

2025 Annual Report



Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies) acknowledges the people and Elders of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations who are the Traditional Owners of the land and seas of Australia.

Our vision To find enduring solutions to health problems that matter.

Our purpose To improve the health and wellbeing of people in our region through genuine partnerships, and excellence in research, translation and education.

Our values

- Quality:** we strive for excellence and rigour in everything we do.
- Integrity:** we are open, honest and transparent, and maintain the highest standards of governance, accountability and ethics.
- Relevance:** we concentrate on solving problems that matter. Our work is informed by the health needs and shared priorities of the people and communities with whom we work.
- Partnerships:** we seek to partner with communities, health and other service providers, policy-makers and other researchers.
- Innovation:** we embrace new approaches and technologies.
- Communication:** we maintain an ongoing dialogue with partners, stakeholders and the local and national community during the research process, from conception through to completion and translation of results.
- Accountability:** we take responsibility for our actions and results.

Find out more at menzies.edu.au

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this document may contain the names and images of people who have passed away.

Who we are

For four decades, Menzies has been at the forefront of health research, education and innovation working to reduce disparities and improve health outcomes for communities that need it most.

Our work spans infectious and chronic diseases, mental health, environmental health, maternal and child health, and beyond – translating cutting-edge research into practical solutions, shaping policy, and building capacity to create lasting impact.

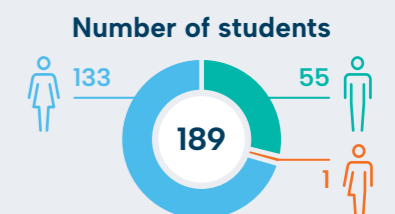
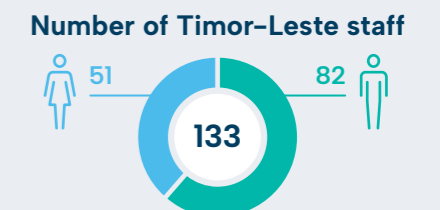
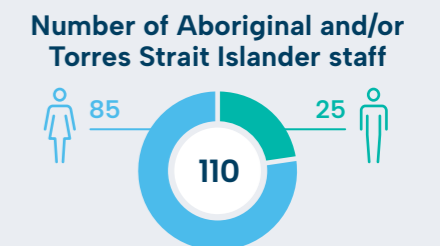
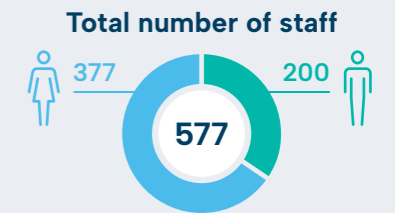
We solve health challenges through leading high-quality research. By providing education and capacity strengthening, we empower health professionals, policymakers, and communities to drive life-changing solutions. While founded in the Northern Territory, our impact is felt far beyond. We lead global efforts to fight life-threatening illnesses in the Asia-Pacific and across the world and train the experts of tomorrow – today.

We believe everyone should have access to high-quality healthcare – especially those who need it most. By joining scientific knowledge with shared wisdom, we help to close the gap, creating healthier communities for all. A true measure of what we do lies in building strong collaborations and creating meaningful employment opportunities for people affected by our work. After all, it takes local insights combined with scientific knowledge to create lasting change.

Our mission is simple – to shape a healthier, more equitable future where every community can thrive.



Dr Ludwig Hoon and Dr Anjana Rai on site at Menzies Laboratory, Garramilla (Darwin).



Where we work

Menzies leads world class research that influences national and global health policy, transforms services, and improves lives across some of the most remote regions on Earth. We do this through our deep connections and decades-long commitment to our region.

Headquartered in the Northern Territory, with offices in Garramilla (Darwin) and Mparntwe (Alice Springs), our work spans central and northern Australia. In partnership with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) and Health Services, we support community-led efforts to improve health outcomes across the region and contribute to Closing the Gap.

Our reach extends beyond Australia through long-standing global collaborations and a strong commitment to working with our near neighbours to address shared health challenges. With an office in Dili, Timor-Leste, through our local workforce we work side by side with the Timor-Leste Government, as well as hospitals and laboratories, to strengthen national health systems while supporting communities to lead locally driven solutions.

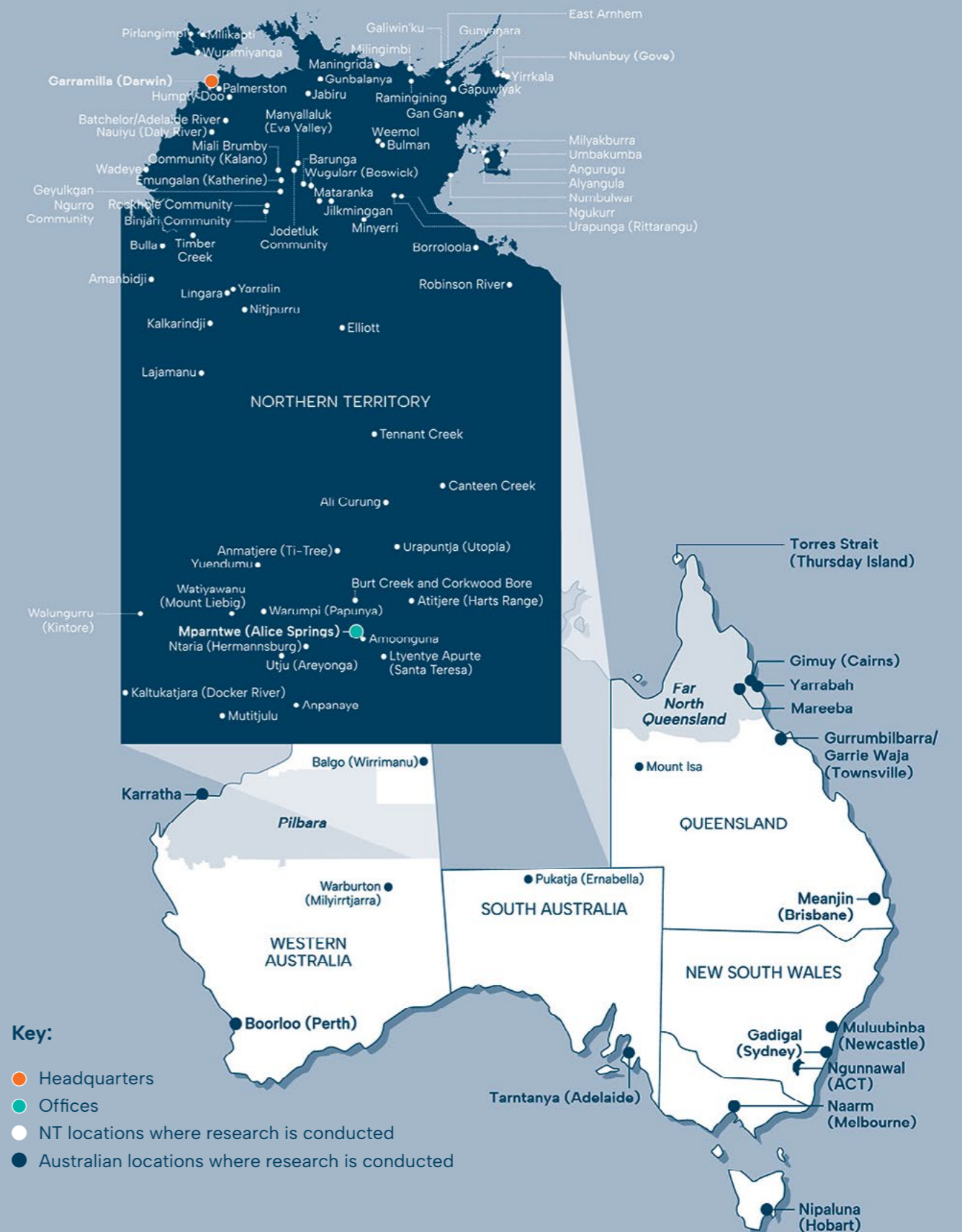
We collaborate with a diverse network of partners across the Northern Territory, Australia and internationally, including community groups, government agencies, universities, research institutes, non-government organisations and international bodies. Together, these partnerships span remote communities to global research settings, united by a shared commitment to improving health outcomes.

We thank all our collaborators for their ongoing partnership and collective contribution to creating meaningful, lasting impact.



Dr Arkasha Sadhewa and Dr Anjana Rai at Menzies Open Day.

Australian research locations



Global research locations



- Key:
- Orange square: Countries where we work
 - Light blue square: Countries with research collaborations
 - Teal circle: Offices

Celebrating 40 years

In 2025, Menzies celebrated a remarkable milestone – 40 years of health research and meaningful contribution to health policy and practice. Throughout the year, the organisation celebrated not just our history, but importantly the people, partnerships, and communities that have shaped Menzies into the institution it is today.

Our 40th Anniversary provided an opportunity to reflect, share, and connect. Across the year, our work and achievements were highlighted in the media and through events and community engagement. From celebrating milestones in the Northern Territory, across Australia and Timor-Leste, to showcasing our global collaborations, the anniversary year created moments of pride, reflection, and inspiration for staff, partners, participants, and supporters.



Tiwi Island artists demonstrate weaving at the Menzies Gala Dinner, George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens, Garramilla (Darwin).



Hannah Reedy and Danielle Aquino at the Menzies Brand Launch.

A new era for the Menzies brand

A highlight of the year was the launch of the refreshed **Menzies brand** in March. The rebrand was the result of extensive consultation and collaboration across the organisation and with external stakeholders. Our brand embodies our values and signifies that through respectful engagement with our communities. We learn, grow and shape change together. It reflects our community-centred research approach and reaffirms our commitment to health equity through meaningful partnerships.



Unveiling of the new sign – with Mark Mayo, Ken Davies, Prof Alan Cass and Jayde Hopkins.

First Nations overlay: launched during National Reconciliation Week

During National Reconciliation week in May, Menzies proudly launched our **First Nations brand overlay**, created by Jayde Hopkins – a respected artist, and researcher at Menzies.

The artwork provides a powerful visual expression of our ongoing commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Accompanying the master brand across a range of settings, the overlay reflects cultural connection, community, knowledge and resilience – a lasting symbol of our values and vision for the future.

The First Nations logo overlay will be prominently featured during culturally significant dates that celebrate and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures, including:

- National Close the Gap Day
- National Reconciliation Week
- NAIDOC Week



“Temporal Currents” by Jayde Hopkins, tells the story of where Menzies has been and where we’re going.

Dr Kiarna Brown presents at Menzies Gala Dinner, George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens, Garramilla (Darwin).



40 years
of health research
and community
impact

Refreshed
Menzies Brand
launched

First Nations
brand overlay
unveiled
(National Reconciliation Week)

5 Research
Impact
Series
events

2 PhD
Scholarships
awarded

10 award-
winning
articles in the
MJA Menzies Collection

14 major
media
touchpoints
*(10 radio interviews +
print/online features)*

Thousands of participants and supporters engaged

Sharing Our Achievements

Throughout our 40th Anniversary year, Menzies celebrated four decades of research excellence by highlighting the impact, innovation, and collaborations that define our work. From uncovering new health insights to translating knowledge into practice, we shared our achievements through a range of creative and engaging platforms.

Our researchers' stories and expertise reached audiences across Australia and Timor-Leste through the [ABC Radio monthly series](#) and the [Menzies Sizzle Reel](#), bringing to life the people and projects driving meaningful change. The [Research Impact Series](#) and [Menzies Open Day](#) offered audiences a deeper look at the breadth and depth of our research, illustrating how our work informs policy, strengthens communities, and improves health outcomes.

Menzies launched and awarded the **40Y40K PhD Scholarships**, supporting two PhD students with \$40,000 per annum each for the duration of their PhD. This initiative marks the milestone year and reflects our commitment to investing in the next generation of research leaders who will continue to drive health impact across our region.

The **Menzies Gala** was a vibrant celebration of our history and our future. Professor John Mathews AM, Menzies' founding director, reflected on our beginnings, while researchers Professor Josh Francis and Dr Kiarna Brown shared insights into the dynamic work shaping Menzies today. Media coverage in the [NT News](#) and [Territory Q](#) helped bring our story and research impact to a wider audience. Complementing this, the [InSight+ article](#), a follow-up to the [Menzies Collection with the Medical Journal of Australia](#), showcased the lasting influence of our most important publications, underscoring four decades of significant scholarship.

Looking ahead

Our 40th year celebrations, brand launch, and First Nations overlay together marked a new chapter for Menzies – one that honours our past while setting a bold, inclusive vision for the future.

Menzies is deeply grateful to everyone who has supported and joined the organisation on this journey. This year has shown how powerful it is to share our story – and how ready the organisation is for the next 40 years of contribution to health research.



Menzies staff enjoy the Brand Launch in March.

2025 Highlights

MARCH

The Paediatric Respiratory Microbiome Program team published their work assessing ways to collect breath from young children. Three collection methods were trialled (mouthpiece, mask and straw). One important finding was the mouthpiece-based breath sampling, previously recommended for children aged over 4 years, also works well for children as young as 2 years. This work advances Menzies' larger research goal of developing breath tests to detect and identify the bacteria that cause chest infections in children with chronic wet cough.

[Read more on page 31](#)



Community Health Agent, Ineido taking a finger prick blood sample to test for malaria from Kellen in Nossa Vitoria, Manaus, Brazil. Photo credit: Nathalie Brasil/MMV/PATH

An analysis led by Associate Professor Angela Devine in collaboration with colleagues from Brazil and funded by Medicines for Malaria Ventures, resulted in the approval of paediatric tafenoquine by Brazil's National Committee for Health Technology Incorporation (CONITEC) for the radical cure of vivax malaria. The medication clears the liver parasites that

remain dormant after treatment, leading to reinfection. The team will continue working with other countries to make tafenoquine more widely available in malaria endemic countries.

[Read more on page 34](#)

APRIL

The Communicate Study Partnership released three new episodes of the award-winning *Ask the Specialist* podcast, focused on culturally safe palliative care. Yolŋu, Warlpiri and Arrernte Elders guide the episodes, which explore topics such as language around death, sorry business, smoking ceremonies, and supporting families with end-of-life choices.

[Read more on page 63](#)



Ask the Specialist podcast artwork.

Dr Michelle Fitts presented the 2025 Fay Gayle Lecture held at the University of Adelaide on *'Head Health and Healing – Listening to the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women about traumatic brain injury from violence'*.

This was an incredible honour for Michelle and an excellent showcase of research translation across her work. Michelle and her colleagues are collaborating with communities and frontline services across the Northern Territory and Queensland, as well as internationally to co-design, pilot and implement violence-related traumatic brain injury training modules.

[Read more on page 47](#)



Dr Michelle Fitts (centre) with colleagues at the 2025 Fay Gayle Lecture held at the University of Adelaide.

MAY

Menzies proudly collaborated with the Medical Journal of Australia (MJA) to develop The Menzies Collection. The commemorative issue showcases 10 research papers that reflect the breadth and depth of Menzies' contributions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and medical research in Australia. The front cover features artwork *Temporal Currents*, by Menzies researcher and artist, Jayde Hopkins, sharing a powerful visual representation of the direction and impact of our work.



Front cover of the MJA: *The Menzies Collection*

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Brand Advisory Group were instrumental in shaping Menzies' new brand identity. Elements from the commissioned artwork *Temporal Currents*, by Jayde Hopkins, was used as part of our First Nations brand overlay. The overlay highlights Menzies' commitment to reconciliation and meaningful collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The overlay was launched during National Reconciliation Week and will be prominently featured during culturally important dates that celebrate and recognise First Nations people.

[Read more on page 9](#)



Mark Mayo and Jayde Hopkins present *Temporal Currents*.



Menzies First Nations Overlay logo.

Menzies hosted an Open Day, welcoming the public to explore the breadth of our research programs. Visitors experienced a variety of hands-on activities and interactive displays, offering insight into how Menzies is advancing health and wellbeing through world-class research. The event also included behind-the-scenes lab tours and opportunities to meet researchers, giving a glimpse into the dynamic work happening across our projects.



Learning all about snakes at Menzies Open Day.

The Centre for Child Development and Education (CCDE) hosted a two-way learning and program development workshop with the Yothu Mulka Home Visiting Program team from Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation (Miwatj Health). The three-day workshop combined lessons from the Maternal and Early Childhood Sustained Home visiting (MECSH) evaluation, new parenting resources, and Yolŋu knowledge to strengthen support for Yolŋu families from pregnancy to toddlerhood.

