



# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2021

Funding research today,  
to improve the lives of children tomorrow.





# Who We Are

The Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia (CRF) Incorporated is an independent not-for-profit organisation dedicated to enriching the lives of children through research.

Established in 1976 with proceeds from the Channel 7 (then Channel 10) Christmas Telethon Appeal, CRF is committed to *Funding Research Today, to Improve the Lives of Children Tomorrow*, allocating around \$1.8M per year through its annual grants program and two CRF mid-career Fellowships.

Throughout CRF's 45-years, organisations such as Flinders University, SA Pathology, University of South Australia, The University of Adelaide, SAHMRI, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the Women's and Children's Health Network, and Novita have accessed nearly \$43.5M (in today's dollars) in support of almost 1,000 research projects into children's health, education and welfare in South Australia.

CRF is also passionate about fostering research talent and career opportunities for young researchers through Early Career Researcher Grant opportunities and its partnership with Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA) for support of PhD scholarships.

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To find out more about the CRF and the research we fund, we invite you to visit our website [www.crf.org.au](http://www.crf.org.au)





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# Message from the Chair and Executive Director

In 2021, the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia Inc. (CRF) celebrated its 45<sup>th</sup> year of *Funding Research Today, to Improve the Lives of Children Tomorrow*.

On behalf of CRF's Honorary Board, it is our pleasure to present this 45<sup>th</sup> annual report.

As we deliver this overview we must acknowledge the significant impacts that COVID-19 continues to place on our nation's communities, families and individuals, and to express our gratitude to those who continue to work selflessly to provide care, inspiration and governance during this global pandemic.

Our home state of South Australia has endured fewer lockdowns, and we've been able to forge ahead and deliver new initiatives for the CRF, most notably the establishment of two mid-career Fellowships and planning an annual event to celebrate the remarkable people bringing children's research to new heights.

At the start of the year, our Honorary Board of Directors re-confirmed that the fundamental focus for grants awarded by the CRF would be to support quality research into any area affecting children's health, education and welfare. Research would need to be undertaken in South Australia, and to be led by state-based researchers to meet CRF's commitment to fostering research talent and careers in SA.

Funding commenced in January for the 18 research projects selected for a grant in our 2021 annual grants round, with a total of \$1,529,367 awarded. A summary of these research grants can be found on page 15.

February heralded the beginning of our grant application program for children's research conducted in 2022, resulting in 97 expressions of interest received across the basic science, community-based study and clinical study categories. From this, 43 were shortlisted to progress to the full grant application stage for what will be CRF's 46<sup>th</sup> successive grant round.

As we concluded our five-year (mid 2016 to mid-2021) funding of Australasia's first Chair for the Prevention of Childhood Disability, we inaugurated two fixed-term, three-year CRF mid-career Fellowships under the theme of Prevention and/or Management of Childhood Disability and Disease.

A Partnership Program and supporting Prospectus was implemented mid-year to appeal for corporate investment in research grant partnerships and to stimulate community and workplace giving.

The Foundation was also pleased to unveil a new look and design assets for the brand, including a UX-enriched website and marketing collateral.

Throughout the year we continued to work closely with our Membership Organisations to build media coverage and community awareness for CRF-funded research, including exclusive stories with 7NEWS Adelaide, taking CRF into the living rooms of South Australian families.



**Paul Jury**  
Chair and Channel 7  
Foundation Member



**Greg Ward**  
Executive Director

CRF joined Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA) to announce the 2021 and 10<sup>th</sup> Cohort recipients of the Annual CRF HDA PhD Excellence Awards and the inaugural Schools Communicator Award. This new program funded by the CRF is an expansion on our 14-year partnership with HDA to build research excellence and careers in children's health and development in South Australia.

We were honoured to receive and gratefully acknowledge the continued patronage of the Governor of South Australia, His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC.

In January, the CRF Board welcomed Professor John Lynch as the incoming representative of The University of Adelaide succeeding Professor Sarah Robertson, whose valuable contribution for seven years we acknowledge with great thanks.

Due to the pandemic, FY21 was another challenging fiscal year, and we recognise the work of the Treasurer and Finance Committee during this time. Investment returns were lower than prior periods but thanks to astute management, CRF was able to maintain grant payments throughout the financial year and grow the investment portfolio by \$9.2M to \$48.6M, and return a surplus of \$339K for the 12 months to 30 June 2021.

It is with gratitude we acknowledge the commitment and collaboration of our Honorary Board of Directors and Research Committee who so generously give their time and expertise to help preserve and grow the legacy of the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation as it moves towards its 46<sup>th</sup> year in 2022.

**“We are proud to report that since being established in 1976, the Channel 7 Children’s Research Foundation has given \$43.5M (in today’s dollars) in grant funding to around 1000 research projects into children’s health, education and welfare in South Australia.”**

# Our People

## Board of Directors and Foundation Members

Our Board of Directors is a collaboration of dedicated people offering depth and diversity in the knowledge and judgment we seek to guide the strategic direction and fiscal trust of the CRF. We are extremely grateful for their honorary service and time.



