

ACA^H

ACADEMY OF CHILD &
ADOLESCENT HEALTH



Newsletter July 2025



<https://acah.org.au/>



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Academy of Child and Adolescent Health



[academycah](https://www.instagram.com/academycah)

Chair's Welcome

As Chair of the Academy of Child and Adolescent Health, I admit that I am feeling both energised and challenged:

- **Energised by the engagement and energy of our younger members**
- **Challenged by the issues that children and young people in Australia and globally continue to face**

I have long realised that when we raise our voices and work together, we are more powerful and impactful- the ACAH is an effective way of increasing our impact to improve child health.

I recently attended a seminar at The Ethics Centre, Sydney, led by Dr Tim Dean- How to Live a Good Life. Two key aspects involve connection and purpose. I reflected on how the ACAH can help us feel connected and a sense of purpose.

As you read through this newsletter, I hope you too will be inspired by our younger members who are making their mark through the ACAH and beyond- Devin Deo as Producer of this Newsletter and Member of ACAH Conference Organising Committee, Pretashini Somasundrum, who is leading the Prevoc and Trainee Committee and the energetic and visionary Monica Parker and Marissa Loh, who are Co-Chairing the ACAH Conference Organising Committee.

We are continuing to progress planning for ACAH2026 Darwin to be held early next year, provide you with increased ways of connecting with local and international thought leaders through webinars and linking you with like-minded colleagues throughout Australia.

And lastly, a very warm welcome to Nitin Kapur who has joined ACAH Board. I would like to encourage you to renew your membership or join us at the ACAH - I am sure you will feel welcome.

- **Renew your membership** <https://acah.org.au/membership/apply-for-or-renew-membership>
- **Join the ACAH** <https://acah.org.au/membership/apply-for-or-renew-membership>
- **Email us** about what you want to see from or do with the admin@acah.org.au

Please enjoy this newsletter and stay tuned for more about the ACAH.

Jacqueline Small, Chair Board.

Connecting Future Leaders in Child Health - the ACAH Prevocational Arm

The Prevocational Arm of ACAH is a vibrant and growing community of medical students and junior doctors with a passion for paediatrics. Whether you're curious about a future in child health or already planning your paediatric training journey, this is your space to explore, learn, connect, and contribute.



Please read more later in this newsletter.

Who Are We and What Do We Do?

We exist to support and inspire the next generation of child health professionals. Our core aims are to:

- Foster interest in paediatrics through engaging and accessible educational, research, and networking opportunities.
- Promote collaboration across disciplines and states, empowering junior voices to drive change in child health—locally and globally.
- Bridge the gap between medical school and paediatric training by building a supportive, like-minded community.

Past Highlights

Over the past few years, we've hosted a dynamic range of events including:

- Webinars and conference sessions exploring refugee child health, climate change and children, gender affirming care, Paediatrics 101, and advocacy skills
- Hands on workshops on topics including how to provide trauma-informed care, screen for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and collaborate with child play therapists.
- Research support through a platform that promotes student and junior doctor research including rewards

Looking Ahead – Our Vision for 2025

We're excited to keep growing over the coming year with initiatives across four key areas. We'd love to hear your thoughts on these ideas to ensure that the activities of the prevocational arm reflect your interests and aspirations. Get in touch via prevocacah@gmail.com

- **Education:** A new lineup of webinars, interactive workshops, infographics, quizzes, and podcast collaborations to keep learning engaging and accessible. Join us at the ACAH 2026 conference in Darwin where we have a fantastic lineup of prevocational seminars, networking opportunities, workshops and socials!
- **Mentorship:** A national mentoring program connecting prevocational members with paediatric trainees for career guidance and peer support.
- **Research:** Opportunities to join established paediatric research projects across Australia, helping you gain valuable experience and build your research skillset.
- **Advocacy:** collaboration in media campaigns and public health statements that speak up for children and young people.

Get Involved – Shape the Future

We're always looking for passionate and motivated individuals to join the Prevocational Arm and our subcommittee. Your voice can shape what ACAH does in the coming year. Whether you want to lead, learn, or just explore your interest in child health, we'd love to hear from you.

GET IN TOUCH AT PREVOCACAH@GMAIL.COM

AND LET'S BUILD THE FUTURE OF PAEDIATRICS, TOGETHER.

THANK YOU



ACAH Primary Care Workshop: *A Paediatric Update*



Date: 17th July 2025 5:30pm-8:30pm AEST

This workshop focuses on challenging child health topics in primary care, and some of the long-term issues that often our primary care colleagues are called on to co-manage whilst waiting for their patients/clients to survive the wait times for public paediatric clinics. We want to answer your burning questions, so we will be basing our Q&A on what you want to hear!

This session aims to continue a conversation, to create networks, to refresh and renew knowledge, and to reinvigorate you for your work with children and adolescents. We look forward to seeing you there.

Check out the next page to see our full panel of speakers and all the exciting topics we will be covering in this workshop.

Get your tickets here:

<https://events.humanitix.com/acah-primary-care-workshop-a-paediatric-update>

Anysha Walia, Trainee and Board Director.

