

Project Number	Project Title	Project Summary
1	<p><b>The role of traditional medicine practice in primary health care within Aboriginal Australia</b></p> <p><i>Supervisor: Dr Alana Gall</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i></p>	<p>Ten years have passed since the publication of Oliver (2013) seminal review of literature exploring the role of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medicines (TM) in the primary health care (PHC) setting in Australia. Furthermore, several key national health policies* that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander PHC were developed alongside each other in 2021 and are due to replace existing policies in 2023 and beyond. This provides a unique opportunity to provide a snapshot of the role of TM in PHC prior to the implementation of these new policies, through updating Oliver (2013) review, and building on this review through screening of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services websites to explore current access to TM. [*National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021-2031; National Agreement on Closing the Gap; Australia's Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan 2022-2032(draft); National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030].</p>
2	<p><b>Self-care to prevent and treat COVID19 among migrants in NSW</b></p> <p><i>Supervisor: Dr Peter James</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i></p>	<p>COVID19 has significantly impacted people's health and well-being, and they have used self-care interventions to prevent or manage COVID19. Vulnerable populations such as migrants have been greatly impacted. However, little is known what selfcare practices are employed by this vulnerable subset of the population. This study aims to examine the selfcare practices used by migrants to prevent and treat COVID19.</p>
3	<p><b>Analysis of disciplinary cases and case law in integrative medicine</b></p> <p><i>Supervisor: Prof Jon Wardle</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i></p>	<p>Integrative medicine is meant to combine the best of conventional and complementary approaches to healthcare. However, a major barrier to adoption is the orthodox hegemony of conventional medical practice, which can bring ideological opposition and conflict from the medical profession. One area where this conflict can materialise is in disciplinary hearings against medical doctors who use complementary medicines, often seen as being improper for medical practitioners by virtue of their unorthodox and nonevidence-based treatments that fall outside professional norms. This project will conduct a case analysis of disciplinary hearings related to integrative medical practice. This study will not only inform stakeholders on key developments in integrative medical practice but will also provide valuable insights which will inform regulation of complementary medicine professions, to ensure that regulation meets its mutual aims of respecting autonomous practice whilst supporting public interests.</p>

4	<b>Prophetic medicine practice in Australia</b>	Prophetic medicine or Medicine of the Prophet (Peace be upon him) comprises the divinely inspired words of therapy of Prophet Muhammad. Despite widespread practice little is known about the actual supply, and uptake of Prophetic medicine practices in Australia. This project aims, via a literature review or social media analysis, aims to identify common practices in Australia. The project can be focused on specific interventions, for example Hijama (cupping), or around religious practices such as Ramadan.
	<i>Supervisor: A/Prof Romy Lauche</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i>	
5	<b>Dietary patterns in the aftermath of the 2022 floods in Northern New South Wales</b>	Individuals affected by natural disasters such as floods often face many challenges, including loss of housing and property, financial difficulties, and mental health problems. Emerging evidence demonstrates that diet plays a significant role in mental health outcomes, including depression and anxiety. However, relatively little is known on how natural disasters effect dietary change in flood affected individuals and the impact these changes have on mental wellbeing. Therefore, we aim to investigate these research questions in flood affected residents of NSW via an online cross-sectional questionnaire. This will provide crucial information on how flood disasters impact diet quality and the potential consequences for mental health. It will also provide guidance for future targeted diet interventions/programs for flood affected individuals within the community. (This project requires HREC approval, which will be acquired prior to the project)
	<i>Supervisor: Jessica Bayes</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: A/Prof Romy Lauche</i>	
6	<b>Cannabinoids in hemp, analysis and antimicrobial perspective</b>	Hemp has been approved to use as food and medicinal products recently in Australia. Cannabinoids (e.g. CBD) in hemp have proven effects to treat epilepsy and are studied to treat other conditions such as Parkinson's disease, diabetes, and anxiety. Hemp extracts have also shown their antimicrobial potential which can be applied not only in medications but to many other products we use every day (soap, body wash, washing powder etc.). Cannabinoids in hemp could be responsible for the antimicrobial activity. This project aims to develop a fast analytical chemistry method to quantify cannabinoids in hemp and hemp products and evaluate the antimicrobial potential of hemp phytochemicals via literature review and pilot experiment.
