



**Department of Psychological Medicine**  
**Te Tari Whakaora Hinengāro Tangata**  
University of Otago Wellington

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2020**



**Waiho i te toipoto,  
kaua i te toiroa**

*Let us keep close together,  
not wide apart*

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Cover image: Original artwork by Paige Wilson (Ngāti Rangī, Ngāti Tūwharetoa) to represent connection, love, wisdom, the support of whānau and meeting challenges head on, inspired by the four corners of wellbeing – wairua tinana, hinengaro, whānau. Designed with aroha to support mental health research within the University of Otago.

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## FOREWORD

In 2020, the Department of Psychological Medicine entered an exciting phase of growth and generativity. Across all measured metrics, research productivity in the Department increased significantly. The Department has achieved its best outcomes on record in research publications (98% increase), media mentions (56% increase) and grant applications (200% increase).

The Department has established new collaborations with academic colleagues in New Zealand and overseas and with stakeholders in the mental health sector. We have engaged in greater cross-campus collaboration than previously, holding joint meetings, establishing a grant review group, and increasing our collaborative research projects. Similarly, the Department has attracted a record number of PhD students and psychiatry registrars undertaking scholarly projects under the supervision of our academics. At the start of the year, we were also delighted to welcome the Suicide and Mental Health Research Group.

The Department rose to the challenges introduced by COVID-19 and distance learning. Staff quickly adapted teaching programmes to shift into the online space, and these efforts were rewarded by positive feedback from students and in celebrating their achievements in successfully completing a difficult academic year without any delays in progression.

The Department's World of Difference teaching programme was rolled out to Dunedin School of Medicine and Christchurch will follow. The team won the prestigious binational TheHMS prize for leadership, which will be awarded in Perth in February 2021. Dr Sarah Gordon, the lead of the World of Difference team, was selected as a finalist in the NZ Women of Influence Award for her work in leading this group.

I am delighted with the progress made by our Department and the exciting developments that are currently underway. I would like to thank everyone in the team for exceeding all expectations to turn a challenging year into great success.

mā pango, mā whero ka oti te mahi

-by black and red together the work will be done-



Associate Professor Susanna Every-Palmer  
Head of Department, Psychological Medicine, UOW

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## SECTION 1: STAFFING IN 2020

The Department of Psychological Medicine, University of Otago Wellington ('the Department') is a medium-sized department, with over 20 academics and 10 PhD students.

The recruitment of high calibre academic staff has been a high priority for the Department since the Independent Departmental Review in September 2018. Overall, the review was positive about the Department, describing it as "supportive" with people "working well as a team". However, the Panel recorded major challenges relating to staffing, describing recruitment to be at "the centre of the challenges faced by this Department." They considered "Staffing levels appear to be at a knife edge of critical mass, where any reduction could tip the balance and lead to a downward spiral."

The Department has made excellent progress in this area in the last two years. The Department now has over 20 academics, an increase of over 50% since 2018. This increase is a result of: (a) all pre-existing vacancies now being filled; (b) the Suicide and Mental Health Research Group moving into the Department; and (c) new positions being created through new revenue associated with the success of our post graduate programmes.

We were delighted to welcome two new senior lecturers to join the team in 2020, Dr Paul Skirrow and Dr Emily Cooney. Their appointments were the result of a competitive application process which yielded over a dozen eligible candidates.

Paul is a British-trained clinical psychologist. His areas of research interest include applied neuropsychology, the psychological aspects of concussion, brain injury and stroke rehabilitation, and cognitive and psychological impacts of acquired and developmental neurological conditions. Dr Skirrow was recruited from MHAIDS 3DHB, where he was the Psychology Clinical Lead, with a team of approximately 60 psychologists. He is now leading an exciting new project for the Department, designing a postgraduate course in clinical neuropsychology.

Emily is a clinical psychologist with expertise in dialectical and cognitive behaviour therapies, and the treatment of PTSD for people with high-risk behaviour. She returned to New Zealand from an appointment at Yale University in the United States. She has become the Director of the postgraduate CBT programmes. As the principal investigator of three competitive research grants awarded in 2020, Emily was the Department's most successful grant writer; particularly impressive as she only started work with the Department in mid-2020.

The Department has enjoyed having the Suicide and Mental Health Research Group join us in 2020. Dr Gabrielle Jenkin and Dr Sarah McKenzie have brought a wealth of research experience and their social science backgrounds have greatly expanded the multidisciplinary perspectives and research outputs within the team.

We have had a number of staff recruited in 2019 go from strength to strength in 2020. Dr Francis Goodstadt, child psychiatrist, was employed as a senior lecturer to convene the 5th year ALM programme. He has twice been awarded School-wide teaching prizes to recognise his outstanding teaching and pastoral care and support of medical students. Dr Matthew Jenkins was appointed into a new Research Fellow in Mental Health role in November 2019 and has rapidly made considerable gains in supporting mental health research which are described in later in this report.

The Department has a fantastic group of client services staff, including new appointees Kerrie Harford and Clem Cizadlo. They have been mentored by Kristy Wilson and Maria Fitzmaurice, who are highly valued as some of the most experienced support staff in our school. All staff are well supported by Lead Administrator Shan Valiyara

Despite the challenges of 2020, the Department still had a lot of fun during the year, enjoying professional and social activities, including lunch time Lindy Hop dance and yoga lessons, Departmental te Reo Māori classes, and much appreciation of the contribution of Masterchefs (Kerrie), apiarists (Mark), and kaimoana gatherers (the Wilson whānau).



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## SECTION 2: RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2020

As part of the Divisional funding in Mental Health Research, the Department was tasked with a number of specific research-related objectives at the outset of 2020. They were as follows:

1. Conduct a stocktake of current research and identify themes or groupings.
2. Build the external profile of Mental Health Research at the University of Otago.
3. Increase collaborative mental health grant applications (with people from >1 department).
4. Increase collaborative mental health research studies (involving people from >1 department).
5. Demonstrate a commitment to Māori and Māori-relevant research.
6. Prepare an application for a Mental Health Research Theme in 2021.
7. Demonstrate a commitment to mental health service users and explore and implement co-production opportunities.