[Read more on page 30](#)



Participants at the Learning Together workshop.

The Doing It Together (DIT) project provides peer support and peer-led education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth living with type 2 diabetes (T2D). In 2025, the project held three camps for young Territorians with T2D. Two camps were held in May – one for young leaders and another for young women. The third camp for young men was held in August. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with participants requesting camps in 2026.

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Young Men's Camp - Doing It Together (DIT) Project.

Territory Kidney Care (TKC) is an integrated clinical information system developed in partnership with NT Health, Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT) and Northern Territory Primary Health Network (NT PHN). The system achieved a landmark milestone with all 14 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs) now participating in TKC. With full participation from government primary and tertiary health services as well as ACCHSs, clinicians now have access to comprehensive patient information regardless of where they work.

JUNE

Menzies 40th Anniversary Gala Dinner was held at the George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens, Garramilla (Darwin). The event was a night full of celebration, showcasing interactive research activations, inspiring speakers and entertainment from local artists. Three hundred supporters and friends of Menzies attended, making it a memorable night for the community to celebrate the impact of 40 years of research, and to support the future generation of change-makers.

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Menzies 40th Anniversary Gala Dinner.

The CCDE launched a suite of new resources that can be integrated into maternal, child and family support programs. The resources were co-developed with practitioners from Miwatj Health, Katherine West Health Board and Sunrise Health Service. They are freely available and are based on the lived experiences of parents from the East Arnhem and Katherine regions.

[Read more on page 30](#)



Danielle Aquino and Lynette Johns reading 'My Baby is Lovely' at Menzies 40th Anniversary Gala.

Menzies was strongly represented at the Lowitja Institute 4th International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference in Adelaide, with staff sharing their research and expertise through a series of presentations. Norlisha Bartlett and Jessica Phillips, Women's Cultural Hub Coordinator at Mala'la Health Service Aboriginal Corporation, presented "This isn't a joke anymore!" Maningrida women taking charge – the Manayingkarirra Healthy Women's project story. Kureisha Wilson, with colleagues Dr Vishnu Khanal and Karina Coombes, presented "Barriers and Enablers to Community-Preferred Models of Telehealth", with Professor Tim Shaw from the University of Sydney also contributing. Shiree Mack and Emma Weaver shared insights from the Merne Mwerre Artweye Areye-ke Program, a family-based diabetes prevention initiative in Central Australia.

More than 20 Menzies staff attended the conference, engaging in networking, community discussions, and hosting an information booth that showcased our work, strengthened partnerships, and highlighted the impact of our programs to national and international delegates. The conference theme, *Strong, Fearless, Together*, reinforced the importance of collective action in advancing Indigenous health – a principle reflected in Menzies' collaborative approach across all our programs.



Menzies staff gather at the Lowitja Conference.

Tuberculosis (TB) continues to affect communities in the Northern Territory, despite being preventable with medication. The Remote Aboriginal Communities ending Tuberculosis (REACT) project is working to address barriers to TB preventive treatment in remote communities.

In 2025, REACT introduced a new, shorter TB prevention treatment in Maningrida. The program also trained the first cohorts of Aboriginal Community Health Workers in TB prevention, care, and safe medication management. Together, these initiatives help more people in remote areas to access culturally safe and supportive TB preventive care.

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Menzies REACT team members.

JULY

Testing the G6PD enzyme is essential for safely treating vivax malaria. In July, Associate Professor Benedikt Ley and Dr Arkasha Sadhewa launched a pilot study in Bangladesh to improve access to reliable testing in remote areas. The project commenced with a co-design workshop where government health staff and NGO partners developed practical solutions to collect and track blood samples while protecting patient confidentiality. Health workers said the new approach "saves patients long, costly trips" and is easy to use in daily practice. Sending blood samples instead of referring patients makes testing more accessible, and early feedback from policymakers supports scaling up this model.



Demonstration of the G6PD diagnostic to local health workers.

AUGUST

The DIABETES across the LIFECOURSE: Northern Australia Partnership – 2025 Annual Educational Symposium was held in Garramilla (Darwin), with satellite sites in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and Gimuy (Cairns). The event united clinicians, researchers, community partners, and students to share knowledge and strengthen collaboration in diabetes care and research. Highlights included updates on partnership achievements, presentations on youth T2D, and discussions on diabetes in pregnancy. With a focus on culturally responsive care, co-designed interventions, and early engagement, the symposium promoted collaboration and practical impact. Student contributions showcased emerging research capacity, reinforcing partnerships and advancing efforts to improve diabetes outcomes across the lifecycle.



Darwin participants of the Diabetes Partnership's Annual Educational Symposium.

The Menzies-led vivax Genomic Epidemiology Network (vivaxGEN) developed new genomic tools to monitor *Plasmodium vivax* (*P. vivax*) transmission and treatment effectiveness.

The new tools were developed in Associate Professor Sarah Auburn's lab. They include a laboratory assay that can genotype hundreds of parasites across hundreds of markers in one go, delivering millions of DNA sequences. Computational scientists in A/Prof Auburn's team have also developed user-friendly tools to process the large datasets, revealing where parasites originate and how they spread. The tools have been shared for open-access use by the malaria community, and the work is published in *Nature Communications*.

[Read more on page 35](#)



Collaborators at the Mahidol Oxford Research Unit in Bangkok, Thailand, working through the Menzies protocol.

The Communicate Study Partnership hosted its bi-annual First Nations Health Communication Symposium in Garramilla (Darwin), Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and online, with over 240 participants attending. The program featured 13 presentations, two panels and a keynote, including themes such as truth-telling, interpreter experiences, intercultural training, and community-led health education. Stalls from partner organisations showcased resources and programs. Attendees, ranging from clinicians and interpreters to researchers and community members, emphasised the importance of listening, collaboration and respecting cultural authority.

The symposium strengthened connections and shared practical strategies, reinforcing a collective commitment to drive culturally safe communication in healthcare.



Members from the Communicate Study Partnership, from Menzies, NT Health, Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreter Service (NT AIS), National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), and Charles Darwin University (CDU).

The Merne Mwerre Artweye Areye-ke program (meaning "Good food for the whole family" in Arrernte) was successfully delivered in partnership with Central Australian Aboriginal Congress to four communities in and around Mparntwe (Alice Springs). The 10-week, family-based diabetes prevention program was delivered for the first time in the remote community of Ntaria (Hermannsburg) in August. Families celebrated the end of the program at a culturally significant site, known as Jesus' Footsteps. The program topics included: exploring sugary drinks, traditional foods and whole foods, joyful movement and slow foods, balancing your plate, meditation, mindfulness and self-care.

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MMAA - Ntaria group (Western Arrernte) at their celebration session.

Menzies researchers presented at the inaugural Think Tank for the National Multidisciplinary Primary Care Research, Policy and Advocacy Consortium, led by Australia's Chief Medical Officer, Professor Michael Kidd. The Menzies-led Centre of Research Excellence for Strengthening Health Systems in Remote Australia (CRESTRA) is one of five foundational centres of research excellence in the consortium. The consortium's work connects to a five-year MRFF-funded project led by Adjunct Professor John Boffa. The project will co-design, implement and evaluate two multidisciplinary primary care models for Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and remote Central Australian communities to strengthen care continuity, chronic disease management, service integration and access for Aboriginal people.



Dr Ashmita Karki, Associate Professor Alexandra Edelman, and Associate Professor Deborah Russell represent CRESTRA at the at the inaugural Think Tank.

SEPTEMBER

A secondary analysis of a multicentre randomised trial examined children hospitalised with community-acquired pneumonia across Australia, New Zealand, and Malaysia. The study found that 17% of children had incomplete resolution on chest radiographs at four weeks, and 14% still showed unresolved imaging abnormalities 12 months after discharge.

Key risk factors included a previous hospitalisation for pneumonia and ongoing respiratory symptoms at four weeks. The findings suggest that in high-risk settings, targeted follow-up imaging and monitoring may be needed in children with these risk markers to identify and manage persistent lung changes.

[Read more on page 33](#)

OCTOBER

The Remote Health Systems and Climate Change Centre (RHC3) was officially launched in October. The launch coincided with the 10th Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium in Mparntwe (Alice Springs), which was preceded by the RHC3-convened Remote Research Impact Workshop. Over 70 participants from across Australia attended the workshop, which explored what "research impact" means in a remote context, how to measure it, and opportunities to strengthen impact measurement. The RHC3 launch and workshop highlighted the growing momentum for collaborative, place-based, and cross-sectoral research approaches to improve health outcomes. RHC3 champions research that leads to "real" outcomes – meaningful change, shaped in genuine partnership.

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RHC3 co-leads A/ Prof Deborah Russell, A/Prof Alexandra Edelman, and A/Prof Supriya Mathew, with RHC3 Project Manager Kristal Lawrence at the RHC3 launch.

Menzies' annual public address featured an inspiring keynote by Tiahni Adamson, the 2024 South Australian Young Australian of the Year. A proud Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman, she is a leading advocate for Indigenous science, climate justice and youth leadership. *Menzies Presents: Next Generation Solutions* explored how young people – across cultures and disciplines – are shaping a fairer, healthier and more sustainable future. The program also featured a dynamic panel discussion with four local change-makers, who examined emerging shifts in health, science and community, encouraging guests to think boldly and act with purpose as we look to what comes next.



Peter Susanto, Dr Josie Povey, Tiahni Adamson, Jahdai Vigona and Professor Heidi Smith-Vaughan speak at Menzies Presents.

The LENO BESIK study in Timor-Leste evaluates the implementation of task-sharing echocardiography screening for rheumatic heart disease (RHD) into routine care. The work has been led by Menzies staff from Timor-Leste, in partnership with Maluk Timor and the Timor-Leste Ministry of Health. The team provided training across the five recruitment sites, organised RHD screening events, and supported the coordination of care for positive cases. LENO BESIK has demonstrated that this model of task-sharing – echo screening for RHD can be successfully embedded into a health service and remain sustainable beyond the initial research framework.

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LENO BESIK Study Team members.

The SCOPE study is a multi-country feasibility study co-designed with ministries of health in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea (PNG) to evaluate a novel antimalarial intervention for the radical cure of *P. vivax* malaria. It builds on more than a decade of collaborative clinical trials and studies, incorporating new protocols into routine clinical practice and monitoring their acceptability and feasibility across ten remote health clinics. Patient enrolment concluded in October 2025. The teams are now translating evidence into national policy and strengthening district-level readiness for improved malaria case management.

[Read more on page 37](#)



Patient education as part of the SCOPE study.

Dr Liam Grealy published the Homelands Housing and Infrastructure Program (HHIP) Monitoring and Evaluation Project Report. The report marks the end of a two-year developmental evaluation of a new Northern Territory homelands program focused

on housing refurbishments and infrastructure improvements for essential services.

[Read more on page 36](#)



A homelands house refurbished under the HHIP.

The Dialysis Models of Care (DxMoC) Project explored the cultural, social, health, and economic impacts of dialysis on Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory, focusing on the importance of 'place' in treatment access and outcomes. Guided by senior Aboriginal co-researchers using the Uti Kulintjaku Iwara drawing and storytelling method, the study identified that dialysis location greatly influences patient wellbeing and adherence. Participants requested workshop data be shared with their families and communities. Therefore, the book *What makes a good life: Dialysis Models of Care 2015–2023* was created and compiles the workshop pictures, stories and data.

[Read more on page 65](#)



Sam Togni, Associate Professor Gillian Gorham, and Menzies Director Professor Alan Cass at the book launch in Mparntwe (Alice Springs).

NOVEMBER

Throughout the year, Menzies hosted a five-part Research Impact Series as part of the organisation's 40th Anniversary celebrations. The events were designed to share how real-world experiences and thinking can be applied to multiple settings to help drive change. The event themes included health education and training, partnerships, First Nations leadership, laboratory discovery and research in Central Australia. The event programs featured presentations and a panel discussion by Menzies researchers and key collaborators. The final event was held in November, celebrating Menzies long-standing partnerships and work in Central Australia.



Dr Leisa McCarthy opens the final event in Menzies 40th Anniversary Research Impact Series.

Reconciliation Action at Menzies

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is a significant week on Menzies calendar and continues to play a vital role in strengthening Menzies commitment to reconciliation. Through our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), we collectively acknowledge that reconciliation is everyone’s responsibility and that every action, big or small, contributes to lasting change.

During NRW (27 May – 3 June 2025) staff in both Garramilla (Darwin) and Mparntwe (Alice Springs) came together to celebrate, engage in meaningful discussions, and strengthen our shared commitment to reconciliation. The 2025 theme, Bridging Now to Next, encouraged all Australians to reflect on our shared history, listen to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, and take action towards a more inclusive and respectful future.

Throughout the week, our offices were filled with warmth, energy, and a strong sense of togetherness. It was inspiring to see so many staff actively participating in events, sharing their stories, and contributing to the conversation about what reconciliation means to them personally and professionally.

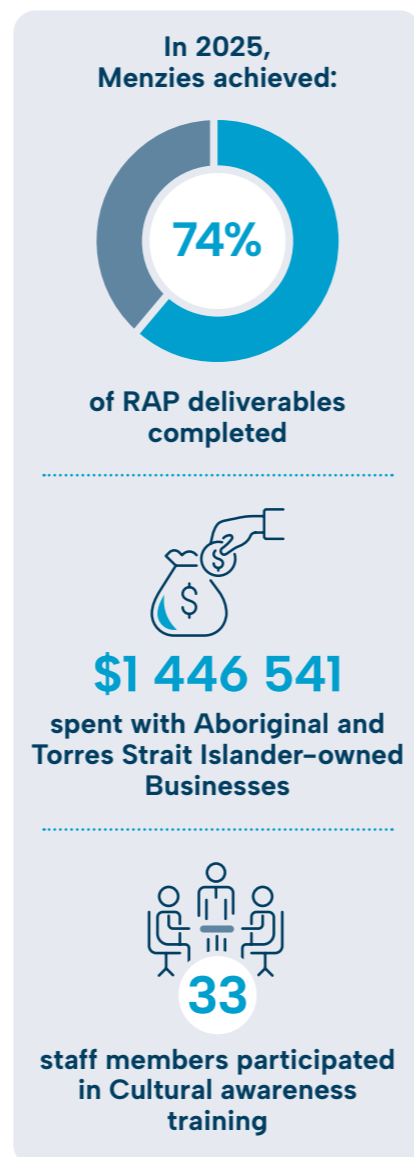
These moments of connection supported Menzies’ staff in building deeper cultural understanding and appreciation. The week also reinforced the importance of respect and relationships in our workplace.

The RAP Working Group extends its heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated in and supported National Reconciliation Week activities.

Menzies is committed to reconciliation through respect, relationships, opportunities and governance, guided by our 2024-2026 Innovate RAP.



Menzies acknowledges National Sorry Day (26 May), sharing Stolen Generations Flower pins.



Menzies staff take part in a smoking ceremony, share damper, and engage in meaningful dialogue as part of National Reconciliation Week 2025.

Director and Chair's Message

It has been an honour and a privilege to lead Menzies School of Health Research during our 40th anniversary year. Being involved in the many events that have commemorated and celebrated the remarkable achievements of our staff and students over the past four decades has brought us, as Director and Board Chair, immense pride.

The depth, breadth and history of our critically important research is powerfully encapsulated in the *Medical Journal of Australia* (MJA) Menzies Collection. These ten significant research papers reflect Menzies' longstanding and meaningful contributions to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as well as to the broader scientific and medical research landscape in Australia. The collection highlights research addressing urgent and enduring challenges, including rising rates of diabetes, the prevention and management of acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease, otitis media, and systemic barriers within the health system that continue to impact First Nations Australians. Many of these projects are also featured throughout this report.

This year has provided an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the outstanding achievements of our offshore research programs. Our malaria teams continue to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and accessibility of malaria treatment globally. They have developed new genomic tools to survey and monitor malaria transmission and

treatment, and in many instances their work has shifted the global approach towards this disease.

Our Timor-Leste office continues to expand as our research programs grow, made possible through strong collaborations with Government and local and international partners. This year has seen the release of Wolbachia mosquitoes in Dili to help address the spread of infectious diseases like dengue and a greater focus on One Health solutions to take an integrated approach to human, animal and environmental health.