	<i>Supervisor: Dr Ben Liu</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: Dr Andrea Bugarcic, Kate Summer</i>	
7	<b>Kombucha – the stuff that dreams are made of?</b>	Over the last decade, the interest in traditionally fermented foods has grown substantially, with the underlying assumptions of that they can lead to significant health benefits through the beneficial influences of bacteria and yeast on the digestive microbiome. Kombucha is a drink made by symbiotic fermentation of sugared tea using symbiotic cultures of bacteria and yeast, the so-called <i>mother</i> or <i>mushroom</i> . Claims include positive impact on the gut microbiome, and health resources suggest that Kombucha boosts the immune system, aids in digestive problems, and improves overall health, however little evidence is available to support these claims. This study aims to assess self-reported changes in health, and well-being following Kombucha consumption. Using an online survey, adults consuming Kombucha will be asked to complete a questionnaire on their health status and observed changes with consumption. The student will help develop the questionnaire, drive recruitment, and analyse the data under guidance. (This project requires HREC approval, which will be acquired prior to the project)
	<i>Supervisor: A/Prof Romy Lauche</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i>	

8	<p><b>Folk medicine and medicinal plant use in Australia: A Cross-Cultural Historical Study</b></p> <p><i>Supervisor: Prof Jon Wardle</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i></p>	<p>Australia is an ancient land with a unique floral heritage that was readily exploited by Indigenous peoples and that excited and intrigued the early European explorers and scientists, and other early immigrant arrivals from India and China. An impressive Indigenous materia medica (a collective knowledge about the therapeutic properties of any substance used for healing) had been developed prior to European colonisation, and the breadth of this knowledge and the potential of new resources offered by the new continent was immediately evident to European colonisers. However, such potential was left largely unrealised by the official medical community for a variety of reasons, including: dismissal of Indigenous knowledge by early colonists, the lack of a significant local publishing industry and reliance on imported medical literature and the lack of local medical schools or systematic organisation of local medical professions with associated reduced research capacity in medical botany and reliance on foreign medical practitioners who were unfamiliar with Australia's native materia medica. However, lay populations enthusiastically embraced native medicinal plants, and lay media reported a variety of uses. This project will explore how early colonial settlers interacted and engaged with native Australian medicinal plants by examining historical documents and early newspaper reports.</p>
9	<p><b>Interweaving narratives: Co-producing mental health social work curricula</b></p> <p><i>Supervisor: Dr Louise Whitaker</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: Dr Meaghan Vosz, Jessica Jeffreys, A/Prof Matthew Leach</i></p>	<p>Co-production involves people who use services, including social work and educational services, in service design. The SWRK3001 Social work Practice III – Mental Health curriculum was designed and delivered in accordance with co-production principles. The curriculum was developed and delivered by colleagues drawing on lived experience of mental distress and recovery, alongside experience and expertise in social work and community work. With a view to furthering co-production, this curriculum review will incorporate the views of a social work student who has completed the unit.</p> <p>Using cooperative inquiry, this study explores experiences of learning and teaching with co-produced mental health social work curriculum, interweaving perspectives of a social work student, a lived experience academic, a mental health social work practitioner and a social work academic.</p> <p>During the project, the social work student will be invited to a) review literature about co-production in mental health social work education and practice; b) participate in weekly collective critical reflection meetings about the experience of learning in SWRK3001 Social work Practice III – Mental Health curriculum; and c) co-author a manuscript reporting the study's findings.</p>
10	<p><b>Complementary and integrative medicine use in Australian hospitals</b></p> <p><i>Supervisor: Prof Jon Wardle</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i></p>	<p>Complementary medicine use is surging in Australia, yet most of this growing use has been confined to private practice that is not subsidised by public health schemes. However, there are pockets of integration in both Commonwealth and State-funded health systems. Complementary medicine is significantly integrated and documented in hospitals in numerous countries, yet the presence of complementary therapies in the Australian hospital system remains largely unknown. This project utilises similar approaches to studies in Norway, Canada, and the United States to systematically map complementary medicine integration of complementary therapies in the Australian public and private hospital settings.</p>

11	<b>Exploring traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medicines inclusion in Australian public health policies</b>	Anecdotal accounts speak to the inconsistent and somewhat non-existent presence of the inclusion of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medicines (TM) in Australian health policies, at both the national and state/territory level. The lack of guidance around TM in Australia through inclusion in policy impacts both the health practitioner (HP) and the health consumer (HC), through the compounding intersection of HPs not feeling equipped or supported to advise/discuss TM, and HCs not feeling safe to disclose their use of TM. Furthermore, this leads to the potential for unsafe interactions between the two models of care, TM and biomedical, resulting in potential harm to HCs. This project aims to bridge this knowledge gap through screening Australian public health policies for the inclusion of TM, and where included, providing an overview of how TM is presented using reflexive thematic analysis of all TM content.
