

Collaborative research for community benefit

THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME AUSTRALIA has gained a reputation for ground-breaking collaborative research designed to help those facing challenging circumstances.

The University of Notre Dame Australia recognises the importance of collaborative research and with the foundations of Catholic intellectual tradition, Notre Dame researchers across the campuses in Fremantle, Broome and Sydney work to deliver practical benefit to communities and lives.

Few projects better illustrate the positive impact of Notre Dame's research on communities in need than the seminal investigation into alcohol restrictions in northern Western Australia. Following 2007 evidence that alcohol misuse was linked to violence and poor health and education outcomes in remote communities, the local government restricted sale of full-strength alcoholic drinks. Notre Dame researchers and

Nulungu Research Institute staff working with public agencies, other universities and Aboriginal cultural and community leaders sought to gain accurate information on the effects of the restrictions. Researchers found there was more than 30% fewer alcohol-related illnesses and crimes in the first year of restrictions. Continued work demonstrates continuing declines in domestic violence and street drinking as well as improvements in family health awareness.

Notre Dame is particularly renowned for its health and medical research underpinned by strong partnerships. Research has improved survival outcomes for people with prostate, colorectal, lymphoma and sarcoma cancers through the development of a programme focused on patient needs



Researchers Lynley Wallis (L) and Anna Dwyer (R) from Notre Dame University's Nulungu Research Institute in Western Australia.

from the time of diagnosis to beyond the completion of treatment. Other peer-led programmes significantly reduced falls among older men and women in community and residential care facilities, and new education programmes reduced the number of clinical interventions in childbirth.

RESEARCH HAS IMPROVED SURVIVAL OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH PROSTATE, COLORECTAL, LYMPHOMA AND SARCOMA CANCERS

The university is also participating in an Australia-wide industry-supported project aimed at improving

detection and management of the genetic condition, familial hypercholesterolaemia, by transferring responsibility from the tertiary hospital sector to the less expensive and more easily accessible primary health care sector.

Working with investigators from the University of Southern Queensland, James Cook University and Northern Archaeology Consultancies, Notre Dame researchers are studying historical records to reconstruct a picture of 200 campsites used by the Queensland Native Mounted Police (Aboriginal troopers enlisted in the early days of European settlement). The work, funded by the Australian Research Council, is enabling a better understanding of early Australian frontier conflict and contributing to global studies of Indigenous responses to colonialism.

Notre Dame is committed to making a real difference in the communities it serves. Along with health and Indigenous studies, its primary areas of focus are ethics, philosophy, theology and education. ■

HUMAN OCCUPATION OF NORTHERN AUSTRALIA BY 65,000 YEARS AGO

Chris Clarkson, Zenobia Jacobs, Ben Marwick, Richard Fullagar, Lynley Wallis et al.



Notre Dame's focus on Indigenous studies was reflected in an article published in Nature in 2017. The article achieved a social impact score of 1425.

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Clinical Sciences 'Well above world standard'

State of Australian University Research 2015-16: Volume 1
Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) National Report



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