Our 40th anniversary has been a time to consider the future — where we are heading and how we will get there. Working in genuine partnership with communities remains central to Menzies' ethos, and we are committed not only to continuing this approach, but to growing and adapting it in response to new ways of working and emerging research priorities.

We believe our education and training programs are a key part of the future of Menzies. By growing and nurturing our own talent, and providing meaningful opportunities for young Territorians, we can help ensure research leadership remains locally grounded,

community-informed and future-focused. This message was strongly reflected in our annual public address, *'Menzies Presents'*, where our inspiring panellists encouraged us to all think boldly about what's next.

We are also looking forward to our involvement in the CDU Menzies Medical Program as it commences in 2026. We believe this will be a valuable opportunity to optimise local training pathways and further strengthen the Territory's future medical and research workforce.

Looking to 2026 and beyond, we are considering innovative and emerging areas of research. In partnership with NT Health, we're pleased to announce that the next Father Frank Flynn Fellowship research program will focus on maternal health across the Northern Territory. Associate Professor Kiarna Brown, a remarkable Aboriginal clinician-researcher, will drive this critical program of work. Other emerging areas at Menzies include head health and traumatic brain injury, as well as expanded programs in housing and nutrition research.

We thank our Board members, whose wisdom, experience and commitment guide us and ensure Menzies continues to operate to the highest standards. Through new appointments, we have further strengthened community leadership, financial and global health expertise. This will help guide Menzies into the future.

As always, and especially in this milestone year, we are also deeply grateful to all our supporters. Their continued generosity and belief in the importance of our work is invaluable.



Menzies Director
Professor Alan Cass AO

Menzies Board Chair
Mr Ken Davies PSM

Our Board



Mr Ken Davies PSM

Board Chair
(Commenced as Chair in February 2025)

Ken was CEO of the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet and has previously held CEO roles with departments in the NTG, including Territory Families, Education; Lands, Planning and Environment; Housing, Local Government and Regional Services.

He is Deputy Chancellor of the CDU Council, bringing strategic leadership to both government and higher education.

Ken is a former chair of the NT Board of Studies and former NT Principals' Association President. He has also held appointments to the boards of the Australian Children's Television Foundation, Waterfront Development Corporation and the Land Development Corporation.



The Hon Trevor Riley AO KC

Board Chair
(Concluded February 2025)

Prior to his retirement in 2016, Trevor served as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory, following 18 years on the Court. During his tenure as Chief Justice, he was a strong and respected voice on issues including legal aid funding, high rates of imprisonment and the impacts of alcohol misuse in the community.

Trevor was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1989 and was sworn in as a judge in 1999. Earlier in his career, he served as President of the NT Bar Association from 1993 to 1997. Beyond the legal profession, he has also contributed extensively to community organisations, including long-term service as a Director of St John Ambulance (NT) and as Chair of the AFLNT Appeals Board.

Trevor stepped down from the Menzies Board in February 2025 to take up the role of Chancellor of CDU, Menzies' parent entity.



Prof Alan Cass AO

Director

Alan has been the Director of Menzies since 2012.

Alan is a Board Director for the Top End and Central Australia Health Research Translation Centres, has been Deputy Chair and Chair of the NT Clinical Senate, and has had governance roles for the ANZ Dialysis and Transplant Registry, Australian Kidney Trials Network, ACTA, ANZ Society of Nephrology and Top End Area Health Services.

He is a kidney specialist with a particular interest in preventing and managing chronic disease and First Nations health.

His research has focused on developing, implementing and evaluating strategies to improve health outcomes.

Alan has been instrumental in leading national and international clinical trials and research to improve access to services and the provision of care to patients with low health literacy, who speak a different language and have different understandings of health and illness from their healthcare providers.



Mr Rowan Johnston

Board Treasurer
(Concluded October 2025)

Rowan is a Sydney-based corporate advisor and managing director of C42 Consulting, a private advisory firm.

He spent almost 30 years as an investment banker and corporate advisor with Greenhill & Co. Australia (formerly Caliburn) and Deutsche Bank in Australia and Hong Kong.

Rowan continues to advise a range of private and public sector clients on corporate and financial issues, including equity capital markets and has advised a range of Australian and overseas governments and their agencies on strategic, infrastructure and financial matters.



Ms Clare Milikins FCPA, GAICD

Board Member

Born and raised in Darwin, Clare is an experienced Director and established Chair of Audit and Risk. In addition to Menzies, she serves as a Director and Chair of Audit and Risk for Venture Housing, as a member of the NT Treasury Corporation's Advisory Board, and is the Independent Chair of Risk and Audit for the City of Palmerston.

Clare has diverse experience across commercial and public sectors, specialising in developing business capability, improving efficiency and leading change. She provides advisory, accounting and practical assistance to local businesses, councils and not-for-profits. Clare is an FCPA, GAICD, registered BAS and payroll agent, holding a Bachelor of Commerce and a Postgraduate Certificate in Public Sector Management.



Prof Louise Baur AM FAHMS
Board Member

Louise is Chair of Child and Adolescent Health at the University of Sydney, with a conjoint appointment as Professor in the Sydney School of Public Health. She is an NHMRC Leadership Fellow (2022–2026). She is also a consultant paediatrician at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead (Sydney) and former Head of Weight Management Services.

Louise is President of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences (2023–2026), a member of the WHO Ad Hoc Working Group on Science and Evidence for Ending Childhood Obesity and is an Associate Director of the University of Sydney’s WHO Collaborating Centre in Physical Activity, Nutrition & Obesity. She is the immediate Past-President of the World Obesity Federation (President 2022–2024; Past President 2024–2026). In 2010, Louise was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for services to medicine and the community.



Ms Patricia Angus PSM
Board Member

Trish is a Jawoyn woman from Katherine, Northern Territory; residing in Darwin for the past 30 years.

Before retiring in 2012, Trish worked as a registered nurse at public hospitals, an Aboriginal community-controlled health service, community health clinics, and the Royal Australian Air Force.

Trish has held senior positions within the NT departments of Health; Housing, Local Government, Regional Services, Aboriginal Affairs and Community Services.

For her service to public sector policy and Aboriginal programs and services, Trish was awarded the Public Service Medal at the 2013 Australia Day Awards. She has served on several committees, boards, advisory councils, and panels.



Ms Cindy Penrose
Board Member

Cindy was the CEO of the Yoorrook Justice Commission, the first formal truth-telling process into injustices experienced by First Peoples in Victoria.

Previously, Cindy was the Chief Operating Officer of the Paul Ramsay Foundation, where she led the creation of ‘Yirranma Place’, and over saw more than \$100 million in investments in justice reform.

She was the first female CEO of the Australian Bar Association and the Assistant Director of the Australian Defence Force’s Defence Abuse Response Taskforce. Cindy currently serves on the Board of StreetWork and Down The Track, as well as on the NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner’s Advisory Panel.



Ms Denise Bowden
Board Member
(Commenced 27 March 2025)

Denise was born in Katherine, Northern Territory, where her family lived on Carbeen Park, a working cattle and horse racing pastoral station.

She has been the Chief Executive of the Yothu Yindi Foundation (YYF) and the Director of the Garma Festival since 2010. Currently, Denise is the most senior lead for the YYF’s Garma Institute. This major NT project is under construction in the very remote Yolngu community of Gunyangara, Arnhem Land, and is scheduled to open in 2028.

Denise has hosted many forums, delivered keynote addresses nationally, and worked with four Australian Prime Ministers, as well as foreign dignitaries and international ambassadors. She is an iconic NT figure whose advice is sought by senior business executives across Australia’s largest business sectors.



Mr Tim Regan FCA, FAICD
Board Member
(Commenced 25 September 2025)

Tim is an experienced executive and non-executive director across listed, unlisted and not-for-profit companies, both growing and mature. He is currently the Executive Director of the Randwick Health and Innovation Precinct, and former interim Chief Executive Officer of the Melanoma Institute Australia, and Chief Operating Officer of The George Institute for Global Health.

Tim has extensive experience in the health, property and services industries, including roles as Chief Operating Officer of ASX-listed Mirvac Group, Chief Executive Officer of TJS Services, Commercial Manager at Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games, and Senior Manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC).

He holds a range of commercial and not-for-profit board positions that allow him to draw on his experience in property, audit, project management, leadership, and government relations.



Prof Scott Bowman AO
Board Member

Scott was the Vice-Chancellor and President of CDU.

He joined CDU in 2021 with considerable university leadership experience. Scott was Vice-Chancellor and President of Central Queensland University (CQU). For over a decade, his vision and leadership helped transform CQU into one of Australia’s largest and most engaged regional universities.

He joined Western Sydney University following his retirement as Vice-Chancellor and President of CQ University in 2019.

Previous leadership positions include Deputy Vice-Chancellor (University Services) and Registrar at James Cook University; Foundation Head of the School of Clinical Sciences at Charles Sturt University; and Foundation Dean of the Faculty of Health Science and Community at University College of St Martin (Lancaster University) Lancaster, UK.

Statement on Behalf of the Board of Governors

The following persons were members of the Menzies School of Health Research Board of Governors, Finance Committee and Risk and Audit Committee during the year ended 31 December 2025:

Board Member	Position
The Hon Trevor Riley AO KC (Concluded 24 Feb 2025)	Chairperson
Mr Ken Davies PSM (Commenced as Chair 24 Feb 2025)	Chairperson
Mr Rowan Johnston (Concluded 25 October 2025)	Treasurer
Ms Clare Milikins (Commenced 25 September 2025)	Treasurer
Ms Patrica Angus PSM	Board Member
Prof Louise Baur AM FAHMS	Board Member
Ms Cindy Penrose	Board Member
Prof Scott Bowman AO	Board Member
Ms Denise Bowden (Commenced 27 March 2025)	Board Member
Mr Tim Regan (Commenced 25 September 2025)	Board Member

2025 Sub-committee meetings

Committee Members	Finance Committee	Risk & Audit Committee
Mr Rowan Johnston (Concluded 25 August 2025)	✓	
Prof Louise Baur AM FAHMS	✓	
Mr Fotis Papadakis	✓	
Prof Alan Cass AO	✓	✓
Mr Ken Davies PSM	✓	✓
Mr Amin Islam OAM (Independent Chair)		✓
The Hon Trevor Riley AO KC (Concluded 24 Feb 2025)		✓
Ms Catherine Weber PSM		✓
Mr Brendon Douglas (ex officio member)		✓
Mr Greg Shanahan (Concluded 12 Feb 2025)		✓

Throughout 2025, the continuing principal activities of Menzies consisted of:

- Conducting high quality multidisciplinary research, research training, and public health education with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, remote and tropical health;
- Advancing the local, national and international application of research findings to improve health;
- Advocating for research, and policy and practice change, that will contribute to better health for people of the region;
- Building strong partnerships with community groups, service providers, policymakers and other academic organisations; and
- Promoting a broad understanding of health that reflects underlying biomedical, socioeconomic, cultural and environmental causes of patterns of health and disease.

Menzies acknowledges Mr Amin Islam OAM, Chair of the Risk and Audit Committee, and Mr Rowan Johnston, Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee, for their valued leadership of these committees. Menzies would like to extend a special thanks to Mr Johnston who has stepped down from our Board and Finance Committee after 13 years. During his time with Menzies, he maintained a steadfast focus on helping Menzies achieve its mission and purpose. He provided advice, direction and strategies that directly and positively impacted Menzies' financial position.

We also thank all Board and Committee members for their voluntary contributions of time, expertise, guidance and commitment to Menzies.

Our research *impact*



The Climate Change Project team - Dr Zubair Ratan, Dr Rishu Thakur, Associate Professor Supriya Mathew and Dr Manoj Bhatta in Mparntwe (Alice Springs).

Parenting resources: supporting partnerships with families

This year marked the final phase of a collaborative research translation project that brought together parents, practitioners, and researchers to co-create resources to strengthen home visiting and parenting programs with First Nations families in the NT. From 2022–2025, Menzies worked in partnership with Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation (Miwatj Health), Katherine West Health Board, and Sunrise Health Service, talking to parents across East Arnhem and the Big Rivers region.

The result is a suite of new resources designed to harness parenting strengths, foster meaningful discussions and connections, and enhance responsive care.

The resources include:

- Pathway to dreams – a discussion tool to support parents’ aspirations
- My baby is lovely – stories from parents on how they nurture their children
- I’m a Dad! – a comic book to engage fathers and what they want for their family
- Talking about parenting – picture cards to discuss parenting strengths and worries
- A series of training videos – practitioner insights on working in partnership with families
- Program animations – explain the home visiting program in English, Kriol and Djambarrpuynu

The *I’m a Dad!* comic book fills an important gap in accessible, strengths-based tools for health providers to engage men in discussions about their hopes and concerns as they start their journey into fatherhood. Our research has found:

- Both mothers and fathers appreciate home visiting health workers involving fathers in conversations about parenthood, children’s health, and development
- Fathers often feel shy and find it difficult to talk about the emotional side of parenting, particularly with female practitioners
- At times, the practitioners are unsure about how to have culturally appropriate conversations with men about pregnancy

All of the resources have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS) practitioners as well as other community and health organisations. Miwatj Health also redesigned their ‘Yothu Mulka’ home visiting program to incorporate the new resources.

Danielle Aquino and Lynette Johns reading ‘My Baby is Lovely’ at Menzies 40th Anniversary Gala.



15 years of the Child and Youth Health Research Partnership

Since 2009, the Centre for Child Development and Education (CCDE) and key Northern Territory Government agencies have partnered to conduct research that informs policies and programs to improve the health, wellbeing and social outcomes for Territory children, youth and their families. At the heart of this partnership is a comprehensive resource of linked administrative data from government agencies responsible for the health, welfare and safety of Territorians – the Child and Youth Development Research Partnership (CYDRP) data repository.

Over the past 15 years, 43 projects have used the CYDRP data repository to research topics of critical importance to policy-makers, including mental health and wellbeing, justice, health, education, child welfare, and child development, with a key focus on transition points in the life course. The next phase of CYDRP will establish a stronger approach: a policy-engagement cycle based on co-design and data-driven policy making. This will bring together policy-makers, researchers, and the sector to collaborate in all phases of research.

Supporting women to find safety

The NT Government’s Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Risk Assessment and Management Framework (RAMF) provides Territory-wide, cross-sector guidance to help services identify and safely support people experiencing DFV. Several Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations are working to implement the framework in their primary health care services.

Practitioners from Katherine West Health Board asked Centre for Child Development and Education (CCDE) researchers whether insights from Menzies’ Maternal and Early Childhood Sustained Home-visiting (MECSH) evaluation could help them apply the RAMF. The MECSH evaluation included surveys and qualitative interviews with pregnant women, mothers and fathers of young children in

the East Arnhem and Big Rivers regions, as well as practitioners involved in home visiting and maternal and child health care.

Insights from this dataset have been shared in a research brief. The brief highlights women’s

experiences of domestic and family violence in these remote areas and the novel, whole-of-family approaches some practitioners are using to meet women’s needs and support their safety.



Lynette Johns, Katherine West Health Board and Associate Professor Kayli Wild present at Menzies Open Day.

Feasibility of breath sampling in young children

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in exhaled breath offer promising potential as non-invasive biomarkers for respiratory disease. However, standardised breath collection methods for young children are limited.

Associate Professor Robyn Marsh and her team explored the feasibility and acceptability of breath sampling in children aged six months to 12 years, recruited from chronic cough studies at two sites. Breath was collected into 1-litre Tedlar bags using three approaches – a drinking straw, a mouthpiece, or a mask – and samples were analysed using two-dimensional gas chromatography with time-of-flight mass spectrometry.

The study found that mouthpiece collection was highly feasible in children over two years, well below the previously recommended age of four years. For younger children, mask-based collection was required, though it was less well tolerated. Overall, over 70% of children provided sufficient breath for VOC analysis.

These findings demonstrate that protocols previously used for older children can be confidently applied to those as young as two years, while highlighting the need for alternative approaches for infants and toddlers.



Families learn more about lung health research at Menzies Open Day in Darwin.

The REACH study: why respect in birth care matters for children's futures

The REACH study, led by Dr Emily Bowden, explored how respectful maternity care influences early childhood health outcomes in the Territory. Recognising that First Nations, migrant, and refugee women often experience discrimination, disempowerment, or cultural disconnection in maternity services, the study investigated how these experiences shape maternal and child health trajectories.