These are covered in turn over the next few pages.

### CONDUCT A STOCKTAKE OF CURRENT RESEARCH AND IDENTIFY THEMES OR GROUPINGS

Dr Jenkins has conducted a stocktake of current research across the university and identified themes or groupings. He has collated researcher interests and themes in a spreadsheet and is currently involved in cluster and thematic analysis. This is helping us to position ourselves for a Mental Health Research Theme application in 2021.

### BUILD THE EXTERNAL PROFILE OF MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

The Department has identified six specific goals to operationalise this objective at the outset of 2020. They are as follows:

- Ensure all academic staff have ORCID IDs and up-to-date University of Otago webpage, Google Scholar and ResearchGate profiles
- Re-design and develop the Department of Psychological Medicine webpage
- Hold intercampus training for staff from the three Departments of Psychological Medicine
- Establish new connections and strengthen existing relationships with potential stakeholders and collaborators in the area of mental health
- Increase media mentions of the Department of Psychological Medicine UOW by 25% each year of funding
- Secure funding for a mental health podcast and start content development

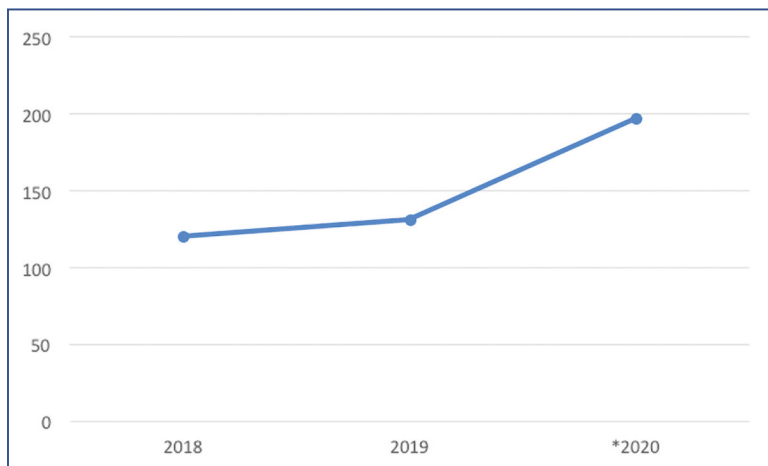
The Department has been successful in progressing or completing all these goals. The front-facing website has been improved and academic staff supported to update their research profiles.

During the year, the Department invited visiting experts to present to staff on how to increase external research dissemination and impact. Speakers have included Veronika Meduna, Chief Editor of The Conversation (15 October 2020) and Maria Larcombe, Research Fellow for research impact (8 October 2020). Media training was organised for academic staff (including staff from all three campuses), which was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID-19 but has been rescheduled for May 2021.

Relationships with marketing and communication teams across campuses have strengthened (e.g., Cheryl Norrie; Fran Wright; Rhys Pritchard; Cat O'Sullivan). Media releases have been arranged for journal papers and other activities (e.g., funding success) where appropriate.

This has been a successful strategy, with media presence increasing 57% from over the preceding years (see Figure 1) and academics increasingly developing a research impact strategy as a normative activity for any research undertaken.

Figure 1. Number of discrete appearances of Departmental research in the media by year



\* Up to 17 December 2020.

Data supplied by Isentia. They were unable to source data from before 2018 (due to copyright restrictions).

Examples of media releases with high national and or international media uptake and a principal investigator from the Department include:

- Use of controversial restraints varies wildly across the Pacific – Otago-led study reveals’ (Giles Newton-Howes, <https://www.otago.ac.nz/news/news/otago758386.html> based on the publication *The use of mechanical restraint in Pacific Rim countries: an international epidemiological study* published in *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences*. Altmetric score of 59 (95th percentile).
- ‘Significant psychological toll from COVID-19’ (Susanna Every-Palmer) based on the publication *Psychological distress, anxiety, family violence, suicidality, and wellbeing in New Zealand during the COVID-19 lockdown: a cross-sectional study* published in *PLOS ONE*. This was widely picked up by national media (including TVNZ, RNZ, Stuff and NZME outlets) and international media (including *The Guardian* and *Washington Post*). Altmetric Score of 190 (99th percentile).
- Why some people find it easier to stick to new habits they formed during lockdown. (Matthew Jenkins, <https://theconversation.com/why-some-people-find-it-easier-to-stick-to-new-habits-they-formed-during-lockdown-149438>) published in *The Conversation*. Based on *Examining the relationships among cognitive acceptance, behavioural commitment, autonomous extrinsic motivation, and physical activity* published in *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*. Altmetric score 44 (95th percentile).
- Media coverage fostered support for gun control in wake of mosque shootings, study finds’ (Susanna Every-Palmer, (<https://www.otago.ac.nz/news/news/otago741089.html>) based on the publication *The Christchurch mosque shooting, the media, and subsequent gun control reform in New Zealand: a descriptive analysis* published in *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*. Altmetric score of 42 (95th percentile).
- Self-harm content on Instagram: “self-harm or self-help?” (Jacobico Picardo, <https://www.otago.ac.nz/news/news/otago744328.html>) based on the publication *Suicide and self-harm content on Instagram: A systematic scoping review* published in *PLOS ONE*. Altmetric score 72 (95th percentile).
- ‘Teens shocked by suicide portrayal in ‘13 Reasons Why’ study finds’ (Sarah McKenzie, <https://www.otago.ac.nz/news/news/otago736924.html>) Based on the research paper *Young People’s Perspectives and Understanding of the Suicide Story in 13 Reasons Why* published in the international suicide prevention journal *Crisis*. Altmetric score 33 (95th percentile).



