

2019 Research Awards

Project Title:

Improving care for people with head and neck swelling after cancer treatment

Lead Investigator:

Amanda Pigott

Research Fellow

Allied Health, Researcher

PAH & University of Queensland



Collaborative Project Team:

Jodie Nixon

Advanced Team Leader, Occupational Therapy

Allied Health, PhD Candidate

PAH

Doctor Andrew McCann

Director of Vascular Medicine

Clinician

PAH

Megan Trevethan

Occupational Therapist

Allied Health, New Researcher

PAH

Doctor Sandro Porceddu

Senior Radiation Oncologist & Director of Radiation

Oncology Research

Clinician

PAH

Claire Jeans

Speech Pathologist

Allied Health, New Researcher

Cavalry Mater, Newcastle

Bena Cartmill

Speech Pathologist & QH Research Fellow

Allied Health, Researcher

PAH

Project Summary:

This study will investigate the development of swelling of the head and neck areas after treatment for head and neck cancer. Head and neck swelling is highly visible, can be uncomfortable and may cause difficulty with things like swallowing, breathing and speaking. There is limited research available to help understand this condition or to guide its treatment.

In the first part of this study, we will seek to investigate who gets swelling during radiotherapy treatment and whether it resolves during the recovery phase. Internal and external swelling will be examined. The second part of the study will offer treatment to people who continue to have problematic swelling (lymphoedema) in their recovery phase. This part of the study will compare two treatment types, massage and compression, and to see what is the most helpful.

Research Benefits:

This study will provide valuable information about how swelling changes during cancer treatment both inside and outside the body. This will assist in our understanding of when we should provide treatment for swelling and which people will most benefit. The treatment currently provided for head and neck swelling has not been well researched. Patients report it is beneficial, but it is very time consuming for both patient and therapist. This study will work towards identifying which components of therapy are most effective for head and neck swelling management to improve outcomes for patients, reduce the burden on future patients' time and ensure the health care system resources are used effectively.

[DONATE TO THIS PROJECT](#)