Using a mixed-methods design, the study combined in-depth interviews with women, a survey on respectful maternity care, and an analysis of clinical and administrative health data. Findings suggest that respectful maternity care plays a significant role in shaping trust, engagement with services, and health-seeking behaviours up to 12 months postpartum. When these elements are absent, the risk of disengaging from care increases. This can affect respiratory and skin health, as well as early childhood development.

The REACH study is generating evidence to inform policy and practice, ensuring maternity care is not only clinically effective but also grounded in dignity, respect, and cultural responsiveness. The study has significant implications for improving long-term health equity for all mothers and children.

Birthing better futures: impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander maternity care

The Maternal Health Program team, led by Dr Kiarna Brown, continued to work towards improved maternity care particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women across Northern Australia. Dr Brown is a Senior Research Fellow at Menzies, and the Top End Lead for the National Preterm Birth Prevention Program and Every Week Counts Collaborative. Dr Brown provides leadership across research, community engagement, and advocacy initiatives focused on improving pregnancy outcomes and reducing preterm and early-term births.

A key focus of the program this year was the co-design of digital health education to support pregnancy care, and wellbeing of First Nations women. The team worked closely with local women, community-controlled organisations, and maternity care providers to create maternal health initiatives that reflect community priorities. The project aims to provide culturally safe,

relevant, and accessible health education that empowers self-determination throughout the perinatal period.

The program's research and advocacy also contributed to national and international conversations on maternal health, highlighting systemic barriers and the importance of culturally responsive care to address persistently high preterm birth rates among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies. The work emphasised the need for continuity of carer, building trust in antenatal care, and embedding Indigenous knowledge and leadership in health service delivery.

By combining research, evidence-based advocacy, and community collaboration, the Maternal Health Program team continues to embed Indigenous knowledge and leadership in health system reforms for improved pregnancy outcomes to help close the maternal health gap in Northern Australia.



Dr Kiarna Brown presented at the Menzies 40th Anniversary Gala Dinner on the importance of addressing preterm birth.

Identifying shared priorities and unmet needs of young Territorians

Young people involved in both the child protection and youth justice systems – also called “dual-system youth” – often face serious health, mental health, and education challenges. These challenges go beyond what either system can address alone. Research from the Centre for Child Development and Education (CCDE) has helped advance understanding of the complex needs of dual-system youth.

Using the CYDRP data repository, a CCDE study examined the patterns of involvement in health, child protection, justice and education systems of 2,584 Territorians aged between 10 and 17 years.

The study identified three main youth groups with different levels and patterns of service involvement. Those with the most complex and frequent contact across multiple systems also faced the greatest social and economic disadvantage and higher levels of health and social service needs.

The findings suggest that supporting these vulnerable young people requires a joined-up, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed approach. This involves agencies working together to focus on key priorities, including keeping young Territorians engaged in school, strengthening family support, and addressing unmet mental health needs.

Clear ears, strong voices: a new approach to treating chronic ear infections

Otitis media remains one of the most entrenched health challenges affecting First Nations children, particularly in remote settings. Persistent chronic suppurative otitis media (CSOM) is characterised by ongoing ear discharge through a perforated tympanic membrane. This leads to hearing damage, developmental delays, educational disadvantage, and social exclusion. Existing treatments, such as topical antibiotics, regular ear cleaning, and surgical referral, are resource-intensive and often ineffective in high-burden settings.

In response, a trial of hydrogen peroxide is underway to evaluate a cheap, commonly recommended topical antiseptic for persistent CSOM. Hydrogen peroxide is widely known for its antiseptic properties.

However, its role in chronic ear disease has been under-evaluated in rigorous clinical trials. This study will evaluate ear health and microbiologic outcomes when hydrogen peroxide is used as an adjunct therapy, and to better understand chronic disease.

Hydrogen peroxide could become a practical, comparatively low-cost tool in the fight to close the ear health gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.



Menzies ear health team at Menzies Open Day.

Unresolved shadows: tracking lung recovery after childhood pneumonia in high-risk populations

In 2025, a significant study titled *Association between hospitalised childhood pneumonia and follow-up chest radiographs in high-risk populations* provided new insights into children's long-term lung health after hospitalisation for pneumonia. This secondary analysis of a multicentre randomised controlled trial enrolled 324 children (aged three months to five years) across seven hospitals in Australia, New Zealand, and Malaysia.

Radiographs were taken at admission, then repeated at four weeks and at 12 months post-discharge. From this, 17% of children showed incomplete resolution at four weeks, and 14% had persistent abnormalities after one year. The analysis identified that children with a prior pneumonia hospitalisation were more than six times as likely to show incomplete resolution four weeks after discharge, and more than four times as likely at 12 months. Ongoing respiratory signs or symptoms at four weeks also strongly predicted slower recovery.

These findings have implications for health services in high-burden settings. They highlight the need for risk-stratified follow-up. For example, children who have a history of pneumonia or persistent symptoms should receive closer monitoring to detect chronic changes early. This work also reinforces the importance of long-term care strategies and provides evidence to support improved post-discharge pathways in paediatric respiratory health.

Brazil improves the treatment of vivax malaria

Outside of sub-Saharan Africa, *P. vivax* has become the predominant cause of malaria. This is due to the challenges of treating the parasite's dormant liver stages, which can relapse weeks to months after the initial infection.

Primaquine is used to clear liver parasites (radical cure) but can cause severe drug-related haemolysis in individuals with an enzymopathy called G6PD deficiency. Associate Professor Angela Devine's cost-effectiveness analysis of tafenoquine prescription following G6PD screening resulted in a positive

recommendation by Brazil's National Committee for Health Technology Incorporation-CONITEC. In 2023, the adult formulation was approved, enabling its prescription in a malaria-endemic country for the first time.

Following extensive consultation with Brazil's National Malaria Control Program, the model was revised to include the newly available paediatric formulation. The results were submitted to and approved by CONITEC in March 2025. This approval enables expanded access for the 175 million Brazilians currently at risk of malaria.



Community Health Agent, Ineido taking a finger prick blood sample to test for malaria from Kellen in Nossa Vitoria, Manaus, Brazil. Photo credit: Nathalie Brasil/ MMV (Medicines for Malaria Venture)/PATH

Young people with type 2 diabetes (T2D) supporting each other in the Doing It Together (DIT) project

The DIT project supports wellbeing and strengthens connections between young people with T2D. The project trains young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with T2D as peer facilitators, who provide education and support to other young people with T2D. DIT builds on the existing strengths, skills and capacities of First Nations people.

The project commenced in February 2024 and now has five peer facilitators. In 2025, the facilitators worked with Wurli Wurlijang Health Service (Katherine), Katherine West Health Board (Kalkarindji), NT Health, and Gulf Youth and Community Service (Borroloola).

The peer facilitators used interactive strategies to discuss diabetes, nutrition, and social and emotional wellbeing. Sessions were held in clinics, communities, and schools. The sessions were flexible, with the peer facilitators connecting with young people while fishing or through home visits. Early research findings suggest this model has strong potential.

Young people with T2D want to connect with others who understand their experiences. The peer facilitators have also started to support clinical staff by translating complex concepts across cultures, languages, and generations.

From May to October 2025, the project held three camps: one for leaders, one for young women, and one for young men.



Young Women's Camp.



Wurli Wurlijang Health Service Youth T2D Group participants at their annual Christmas party.

The camps were attended by 32 Territorians, along with health workers and other support staff. The activities ranged from practical sessions to relaxed group activities. Feedback from the camps has been very positive, and it is clear they are having a meaningful impact.



Young Men's Camp.

Genomics tools strengthening malaria surveillance Building capacity across the Asia-Pacific and Africa

Laboratory scientists within Associate Professor Sarah Auburn's vivaxGEN program, Ms Angela Rumaseb, Dr Ashley Osborne, and Dr Anjana Rai, have successfully established *P. vivax* genotyping at partner sites in the China-Myanmar border region, Ethiopia and Indonesia. They also established genotyping within the GenRe-Mekong surveillance program, which spans Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam.

Bioinformaticians within the vivaxGEN program, Dr Osborne, Dr Hidayat Trimarsanto, Dr Ludwig Hoon, and Mr Edwin Sutanto, delivered online and in-person workshops to build local data analysis capacity at the partner sites.

More than five thousand infections have been genotyped, generating actionable insights to accelerate *P. vivax* elimination with highlights including:

- The GenRe-Mekong program has detected multiple strains spreading across national borders and is now coordinating response activities with National Malaria Elimination Programs in affected countries
- The World Health Organization (WHO) applied the genomics tools during a malaria outbreak investigation in Laos, revealing that the outbreak stemmed from a single cross-border importation that rapidly spread within the community
- In Cambodia, researchers at the Institut Pasteur are using these tools to monitor how effectively local interventions have reduced *P. vivax* transmission, using genetic diversity indicators
- In China, where malaria has been eliminated, the tools are being used to monitor long-distance and cross-border importations to assess and contain the risk of resurgence
- The tools are also being used to assess treatment efficacy in clinical trials across multiple countries, helping to identify liver-stage treatment failures
- In an Ethiopian trial, genetic data suggested that liver-stage treatment was more effective when primaquine was administered with chloroquine, rather than with artemether-lumefantrine as the partner blood-stage treatment



Bioinformatics workshop at the Ethiopian Public Health Institute in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Can vitamin D protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies from infections

Respiratory infections are a leading cause of hospitalisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants in Northern Australia. A double-blind, placebo-controlled randomised trial is investigating whether daily vitamin D supplementation can reduce this burden.

The trial involves mother-infant pairs in the NT. The mothers begin weekly supplementation between 28 – 35 weeks' gestation and continue until birth. Infants receive weekly supplementation from birth to four months of age. The primary aim is to determine whether this approach reduces ARIs during the first 12 months of life, as measured by hospital admissions and primary care visits.

Secondary aims include assessing whether supplementation improves vitamin D status at key time points (birth, four months and 12 months), supports healthy immune development, and reduces nasopharyngeal carriage of respiratory pathogens. The team is also exploring individual variation in vitamin D use to understand why some children respond better to supplementation than others.

This trial builds on evidence that First Nations infants in the Territory experience high rates of vitamin D deficiency, which is linked to an increased risk of ARIs. The study aims to improve respiratory health and inform future healthcare policy.

Tele-Toxinology: using mobile phone images to safely avoid aeromedical evacuation for snakebite in Northern Australia



Professor Bart Currie with a mulga snake (Photo credit Michael Parfitt ABC).

The research team evaluated the impact of using mobile phone images of snakes to guide aeromedical retrieval and hospital management of snakebite in the NT, including rural and remote locations. The data was retrospectively analysed over 14 years using the Top End snakebite management guideline. This incorporated assessment of mobile phone images of snakes implicated in bites.

The implicated snake was identified in 192 patients with suspected or confirmed snakebite, with 74 (38.5%) identified as venomous. Aeromedical retrieval was safely avoided for 25 patients, most bitten at night and some

located more than 700 km from the hospital. Hospitalised patients bitten by confirmed non-venomous snakes were safely discharged without further observation or blood tests.

The study concluded that, with clear guidance on image requirements, access to expert identification of local snake fauna, and strict confirmation that the photographed snake caused the bite, pathways can be safely implemented. These pathways avoid aeromedical retrieval and prolonged hospitalisation for bites from confirmed non-venomous snakes. Overall, this reduces patient impact, costs and resource use.

Housing refurbishments at homelands

In October 2022, the Australian Government announced \$100 million in funding for urgent works at homelands in the NT. This was the first major federal funding commitment to homelands since 2012. The \$100 million investment underpinned the establishment of the Homelands Housing and Infrastructure Program (HHIP).

In October 2025, Dr Liam Grealy published the final report for the HHIP Monitoring and Evaluation Project. The report concluded a two-year developmental evaluation of the new program, which focused on housing refurbishments and improvements to essential services infrastructure in homelands.

The monitoring and evaluation project included five detailed case studies. The case studies examined HHIP projects and

Territory subprograms focused on water testing, supply, and housing sanitation at Rockhole, Anpanaye, Burt Creek, Corkwood Bore, and Gangan. These projects were delivered by Kalano Community Association, Ingkerreke Services Aboriginal Corporation, and Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation. The final report includes 39 recommendations, in addition to feedback provided during program implementation.

The recommendations include the need for:

- secure funding for homelands housing and infrastructure
- policy development for new and replacement housing
- program administration
- grant agreements
- sector consultation and support
- standards for essential services infrastructure.



A homelands house refurbished under the HHIP.

SCOPE study: translating evidence into practice for P. vivax malaria

The SCOPE study, led by Professor Ric Price, is a multi-country feasibility initiative conducted in Indonesia and PNG. The study builds on over a decade of collaboration and clinical insights from several multicenter clinical trials and meta-analyses. The program has now evolved from assessing if radical cure treatments for *P. vivax* malaria are safe and effective to whether they can be feasibly implemented in routine care.

Between 2021 and 2025, the study examined how new tools and treatments — alongside improved patient counselling and community-based

pharmacovigilance — can be integrated into existing health systems. It assessed patient and health worker acceptability, operational readiness, and cost implications across diverse malaria-endemic settings.

The SCOPE team is now supporting Indonesia’s Ministry of Health by translating research evidence into national policy and strengthening district-level systems for rollout. The study found that clinical innovations first trialled by Menzies are effective, safe and responsive to local needs. The next phase is now underway to assess whether the intervention is scalable and cost

effective. SCOPE exemplifies Menzies’ commitment to collaborative, context-driven research that informs policy and strengthens health systems across the region.



Patient education is an essential element of the new treatment protocol.

Co-design conversations for the Head Health and Healing Project

In October 2025, the Head Health and Healing program within RHC3 commenced workshops with women’s groups and community-based services. The workshops co-designed education resources and training modules on violence-related concussion for First Nations women and the frontline services that provide their care and support.

The NHMRC-funded Head Health and Healing project directly responds to a key recommendation from community members, Elders and services about the need for high-quality education and training resources to strengthen understanding, recognition, and support for violence-related brain injuries across Central Australia. Under a previous Australian Research Council-funded project, the research team found that community-based services had limited opportunities to upskill staff. This limited their ability to identify possible signs and symptoms of traumatic brain injury.

Frontline services may associate symptoms with mental health conditions, trauma, or long-term

drug and alcohol use. While these can look similar and may coexist with traumatic brain injury, these injuries are often not considered when working with women who have experienced violence. As a result, critical information and referrals are not provided.

The project includes a diverse range of local and international partners. These include the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine, Alice Springs Hospital, Tangentyere Council, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Townsville

Hospital and Health Service, Auckland University of Technology, and Toronto Metropolitan University.

A mixed-methods evaluation will be conducted in the second half of the project. It will assess if concussion education and training improved the efficacy of healthcare responses and systems, and whether they improved the overall quality of life for First Nations women who have experienced violence-related concussion.



Artwork - Healing Her Beautiful Mind, 2023, Michelle Tyhuis.

Tiny doses, big defence: testing probiotics to prevent infant infections

Acute respiratory infections (ARIs) remain a leading cause of hospitalisation and long-term health impacts in First Nations children. The ProKids trial is testing whether a seven-day course of *Lactobacillus plantarum* (a probiotic), plus fructo-oligosaccharide (a probiotic), given orally from birth, can reduce medically attended ARI episodes during the first year of life. Secondary outcomes include effects on sepsis, gastroenteritis, the gut and upper-airway microbiomes, and systemic immune development.

The trial is led by the Child and Maternal Health team in partnership with the Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH) and a partner site in Papua New Guinea. This collaboration enables shared analysis and provides regional insight into how early probiotic supplementation may improve infant health across diverse settings.

Grounded in evidence linking early microbiome and immune development, the ProKids study explores a scalable, safe, and low-cost approach to preventing infection in early life, with potential benefits for communities experiencing persistently high infant infection rates.

Official launch of the Remote Health Systems and Climate Change Centre (RHC3)

RHC3 was officially launched on 8 October 2025 at the welcome event for the 10th Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium. The national event was held in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) for the first time.

The launch recognised the scope and significance of the place-based research program. This work focuses on remote health services, workforce, climate change, head health and healing, and alcohol and other drugs. The team works in partnership with communities and services in Central Australia, the Top End, and remote Australia, alongside growing national and international networks.

The National Rural Health Alliance’s CEO, Susi Tegen, said at the event that the launch “signifies the centre’s maturity, representing a critical mass of place-based research with an ongoing commitment to working in partnership with communities to address unmet health needs.”