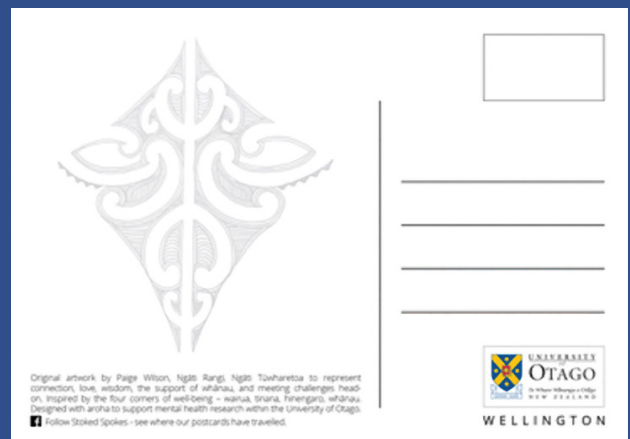
The Department successfully obtained support from University of Otago Research Marketing and Access Radio for a podcast series highlighting mental health research. This podcast will be developed and produced by Dr Matthew Jenkins and will be aired in 2021. The plan for the series is the production of 12 monthly episodes, each 28 minutes in duration (see Appendix 1). The data for the first episode has been gathered from Dr Jenkins' *waiho i te toipoto journey of connection* (see below). The podcast series provides us an opportunity to build the profile of the Department, showcase university mental health research and offer a platform for community voices and integrating Māori worldview. The target audience is broad, encompassing communities, service providers and users and policy makers.

### BUILDING OUR PROFILE – WAIHO I TE TOIPO TO JOURNEY OF CONNECTION

Over the Christmas holidays, Dr Matt Jenkins completed a 3,000-kilometre cycle ride from Cape Reinga to Bluff, with the purpose of mental health and wellbeing outreach focus. He cycled 120km a day, interviewing people across New Zealand about how they define, perceive, make sense of, and manage their mental health. With 2020 being a challenging year for many and social connections being restricted by lockdown measures, Dr Jenkins thanked the people he engaged in conversations about mental health by giving them a pre-paid specially designed postcard to reconnect with friends and whānau.

The art for the postcard was created by 16-year-old Paige Wilson (Ngāti Rangī, Ngāti Tūwharetoa), daughter of Psychological Medicine Client Services Administrator, Kristy Wilson, and was brought to life by the University's Design Services team.

Fundraising to support this endeavour was undertaken across the Wellington campus and further afield.



Dr Matthew Jenkins and Paige Wilson with the *waiho i te toipoto* postcard.

## INCREASE COLLABORATIVE MENTAL HEALTH GRANT APPLICATIONS (WITH PEOPLE FROM >1 DEPARTMENT)

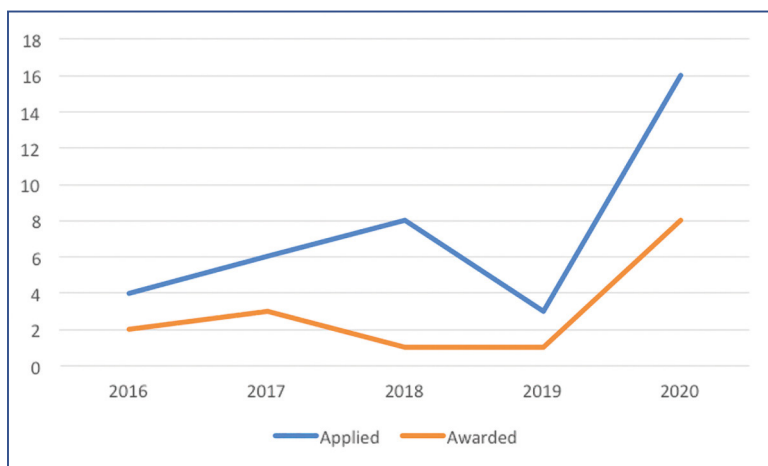
The Department identified three specific goals to operationalise this objective at the outset of 2020. They were

- Initiate a cross-campus grant peer review panel
- Set up a Departmental grant library
- Increase grant applications by at least 25% by encouraging and supporting academic staff to submit grants

The Department has achieved or exceeded these three goals. A grant peer review panel has been established, hosted by the Department with over 20 academics (from all three Departments of Psychological Medicine) acting as reviewers. A library of successful grants to assist subsequent grant writers has also been created.

The objective of increasing grant applications by 25% has been exceeded, with a 200% increase in completed applications in 2020 and a 360% increase in successful applications with Departmental staff as Principal Investigator (Figure 3).

Figure 2. Research grants submitted by staff from the Department



The successful grants for 2020 are listed in Appendix 5. The majority of these grants involve collaborations with academics from other Departments.

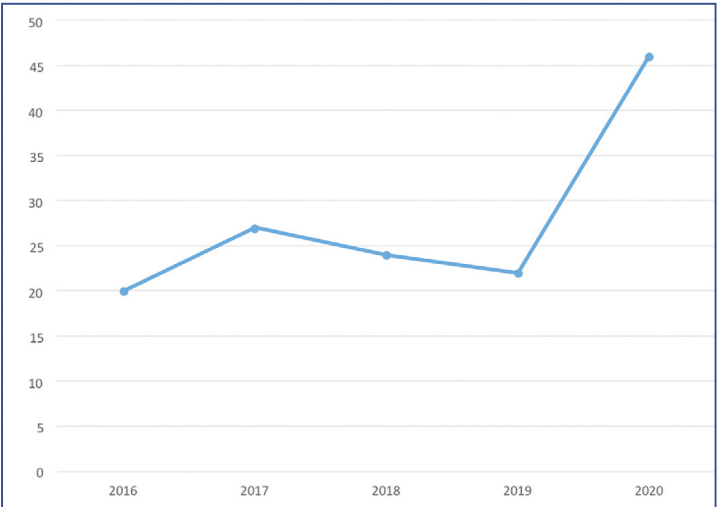
A successful interdepartmental meeting was held in February 2020 in Christchurch, which led to the formation of a number of new collaborations. These included a grant awarded by the James Hume Bequest to extend the World of Difference research to Dunedin (PI Charlie Mentzel). Staff from the Christchurch and Wellington Departments of Psychological Medicine are also collaborating as co-investigators in a 2021–2023 Health Delivery Research Project (\$1,187,682) ‘Meeting physical health care needs of people with mental illness or addiction’ (PI Dr Ruth Cunningham).