	<i>Supervisor: Dr Alana Gall</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i>	
12	<b>Impact of pregnant and breastfeeding mother's diet to children's health in first years of life - A systematic review</b>	The research will investigate and review the available scientific literature, pertaining to epidemiological studies linking early-life children's health and nutritional choices of expecting and nursing women. The student will be expected to gather and discuss the scientific evidence into a short report.
	<i>Supervisor: A/Prof Renaud Joannes-Boyau</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i>	
13	<b>Traditional Health Practitioners' service utilization for children with acute childhood illnesses in Sierra Leone</b>	Current estimates suggest that Sierra Leone's under-5 child mortality rate (122 per 1000 live births) is one of the highest in the world. Acute respiratory infection (ARI), Malaria and diarrhea are considered one of the leading causes of under-five deaths. Seeking healthcare for sick children is considered necessary in reducing under-five mortality. No nationally representative study exists that examines the healthcare-seeking pattern and associated factors. Also, no Sierra Leonean study has specifically examined the proportion of mothers/caregivers who seek the service of a traditional health practitioner. Given that traditional medicine is used every day in Sierra Leone, it is essential to understand the magnitude and characteristics of mothers/caregivers who seek care from a traditional health practitioner for their child's illness (Diarrhea and Fever/Cough). Using the most recent available DHS datasets from Sierra Leone, this study will examine traditional health practitioners' service utilization for children with acute childhood illnesses (Diarrhea and Fever/Cough) in Sierra Leone.
	<i>Supervisor: Dr Peter James</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i>	
14	<b>Integrative medicine prevalence and utilisation in international military and veteran settings and communities</b>	Some global surveys have found use of complementary medicine by military personnel to be significantly higher than CM use in the civilian population. Some military health systems have responded to this high level of use by integrating CM into health care delivery, including recommendations by NATO to integrate CM where appropriate. However, despite significant levels of integration of CM into military health care delivery in some countries such as the US and India, there appears to have been little integration of CM into the treatment of Australian military personnel. To date there have been no studies examining the impact of integrating CM into healthcare for Australian military personnel and veterans, and no systematic evaluation of integration of CM in military and veteran populations globally. This project conducts an international systematic review of CM in military and veteran populations.