At the launch, an artwork representing RHC3, created by Keioni Lander, a proud Arrernte, Kaytetye, Warlpiri and Anmatyerre woman, was unveiled.

Titled *We Are All Connected*, the piece is intended to convey the complex layers of remote health and to emphasise the interconnections between people, communities, Country and wellbeing.

Professor Alan Cass, Dr John Boffa (Central Australian Aboriginal Congress), Emeritus Professor John Wakerman, and Associate Professor Alexandra Edelman also spoke at the event about the genuine partnerships the team has fostered across remote Australia and the team’s strong collaborative approach to research.



RHC3 co-leads A/Professor Deborah Russell, A/Professor Alexandra Edelman, and A/Professor Supriya Mathew, with RHC3 Project Manager Kristal Lawrence at the RHC3 launch. The commissioned artwork in the photo is by local artist Keioni Lander.



The RHC3 Team at their planning day in Mparntwe (Alice Springs).

From smoking research to a TV advertisement during the footy

Professor David Thomas drew on his 20 years of experience in tobacco research during a secondment to AMSANT as part of the Top End Tackling Indigenous Smoking team. The collaboration brought together Menzies, AMSANT, Mala’la Health Service, Red Lily Health Service, NT Health and Katherine West Health Board, working collectively to reduce smoking-related harm across Top End communities.

The team’s *No smoking, strong body* television advertisement

was shown across the NT during all free-to-air Australian Football League (AFL) games in 2025. The ad was also played on Channel 7, 7mate and 7two. The TV ad featured Graham Hayes and Beth Ali from Maningrida, who shared their stories of quitting smoking. It was filmed at the Kick the Habit festival in Maningrida in November 2024, led by AFL team, The Sydney Swans in partnership with Mala’la Health Service and other organisations. The ad, other inspiring personal stories,

and information were posted on the Top End Tackling Indigenous Smoking social media pages.



Graham Hayes in the ‘No smoking, strong body’ television campaign.

The Renal Wellbeing Project: integrating cultural safety to reduce Emergency Department (ED) pressures

The Renal Wellbeing Project is one of four intersecting projects within the StreamlinED Project, an MRFF-funded initiative in partnership with Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH) exploring pathways to address ED pressures. The Renal Wellbeing Project focuses on low dialysis attendance that leads to ED presentations. Using mixed methods, the study quantifies patterns of dialysis attendance. It also explores the reasons for lower dialysis attendance to inform the co-design of support pathways to improve dialysis engagement.

The project research commenced with Yarning Circles with patients and 35 interviews with NT Health service providers. Ongoing consumer engagement supported validation and interpretation of findings.

The study found that low dialysis attendance was influenced by factors extending beyond a single issue. Key themes include:

- the negative emotional and physical impact of dialysis
- wellbeing

- limited staff cultural awareness or sensitivity due to rigid service structure
- stretched health service resources resulting in poor coordination and inflexible care

Dialysis attendance is also impacted by cultural obligations and family responsibilities, which often take precedence over scheduled dialysis.

The findings highlight the need for services to consider multiple factors when addressing low attendance. Central to this is maintaining flexibility in scheduling and resource allocation to accommodate the emotional challenges patients experience from treatment and competing cultural priorities.



Trudi Sieland with renal patients participating in a Renal Wellbeing Project workshop focused on improving dialysis attendance and wellbeing outcomes.

Patients identified this flexibility as critical to enabling both dialysis treatment and fulfilment of cultural obligations.

Other proposed strategies include ongoing cultural and language training for staff, dedicated renal Aboriginal Liaison Officers and social workers, incremental dialysis for transition to treatment, and system-level initiatives such as increasing dialysis on Country.

By listening to patients and engaging in meaningful co-design, this project has supported patients in transforming renal services. These patient-centered strategies will deliver sustainable improvements in dialysis attendance and reduce ED demand. The implementation of pathways is underway, with developmental evaluation used to assess impact and respond to arising issues.

Our people



Organisational structure

SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM		
Professor Alan Cass AO Director		
Professor Anna Ralph Deputy Director Research	Mark Mayo Deputy Director First Nations Leadership	Dr Leisa McCarthy Deputy Director First Nations Engagement and Research Strategy
Tegan Ryan Chief Operating Officer	Chris Pearce Chief Financial Officer	Esther Miller Associate Deputy Director Strategy

RESEARCH			
Global and Tropical Health Dr Tina Noutsos	Child and Maternal Health Professor Anne Chang AM	Centre for Child Development and Education Professor Gary Robinson	Wellbeing and Preventable Chronic Diseases Assoc Professor Alexandra Edelman
Malaria	Respiratory Health	Preventing Suicide and Self-Harm	Mental Health and Wellbeing
Tuberculosis	Maternal Health	Evaluation of Child and Family Health and Social Services	Tobacco Control
Regional Endemic Diseases	Child Immunisation	The Child and Youth Development Research Partnership	Housing
Regional Health System Strengthening	Ear Health	Strong Parents and Children	Nutrition
Melioidosis	Childhood Anaemia	Resilient Youth	Diabetes
One Health and Zoonoses	Life Course	Population Health and Wellbeing	Cancer Epidemiology
Health Economics	Polymicrobial Research		Renal
Intercultural Health Communication	International Child Health		Rural and Remote Health Services
Vaccine immunology	Child Health Laboratory		Alcohol and Other Drugs
Viral Hepatitis			
Rheumatic Heart Disease			

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PATHWAYS		
Higher Degrees by Research Professor Heidi Smith-Vaughan	Postgraduate Studies Professor Fergal Grace	Training and Pathways
Master by Research	Postgraduate Coursework Programs	Menzies-Ramaciotti Training Centre
Doctor of Philosophy		HealthLAB
Honours Program		SHELab

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES			
Executive Support	Development	Research Office	Data Management
Finance	Biyamarr ma	Communications, Media and Marketing	Research Quality
Human Resources	Work Health and Safety	Information Technology	Ethics Office
Legal Services	Facilities and Operations	Governance and Risk	Laboratory Science
			Biostatistics

Menzies-Ramaciotti Centre

The Menzies-Ramaciotti Centre enables regional and remote youth to overcome barriers to the health workforce by providing multiple entry and exit points to training, study and employment. 2025 was a year of growth, achievement, and strong connections at the Centre. Students embraced new learning opportunities, progressed through study and training pathways, and represented their communities locally, nationally, and internationally.

In 2025, the Centre engaged with more than 3,000 students and community members across the Northern Territory through one-on-one training, school-based work experience, and broader community outreach delivered by HealthLAB. The Centre supported 65 students through school-based work experience, undergraduate study, vocational placements, scholarships, certificate-level training, and internships, 74% of whom were First Nations students.

Throughout the year, students continued their studies, completed hands-on laboratory training, micro-credentials and developed their skills while contributing to projects across Menzies. They represented their communities across the Territory and presented at local and national conferences.

A key focus in 2025 was strengthening long-term workforce pathways. Former students transitioned into paid roles, including Biosecurity Interns and Project Assistants, reinforcing the Centre's commitment to supporting young people from education into employment.

Students also contributed to research, including tuberculosis resource development in remote communities, rheumatic heart disease diagnostic training, genomics workshops, and through the Centre's Youth Advisory Group.

Menzies-Ramaciotti Centre partners, HealthLAB and SHELab, continued to engage communities across the Northern Territory through co-developed, interactive health promotion. A significant milestone was achieved with the

international expansion of HealthLAB through the launch of Hili Saudável (Choose Healthy) in Timor-Leste. This project was delivered with Centre students alongside a cultural exchange led by the Centre.

Supported by our community partners, Elders, families, and mentors, 2025 was a strong and inspiring year for the Centre. Together, the Centre looks forward to continuing this work in 2026.



The Menzies-Ramaciotti team in Dili, Timor-Leste for the One Health Symposium.



Menzies Fellowships, Grants and Awards

Menzies Fellowships aim to support the next generation of researchers at Menzies to develop and progress their careers. This is a commitment in line with Menzies' strategic priority of fostering talented and committed staff.

Following a peer review process, the following Menzies researchers were awarded a fellowship:

Dr Emily Bowden

Research vision: To build a sustainable, country-led research platform in Timor-Leste that generates policy-relevant evidence and strengthens maternal and newborn health systems to reduce preventable maternal and infant mortality.

Dr Hidayat Trimarsanto

Research vision: To develop relevant, user-friendly bioinformatic tools to address critical public health needs, with a vision to bring equity in data analysis needs. This will be focused on pathogen surveillance, transmission dynamics, molecular mechanisms, and treatment.

The Maple-Brown Family Foundation Fellowship

The Maple-Brown Family Foundation Fellowship supports the highest-ranked applicant

under the Menzies Fellowships Initiative whose work contributes to the wellbeing of the Australian community, with a particular focus on supporting disadvantaged populations, rural and remote areas, health, and environmental issues. This was awarded to:

Dr Beau Cubillo

Research vision: To solidify Menzies' reputation in both food and nutrition and Aboriginal-led research by producing policy-relevant outputs and investing in capacity development of Aboriginal researchers.

Menzies Small Grants

Menzies Small Grants program is an internal, competitive, peer-reviewed program providing seed funding for new ideas and developing projects that will contribute to sustainable research programs at Menzies.

The successful applicants and projects are:

Dr Liam Grealy

Coronial inquests as a mechanism for housing policy change

Dr Anjana Rai

Development of a consensus amplicon-based sequencing assay for Plasmodium falciparum molecular surveillance

Dr Beth Temple

Measles seroprevalence in infants in Timor-Leste

Long Service Awards

Long Service Awards provide the opportunity to reflect on the contributions of those long-serving staff members who have been instrumental to Menzies' development, growth and success.

Recognised in 2025 for their long-standing contributions were:

35 Years

- Professor Heidi Smith-Vaughan

25 Years

- Cate Wilson
- Dr Jemima Beissbarth
- Jo Bex

15 years

- Professor Anna Ralph
- Professor Gary Robinson
- George Gurruwiwi
- Jodie Ellis
- Associate Professor Kylie Dingwall
- Lesley Versteegh
- Associate Professor Sarah Auburn

Menzies was also delighted to celebrate our 30 five year and three 10 year service award recipients.



Cate Wilson, Dr Jemima Beissbarth and Jo Bex celebrating 25 years at Menzies.



Prof Heidi Smith-Vaughan celebrating 35 years at Menzies with her daughter Charlotte Valle.

Research Excellence

Menzies recognises that our people are our greatest asset. The organisation strives to encourage and promote excellence in research and build capacity to help our people excel in their chosen fields.

2025 Fulbright Scholarship (Northern Territory)

Alexandra Gregory was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to explore culturally relevant parenting measures. Her research aims to explore culturally grounded measures of parenting constructs with First Nations caregivers, which are crucial for the development and evaluation of parenting support programs. Through this scholarship, she will bring together mentorship from researchers at the Centre for Indigenous Research Collaborations and Learning for Home Visiting (CIRCLE HV) at the University of Colorado with her existing collaborations with NT First Nations parenting support programs.



Alexandra Gregory, Fulbright scholarship recipient.

Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Inc. (ACSPRI) Fellowship

Alexandra Gregory was awarded the ACSPRI Fellowship to support capacity building of First Nations co-researchers. The fellowship supports her PhD research investigating understandings and measurement of parenting.



Alexandra Gregory, with Kateline, Tiwi co-researcher, during a training session.

2025 University of New South Wales Alumni Award for Teaching and Research

Professor Louise Maple-Brown was the recipient of this award for her pioneering work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, which has transformed diabetes care and advanced health equity across remote Australia.



Professor Louise Maple-Brown.

National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) Inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award

Emeritus Professor John Wakerman was recognised with this award, which acknowledges his immense contribution to improving health outcomes across remote and rural Australia. It highlights his dedication to improving access to primary health care in remote settings, stabilising the remote health workforce, and the importance of research to drive policy and practice change. For more than 30 years, John has worked in remote primary health care as a clinician, senior remote health services manager, educator, researcher, advocate and mentor. Prior to his retirement in 2023, he laid the groundwork for building a sustainable program of research in Central Australia.



Emeritus Professor John Wakerman in conversation with Associate Professor Pim Kuipers the 10th Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium.

Finalists for the 2025 NT News Women of the Year Award – STEM

Associate Professor Gillian Gorham and Associate Professor Sarah Auburn were recognised as finalists in the STEM category. This recognition celebrated their work as inspiring leaders and their outstanding contributions to science, health, and innovation in the NT.



Finalist for the Technology Leader of the Year Award (WOMENpreneur Awards 2025)

Mary Adewunmi was recognised as a finalist in the WOMENpreneur Awards, which celebrate outstanding women leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs across Africa who are driving impact through technology, business, and social change.

2025 The Australian Sociological Association Best Paper Award for Health Sociology Review (HSR)

Dr Michelle Fitts, alongside co-authors Jennifer Cullen, Gail Kingston, Elaine Wills, Yasmin Johnson, and Karen Soldatic, received this award for their paper titled 'Using research feedback loops to implement a disability case study with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and service providers in regional and remote Australia'.



Dr Michelle Fitts (right) with her colleague and one of the co-authors, Yasmin Johnson.

2025 Avant Research Grant Award

Dr Kiarna Brown and her research team were recognised for their work transforming pregnancy care for First Nations women through the Dungudbila App Project. The project aims to advance quality, safety and sustainability in medicine through research, with a special focus on health systems. Clinical Research Manager Jessica Murray and Katena Valastro accepted the award. Katena is a member of the co-design working group in Garramilla (Darwin), and her lived experience helped shape the project work.



Heather Kennedy, (Avant Foundation), Katena Valastro and Jessica Murray.

2024 Churchill Fellowship update

Dr Beau Cubillo's Churchill Fellowship across North America sought to investigate how Indigenous peoples self-determine their food systems. Dr Cubillo hosted a series of workshops, presentations and discussions with cross-sectoral US and Canadian government departments, academics, and business owners. He facilitated conversations to discuss localised approaches to food systems and self-determination. Similar to Australia, he found their Indigenous food systems intertwined with historical, social, political, and socio-cultural determinants, and increased Indigenous-led and governed food systems are needed.



Dr Beau Cubillo at the University of Alaska.

Internal Awards

2025 Ryan Family Prize

The Ryan Family Prize is an annual award that recognises outstanding contributions to Menzies from individuals or groups. The prize is awarded to staff who go above and beyond in their role to help make Menzies a great place to work. Nominees demonstrate that they have:

- contributed to furthering the goals of Menzies
- shown commitment and dedication to the core values of Menzies
- fostered an environment of collaboration, teamwork, respect and communication (internally and externally)
- displayed energy, motivation and enthusiasm

Thanks to the generosity of the Ryan family, the winner receives a \$5,000 prize for professional development and a perpetual trophy.

The 2025 Ryan Family Prize winner was Jo Campbell, Biyamarr ma Project Officer and Reconciliation Action Plan Lead.

Throughout Jo's journey at Menzies, her integrity, empathy, and optimism have inspired those around her. She embodies Menzies' values through creating an environment built on trust, respect, and shared responsibility. Jo has a real strength in connecting with people through building genuine relationships, creating safe spaces, and taking an open and respectful approach. Through her leadership, Jo has strengthened Menzies' cultural capability and is building a legacy of collaboration and genuine reconciliation.



Ryan Family Prize recipient, Jo Campbell with Mark Mayo, Deputy Director First Nations Leadership, Di Walker, Biyamarr ma Project Officer and Professor Alan Cass, Menzies Director.

2025 Menzies Medallion

The Menzies Medallion is awarded by the Menzies Board to individuals or groups that have made a considerable contribution to health in the Northern Territory.

In 2025, the Menzies Medallion was awarded to Rarrtjiwuy Melanie Herdman for her outstanding dedication to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people and communities across the Northern Territory.

For more than a decade, Ms Herdman has demonstrated deep commitment to learning, growth, and advocacy, working to ensure that Yolŋu and all Aboriginal people are meaningfully included in research and health initiatives that affect their lives. Her leadership reflects a balance of her knowledge and collaboration, bridging Yolŋu and Western ways of doing *djāma* (work) to improve health outcomes and influence systemic change.

Ms Herdman accepted the Menzies Medallion not as an individual honour, but as recognition of a collective journey shared with both Yolŋu and non-Yolŋu colleagues, mentors and communities who have guided and worked alongside her. Her work continues to inspire greater respect for Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing in health and research, and she

remains a powerful advocate for inclusion, understanding and transformation in the Northern Territory and beyond.