The 2021 Theme Application will involve academics from all Departments with the intention that this will lead to collaborative Centre of Excellence Funding.

# INCREASE COLLABORATIVE MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH STUDIES (INVOLVING PEOPLE FROM MORE THAN ONE DEPARTMENT)

Collaboration across the university has also increased. The Department has published more research papers in international peer-reviewed journals than at any other time in history. We have increased the production of papers by 98% above the 2015–2019 mean (see Figure 3). Over 75% of these outputs have involved collaboration with people from more than one department.

Figure 3: Research paper outputs for the Department over the last five years



This increase in research outputs is not due to the recent recruitment of new academic staff, who, while very productive in writing research grants, have not yet had sufficient time to complete and publish their work. The increase is predominantly due to a significant increase in outputs from established staff. Some outputs are the result of a several years of research efforts while others arise from agility in responding to key research opportunities (for example on the mental health effects of the COVID pandemic on New Zealanders).

The COVID wellbeing collaboration is a good example of a recent collaboration success, which deliberately sought to involve researchers from all three campuses, inviting nominations from the HODs Professor Richard Porter and Professor Kate Scott.



The COVID mental health and wellbeing collaboration led by Susanna Every-Palmer and Matthew Jenkins. From left to right: In Christchurch: Ben Beaglehole, Caroline Bell, Jonathan Williman; In Dunedin: Charlene Rapsey, Janet Hoek, Phil Gendall; In Wellington: Matthew Jenkins, Susanna Every-Palmer, James Stanley (from He Kitenga).

## DEMONSTRATE A COMMITMENT TO MĀORI AND MĀORI-RELEVANT RESEARCH

During 2020, the Department has focussed on establishing and strengthening relationships with Māori researchers and key stakeholders. The Department has been committing time to build and nurture relationships with Māori and to build knowledge of te Ao Māori.

The key relationship building activities have included:

- Engaging with researchers working within Kaupapa Māori research. This has included discussions with Dr Keri Lawson-Te Aho and Anaru Waa to discuss how the Department can make a greater contribution to Māori and support the work of Māori researchers.
- Consulting with Bridget Robson (director of Te Rōpū Rangahau Hauora a Eru Pōmare) to ensure cultural appropriateness in the inaugural PhD symposium. This received spontaneous acknowledgement in the anonymous evaluation e.g. *Particularly loved the bicultural opening and closing, and the great bicultural touches in the abstract book. Clearly a lot of thought had gone into it, which often doesn't at some higher-level conferences.*
- Arranging a hui on 15 February 2021 at Rūaumoko in Porirua with DHB kaumātua, Kuni Shepherd, and whaea, Areta Koopu, and kaimanaaki to discuss commitments to clinical research that is important to Māori and to strengthen connections to the local iwi, Ngāti Toa.

Staff have been extending their knowledge of Māori tikanga and the use of Reo Māori. The Department is committed to upholding the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and has decided on an equity theme that prioritises Māori for the Research Theme application.

In February 2020, all Department meetings were opened and closed with karakia. New students were consistently welcomed with mihi whakatau. The Department convened a Māori mental health course in September 2020 for psychiatric registrars, partnering with Māori leaders in mental health (e.g. Keri Lawson-Te Aho, Mark Lawrence) and a local marae to deliver this highly successful initiative.

In June, the Department started weekly Te Reo Māori lessons with Tāwhana Chadwick (Ngāti Kahungunu) from Kuwaha (funded by senior academics within the Department). We have now completed Level 2 and will commence Level 3 in 2021.

## PREPARE AN APPLICATION FOR A MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH THEME IN 2021

The preparation of an application for a Mental Health Research Theme is well underway. The topic has been determined in consultation with the three Heads of Department across campuses. This topic is *Improving equity in mental health*.

Staff have talked to a number of previous theme applicants and reviewed their applications. Research areas of interest across the different campuses have been collated in order to map key research streams. Potential collaborators and steering committee members across departments and organisations have been identified. The first draft of the application documents are being prepared in anticipation of an August 2021 submission deadline.

## RESEARCH GROUPS: THE WORLD OF DIFFERENCE PROGRAMME

The Department is committed to mental health service users and to co-production opportunities in research and teaching. A key example of this is in the World of Difference (WoD) education and research team. This team delivers and evaluates service user-led and co-produced education and research focused on ending discrimination, promoting recovery, inclusion and respect for human rights for those who experience mental distress. To our knowledge, this is the only such team that exists within a Psychological Medicine Department. Funding sources include the Health Promotion Agency, the Mental Health Foundation, the Ministry of Health, the NZ Police and the Royal Marsden research fund. The work of the World of Difference team is being recognised locally, nationally and internationally.

In 2020, the Department's WoD research and teaching programme was rolled out to involve all three campuses. Ten papers have been published regarding co-produced education or research, attracting significant international interest.

**Table 2.** Pre-programme (T1) and post-programme (T2) attitude scores for fifth- and sixth-year programme and control cohorts and comparison between the two.