Meet the Panel



Dr Andrew Ming, Adult and Paediatric Dermatologist

5:30 - 6:00pm: Common Rashes in Paediatrics

Prof Nigel Crawford, Chair of ATAGI, Head of Immunisation Service at Royal Children's Hospital

6:00 - 6:30pm: Paediatric Respiratory Infection + Vaccination Update - RSV + Flu + COVID + Mycoplasma



Dr Michele Yeo, Adolescent Physician, Medical Lead for Eating Disorder Service at Royal Children's Hospital

6:30 - 7:00pm: Adolescent Medicine for the Primary Care Practitioner - Focusing on ARFID

A/Prof Phil Britton, Paediatric Infectious Diseases Physician, Children's Hospital at Westmead

7:00 - 7:30pm: Paediatric Travel Medicine - malaria prophylaxis, mosquito prevention, common vaccinations



Dr Jacqui Dalby-Payne, Clinical Director of Medical Program at Children's Hospital at Westmead

7:30 - 8:30pm: Panel Discussion: Common Cases in Paediatrics



Dr Chris Yong, Head of Department of Paediatrics at Blacktown Hospital

7:30 - 8:30pm: Panel Discussion: Common Cases in Paediatrics

Who is the ACAH?

Reflections from our Members and Directors

Prof Nitin Kapur, Respiratory & Sleep Paediatrician and Director of Paediatric Education at the Queensland Children's Hospital

As the immediate past President of the Paediatric & Child Health Division of the RACP, I see the huge impact advocacy can have on the health care outcomes of children and young adults. Our Academy of Child and Adolescent health is now well placed to be the leading voice in canvassing for children's rights as well as being the organisation that can be the platform for bringing like-minded people together, all of whom want to make the world a better place for children and young adults. As a father of two young girl, I see how important it is currently to fight for the well being of our children and young adults.



My motivation to join the academy was to be part of an agile and nimble organisation which could be at the forefront of all issues pertaining to health and well-being of children & young adults. I also see the academy to play a pivotal role in holding multidisciplinary paediatric scientific forums, something which has been missing from the Australasian landscape for quite some time. I am also enthused by the fact that we are a relatively young organisation, and it is up to us to shape the path our academy should take in the future. This newness is a strength because we are not "set in our ways" yet and can take up new challenges without needing to overcome often unnecessary and redundant rules and regulations.

Who is the ACAH?

Reflections from our Members and Directors

Stephanie Dowden

RN, Paed Cert, MEd, MN(NP), FACNP

Stephanie Dowden is a Paediatric Nurse Practitioner based in Perth, Western Australia. Stephanie has worked for over 25 years in children's healthcare settings in NZ, Australia and the UK. In 2017, Stephanie established her business, NursePrac Australia, a Social Enterprise with a vision to improve health equity for children and their families. Stephanie has a clinic, Just Kids Health and works closely with Early Childhood providers, NGOs and Not-for-Profits offering novel models of high-quality, evidence-based healthcare that is very accessible for hard-to-reach families.



In 2024, Stephanie was one of 4 finalists for The Health Minister's Award for Nursing Trailblazers - the only award of its kind in Australia, recognising nurse leaders and innovators who transform health and aged care systems.

"I am deeply committed to addressing the Social Determinants of Health and the far-reaching impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). I believe in the power of early intervention and creating systems that foster resilience and support child and family well-being."

Stephanie is an experienced director and committee member and has held a range of state and national committee and board positions. Stephanie has been on the ACAH Board since 2019. She was asked to apply to the Board to broaden the scope of ACAH, from a single-discipline viewpoint. Stephanie was Co-Chair of the Academy in 2024 and currently holds the position of Deputy Chair.

Who is the ACAH?

Reflections from our Members and Directors

Marissa Lou - Advanced Trainee, Royal Darwin Hospital

On behalf of the ACAH 2026 Organising Committee, I am looking forward to welcoming you to Larrakia Country next year. Darwin is a vibrant and extraordinary place to meet - rich in culture, history, and stunning sunsets.

About Me:

Having moved to the Top End this year to continue my Paediatric training journey, I am currently undertaking Advanced Training in General Paediatrics and Community Child Health. Hailing from Perth originally, I moved to Melbourne to commence paediatric training, where I've lived for the last four years. Now, I'm excited to live in Darwin, working as an acute paediatric registrar at Royal Darwin Hospital (with a stint in Katherine District Hospital later this year). The patient cohort, and teams that we work with, are truly inspiring, hailing from all over the Territory. It is an immense privilege to be learning and training here. Alongside Monica Parker (a fellow Darwin paediatric registrar), Tara McFadyen (Darwin resident) and Teresa Pham (Adelaide intern), I will be one of your co-convenors for the 2026 ACAH Conference. I hope that we will be able to share with you an insight into the joys and the unique challenges of medicine in the Northern Territory and beyond, alongside the markets, beaches and traditions which make Darwin such a special



The Vision for ACAH 2026:

With the theme of "Building Brighter Futures", the conference will explore the journey of children and adolescents in the Northern Territory, Australia and beyond – encompassing the neonatal period, early childhood, schooling, and adolescence, culminating in a focus on population health and environmental health. Plenary sessions, workshops and panel discussions will centre on the health of First Nations people, health and population research and initiatives in Timor-Leste, youth justice, and mental health and environmental advocacy. The conference aims to bring together like-minded professionals, trainees and students from around the country, from allied health, nursing and medical backgrounds, to further educate, connect and empower those passionate about improving child and adolescent health. Ultimately, we hope that delegates will not only leave richer in knowledge about eminent issues facing Australian youth, but that they will feel inspired to advocate for change, and gain a deeper insight into what it means to care for our most vulnerable populations, and the challenges facing their future.

