of Management (Tourism and Hospitality)

The South Australian tourism industry is thriving and passionate South Aussie, Andrew Bullock, has spent a good part of this century immersed in the business climbing the ranks at **1834 Hotels - 1834 Hospitality**, formerly known as Country Club Hotels & Resorts.

This experience, and knack for knowing what makes our state great, has also made him the perfect fit for his newest role, the Chair of the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) Board.

Before Andrew was heading the SATC Board,he began his career at Country Club Hotels & Resorts in 2002 while still studying at UniSA.

Throughout the two decades he has been a part of the company, he has been instrumental in the growth and expansion of the company across Australia and responsible for generation of annual sales in excess of \$100 million.

The 1834 Hotels network is a "holistic management service" that offers a range of accommodation – including the Mayfair Hotel, The Meridien, the Barossa Weintal Hotel and even more cafes, restaurants and bars, golf courses, function and wedding venues – dotted both regionally and in capital cities throughout the country.



The Mayfair Hotel on King William Street in Adelaide

After initially starting out in sales, Andrew was eventually promoted to the Group General Manager, with this role encompassing all operational aspects of the group of hotels and resorts. But then in 2008, at 29-years-old, he became the Chief Executive Officer after founder Ian Conolly, both a mentor and a friend, passed away.

Andrew still cites Ian, the banker turned manager, as “the most inspiring person he ever met” having had a significant impact his professional career and still holds his advice and guidance close to his heart.

“He taught me that you don’t have to be a dictator in business to get positive outcomes, you need to be firm however positive outcomes are always possible with a positive outlook,” he says.

As CEO, Andrew led the company through a number of developments and its increasingly diverse portfolio. When he started, the chain managed a network of four hotels – this number has now grown to 23. And now with almost 1000 staff employed under the 1834 banner, it makes them one of the largest regional tourism employers in South Australia.

Andrew didn’t always imagine himself playing such a pivotal role in the tourism sector though. It was only after becoming involved in the industry that he realised he had a passion and inherent knack for it.

In his two decades with the company, Andrew says the best part of his job has been the opportunity to work with the wide range of people he’s been in contact with and he’s particularly proud of watching the 1834 group develop and grow.



“I spent some time in sales initially before becoming involved at a more senior management level,” he says. “I became very enthusiastic about tourism and hospitality in South Australia for a number of reasons. As well as the terrific growth we have seen in recent years, one of the most exciting prospects is the capacity we have for further growth.”

“I often find myself thinking back on theory that I learned at uni and now use in day-to-day work. I believe having that background from UniSA has allowed me to progress much quicker in my career and development.”

On top of his work managing the operations and finances, and devising key business strategies for revenue growth at 1834 Hotels, last month Andrew was officially named as the Chair of South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) Board.

Here he will use his extensive experience and knowledge of the sector to fulfil the SATC’s mission to make South Australia a destination of choice for international and domestic visitors.

“Tourism is one of the most exciting industries to be a part of. For me one of the great advantages is the economic benefits it provides local economies by being a reliable and sought-after exporter of goods,” he says.

The visitor economy created by tourism is important because much of the economic benefit it brings to the state flows to regional communities and also has a positive impact on other industries such as agriculture, wine, retail, education, real estate and transport.

Looking forward, Andrew believes that nationally we are at the cusp of further strong growth in the international markets.



The Clare Valley Riesling Trail. Photo by SA Tourism Commission

“China is in incredible growth, now our challenge as a country is to ensure we continue to get our market share internationally and grow that market share,” he says.

“In South Australia the story is similar – we have seen terrific growth – now our challenge is to grow that further and see a greater market share of visitation to Australia visiting South Australia.

“As a potential net exporter the benefit and opportunity for the state is significant and in particular with the regional dispersal that tourism provides, we can see economic growth in regional South Australia from tourism activation.

“Tourism can also become the jobs of the future in areas that otherwise have limited opportunity.”

He’s right – who doesn’t want to go on a holiday?

As a seasoned tourism professional Andrew also knows a thing or two about hidden gems around the state too. He recommends the Riesling Trail next time you are looking to experience the best South Australia has to offer.

“There are so many wonderful spots in South Australia it would be hard to pick just one! I do have a soft spot for the Clare Valley – I think the opportunity to ride a bike along the Riesling Trail and pop into a few wineries on the way is such a terrific experience.”



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A cup of Joe and you’re good to go (Under 6 a day and you’re A-OK)



While the pros and cons of drinking coffee have been debated for decades, new research from the University of South Australia reveals that drinking six or more coffees a day can be detrimental to your health, increasing your risk of heart disease by up to 22 per cent.

In Australia, one in six people are affected by cardiovascular disease. It is a major cause of death with one person dying from the disease every 12 minutes. According to the World Health Organization, cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death, yet one of the most preventable.

Investigating the association of long-term coffee consumption and cardiovascular disease, UniSA researchers Dr Ang Zhou and Professor Elina Hyppönen of the Australian Centre for Precision Health say their research confirms the point at which excess caffeine can cause high blood pressure, a precursor to heart disease.

This is the first time an upper limit has been placed on safe coffee consumption and cardiovascular health.

“Coffee is the most commonly consumed stimulant in the world – it wakes us up, boosts our energy and helps us focus – but people are always asking ‘How much caffeine is too much?’” Prof Hyppönen says.



UniSA Professor Elina Hypponen, Centre Director: Australian Centre for Precision Health

“Most people would agree that if you drink a lot of coffee, you might feel jittery, irritable or perhaps even nauseous – that’s because caffeine helps your body work faster and harder, but it is also likely to suggest that you may have reached your limit for the time being.

“We also know that risk of cardiovascular disease increases with high blood pressure, a known consequence of excess caffeine consumption.

“In order to maintain a healthy heart and a healthy blood pressure, people must limit their coffees to fewer than six cups a day – based on our data six was the tipping point where caffeine started to negatively affect cardiovascular risk.”

Using UK Biobank data of 347,077 participants aged 37-73 years, the study explored the ability of the caffeine-metabolizing gene (CYP1A2) to better process caffeine, identifying increased risks of cardiovascular disease in line with coffee consumption and genetic variations.

Prof Hyppönen says that despite carriers of the fast-processing gene variation being four times quicker at metabolising caffeine, the research does not support the belief that these people could safely consume more caffeine, more frequently, without detrimental health effects.

“An estimated three billion cups of coffee are enjoyed every day around the world,” Prof Hyppönen says. “Knowing the limits of what’s good for you and what’s not is imperative.

“As with many things, it’s all about moderation; overindulge and your health will pay for it.”

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