	Programme					Control					Programme minus control T1-T2	
	N	Median (IQR)	Median (IQR)	Median [95% CI]	p*	N	Median (IQR)	Median (IQR)	Median [95% CI]	p*	Median <sup>b</sup> [95% CI]	p <sup>c</sup>
<b>Fifth year</b>												
RAQ 16 <sup>d</sup>	65	28 (24-30)	21 (19-25)	5 [4, 7]	<0.0001	63	28 (26-32)	26 (23-29)	2 [2, 3]	<0.0001	2 [1, 4]	0.0007
RAQ Factor 1	68	10 (9-11)	7 (6-9)	2 [2, 4]	<0.0001	65	11 (9-12)	10 (8-11)	1 [0, 2]	0.0003	2 [1, 2]	0.0002
RAQ Factor 2	69	4 (3-5)	3 (3-4)	0 [0, 1]	0.019	67	4 (3-5)	4 (3-5)	0 [0, 0]	0.23	0 [0, 0]	0.41
OMS	68	47 (43-51)	43.5 (39-48.5)	3 [1, 5]	0.0003	59	46 (43-50)	45 (42-50)	2 [-1, 3]	0.076	2 [0, 4]	0.071
OMS 15	68	33 (29-37)	29 (26-34.5)	2 [1, 4]	0.0005	60	32 (29-35)	30.5 (27-35)	1 [0, 3]	0.024	1 [0, 3]	0.15
OMS Factor 1	69	13 (11-14)	11 (9-13)	1 [0, 2]	0.082	62	13 (11-14)	12 (10-14)	1 [0, 2]	0.013	0 [-1, 1]	0.70
OMS Factor 2	70	11 (10-13)	10 (9-12)	1 [0, 1]	0.003	65	11 (9-13)	11 (9-13)	0 [0, 1]	0.079	0 [0, 1]	0.30
OMS Factor 3	70	9 (7-10)	7.5 (6-10)	0 [0, 1]	0.17	65	8 (7-10)	8 (6-10)	0 [0, 1]	0.39	0 [-1, 1]	0.62
<b>Sixth year</b>												
RAQ 16 <sup>d</sup>	53	25 (23-27)	22 (18-27)	3 [2, 4]	<0.0001	50	28 (26-30)	26 (24-28)	1 [1, 2]	0.016	2 [0, 3]	0.032
RAQ Factor 1	53	9 (8-10)	7 (6-9)	1 [1, 2]	<0.0001	51	10 (9-12)	9 (8-12)	1 [0, 1]	0.023	1 [0, 1]	0.060
RAQ Factor 2	55	4 (3-4)	3 (3-4)	0 [0, 0]	0.77	51	4 (3-5)	4 (3-5)	0 [0, 0]	0.39	0 [0, 0]	0.58
OMS	50	47 (41-52)	46.5 (41-50)	1 [0, 3]	0.011	46	49 (44-53)	47 (42-50)	3 [2, 4]	0.0003	-1 [-3, 1]	0.20
OMS 15	52	33.5 (29-37.5)	33 (27.5-35)	1 [1, 3]	0.006	46	34 (30-38)	33 (28-36)	2 [1, 4]	0.0003	-1 [-2, 1]	0.38
OMS Factor 1	53	13 (11-15)	12 (10-14)	1 [0, 2]	0.025	47	13 (12-15)	12 (11-14)	1 [1, 2]	<0.0001	-1 [-1, 0]	0.16
OMS Factor 2	55	11 (9-12)	10 (8-12)	1 [0, 1]	0.0002	46	10 (9-12)	10 (9-12)	0 [0, 2]	0.075	0 [0, 1]	0.39
OMS Factor 3	54	9.5 (6-11)	9 (6-11)	0 [0, 1]	0.86	47	9 (7-11)	9 (8-11)	0 [-1, 1]	0.66	0 [-1, 1]	0.86

IQR: interquartile range; CI: confidence interval; RAQ: Recovery Attitudes Questionnaire; OMS: Opening Minds Stigma Scale for Health Care Providers; RAQ Factor 1: Recovery Is Possible and Needs Faith; RAQ Factor 2: Recovery Is Difficult and Differs Among People; OMS Factor 1: Attitudes of health care providers towards people with mental illness; OMS Factor 2: Disclosure/help-seeking; OMS Factor 3: Social Distance.

\*Wilcoxon signed-rank test.

<sup>b</sup>Hodges-Lehmann estimate.

<sup>c</sup>Wilcoxon rank-sum test.

<sup>d</sup>RAQ 16-item questionnaire excluding the non-traditional domain.


Outcome table from WOD study published in ANZJP. This was a comparison cohort study used to compare the attitudes of >200 medical students, half of whom received the WOD programme (at UOW) and half who received a standard psychological attachment (at UOC). Those who participated in the WOD programme finished with significantly more positive attitudes towards recovery than the controls.

The WoD team won the prestigious binational TheHMS prize for leadership, which will be awarded in Australia in February 2021. Dr Sarah Gordon, the lead of the team, was also elected as a finalist in the NZ Women of Influence Award for her work in leading the WoD work programme.

### Making a world of difference

Home / Uni News /

Thursday 1 October 2020



Dr Sarah Gordon (University of Otago, Wellington) is a finalist in the Women of Influence awards.

## **RESEARCH GROUPS: *THE SUICIDE AND MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH GROUP***

The suicide and mental health research group is a multi-disciplinary team of researchers and clinicians sited within the Department of Psychological Medicine. It comprises two full-time social science researchers, an Assistant Research Fellow, PhD and summer students, and early career post-doctoral researchers. The research contributes to knowledge, policy, and services through high quality research in suicide prevention and mental health. The group is led by Dr Gabrielle Jenkin and Dr Sarah McKenzie and supported by Hannah Paap.

In 2020, the group provided supervision for two Assistant Research Fellows, five PhD students, four summer students (three jointly supervised with Victoria University School of Architecture), and a psychiatric registrar. Two students completed their PhDs, Rowan Magill and Steven Davey, with Steven being awarded the PhD Research Prize Clinical Research for his thesis "Where is an emotion?" Dr Denise Steers was awarded a Lotteries post-doctoral fellowship to develop and evaluate a parent resource for parents who have a child born with a variation in sex characteristics. The resource will provide a virtual voice from young adults with lived experience to encourage a Human Rights-based perspective promoting bodily autonomy.