	<i>Supervisor: Prof Jon Wardle</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: Dr Jessica Bayes, A/Prof Romy Lauche</i>	

15	<b>A mixed-method study exploring compassion-based strategies in the early postpartum period</b>  <i>Supervisor: Dr Julia Caldwell</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i>	<p>This project will utilise data from the supervisor's PhD study, a mixed-method, longitudinal project, exploring shame, compassion, and psychological adjustment at 3 time points (pregnancy 3rd trimester, 3 and 6 months postnatal). This project involves quantitative (online survey) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews) data.</p> <p>Compassion is related to better psychological adjustment to motherhood, and the evidence for compassion in the perinatal period is mounting. The relationships between the three compassionate flows (capacity to give compassion to the self [self-compassion], to others [giving compassion], and receive from others [receiving compassion]) and maternal mental health in the early postpartum period is not known. The aim of this research project is to build upon knowledge gaps in the early postpartum. This is a key time for early intervention to reduce, or circumvent, the impact of psychological distress on mothers and their babies. <i>Research Question 1.</i> What is the relationship between compassionate flows and psychological health in women at 3 months postpartum? This will involve a correlational analysis of 60 surveys completed by women at 3 months postpartum. <i>Research Question 2.</i> What are the perspectives of women on the relationship between compassionate flows and their postpartum mental health? This will involve thematic analysis of two questions in the interview data completed by 14 women at 3 months postpartum. Taken together, the knowledge will contribute to better integration of women's perspectives and psychological outcomes with compassion therapy. It is anticipated that we will work on publication and, if time permits, a scoping review of the literature on compassion interventions for the early postpartum period.</p>
16	<b>Social media content of yoga for weight loss</b>  <i>Supervisor: A/Prof Romy Lauche</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i>	<p>Overweight and obesity are major challenges for individuals and the health care system. Complementary medicine interventions may assist with a healthy lifestyle to approach excess weight, most therapies however still lack unequivocal evidence to support their use. One area where claims are potentially exaggerating evidence, is yoga. This project aims to examine social media advertisement for yoga classes targeting adults with overweight and obesity, to critically examine what claims are made, and how they are supported by current evidence.</p>
17	<b>A qualitative study to capture participants' experiences and perceptions about herbal and nutritional products to improve flood-related stress and anxiety</b>  <i>Supervisor: Dr Kirstine Shrubsole</i> <i>Co-Supervisor: A/Prof Romy Lauche, Dr Alana Gall</i>	<p>Involving end-users (such as consumers and other key stakeholders) is critical to successful implementation of evidence-based healthcare into practice. Too often there is a failure to include end-users in the development stages of treatment, which leads to implementation issues in the long-term. Therefore, it is recommended that implementation considerations are identified early through end-user engagement. NCNM is currently conducting a trial to examine the potential benefits of herbal and nutritional products on flood-related increased stress and anxiety. A total of 100 participant will complete this trial. With this summer project we aim to explore the participants' perceptions of the trial and factors impacting their involvement in order to understand trial outcomes and inform future implementation. For this purpose semi-structured interviews will be conducted with arounds 20 participants at the completion of the study to explore their perceptions, and experiences with the trial, and the interventions. These will be recorded, transcribed, and analysed using thematic content analysis. (This project requires HREC approval, which will be acquired prior to the project)</p>

18	<p><b>Prevalence, patterns, and predictors of complementary medicine use</b></p> <p><i>Supervisor: A/Prof Romy Lauche</i>  <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i></p>	<p>Complementary medicine is being used worldwide. Various public datasets are available, examining the use of conventional and complementary medicines. Through associations with sociodemographic characteristics, and health status it allows for a better understanding of the reasons why complementary medicines are being used, how they are being used, and what the experiences and outcomes of those interventions are. This project aims to examine the prevalence, patterns, and predictors of complementary medicine use in a country and population of the student's choice (tbd).</p>
19	<p><b>Systematic Literature review looking at different delivery methods for medicinal cannabis and their bioavailability.</b></p> <p><i>Supervisor: Dr Janet Schloss</i>  <i>Co-Supervisor: TBA</i></p>	<p>This project aims to conduct systematic literature review assessing information in the literature about different delivery methods of medicinal cannabis. Currently in Australia, there are several delivery methods available but not all delivery methods are effective or suitable for certain population groups. In addition, there is still stigma in regard to smoking or vaping cannabis. Alternative routes of administration other than inhalation that dominate the Australian medicinal cannabis market include oils, capsules, sublingual sprays, and some wafers, and limited transdermal gels, patches, and creams. In addition, suppositories or pessaries have been suggested. There is emerging evidence of the bioavailability of these methods but to date, no literature review has been conducted to consolidate this evidence.</p>