

Around the universities and research institutes



Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute has appointed Dr Alex Pinto as head of its new Cardiac Cellular Systems laboratory which aims to determine if pathological changes in

cardiac cell networks contribute to heart failure; and whether manipulating the cell network can influence cardiac remodeling to prevent and treat subsequent cardiac disease. Dr Pinto most recently led a research group at the Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor, Maine in the US. In addition to his role at the Institute, Dr Pinto has a joint appointment with **La Trobe University's** Centre for Cardiovascular Biology and Disease Research, and holds an affiliate position at the Jackson Laboratory — where he will maintain a funded research program — until the end of 2019. Key areas of ongoing research will include determining the plasticity and elasticity of cardiac cell networks in the context of physiological stressors such as obesity and hypertension; determining the molecular and cellular drivers of these processes; and development of unique genetic, computational biology, and imaging approaches to study diverse cell populations in the heart.

<https://baker.edu.au/news/institute-news/news-alex-pinto>



Professor Ricky Johnstone has been appointed Executive Director of Cancer Research at the **Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre**. He will also be the Head of the Sir Peter MacCallum Department of Oncology at the University of Melbourne.

Professor Johnstone has been acting in the EDCR role while Peter Mac undertook a global search to fill the position and has demonstrated his ability to lead the research team to high levels of performance. He was originally recruited to Peter Mac almost 18 years ago and has held senior leadership roles within the laboratory research domain for 10 years. As Head of the Gene Regulation Laboratory, Prof Johnstone holds a professorial appointment with the University of Melbourne and was appointed Associate Director Laboratory Research at Peter Mac in 2015. He takes over the role from Professor Joe Trapani who held the EDCR position since 2009. Prof Trapani is continuing to lead Peter Mac's groundbreaking immunotherapy research in his role as Head of Peter Mac's Cancer Immunology Program and Group Leader for the Cancer Cell Death Laboratory.

<https://www.petermac.org/news/new-head-cancer-research-peter-mac>



Dr Ashleigh Lin, Head of Mental Health and Youth research at the **Telethon Kids Institute** has won a \$716 000 grant from the NHMRC to investigate the social and emotional wellbeing and mental

health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or queer (LGBTIQ). Her project was one of five chosen following a targeted call by the NHMRC for research into Indigenous Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB). The chosen projects will share in a total of \$5.5 million of funding. Dr Lin and fellow Telethon Kids mental health researcher Dr Yael Perry will work with **Western Sydney University**, the Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre at **Murdoch University**, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ suicide prevention not-for-profit Black Rainbow to give a voice to young people whose experiences and needs have until now been poorly understood. Dr Lin said it was difficult to say how many young Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people aged 15-24 identified as LGBTIQ, but it was thought the figure likely exceeded 17 000 across Australia.

<https://www.telethonkids.org.au/news--events/news-and-events-nav/2018/august/research-to-investigate-needs-of-aboriginal-lgbtiq/>
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