In 2020, the group led five grant applications, one of which was successful, and supported another four applications, all of which were successful. The group has established a number of new collaborations, within and outside Otago University, including with the disciplines of criminology and architecture. They have increased collaborations with Māori researchers through joint papers and research grant applications.

Dr McKenzie has been working on a new postgraduate paper: Introduction to Suicidology and Suicide Prevention, which will run for the first time in 2021.

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## SECTION 3: TEACHING ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

### UNDERGRADUATE ALM TEACHING

#### FIFTH YEAR ALM TEACHING

The fifth year teaching programme is a well-established module convened by Dr Francis Goodstadt. It comprises a one-week didactic programme and four weeks in diverse clinical placements across the Greater Wellington region. Student learning in these teams is very well supported not only by psychiatrists but by all members of the multidisciplinary team; the student inclusion is greatly appreciated. Lastly, a service-user component run is interwoven throughout the module, led by the World of Difference team. This is a ground-breaking, internationally unique approach. Students spend time in MIX (a service-user community centre), exceptionally supported by service-user supervisors and MIX participants. This experience is consistently described by students as a highlight, and transformative in understanding mental health.

Unsurprisingly, COVID-19 dominated student learning 2020, with lockdown requiring immediate provision of learning experiences in the absence of direct clinical contact. Moving to online teaching was made possible by the Department lecturers all committing extra time and resources to provide additional sessions. Use of simulated scenarios, role-play, and a carefully crafted suite of selected films pertinent to mental health ensured students' progress and experience was maintained. Particular acknowledgment needs to be given to MIX and the World of Difference team in providing service-user based conversations online, so this key aspect of the course was not lost. The students also stepped up, and demonstrated their high calibre and diligent attitude to learning with the changing programme. The efforts of the Department were recognised in the end of year student-nominated awards, with Dr Goodstadt being given an Exceptional COVID response award. He also received excellent anonymous evaluation feedback through the Quality Advancement Unit for his convening of this course.

The students have continued their enthusiastic engagement with learning about Mental Health through 2020, with their interest reflected in applications to attend the RANZCP Mental Health Conference in Napier, and four students being funded to attend.

#### SIXTH YEAR ALM TEACHING

The sixth year psychological medicine attachment contributes four weeks of the 48 weeks of largely clinical learning undertaken by medical students in their 6th year program. The programme is convened by Associate Professor Giles Newton-Howes with support, particularly in examination, from Dr Gregory Spencer. The focus of the course is on assisting students to learn individualised applications of the 'book knowledge' garnered in earlier parts of the course, and assessed in the fifth year examination. An apprenticeship approach is taken to both the work, teaching and assessment. Trainee interns are assumed to already have sufficient knowledge and clinical skills; this module provides an opportunity to enable them to practice applying their knowledge and skills in the real world clinic setting. This occurs by observation and participation in the running of the mental health service within which they are placed. Some TIs experience this module in more rural locations including the Hawke's Bay, Palmerston North, Masterton and Gisborne.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, some TIs were able to continue learning in their clinical placements, whereas others had to learn at home. A/Prof Newton-Howes created a series of home learning modules that took approximately one day to complete (called psychological medicine 'day activities') and which involved a multi-modal exploration of a clinical scenario. This allowed those students who had to remain at home to continue their learning.

Other work in 2020 involved the alignment of the TI psychological medicine programme across the three schools, providing a consistent approach to teaching and examining 6th-year level psychological medicine across Otago Medical School.

## **POSTGRADUATE TEACHING: FAMILY SYSTEM THERAPY**

The Family System Therapy course was run in Christchurch, convened by Julie Burgess Manning. Despite the challenges imposed by COVID-19, all enrolled students successfully completed the course and appraised it highly. Due to low student numbers, this course will not be offered in 2021.

## **POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME: COGNITIVE-BASED THERAPY**

In 2020, the CBT programme had 46 students enrol on the certificate course, an increase of 100% from previous years. For the first time, the group was divided into two streams which ran in separate weeks, to maximise the learning experience through smaller group size.

The first block week in March (in the week just before lockdown) involved a rapidly adapted hybrid design, with material delivered remotely to some students remotely via Zoom, and others in-person. The second week of block teaching was delivered entirely by Zoom, with lots of break out room exercises, practices and use of polls to maintain engagement. The convenors were pleased by the positive feedback they received about how smoothly this went. Many students commented both during the second block week and afterward how helpful the content had been for them. In a poll administered to half the cohort at the end of the teaching week, over half the students indicated a preference for remote attendance for at least some of the course going forward.

It was striking how active and focussed students remained during teaching in lockdown, despite having to stare at a two-dimensional screen for hours every day over the whole week while having to deal with multiple attendant COVID-related stressors. As is typical, this course was fortunate to have a fabulous, motivated, hard-working group of students enrol. They were well supported by their supervisors. Only four students withdrew, mainly due to COVID-related redeployment.

A written format was used for the exam in 2020, instead of the usual oral exam process. It was a two-hour exam and involved reviewing case scenarios and responding to specific questions about assessment, formulation and treatment plan, and as well as a combination of multiple-choice and/or short-answer questions. This went well with 100% of CBT students who completed the course passed last year.

The Department was delighted to welcome Emily Cooney in mid-2020. Emily joined the teaching team from Yale University. She has now moved into the role of Director of the CBT programme, taking over from Fiona Mathieson who has done an extraordinary job of growing and extending the programme over the last ten years. Fiona will continue teaching in the CBT program in 2021, but she will reduce her hours

At the end of 2020, the CBT team was nominated for an Otago Teaching Award in the Distance Learning category.

