

# NEURONEWS

FUNDING LIFESAVING | NEUROSURGICAL RESEARCH

## Getting Ahead: SA TBI Research Leading the Way



Your generosity is driving transformative research right here in South Australia. Led by Dr Adam Wells, this groundbreaking research on Chronic Subdural Haematoma (cSDH) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is gaining global recognition.

TBI is a leading cause of hospitalisation, disability and death worldwide. Around 1 in 4 patients who experience a head injury will develop a cSDH, a potentially life-threatening neurosurgical condition where blood collects between the skull and the surface of the brain.

This research aims to utilise innovative techniques to influence the body's clotting mechanism. A key focus is Rotational Thromboelastometry (ROTEM). Unlike standard lab tests, ROTEM can be performed bedside and offers real-time detailed insights into the patient's blood clotting process. The research team are exploring how ROTEM can enhance clinical outcomes for TBI patients, potentially leading to the development of new treatment guidelines. All of this is only possible because of your generosity. Dr Wells credits the NRF Abbie Simpson Clinical Fellowship for enabling him to establish the Neurosurgical Research Group at the RAH.

Supported by Clinical Research Officer Lola Kaukas, the group has participated in over 20 clinical research projects, including several clinical trials and international collaborations.



### Some of their ongoing research includes:

- **BONANZA** - Brain Oxygen Neuromonitoring in Australia and New Zealand Assessment.
- **ROTEM-TBI** - The Use of ROTEM in Moderate to Severe Traumatic Brain Injury.
- **RiSE** - Pre-operative Rotational Thromboelastometry in Elective Chronic Subdural Haematoma Evacuation.
- **FIND-TBI** - Forecasting Impairment and Neurodegenerative Disease Risk following Traumatic Brain Injury.
- **SANTB** - The South Australian Neurological Tumour Bank.
- **KARPOS** - A Phase I, Single Centre, Non-Randomised, Open-Labelled, 1 Escalating Dose Study of Autologous GD2 Chimeric Antigen Receptor-Expressing Peripheral Blood T Cells In Patients with Recurrent GD2-Positive Glioblastoma Multiforme.
- The Development of a **Core Outcome set for Cranioplasty** following Stroke or TBI.

**Thank you for your continued support, please consider donating today to advance this vital research and improve patient outcomes.**

## Supporting The Brain Injury Community



In 2018, Lauren's life changed in an instant when she suffered a traumatic brain injury after an accidental fall while helping a student down from a piece of play equipment. What began as personal journaling to aid her rehabilitation led to the creation of The Orange Butterfly Foundation - which aims to raise awareness and provide financial support to those affected by brain injury and concussion. Lauren is an incredible advocate for the brain injury and wider disabled community. The NRF is proud to be sponsoring The Orange Butterfly's October Gala Dinner, supporting SA patients living with TBI.



Tyler Fuller was just 19 years old when he suffered a terrible, falling from a 10 metre cliff in Middleton landing head first onto the rocks. Medevaced to hospital, four neurosurgeons performed a six hour life-saving surgery, removing a large portion of skull bone to alleviate brain swelling. He remained in a coma for 19 days, after which he began his long recovery and rehabilitation journey. These days he is a passionate brain injury advocate and fundraiser. He is pictured during his Big Ride fundraiser with ICU paramedic Ian, the first responder at his accident. We are proud to partner with Tyler to raise awareness and advance critical TBI research.

# Grey May 2024 Shatters Records with Over \$170,000 Raised!

We've doubled last year's record, thanks to your incredible support! Grey May 2024 has raised \$170K to fund vital brain tumour research and work towards a cure. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who took part and helped spread awareness this Grey May. Every contribution has made a significant difference, with **100% of the funds** going directly to groundbreaking research projects and support. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who donated, fundraised, bought a badge, beanie or star of hope, shared their story, attended an event, volunteered, participated in our raffle and online auction, or got involved in any way to help spread awareness to Go Grey in May!

## A HUGE THANK YOU TO OUR GREY MAY SPONSORS

JonesRadiology



The Memorial Hospital

by ACHA Health



Adelaide Hospital



## SERVICE SPONSORS

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## Highlights of Grey May 2024

We capped off the month with a celebration, where we introduced the newly appointed SA Brain Tumour Support Nurse—a role made possible by your contributions.



- A new collaboration with Munno Para Foodland helped drive awareness with raffle donations and a token wall fundraiser raising \$7,730.

- Brave for Dave in the Riverland region showed amazing support, raising \$10,000 at local netball, hockey, and footy games, an incredible effort!

- Throughout May, we spread awareness with stands at The Memorial Hospital, Munno Para Foodland, Calvary Hospital, and St Andrews Hospital.

- A Brain Tumour Research Update and Lab Tour at Uni SA's Centre for Cancer Biology provided an inside look at the latest research, and unveiled the new Felicity's Countess equipment, donated in memory of Felicity Plew.



# Progress Takes People: New Personnel Grants Accelerate Research

Following a state-wide think tank hosted by NRF President Dr Nick Vrodos in January, which brought together South Australia's leading neurosurgeons and researchers, the priority became clear: people are at the heart of research progress.

As a result, the NRF created a new grant category to fund researchers and research assistants directly. This year, \$300,000 in funding was distributed across 6 projects, with each recipient receiving \$50,000 to further vital research. The grants reflect the NRF's commitment to investing in innovation and strengthening South Australia's research capacity.