Meet the Board



Dr Jacqueline Small, Chair

Jacki is a Community Child Health Consultant in SLHD and has over 27 years experience in multidisciplinary teams for children with developmental disabilities. She was RACP President/Board Chair 2022-2024 and President Australian Association Developmental Disability Medicine (2015-2020).

Stephanie Dowden, Deputy Chair

Stephanie is a Nurse Practitioner based in Perth and has worked for over 25 years in child health in Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and UK. She has experience as a Director and is passionate about equitable and evidence based child health.



Dr Has Gunasekera, Treasurer

Has is a Clinical Academic and Professor of Paediatric Priority Populations at CHW and University of Sydney. He is engaged in research with ACCHOs and worked in Health Assessment for Refugee Kids clinic for over two decades.

Dr Paul Bauert OAM, Secretary

Paul is a Paediatrician in Royal Darwin Hospital. He won the RACP Rural Medal in 2008 and twice won the AMA President's Medal for passionate and persistent advocacy for improvements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.



Sam Harkus

Sam is an audiologist based in Gadigal, Sydney NSW. Her work has predominantly focussed on equitable and earlier access to ear health and hearing care for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Meet the Board

Dr Kim Oates AO

Kim is a paediatrician who trained across 3 countries and was the first holder of University of Sydney's Chair of Paediatrics and Child Health (1985-1997) and subsequently, CE from 1997-2006. Kim retains his international reputation as an expert in child abuse and neglect and as a teacher of medical students.



Dr Jenny Proimos

Jenny has served the ACAH as a Board Director since it was established. She has also been Board Chair and Treasurer. She is a consultant adolescent physician and previously was the Principal Medical Adviser in the Victorian Department of Education and Training and President of Paediatrics and Child Health Division, RACP, from 2008-2010.



Simone Sherriff

Simone is a Wotjobaluk woman who lives and works on Wiradjuri country and is a Research Fellow at the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health at Sydney University. Simone has extensive experience working in the Aboriginal community-controlled health sector in NSW and has worked with Aboriginal community organisations for the last 15 years on health research and the implementation of services around key priority areas for communities. Simone's research interests are around food security, breastfeeding, and child health.



Dr Anysha Walia

Anysha is a paediatric trainee in Victoria and was shortlisted as Intern of the year in 2022. She has been active in the ACAH since she was a medical student and was co-convenor of ACAH2023. She is a volunteer for Water Well project and involved in refugee health research.



Prof Nitin Kapur,

Prof Kapur is a Respiratory & Sleep Paediatrician and Director of Paediatric Education at the Queensland Children's Hospital. He was the past President of the Paediatric & Child Health Division of the RACP and the newest board member of the ACAH.



How lobbyists are blocking bans on advertising for online gambling - and putting young Australians at risk, by Monique Ryan MP.

- By the time a child turns 13, an estimated 72 million data points have been collected about them online. Gambling companies use this information to serve up ads that are not just persuasive – they’re predatory. As the article explains, these ads are “delivered with pinpoint precision to our kids and young people when they are most vulnerable to their influence.” They appear during sports highlights, gaming streams and even innocuous YouTube searches. The message is clear: gambling is fun, easy and part of growing up.
- A 2024 study by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education found that most teenagers aged 14–17 were exposed to at least one gambling ad per day online – in some cases, “one per hour.”
- The Australia Institute recently reported that “one in three 12-17-year-olds in Australia gamble and 46% of 18–19-year-olds.” The Australian Gambling Research Centre has found that young people aged 18–34 are the most at risk of gambling harm: among regular online bettors in this age group, “82% meet criteria for at-risk gambling.”
- As Monique Ryan writes, “These companies know that the younger someone is when they start gambling, the more likely they are to develop problems later on.” Despite clear evidence of harm, powerful lobbying by the gambling industry has stalled reform, including bans on advertising during times when children are online.
- The piece concludes with a call for urgent action: “We need to put the health and wellbeing of our children ahead of the profits of online gambling companies.”

Read more at:

<https://johnmenadue.com/post/2025/06/how-lobbyists-are-blocking-bans-on-advertising-for-online-gambling-and-putting-young-australians-at-risk/>

AND

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Social_Policy_and_Legal_Affairs/Onlinegamblingimpacts/Report



ACAHA 2023 CONFERENCE MOMENTS

*A look back at the wonderful
moments at the ACAHA 2023
Conference*