## **POSTGRADUATE TEACHING: REGISTRARS**

The Department convenes four programmes for the 30-odd doctors training in psychiatry in the lower half of the North Island (Critical Appraisal, Stage I, Stage II, and Stage III education courses) and one national course (The National Psychiatry Leadership and Management Course). The courses are administered by Kerrie Hartford and supported by Peti Waaka in the Director of Training office. These courses are centrally funded through VoteHealth and also report to the Lower North Training Committee. In 2020, academics from the Department also provided individual supervision to eight registrars completing research projects (known as scholarly projects). Two of these registrars had abstracts selected to present at the 2020 College of Psychiatry Conference, and one (Chiranth Bhagavan, supervised by A/Prof Giles Newton Howes) won the national Dawn Short Award for his study.

The teaching programmes follow the curriculum set by the College of Psychiatry and the content is examined by a series of assessments sat by all Australian and New Zealand psychiatry registrars. In 2020, the trainees taught by the Department did significantly better in their exams across the board compared with binational pass rates.



## **CRITICAL APPRAISAL**

The critical appraisal course is available to all psychiatry registrars but is typically attended by Stage I and Stage II trainees. It is convened and taught by A/Prof Susanna Every-Palmer. The course is comprised of 11 lectures, a mix of didactic teaching and group problem solving exercises, which occur on the last Thursday of each month and are 90 minutes in duration. There is additional support to registrars by email and extra tutorials before exams.

Before this course started, the pass rate for registrars was below 50% for this section of the exam. The exam pass rate has now averaged out at approximately 80%. The anonymous Quality Advancement Unit evaluations of this course in 2020 showed that students considered it to be excellent.

## **STAGE I FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

This course is convened jointly by Dr Adam Sims and Dr Sally Rimkeit. It comprises teaching sessions every Thursday afternoon held at Te Papa, on the Porirua campus. The course is linked to the Balint sessions held weekly to allow registrars to participate in group psychotherapy and monthly sessions on medical statistics.

During 2020, zoom was used more frequently to enable teaching to continue in Level 3 COVID restrictions, with positive feedback.

## **STAGE II FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

The Stage II post-graduate psychiatry academic programme is convened by A/Prof Susanna Every-Palmer and Dr Oliver Hansby. A detailed programme with the relevant tutors is provided at the beginning of each block so trainees know in advance what to expect.. Active learning is fostered through discussion in lectures and tutorials and the requirement to prepare and present material. Trainees are advised to actively prepare for teaching sessions, identifying knowledge gaps before the session, and any remaining after the session.

Lecturers are asked to provide materials in advance of each tutorial, which are posted on moodle, and to spend a few minutes at the beginning of each session determining the level of knowledge of trainees on the topic in question. A range of teaching approaches are used by lecturers depending on the material to be covered, but most sessions rely on trainee participation, either as contributors to a group process or as presenters of work they have prepared in advance. Occasionally, lectures may be given, where significant amounts of formal content must be conveyed.

The Moodle / eReserve repository was created due to the copyright licensing requirement incumbent upon the University to make payment to copyright holders for using articles/chapters in teaching. It also serves as a dedicated repository for all teaching materials (PowerPoint presentations, required reading, and additional resources) that is easily accessible to trainees and does not get lost as their place of work changes (as might occur for materials sent by emails).

Confidential paper feedback is collected after each afternoon's teaching session and conduct focus group feedback on a yearly basis. In 2020, trainees consistently reported finding the course of high quality, both in terms of organization and quality of teaching. The Māori mental health module was a particular highlight.

## **STAGE III FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

The Department also is responsible for the academic training for psychiatric registrars in the final phase of their preparation with RANZCP to become consultant psychiatrists. This course is convened by Dr Mark Huthwaite and runs for one afternoon a month. The syllabus follows an adult learning module, in which students set their own priorities for learning and Dr Huthwaite organizes the speakers and facilitates the sessions.

## NATIONAL PSYCHIATRY LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT COURSE

This is a three-day national course the Department runs annually to provide formal training in leadership and management skills for senior psychiatry trainees from across Aotearoa New Zealand. The university is directly funded by Te Pou to run this programme. It is convened by A/Prof Susanna Every-Palmer.

In 2020, 16 senior registrars from across the country attended the course. The College of Psychiatrists continuing support with this occasion is greatly appreciated and the students enjoyed the companion social function which was held at the RANZCP Office in Chews Lane on the first night of the forum.

Attendees completed 'before and after' assessments, feedback forms for each presentation and filled out anonymous evaluations through the Quality Advancement Unit. As in previous years, both qualitative and quantitative feedback was sought for each individual session. All contributors were rated as effective presenters (all good to excellent). The evaluations indicate that the attendees found the course valuable and stimulating, with 17/18 students completing the final anonymous evaluation and median scores of 1.0 ('excellent;') for all core teacher domains ("fabulous panel of speakers and sessions", "Inspiring!"). In addition, the students valued the opportunity to network as a group of peers.



National Psychiatry Leadership and Management Course graduates 2020 with convenor, Susanna Every-Palmer.

## POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS: PHDS

By the end of 2020, there were 10 enrolled PhD candidates in the Department of Psychological Medicine, with numbers having increased by 40% during the course of the year and two more applicants preparing for admission in early 2021. This is a record number of PhD students for the Department. It is pleasing to see this continued growth in PhD student numbers as this has been a strategic priority for the Department. The main contributing factors to this growth include establishing a formal PhD convenor role, held by Dr Elliot Bell, the substantial contribution of the Suicide and Mental Health Research Group's well established PhD program, and a successful recruitment program run by the Department. This has included a video within the Department website, and the advertising of specific research projects on the School and University webpages.

There have been a number of individual successes for PhD candidates. Dr Afiya Ali and Dr Denise Steers concluded their examinations and had their degrees awarded during 2020, while Rowan Magill, Marieke Jasperse, and Steven Davey all submitted their theses for examination as previously mentioned. Steven Davey was also a joint winner of the "Clinical Research" UOW PhD Research Prize for 2020. Finally, Dr Ali and Dr Tess Soulié (a PhD graduate from Psychological Medicine who completed her postdoc in Canada in 2020), who are both now based overseas, were awarded Otago Affiliate Staff member status at Psychological Medicine. This will help facilitate their continued research collaborations with academics from the Department.