## Among the recipients:



**Bree Hodgson, Research Assistant at the SA Neurological Brain Tumour Bank (SANTB),** will support an increasing number of neuro-oncology projects.



**Sidra Nawaz Khan, assisting in CART Cell Therapy Clinical Trials at the Royal Adelaide Hospital,** will help manage the growing demand for cutting-edge patient trials.



**Shannon Stuckey, in the Translational Neuropathology Laboratory,** will contribute to vital stroke surgery research utilising her specialised technical expertise.



**Angus McNamara in the Neurodegenerative Disease Laboratory,** will lead the ongoing FIND-TBI study and investigate why TBI significantly increases risk of later developing a neurodegenerative disorder such as Parkinson's disease.



**Dr Rebecca Hood in the Translational Neuropathology Laboratory,** will work on key stroke projects exploring the role of neuroinflammation in the development of secondary neurodegeneration.



**Mr Hugh McCloskey in the Centre for Orthopaedic and Trauma Research,** is investigating Adelaide MRI metrics as trauma screening and return-to-play tools for contact sport athletes.

This initiative marks a significant step forward, ensuring that the NRF's research projects have the manpower necessary to deliver life-changing advancements.

# Investing in Innovation: \$2.7m Trailblazing Neurosurgical Research Funded

Thanks to your unwavering support we have been able to fund an impressive \$1,378,531 across 34 different research and equipment grants in the 2023/24 financial year. You can read all about these groundbreaking projects in our latest Impact Report.

We are pleased to announce another \$1,375,112 has been awarded to 29 additional projects for 2024/25. This amazing investment is advancing critical research and developing innovative treatments that improve patient outcomes.



2023  
2024



## IMPACT REPORT

NeuroSurgical Research Foundation

### YOUR 5 YEAR IMPACT 2020-2024



Over \$4.4m to 125 research projects and scholarships



\$500k vital equipment to research labs and hospitals



\$700k NRF seed funding used to attract \$32m additional federal research funding



Launched Brain Tumour Research SA to fast-track progress and find treatments faster



Established SA's first Brain Tumour Support Coordinator

Every dollar you give helps fast-track lifesaving discoveries. We thank you for your generosity and look forward to working together to drive even more breakthroughs.

# Donald Simpson Biography Set To Launch New Scholarship



Donald Simpson was a pioneering neurosurgeon and helped co-found the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation in 1963 with Trevor Dinning. Two of his former trainees and colleagues, Glenn McCulloch and Peter Reilly, have written a biography shedding light on the fascinating life of this remarkable yet humble man. It covers the many aspects of his life - from medical research and historical interests to working with disabled and sick children and his humanitarian activities. It also contains many contributions and stories from people who knew him, some humorous, some surprising but always "Donalduesque".

By purchasing this biography, you not only gain insight into the incredible life of Donald Simpson but will also help continue his legacy by contributing directly to advancing medical research in neurosurgery. All proceeds from the sale of the book will fund the newly created Donald Simpson Neuroscience Scholarship, which will support a junior neuroscientist to advance their research skills.

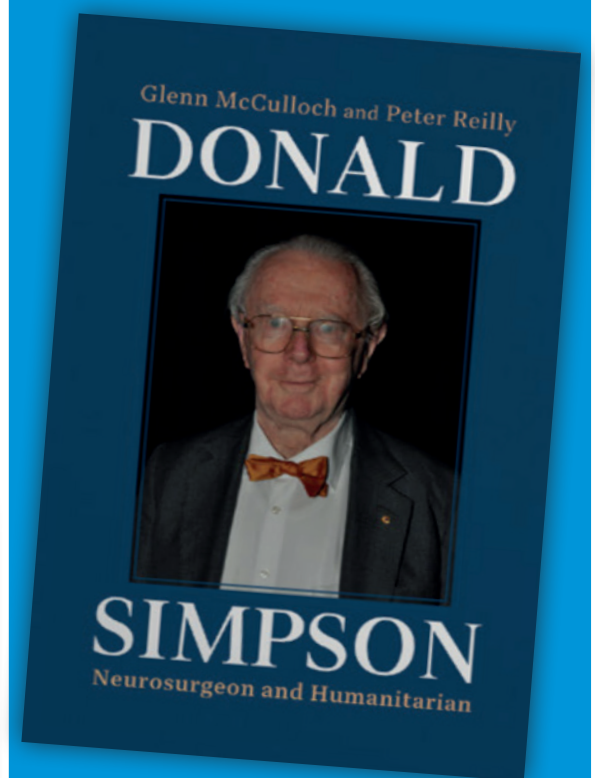
*Christmas High Tea  
& Book Launch*

Join us for a festive high tea and help support vital neurosurgical research.

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> Nov | 1pm to 4pm**

Indulge in a delectable high tea of scrumptious savouries and luscious sweets in the beautiful surrounds of The Conservatory at Ayers House. Drinks package includes sparkling wine, beer, wine, soft drink & juice as well as a continuous selection of T Bar teas and freshly brewed coffee.

All proceeds from the event and book sales will fund the newly created Donald Simpson Neuroscience Scholarship, which will support a junior neuroscientist to advance their research skills.



**Please join us to celebrate the release of the new book "Donald Simpson - Neurosurgeon and Humanitarian".**

All proceeds from the event and book sales will fund the newly created Donald Simpson Neuroscience Scholarship, which will support a junior neuroscientist to advance their research skills.