Rarrtjiwuy Melanie Herdman, 2025 Menzies Medallion recipient.

Menzies Mentorship Award

Menzies is committed to building a strong, resilient organisation by fostering a talented and dedicated workforce.

As part of this, Menzies recognises the importance of effective mentorship – both formal and informal – for academic and professional staff in achieving our goal.

In recognition of this, in 2022, Menzies developed the Mentorship Award. This award recognises staff who provide excellence in mentorship.

Recipients are acknowledged for their outstanding contributions as a mentors, including providing support, sharing knowledge, and demonstrating respect for colleagues' development.

In 2025, Menzies was delighted to have three recipients of this award:

- Dr Josie Povey
- Katherine Hancock
- Dr Shawn Ting

Each mentor was recognised for their generosity of time, insightful guidance and ability to support and develop the professional skills of the individuals and teams they guide.



Dr Shawn Ting receives the Menzies Mentor Award from Mr Ken Davies and Prof Alan Cass.

Val Asche Memorial Prize for Academic Excellence

The Val Asche Memorial Prize for Academic Excellence is awarded annually at the end of each academic year.

The late Dr Valerie Asche was the head of the microbiology research unit at Menzies from 1986 to 1994 under its founding Director Professor John Mathews. Dr Asche supported this award for 19 years before sadly passing away in 2019. Dr Asche's family maintains an interest in education and continues to support academic excellence among Menzies students.

The 2025 winners of the annual Val Asche Memorial Prize for Academic Excellence were:

Master of Public Health/Master of Health Research
Andrea Teresa Porteous

Master of Public Health
Trudi Sieland

Master of Health Research
Rihab Tuama Lafta Lafta

Graduate Diploma of Public Health
Brana Cupsa

Graduate Diploma of Health Research
Murad Habibullah Talukdar

2025 Harry Christian Giese Research Impact Prize

The Harry Christian Giese Research Impact Prize was introduced in 2024, in recognition of the significant and formative role that the late Harry Giese AM MBE had in the establishment of Menzies.

This award acknowledges and remembers his important legacy. Both Harry and his wife Nancy "Nan" Giese were resolute in their commitment to providing educational opportunities for Territorians and for their support of Menzies.

This prize has been made possible through the generous support of the Giese family. It is designed to recognise an early or mid-career researcher at Menzies whose research has led to measurable improvements, better health policies, expanded programs, or established collaborative partnerships.

Dr Chris Lowbridge was the 2025 recipient whose work in Tuberculosis (TB) has strengthened both understanding and the clinical and public health management of the disease.

Dr Lowbridge's work focuses on treating latent TB in the NT. This is a key strategy for TB elimination and essential for Australia to meet the global targets set by the WHO's End TB Strategy.

His work with Top End remote Aboriginal communities empowered TB-affected areas to shape the response to the disease and improved the use of routine screening and entry into TB treatment. Dr Lowbridge's work also enhanced the capacity for patient-centred primary care management of TB, supporting better health outcomes in the region.



Dr Chris Lowbridge receives the Harry Christian Giese Prize from Mr Ken Davies and Prof Alan Cass.

2025 Fakhru Islam Scholarship

The Fakhru Islam Scholarship is an annual award for Menzies students undertaking their PhD or Masters in the areas of renal disease or diabetes.

The scholarship recipient receives \$5,000 to help support them in their studies. This may be used for training courses, attending conferences, internships, or opportunities to network.

This scholarship is made possible by the generosity of the Islam Family.

In 2025, the recipient of this scholarship was Emma Weaver.

Emma's PhD is focused on exploring effective strategies to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth to prevent and manage Type 2 Diabetes (T2D). She is the lead evaluator of the Merne Mwerre Artweye Areye-ka (MMAA) program, a community-led family-based obesity and diabetes prevention program being delivered across ten communities in Central Australia.



Emma Weaver - Fakhru Islam Scholarship recipient.



Mr Amin Islam OAM presents the Fakhru Islam Scholarship.

Education *and* Training



Students benefit from real-world learning opportunities alongside leading researchers and public health practitioners at Menzies.

The 2025 academic year was a standout for the Education Team.

Enrolments grew across Menzies' postgraduate programs, with strong demand for the Master of Public Health and Master of Health Research awards, placing course offerings in a healthy and competitive position. This growth reflects the continuing relevance of Menzies' programs and the trust students place in Menzies as a leader in health research training across Australia and the Asia-Pacific.

The Education team's focus on building research capability delivered clear results. Completion rates for master research thesis students increased, supported by high-quality supervision from researchers across multiple Menzies divisions.

This collaborative approach continues to strengthen the student experience and reinforces Menzies' role in developing the next generation of public health professionals and researchers.

Our valued partnership with CDU remains central to this success. Through this collaboration, students benefit from real-world learning opportunities alongside leading researchers and public health practitioners at Menzies. The result is practical, hands-on experience that equips graduates with the skills and confidence to pursue impact-driven careers in public health and health research.

Master of Public Health Graduates completed with a research thesis:

Amy Le Compte
Hot Weather and Air Pollution in the Gove Peninsula: A Qualitative Study

Coralie Warby
Child development assessments services in Darwin, do they reach the majority? A retrospective audit.

Kimberley Martin
DiaBEATz: Co-designing a multimedia health promotion resource to reduce youth type 2 diabetes shame and stigma among First Nations communities

Michelle Leigh Edmonds
An Audit of Patients Experiencing Medicines Access Barriers in a Tertiary Hospital in the Northern Territory

Samuel Moore
Exploring Participant Experiences and Methodological Outcomes in the Stories Project's Approach to Substance Use Research

Trudi Sieland

Key turning points and facilitating factors of health trajectories as told by Indigenous People in the Northern Territory: a qualitative research nested in the Aboriginal Birth Cohort Study

Master of Health Research Graduates completed with a research thesis:

Rihab Lafta
Patient Experiences with Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to Managing Diabetic Foot Ulcers: A Scoping Review.

Double Master of Public Health/Master of Health Research Graduates completed with a research thesis:

Andrea Teresa Porteous
Perspectives of patients who frequently attend the emergency departments in Australia's Northern Territory: A phenomenological inquiry.

Archana Khadka Shapkota

Assessing the prevalence and progression of liver disease and its association with dialysis vintage in First Nations haemodialysis patients with high ferritin in the Top End.

Chiratidzo (Hope) Mulambo

Hot weather and violence against women: A global scoping review

Kartiki Shinde

Neonatal antibiotics exposure among Australian First Nations infants and acute lower respiratory infection in the first year of life.

Nicky

The key factors impacting on trust between First Nations People as care recipients and their healthcare providers: a scoping review.

Rajib Adhikari

Meta-Analysis: Dementia Prevalence in Australia, 2001- 2024

Shayne Pomeroy

Geographic variation in Indigenous smoking prevalence and cancer incidence in the Northern Territory

2025 Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Program

Menzies HDR students continue to conduct worldwide health research with world-class outcomes.

The students work in partnership with communities, health services, and research collaborators across Northern Australia, the Asia-Pacific, and globally. Their findings inform policy, strengthen health systems, and drive real-world improvements in health outcomes. Collectively, Menzies HDR students exemplify the organisation's commitment to producing research that matters — locally grounded, globally relevant, and focused on better health for all. In 2025, the cohort comprised 74 students undertaking PhD and Master by Research studies, including seven new commencements and two Honours students. Over the year, fourteen outstanding students graduated, while another six successfully completed their candidature and are set to graduate in 2026.

2025 HDR Graduates

- **Kian Soon (Ludwig) Hoon (PhD)** Utility of resolution-optimised SNP sets in the whole genome sequencing age
- **Sandawana William Majoni (PhD)** Exploring hyperferritinaemia, anaemia and markers of liver function in First Nations Australians with chronic kidney disease
- **Diana Mackay (PhD)** Improving systems of care during and after a pregnancy complicated by hyperglycaemia in regional and remote Australia: a mixed-methods evaluation of a multicomponent health systems intervention
- **Angelica Tan (PhD)** Diagnostic approaches to the detection of zoonotic Plasmodium knowlesi infections and the role of neutrophil activation in severe malaria
- **Yao Long (Richard) Lew (PhD)** The epidemiology and outcomes of Tuberculosis (TB) with a focus in Sabah, Malaysia to inform future public health strategies
- **Paula Binks (PhD)** Improving outcomes from hepatitis B and hepatocellular carcinoma in remote-dwelling Aboriginal people in Australia's Northern Territory through education, early diagnosis, culturally sensitive care, and strong community partnerships
- **Sarah Clifford (PhD)** The effect of recent alcohol policy changes on adult domestic, family, and sexual violence in the Northern Territory of Australia
- **Richard Sullivan (PhD)** Hepatitis B in the Top End of the Northern Territory: national priorities in a local context
- **Sarah Cassidy-Seyoum (PhD)** Implementing safe and effective treatment for Plasmodium vivax malaria in pre-elimination endemic settings: a case study in Cambodia
- **Amy Legg (PhD)** Nephrotoxicity of antibiotics in patients with Staphylococcus Aureus Bacteraemia: incidence and outcomes
- **Emily Bowden (PhD)** Barriers and enablers to seeking care during pregnancy and birthing for women facing a high burden of disadvantage in the Top End of the Northern Territory, and the impact on child health outcomes
- **Varunika Ruwanpura (PhD)** Introducing new policies of radical cure for *P. vivax* malaria in Asia Pacific countries: global recommendations, evidence uptake, policy processes, stakeholders and contextual factors influencing policymaking
- **Jacqueline Williamson (PhD)** Echocardiographic elements of Rheumatic Heart Disease
- **Nevio da Costa Sarmento (PhD)** Analysis of respiratory bacterial and viral pathogens to support vaccine implementation and trials in Timor-Leste

2025 HDR Completions

- **Arkasha Sadhewa (PhD)** Implementing routine G6PD testing at the bedside in Indonesia: collating essential information for an informed decision
- **Ery Setiawan (PhD)** Economic evidence on malaria and radical cure strategies, and methods for valuing productivity losses
- **Mary Wicks (PhD)** Improving healthcare for Aboriginal peoples in Central Australia living with diabetes
- **Carolyn Stock (PhD)** More than a program: building capacity and self-efficacy of staff and parents through implementation of a Parenting Program in a Remote Aboriginal Context
- **Mia Miller (PhD)** Development and testing of Ripple, a digital alcohol intervention for Australian Midlife Women
- **Hidayat (Anto) Trimarsanto (PhD)** Genetic epidemiology tools and insights into Plasmodium vivax

HDR Scholarships announced in 2025

- **Edwin Sutanto (PhD)** Molecular investigation of Plasmodium falciparum in Indonesia (ACREME Scholarship)
- **Sintayehu Alemayehu (PhD)** Public mental health service use by children and adolescents in the Northern Territory: a data linkage study to identify gaps and inform service delivery (RTP Scholarship)
- **Te-Yu Hung (PhD)** Improving outcomes for children with rheumatic fever: a randomised, double-blinded, placebo-controlled trial of oral dexamethasone for the treatment of Sydenham's Chorea (NHMRC Scholarship)
- **Ruth Hitchins (MRes)** Aeromedical retrievals in Timor-Leste from 2023-2024: referral patterns, disease classifications and clinical outcomes (Menzies Primary Scholarship).

STUDENT PROFILE

Dr Sarah Anne Cassidy-Seyoum

Dr Sarah Anne Cassidy-Seyoum, a public health professional specialising in the control of infectious diseases, shares her experience of studying a PhD at Menzies

Growing up in Lao PDR in Southeast Asia, I became aware early of the many infectious diseases that can threaten our lives. This experience, combined with my interests in political science and biology, led me to pursue a career in global public health. After completing my MSc in the Control of Infectious Diseases at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, I returned to Lao PDR and began my professional career supporting malaria programmatic and research work.

After several years of experience, I began my PhD in August 2021 as a recipient of the Charles Darwin International PhD Scholarship at Menzies, becoming the first to participate in a double degree program with Maastricht University in the Netherlands. My research investigated factors affecting the scale-up and rollout of Plasmodium vivax malaria radical cure interventions in Cambodia.

My PhD journey was a challenging, rewarding, and unique experience that involved a multidisciplinary supervisory team and collaboration with global partners. I was supported by two primary supervisors, Professor Kamala Thriemer and Dr Noral Engel, who pushed me to produce my best work. I also received support from my co-supervisors, Professor Ric Price and Associate Professor Benedikt Ley, as well as advisors Professor Lorenz von Seidlein, Dr Bipin Adhikari, and Dr Michelle S. Hsiang. As a result, I worked across several institutions, including Menzies, Maastricht University, the Mahidol Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Unit (MORU), and the Cambodian National Centre for Parasitology, Entomology, and Malaria Control (CNM).

During my PhD, I had the opportunity to attend several conferences and present my work, including at the Malaria in Melbourne Conference in 2023. At this conference, I was awarded the Best 5-minute Presentation by a student. My PhD work was also supported by Australian Centre of Research Excellence in Malaria Elimination (ACREME) grants for workshops and skill development.

Hard work, support from my supervisors, and the academic and professional development I received during my PhD enabled me to submit my thesis in April 2025. The thesis comprised two published papers, three submitted manuscripts, and one unpublished chapter. Together, this work contributed to understanding what is needed to implement safe and effective treatment for *P. vivax* in Cambodia and offered insights for malaria-endemic countries facing similar challenges.

In June 2025, my thesis was accepted by CDU without the need for further amendment and unconditionally approved by Maastricht University. I successfully defended my thesis at Maastricht University



Dr Sarah Anne Cassidy-Seyoum at Graduation, with Chancellor The Hon Trevor Riley AO KC

on 4 September 2025 and obtained my degree from CDU on 16 September 2025.

Since submitting my PhD, I started as a Research Officer at Menzies under the supervision of Professor Kamala Thriemer. I am continuing my work on assessing the implementation of radical cure interventions. While also expanding my research agenda to include clinical trial dissemination, evaluation, and capacity building. I look forward to continuing to contribute to malaria elimination through research and supporting clinical trials.

In our *community*



NAIDOC Week

The 50th Anniversary of NAIDOC Week (6–13 July 2025) was a significant and uplifting celebration across Menzies. Staff in Garramilla (Darwin) and Mparntwe (Alice Springs) took part in a range of internal and external activities that honoured the rich history, cultures and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Throughout the week, the atmosphere was filled with pride, unity, and celebration, as teams engaged in meaningful moments of cultural learning and community involvement.

This milestone anniversary provided an important opportunity for staff to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and reflect on the strength, resilience, and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The high level of engagement across both sites demonstrated a genuine commitment to supporting and celebrating NAIDOC Week. These activities continue to strengthen Menzies' journey towards reconciliation and reinforces the importance of Respect, Relationships, and Opportunities across all areas of the organisation.



As part of NAIDOC Week, Menzies celebration included a Welcome to Country and a smoking ceremony led by Yanyuwa/Larrakia man Kim Mullholland, alongside participation in the NAIDOC Week Ball and NAIDOC marches in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and Garramilla (Darwin).

Menzies HealthLAB in 2025

Since its inception in 2014, HealthLAB has reached over 21,300 participants, delivering engaging, evidence-based education across the Northern Territory and internationally.

In 2025, HealthLAB engaged with 3,117 participants, extending its reach from Darwin to Groote Eylandt and Timor-Leste. The team delivered health promotion in the communities of Areyonga, Galiwin'ku, Elliott, Maningrida, Lajamanu, and Canteen Creek, working with local organisations and schools to support community-led health learning.



HealthLAB in action.

SHELab – Women and girls health promotion in regional and remote Australia

SHELab successfully piloted and delivered health promotion activities across the Top End, surpassing target participant numbers. A total of 28 events engaged 1,876 women and girls through schools, youth programs, community organisations, and major community events, with 627 participants from remote communities. The program highlights included SHELab's involvement in the Festival of Women 2025 held in Darwin and NAIDOC Week events on Groote Eylandt. In response to community feedback, new interactive stations were developed covering reproductive health, bone health, mindfulness, healthy relationships, positivity, connection, and overall wellbeing.



The SHELab team at Milyakburra Cultural Centre.

Strengthening skills

Sonearae Bilney, Shanika King and Telithia Matthews Matsumoto from the Deadly Ears team represented Menzies at the 2025 NAATSIHWP Professional Development Symposium. The event brought together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners from across Australia to strengthen skills, share knowledge, and support a culturally safe health workforce.