Other notable developments include an increased number of academic staff from the Department taking on the supervision of PhD students. This has widened the pool of available supervisors, across a broad range of disciplines and areas of expertise.

Finally, the Department was pleased to hold its inaugural Graduate Research Students Symposium in September. This was a well-attended event, co-convened by Dr Elliot Bell and Dr Matthew Jenkins, with presentations from a range of past, present, and future PhD candidates. This symposium was highly rated by attendees, with 100% of evaluations stating attendees were satisfied or highly satisfied with the program. Participants gave the following anonymous feedback:

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*"There is a lot of very interesting, relevant work being done at the department!! And very good professionals doing it! Impressive and exciting!!"*

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*"There's lots of fabulous research happening in this department"*

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*"It was a great opportunity to make connections with other researchers working in the same field"*

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*"Amazing presentations. All the presenters (and organisers) are to be commended!"*

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*"Professionally run. Particularly loved the bicultural opening and closing, and the great bicultural touches in the abstract book. Clearly a lot of thought had gone into it, which often doesn't at some higher-level conferences."*

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*"Let's make it an annual event"*

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*"Please keep these events coming at least annually"*

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Dr Elliot Bell, PhD student convener for the Department of Psychological Medicine UOW talks at the postgraduate research symposium.

Our goal is to ensure that Psychological Medicine is viewed as an attractive place to study for prospective PhD students. PhD candidates have the potential to make a significant contribution to the research environment within the Department. The current challenge facing the Department with regard to developing a vibrant PhD research student culture is the lack of office space on Level J. This has resulted in some candidates having to take desk space on Level H, or in the Ward Support Block. While manageable, this is not optimal with regard to ensuring they feel connected to, and a part of, the Department.

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## CONCLUSION

During 2020, the Department recruited talented new staff, filling all existing vacancies. The Department successfully incorporated the Suicide and Mental Health Research Group, to bring new energy and skills into our team. Across all measured metrics, research productivity in the Department increased, as did collaborative research endeavours and outputs. The Department has also established a number of strong connections that speak well for future collaborations. The teaching programmes continue to get excellent feedback, both in undergraduate and postgraduate and postgraduate course. The Department is capitalising on the current interest and opportunities in mental health education and alongside the remarkable growth in the CBT programme, is looking at offering new courses including postgraduate papers in suicidology in 2021 and in neuropsychology in 2022.

Despite the challenges posed by 2020, we are pleased to report on a highly productive year.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: PLANNED PODCAST EPISODES

EPISODE NUMBER	EPISODE FOCUS
1	What is mental health?
2	Potentially traumatic events
3	Refugee mental health
4	Cannabis
5	Māori and Pasifika psychology
6	Treating mental health – medication
7	Treating mental health – talking therapies
8	Mental health and architecture
9	Physical activity and mental health
10	Brain injury and mental health
11	Family violence
?	Sleep and mental health
12	Focus on the World of Difference research group
?	Depression and suicide
?	Student mental health

## APPENDIX 2: SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH FUNDING WITH DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE, UOW ACADEMICS AS PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS IN 2020

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	FUNDER	PROJECT TITLE	CO-INVESTIGATORS	AMOUNT (\$NZ)
<b>Sarah Gordon</b>	Health Research Council of NZ (HRC) - Health Delivery Research Activation Grant 2 (Jul-20)	Mental Health: Enabling the application of supported decision making in practice	Giles Newton-Howes (Psychological Medicine UOW), Armon Tamatea (University of Waikato)	29,501
<b>Emily Cooney</b>	New Zealand Lottery Grants Board	What does it take to stop hitting home? Voices of family violence	Simon Bennett (Massey University) Gabrielle Jenkin (Psychological Medicine UOW), Silke Kuehl (Psychological Medicine UOW), Michael Roguski (Kaitiaki Research and Evaluation Ltd)	61,328
<b>Emily Cooney</b>	Oakley Mental Health Research Foundation	What becomes of the broken-hearted? Voices of suicidal survivors of family violence	N/A	24,211
<b>Emily Cooney</b>	University of Otago - Deans Research Grant 2021 (UOW) (Sep-20)	What does it take to stop hitting home? Voices of family of violence	Simon Bennett (Massey University) Fairleigh Gilmour (Sociology, Gender Studies and Criminology, School of Social Sciences) Gabrielle Jenkin (Psychological Medicine UOW), Silke Kuehl (Psychological Medicine (UOW), Michael Roguski (Kaitiaki Research and Evaluation Ltd)	28,324
<b>Matthew Jenkins</b>	University of Otago - Deans Research Grant 2021 (UOW) (Sep-20)	Hikoi iti, hikoi nui	Susanna Every-Palmer (Psychological Medicine UOW), Mark Huthwaite (Psychological Medicine UOW), Paul Skirrow (Psychological Medicine UOW), Florence Kinnafick (School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University, UK), Simon Rosenbaum (School of Psychiatry, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia)	12,574
<b>Denise Steers</b>	New Zealand Lottery Grants Board – Lotteries Post – Doctoral Fellowship	The New Normal: expanding parental awareness of issues related to children born with a variation in sex characteristics.	N/A	97,645
<b>Susanna Every-Palmer</b>	NZ Police	Investigating the impact of a co-response team	Silke Kuehl (Psychological Medicine UOW), Sarah Gordon (Psychological Medicine UOW),	109,000
<b>Gabrielle Jenkin</b>	BRANZ	Calculating rates of suicide for me in construction	June Atkinson (Public Health, UOW)	151,868





**Department of Psychological Medicine**  
**Te Tari Whakaora Hinengaro Tangata**  
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