During the event, the team participated in workshops, keynote presentations, and professional development sessions focused on best practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ear health, workforce leadership and community-centred models of care. Staff participation supported ongoing learning and career development, while also highlighting Menzies' commitment to supporting its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

By attending this national event, the Deadly Ears team expanded their knowledge, strengthened professional networks, and contributed to advancing culturally responsive, evidence-based ear health care across Australia.



Sonearae Bilney, Shanika King and Telithia Matthews Matsumoto from the Deadly Ears Team.

Hili Saudável – Timor-Leste health promotion program

In partnership with the First Nations RESPOND team, HealthLAB co-developed *Hili Saudável* with partners in Timor-Leste. The HealthLAB team travelled to Dili to train Timorese partners from the Menzies office in Dili, the Timor-Leste Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education. These partners now lead program delivery and develop new resources. Together with HealthLAB, the team presented to 100 participants at the One Health Symposium in Dili. School ambassadors were also trained and supported to deliver *Hili Saudável* to 200 students in their school.



Menzies First Nations RESPOND Team, HealthLAB and partners in Timor-Leste establish Hili Saudável.

Tuberculosis (TB) prevention and care in remote communities

Tuberculosis (TB) continues to affect communities across the Northern Territory, despite being a preventable disease. The REACT project – a collaboration between Menzies, the NT Centre for Disease Control, Mala'la Health Service, and Sunrise Health Service – is working to overcome barriers to TB preventive treatment in remote Top End communities.

In 2025, REACT introduced a new, shorter TB preventive treatment course in Maningrida. The project also trained the first cohorts of Aboriginal Community Health Workers in TB prevention, care, and safe medication management. Together, these initiatives will ensure more people in remote communities receive culturally safe, effective, and supportive TB preventive care.



Members of the REACT team in Maningrida.

Two-way learning in parenting support

The Centre for Child Development and Education (CCDE) and Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation co-facilitated a three-day Learning Together workshop to support two-way learning and the ongoing development of the Yothuw Mulka home visiting program. Yolju and Balanda staff from Miwatj Health and Menzies reflected on lessons from the MECSH program evaluation and discussed strategies to strengthen Yolju leadership in the redesigned program.

Workshop highlights included practical activities on early brain development, shared learning about different ways to use the new parenting resources, and an inspiring session with Dr Carmen Cubillo. Dr Cubillo is from Healing Circle Psychology and is a First Nations expert in trauma and healing-informed practices.

Following the workshop, the Yothuw Mulka team created a new home visiting schedule. They also plan to develop a program manual and training package to support ongoing implementation.



Participants at the Learning Together workshop.

Returning malaria trial results to participants: tailoring dissemination to local preferences

In 2025, Menzies and partners conducted dissemination activities in Cambodia, Pakistan, and Ethiopia to return results from a large multi-country malaria trial (EFFORT) to study participants. Led by Professor Kamala Thriemer, the activities were designed around preferences identified during the trial, which ensured participants received information in meaningful and accessible ways.

In Pakistan, dissemination involved a large community event for patients and families, held in a local hall with food and small giveaways. A similar event was conducted in Ethiopia and attended by all patients. In Cambodia, results were shared in small groups or individually, reflecting the local preference for more personal engagement.

Evaluation is underway to assess knowledge transfer, understanding, and participant satisfaction. This work also complements a PLOS Medicine publication led by Professor Kamala Thriemer and Associate Professor Holger Unger. The publication reviewed global evidence on effective approaches to sharing health research results with participants.



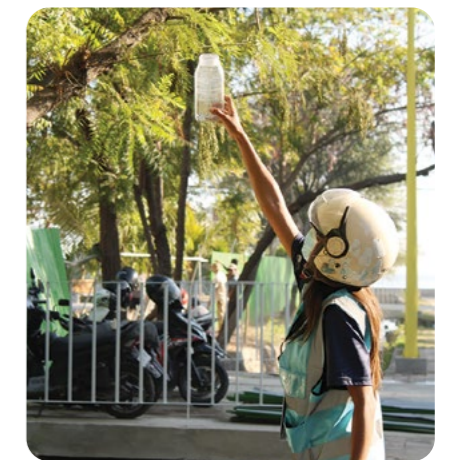
EFFORT study patients in Ethiopia were invited to learn about the main study outcomes in June 2025.

Wolbachia method to address dengue

Wolbachia implementation is tackling dengue through strong community partnerships. Dengue remains a critical public health challenge in Timor-Leste. Menzies Timor-Leste partnered with the Ministry of Health, the World Mosquito Program and Action on Poverty to implement the Wolbachia method in Dili. This work builds on collaboration with communities, local leaders, church groups, disability organisations and dengue survivors.

This inclusive, community-led approach delivers a proven and sustainable solution to significantly reduce transmission of dengue, Zika, chikungunya, and yellow fever in Timor-Leste.

Early success is evident in Dili, following the first mosquito releases in July 2025.



Collecting mosquito samples in Timor-Leste.

Strengthening capacity to diagnose rheumatic heart disease (RHD) in Timor-Leste

The LENO BESIK study evaluates the implementation of task-sharing echocardiography screening for Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) into routine care for children and pregnant women.

LENO BESIK demonstrates that task-sharing echo screening for RHD can be successfully embedded into routine health services and sustained beyond the initial research phase.

This study builds on earlier Menzies-led RHD screening projects in Timor-Leste, which demonstrated the diagnostic accuracy of this task-sharing model. Menzies provided the echocardiography equipment, internet, cloud-based server, and research design for LENO BESIK.

The implementation in Timor-Leste was led entirely by Timorese staff from the Menzies office, Maluk Timor, and the Ministry of Health. This included Timorese doctors delivering task-sharing echo training across five recruitment sites, organising RHD echo screening events, coordinating care for screen-positive cases, integrating cardiology services, and conducting research data collection.



Timorese doctors learning echo scanning in Lospalos, Timor-Leste, undertaking scanning at a local school.



Timorese healthcare workers with the Menzies team, following successful completion of their LENO BESIK scanning assessment.

Landmark trial into the treatment of Sydenham's chorea in children

Sydenham's chorea (SC) is the neuropsychiatric presentation of acute rheumatic fever (ARF). SC causes continuous, involuntary movements that can affect the entire body and is also associated with psychiatric symptoms that impact learning and development.

Menzies is conducting a clinical trial for a three-day course of oral dexamethasone to determine if a simple intervention can substantially reduce SC morbidity in the first 12 months after diagnosis. The trial will use a multi-site network and recruit more participants than any randomised SC treatment trial worldwide. The findings will inform clinical practice on the use or cessation of corticosteroids to treat SC.



Research assistant Nadya Clancy with TREAT-SC participant.

Hep B PAST Plus Partnership

The past year has been successful for the Hep B PAST Plus Partnership, with significant milestones in advancing hepatitis B awareness, care, and equity across the Northern Territory. Two new language versions of the Hep B Story app – *Wubuy* and *Murrinh Patha* – were launched. This expanded access to culturally appropriate health information and supports community engagement.

Results from the latest viral hepatitis mapping project showed a significant closing of the gap in care engagement for people living with chronic hepatitis B in the NT. This reflects the program's long-term, community-led efforts.

In December, Tammy-Allyn Fernandes, Patricia Nundirribala, and Terese Ngurruwuthun presented the Hep B PAST Plus program at the 2025 National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) Conference as invited speakers, representing Hep B PAST, Menzies, NT Health, and Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation.

Their session highlighted the program's strong co-design approach, delivery of care on Country, and the impact of Aboriginal leadership and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) partnerships in improving hepatitis B outcomes across the NT.



The Hep B PAST team delivered an invited plenary presentation at the 2025 NACCHO Conference.



New language versions of the Hep B Story App were launched.

Supporting culturally safe palliative care across the NT

The Communicate Study Partnership released three new episodes of the award-winning *Ask the Specialist* podcast, focused on culturally safe palliative care. Yolŋu, Warlpiri and Arrernte Elders guide the episodes, which explore topics such as language around death, sorry business, smoking ceremonies, and supporting families with end-of-life choices.

Designed in response to questions from health professionals in the NT, the series offers practical strategies to build confidence and cultural respect in care. Produced in partnership with Djalkiri Foundation, Purple House and NT Health's Indigenous Program of Experience in the

Palliative Approach (IPEPA) NT, with national funding support, the project promotes behaviour change and culturally safe care across the Territory.



Co-host Kelly Clark, Producer Caddie Brain and Specialist Rarrtjiwuy Melanie Herdman recording new podcast episodes.



Ask the Specialist podcast artwork.

Piloting new approaches to bring safe malaria treatment to remote communities

Treatment of *P. vivax* malaria uses one compound to relieve symptoms and another to prevent recurrences. Safe use of the second compound requires testing for G6PD deficiency, yet reliable point-of-care diagnosis is often logistically difficult, costly, and not feasible. Also, patient referrals to reference centres are unreliable. For example, data from Cambodia shows that only 50% of patients complete their referral.

In collaboration with the icddr,b (Bangladesh's largest health research institute), Associate Professor Benedikt Ley from Menzies is piloting an alternative in Bangladesh. Malaria patients are identified and treated for symptoms, and blood samples are sent to a reference laboratory for G6PD testing. The results are returned within 48 hours, allowing health workers to safely prescribe the second compound.

Early findings show the alternative approach is feasible, acceptable to staff and patients, and supported by national policymakers. It improves access to care in remote communities and strengthens local capacity.

The model will be next tested in a multi-country trial in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Indonesia.



Demonstration of the G6PD diagnostic to local health workers.

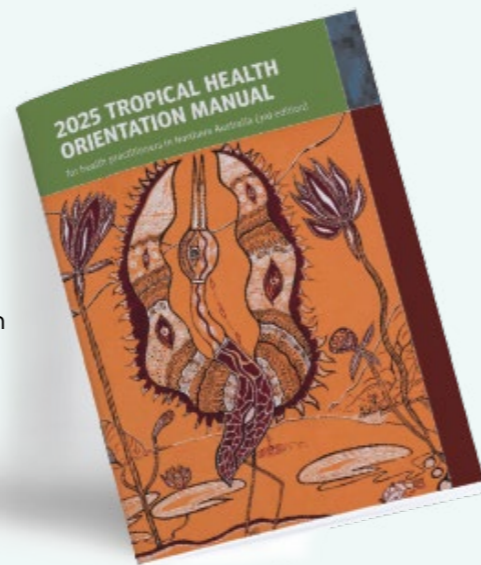
Tropical Health Orientation Manual 2025: updated advice for health practitioners

During 2024 and 2025, Professor Bart Currie and Sara Noonan led a team of experts in reviewing and updating the *Tropical Health Orientation Manual* (THOM). The third edition was published in April 2025 and is available on the Menzies website.

The THOM is a helpful resource for health practitioners working in northern Australia, especially those new to the region who need an introductory overview of clinically important conditions in tropical Australia. The manual complements existing management guidelines and includes local contacts and links to additional resources.

The publication includes health topics such as infections, infestations, toxins, and vector-borne diseases common in the region. The THOM also provides locally appropriate approaches to autoimmune conditions, diabetes and sexually transmitted infections to support care for northern Australia's unique population.

Menzies is grateful to the Northern Territory Primary Health Network (NT PHN) for funding this work.



Cover of the Tropical Health Orientation Manual 2025.

What makes a good life: The Dialysis Models of Care project

The Dialysis Models of Care (DxMoC) project examined the cultural, health and economic impacts of different dialysis models in the NT. It focused on the critical role of place in treatment access and outcomes. This mixed-methods study analysed dialysis attendance patterns, health outcomes, social impacts, and service across different locations.

A key part of the study was gaining a deeper understanding of how dialysis affects the lives of patients, their families and communities. Through a series of workshops with senior Aboriginal co-researchers, and using interpreters to increase

intercultural understanding, the project team explored three questions:

- What makes a good life for Aboriginal people?
- What happens when someone starts dialysis?
- What makes a good life on dialysis?

Guided by the Uti Kulintjaku Iwara method of drawing and storytelling, the study found that dialysis location strongly influences patient uptake and wellbeing. Therefore, providing dialysis on Country helps patients stay connected to family, culture, and community. This leads to better health and social outcomes.

The Aboriginal co-researchers also wanted their data published and shared in an accessible way for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. *What Makes a Good Life: Dialysis Models of Care Project 2015–2023* was launched in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) on 7 March 2025 and in Garramilla (Darwin) on 16 October 2025. The book illustrates the lived experience of renal patients and their families. It also offers guidance for minimising the impact of dialysis from an Aboriginal person's perspective.



Sam Togni, Associate Professor Gillian Gorham, and Professor Alan Cass at the launch of *What Makes a Good Life: Dialysis Models of Care Project 2015–2023* in Mparntwe (Alice Springs).



DxMoC co-researcher Margaret Smith with Azaria Foster, granddaughter of co-researcher Mrs Foster, at the book launch in Mparntwe (Alice Springs).



Renal health service providers, renal patients, and members of the Menzies Renal team at the Garramilla (Darwin) book launch.



Renal health service providers with A/Prof Gillian Gorham, at the Garramilla (Darwin) book launch.

“I want my children to learn about healthy eating”

The Merne Mwerre Artweye Areye-ke program works with Central Australian communities to prevent youth-onset Type 2 Diabetes (T2D) (diagnosed before age 25). This healthy lifestyle program is part of the DIABETES across the LIFECOURSE: Northern Australia Partnership. It was developed in response to requests from communities and clinicians to address increasing rates of youth-onset obesity and diabetes in the NT. The program adapts the successful Tribal Turning Point program trialled with First Nations youth in North America and is delivered in partnership with the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress.

Program delivery began in November 2023, with successful delivery to six communities in the Mparntwe (Alice Springs) region. The program draws on local strengths and leadership within each community. It also supports participants in delivering sessions. Local language, bush foods, and cultural knowledge are embedded in the active learning program.

A key highlight was the delivery of the program at the primary school in the remote community of Ntaria (Hermannsburg). Six families participated in the 10-week program, with overwhelmingly positive feedback from the school community.



MMAA – Ntaria group (Western Arrernte) and their celebration session.

The program concluded with a picnic at the culturally significant site known as Jesus’ Footsteps.



Emma Weaver, Jasmine Brown (from Congress), and Jo Kelaart at the Ntaria group celebration session.

Embedding cultural safety in dialysis: outcomes of the Return to Country study

The Return to Country study has progressed beyond data collection to deliver outcomes that are informing policy and practice in renal care in the Territory. Through ongoing collaboration with NT Health and community partners, the study supports culturally responsive consumer engagement activities that strengthen wellness, identity, and connection to Country for Aboriginal people living with End-Stage Kidney Disease (ESKD).

A key example is the Bush Tucker consumer engagement initiative, a culturally grounded health promotion and two-way learning platform. The first event in August 2023 brought together 17 renal patients, 36 staff, and community

partners. The program expanded in 2024, with regular gatherings of up to 30 patients and their families, often held outdoors. At these events, patients lead cultural practices, such as making damper, supporting autonomy, and community strengthening.

The gatherings build trust, respect, cultural safety, and relational healing, which become embedded practice for dialysis teams. This has resulted in participants reporting improvements in wellbeing, confidence, and a sense of belonging. The initiative also shows system-level impact by embedding culturally responsive approaches into routine care, strengthening workforce capacity,

and informing policy and planning for Return to Country pathways.



Renal Home Therapies, Panuku and the Return to Country team working together at Gurumbai to imagine better, culturally grounded renal care.

Community taking charge: co-designing strategies to reduce risks of diabetes in pregnancy

Diabetes in pregnancy (DIP) is a major driver of the intergenerational diabetes epidemic disproportionately affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Since 2021, the DIABETES Across the LIFECOURSE: Northern Australia Partnership has worked with women, communities, and health services to co-design culturally appropriate strategies to reduce DIP risk.

In 2024 and 2025, the team supported women in Maningrida to deliver regular health education sessions outside of the clinic setting, in partnership with Mala’la Health Service. The women chose the topics, with sessions co-led by a local facilitator and a health professional. The sessions were also translated into Burarra.

In Mareeba, Far North Queensland (FNQ), the project team partnered with Mulungu Aboriginal Corporation to develop a healthy lifestyle program for families that met local needs. The project also upskilled health service staff, including through Diabetes Yarning training.

There was strong engagement in the FNQ program. Participants highlighted the importance of a holistic approach to health and reported improved knowledge of diabetes and healthier eating behaviours. A key outcome was peer support, with women sharing experiences, laughter, and mutual support as they built a strong sense of community.



Sharna Philipps facilitating a health education session in Burarra in Maningrida.



Menzies staff attending Mareeba’s Elders expo and facilitating health education session.

Pintupi Homelands Health Service and RHC3: strengthening remote health systems in partnership

Both Pintupi Homelands Health Service (PHHS) and Menzies celebrated their 40th anniversaries in 2025, a year that also saw the strengthening of their collaborative relationship. The two organisations partnered on a successful NHMRC, Co-operative Research Centre (CRC), Wellcome Trust and MRFF grants. Working together to strengthen health systems in Walungurru (Kintore) – a very remote community in Central Australia.

One research stream will support PHHS to develop a tailored cultural orientation program for new health service staff, led by local Aboriginal Elders. This will build deeper respect for Pintupi culture within the health system.

Another stream is assessing the feasibility of adapting digital health technologies used in other settings (such as telehealth with off-site GPs and specialists) for use within PHHS. Research at another Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCCHS) has shown that community members value the continuity of care enabled by telehealth, as well as the reduced need to travel for health care.

The Menzies RHC3 team will also establish a two-way knowledge-sharing partnership with the Pintupi people. This will combine local environmental knowledge with citizen scientist-led western scientific data to improve community and health service preparedness for climate change.



A/Prof Supriya Mathew, Dr Rishu Thakur, Dr Nanda Kaji Budhathoki, Dr Manoj Bhatta and Dr Lawrence Guodaar from RHC3 met with PHHS board members and CEO Leander Menezes.



Ramaciotti Centre Turtle artwork, lit up by night at the Menzies Gala Dinner, George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens, Garramilla (Darwin).

Stay Strong digital wellbeing tools in language

This year, the Stay Strong program released major updates across its three digital mental health apps – AIMhi for Youth, Stay Strong, and Weathering Well.

The AIMhi for Youth app now features new content developed in collaboration with communities on Kurna, Arrernte, Tiwi and Larrakia Country. The app updates include 11 co-designed videos, seven interactive games, and five new character stories.

The videos share positive affirmations, messages from mentors and Elders, a hip-hop video created by Arrernte youth, and diverse stories told in language. The interactive games draw on nature and art to help young people to build wellbeing skills. The character stories guide users through relatable journeys of connection, strength, and self-care.

The Stay Strong and Weathering Well apps were also refreshed with updated coding to improve performance and accessibility. The Stay Strong app now has audio in five additional Aboriginal languages, enhancing cross-cultural communication and helping more people access digital wellbeing support in the language that feels most familiar.



The Stay Strong AIMhi App, available on iOS and Android.

Our donors and *supporters*





PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Edwards Lifesciences Foundation

Menzies is proud to partner with the Edwards Lifesciences Foundation, whose generous support has significantly enhanced our efforts to combat rheumatic heart disease (RHD) in vulnerable communities, particularly in Timor-Leste and remote regions of Australia.

The foundation's commitment to global heart health is evident in its support for innovative healthcare solutions and community-led initiatives. Every Heartbeat Matters (EHM) embodies this commitment by helping underserved patients with structural heart disease overcome significant barriers to care. Through partnerships with organisations such as Menzies, the foundation works to improve access to life-saving technologies and education, aiming to reduce the global burden of cardiovascular disease.

Menzies, in collaboration with the Timor-Leste Ministry of Health, conducted a successful RHD screening in Hera. Led by RHD Physician Dra Anferida Fernandes, the team screened 210 students and identified 11 new cases of RHD. Swift referrals for treatment, including life-saving surgeries for two children, underscore the need for accessible healthcare in remote areas. The foundation's support has been instrumental in providing the echocardiography training required for these initiatives.

Reflecting on the work, Dra Anferida said, "The support from the Edwards Lifesciences Foundation not only empowers my team to identify RHD cases early but also transforms the lives of children who would otherwise face devastating health outcomes. Their commitment to this cause makes a profound difference."

In addition to the screenings, training sessions were also conducted for Timorese health workers in Lautem, helping to build local expertise. During these sessions, health workers learned to perform echo scans using handheld devices, enabling them

to detect RHD without families having to travel long distances. A poignant moment occurred when a seven-year-old boy, carried to the clinic by his father due to severe joint pain, was diagnosed and treated, demonstrating the immediate impact of this work. Cardiologist Dr James Marangou emphasised the value of this partnership, saying, "Together with Edwards Lifesciences Foundation, my team is bridging the gap in healthcare access and ensuring that lifesaving technologies reach those who need them most."

Menzies extends its deepest gratitude to the Edwards Lifesciences Foundation for its unwavering support. Together, this partnership is not just about diagnosing diseases; it is changing lives and fostering healthier futures for vulnerable populations.

The partnership is harnessing innovation and collaboration to create lasting impact on heart health, while also demonstrating how philanthropy can connect resources and expertise to empower communities and transform the lives of those who need it most.

With the foundation's support, Menzies is advancing its mission to make RHD a preventable disease in the communities it serves.

Menzies was delighted to host Stefaan Poortman, Senior Director, Global Corporate Giving at Edwards Lifesciences Foundation, during his visit to Garramilla (Darwin) in July 2025. Stefaan met with key Menzies team members and then travelled to Timor-Leste, spending time with researchers and community health workers. He witnessed firsthand the RHD screening program in action.



Stefaan Poortman in Timor-Leste with RHD researchers and community health workers.

Empowering the next generation of health professionals: Menzies, Medibank Better Health Research Hub, and the Ian Potter Foundation

The partnership between Menzies, Medibank Better Health Research Hub, and the Ian Potter Foundation is making significant progress in building a strong local health workforce in the Northern Territory.

Through this combined support, Menzies HealthLAB and the Menzies-Ramaciotti Centre are developing a local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce while addressing the needs of First Nations youth.

HealthLAB engaged with more than 2,000 young people through outreach in schools, remote communities, and at CDU events.

The Menzies-Ramaciotti Centre supported 64 students, 70% of whom identify as First Nations, in health-related studies and placements, creating pathways to further education and employment in the health sector. Key programs included the First Nations Wet Season Internship, which provides training and experience across a range of health areas.

Medibank Better Health Research Hub's support of HealthLAB has been vital, empowering young people with the knowledge and skills to reduce chronic disease risks.

At the same time, the Ian Potter Foundation focuses on providing tailored opportunities that guide youth from school into education, training, and employment in the NT health workforce.

HealthLAB Head, Professor Heidi Smith-Vaughan, reflected:

"Our collaborative efforts are not just about training health professionals; they are about empowering youth to become advocates for their communities. Together, a future is being built where First Nations voices are central to health decisions, ensuring better health outcomes for generations to come."

With the support of our partners, training programs, and mentoring opportunities, Menzies, Medibank Better Health Research Hub, and the Ian Potter Foundation are enhancing educational outcomes and fostering a healthier future for First Nations communities across the NT. These partnerships are creating a sustainable health workforce that meets local needs and builds a strong foundation for the future.

Updates from our Prize and Scholarship Winners:

Giese Prize

The Harry Christian Giese Research Impact Prize was awarded to Dr Steven Kho in 2024. His work, the Menzies Malaria Spleen Program, continues to increase understanding of hidden malaria reservoirs in the spleen, building on his initial discoveries.

In 2025, the program achieved key milestones. These included generating the world's first single-cell transcriptomic datasets of malaria parasites and immune cells from infected human spleens, and conducting comprehensive genotyping studies of splenic parasites. The program is also evaluating new diagnostic tools to detect malaria infections outside the bloodstream.

Steven said, "With the support of the 2024 Harry Christian Giese Research Impact Prize, the program is evaluating the performance of new, highly sensitive malaria diagnostic tools to detect infections hidden outside the bloodstream. These developments mark important steps towards improving malaria detection and informing strategies for more effective disease control."

Fakhrul Islam Scholarship

The inaugural Fakhrul Islam Scholarship, which supports PhD or Master students at Menzies undertaking renal disease or diabetes research, was awarded to Victoria Thanasos in 2024.

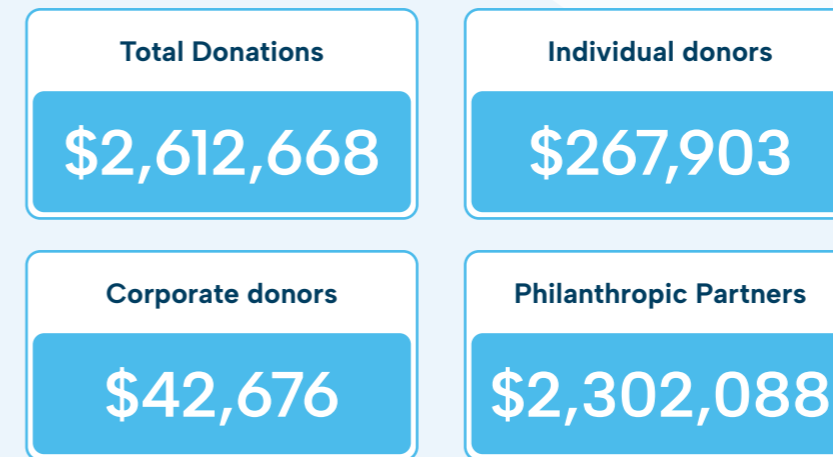
Victoria's research focuses on the use of Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) in renal care and wellbeing in the Northern Territory. The scholarship enabled her to broaden the scope of her project to include First Nations haemodialysis patients in Darwin and Alice Springs, supporting the inclusion of diverse perspectives across culturally and linguistically varied communities.

Victoria said, "I am deeply grateful for the Fakhrul Islam Scholarship, which has supported the expansion of my research and created space for context-specific insights into how measurement practices operate and what they mean in particular settings. This opportunity is vital for centring First Nations voices in discussions on wellbeing measurement and its implications for health practice and policy."

2025 donors and supporters

Menzies is grateful to the following donors for their generous support in 2025:

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| Associate Professor Holger Unger | The Colvin Foundation |
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| Edwards Lifesciences Foundation | The National Heart Foundation of Australia |
| Edwina Menzies & Ian Albrey | The Ramaciotti Foundations |
| Medibank Better Health Research Hub | The Ray and Margaret Wilson Foundation |
| Medtronic | The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International |
| Mr Amin Islam OAM | The Ryan Family |
| Mr Graham Blashki | The Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation |
| Paul Ramsay Foundation | Thrasher Research Fund |
| Sabeline Pty Ltd | |



Menzies greatly values its ongoing partnerships with Charles Darwin University and the Northern Territory Government and is sincerely grateful for their generous support.



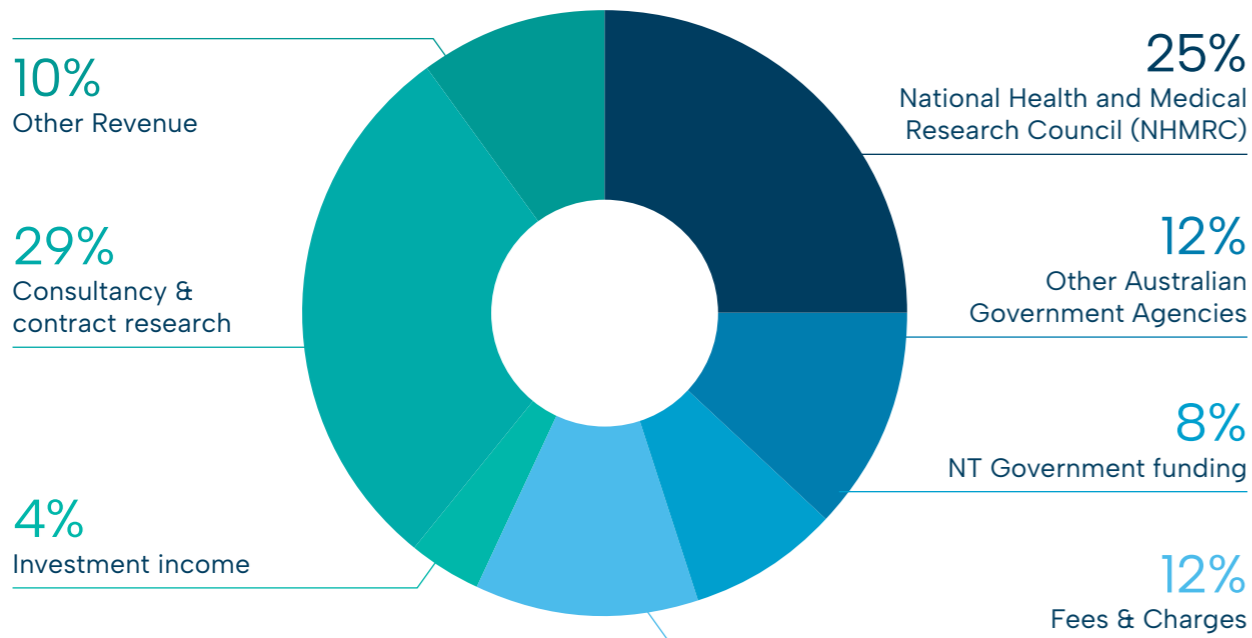
Our *financials*







Financial summary

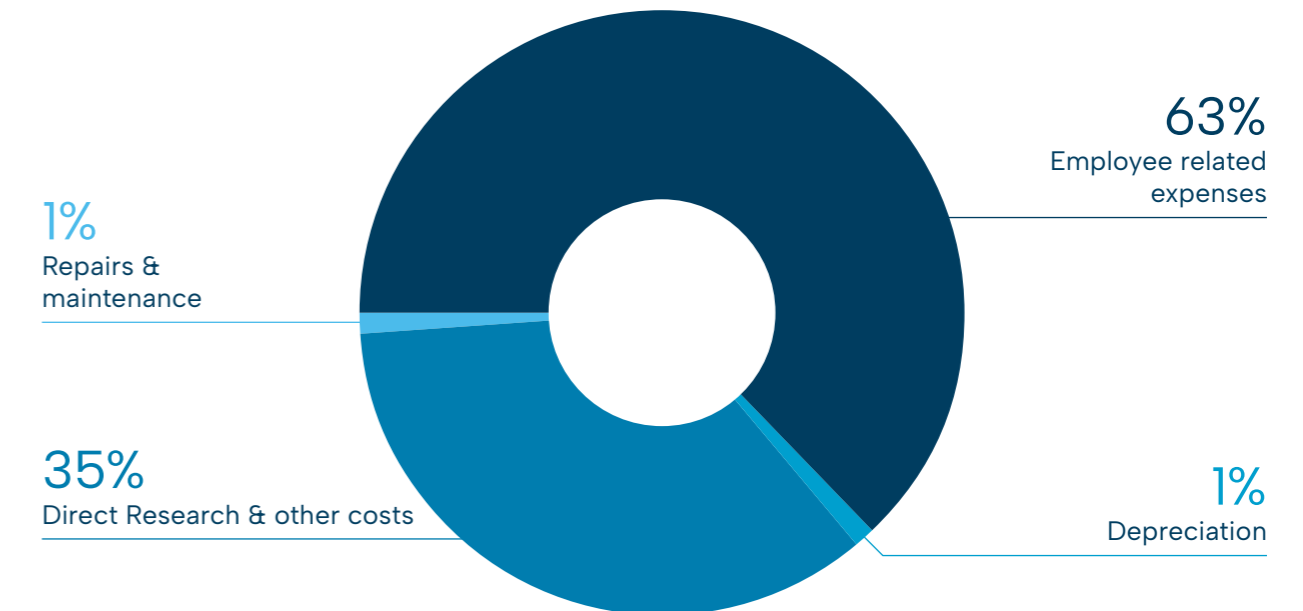
TOTAL REVENUE \$75,538,679



 National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)	\$18,530,642
 Other Australian Government Agencies	\$9,281,613
 NT Government funding	\$5,976,548
 Fees & Charges	\$8,866,725
 Investment income	\$3,251,325
 Consultancy & contract research	\$21,740,261
 Other Revenue	\$7,891,565



TOTAL EXPENSES \$62,616,794

 Employee related expenses	\$39,508,657
 Direct Research & other costs	\$22,119,528
 Depreciation	\$658,711
 Repairs & maintenance	\$329,898



 Gain on disposal of assets	\$47,127
 Gain on value of investments	\$3,066

Thank you to the many individuals and communities who permitted Menzies to use photographic images of themselves and their children throughout this publication.



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