**Paul Jury**  
Chair and Channel 7  
Foundation Member



**Stephen Woolley**  
Deputy Chair and Channel 7  
Foundation Member



**Libby Rayner**  
Channel 7  
Foundation Member



**Rosanna Mangiarelli**  
Channel 7 Representative  
and CRF Ambassador



**Chantelle Hugo**  
Channel 7  
Representative



**Professor Claire Roberts**  
Flinders University  
Foundation Member



**Greg de Cure**  
Novita  
Foundation Member



**Professor John Lynch**  
The University of Adelaide  
Foundation Member



**Professor Carol Maher**  
University of South Australia  
Foundation Member



**Dr Jennifer Fereday**  
Women's and Children's  
Health Network  
Foundation Member



**Professor Kevin Forsyth**  
Co-opted by the Board,  
CRF Research  
Committee Chair



**Greg Ward**  
Executive Director



**Jonathon Grant**  
Treasurer

## CRF Research Committee

Funding for research is granted annually and its success is dependent on the robust review and recommendation of our highly-accomplished and respected Research Committee:

**Professor Kevin Forsyth**  
CHAIRPERSON

**Dr Rhiannon Pilkington**  
CO-OPTED BY THE BOARD

**Mr Paul Jury**  
REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE BOARD

**Associate Professor  
Luke Grzeskowiak**  
FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

**Dr Tina Bianco-Miotto**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

**Professor Leanne Dibbens**  
UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**Dr Jennifer Fereday**  
WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S  
HEALTH NETWORK

## Independent Referees

Our Board of Directors and Research Committee acknowledge with gratitude the many members of the international research community, listed below or anonymous, who provided independent referee reports for our 2021 Research Grant Applications:

**Prof David Amor**  
**Prof Jim Anderson**  
**Prof Fiona Arney**  
**Dr Melanie Baak**  
**E/Prof Lesley Barclay**  
**Dr Carmela Bastian**  
**A/Prof Kerry Bissaker**  
**Dr Annette Briley**  
**Dr Angela Brown**  
**A/Prof Robert Bryce**  
**Dr Tony Carlisle**  
**Dr Catherine Chittleborough**  
**Prof Jennifer Couper**  
**Prof Susan Danby**  
**Prof Philip Darbyshire**  
**Dr Gonzalo del Monte Nieto**  
**A/Prof Michela Denti**  
**A/Prof Christine Doucette**  
**Prof Sally Dunwoodie**  
**A/Prof Paul Ekert**  
**Prof Jozef Gecz**  
**A/Prof Rebecca Giallo**

**A/Prof Lisa Gold**  
**Prof Ross Hannan**  
**Prof Louise Hickson**  
**Prof Gordon Howarth**  
**Prof Cathy Humphreys**  
**Prof Hubertus Jersmann**  
**Prof Ilan Katz**  
**A/Prof Paul Licciardi**  
**Dr Catia Malvaso**  
**A/Prof Robyn Martin**  
**Dr Louisa Matwiejczyk**  
**Dr Nicole McPherson**  
**Dr Fiona Mensah**  
**Prof Mike Nicholls**  
**Ms Jan Pratt**  
**Prof Amanda Richdale**  
**Dr Raman Sharma**  
**A/Prof Cheryl Shoubridge**  
**A/Prof Lisa Smithers**  
**Dr Vijay Suppiah**  
**Prof Julian Trollor**  
**Dr John Widger**



# Outlook for 2021 and Beyond

We're dedicated to enriching the lives of children through research.

Our Annual Grant Program is underpinned by an ambition to help every child live the happiest and healthiest life they can, and deserve.

We're also passionate about fostering research talent and career opportunities in South Australia. That's why we dedicate our entire annual funding to state-led research.

## **Our Vision**

To advance research that will ultimately improve the health, education and welfare of children.

## **Our Mission**

To increase the funding we give to build further opportunities for children's research.

## **Our Commitment**

To remain independent, robust and unbiased in our support of quality and innovative children's research, and to champion South Australian-led research and careers.

## **Our Growth**

We seek partnership and advocacy from organisations and individuals who share our vision to improve the lives of children through research.

## **Our Guarantee**

100% of all partnership dollars and donations received will directly support quality children's research.

**Children's Health, Education, Welfare**

**Quality research**

into the cause, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of any condition which affects a child's health, education and welfare

**Committed to Supporting**

Research Careers SA  
Early and Mid-career Researchers  
Proof-of-concept Research  
Research Outcomes for SA

**Priority Areas**

Improving Mental Health  
Reducing Obesity  
Improving Child Protection  
Understanding Social Determinants



# Our Focus

# Our Outlook

**Advance research**

to improve the health, education and welfare of children

**We Seek Support**

Partnerships and advocacy from organisations and individuals that share our vision and wish to contribute funds to children's research

**Increase Our Funding**

To build further opportunities for children's research

**Guarantee**

100% of all donations and sponsorship dollars goes directly into quality children's research



# Research Committee Chair Report

It gives me great pleasure to note that South Australia's research community is well served by the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation (CRF). The CRF's support of research, especially but not limited to early and mid-career researchers must not be underestimated. It provides an important source of funding at a time when this is increasingly difficult to obtain and is vital to the health of research in this state. The new initiatives of the CRF Fellows is an exciting development, further supporting programs in children's research and supporting research capacity in this State.

In a challenging year, where lockdowns and physical distancing resulted in unplanned obstacles to research, particularly in clinical and community settings, the CRF continued to support researchers, allowing flexibility with variations and extensions to projects, ensuring the best chance of success.

I very much welcomed the Board's commitment to an uninterrupted annual grants program and the call for applications to the 2021 grants round, which resulted in the submission of 136 Expressions of Interest, of which 43, or 30%, were shortlisted.

With a grant application success rate of 40%, 18 research projects were funded in 2021, and a total of \$1,529,367 was awarded to Flinders University, SAHMRI, The University of Adelaide and the University of South Australia.

For 2021, CRF again encouraged applications within its currently identified research priority areas of children's mental health, child protection, obesity and the impacts that social determinants have on a child's health and development.

The grants for 2021 include seven basic science projects, three clinical studies and eight community-based studies, focusing on a wide range of topics that impact children's health, education and wellbeing: *Funding research today to improve the lives of children tomorrow.*

A summary of these 18 funded projects can be found on pages 15-21. We wish all the investigators success with their research.

I would like to acknowledge the Research Committee members for their generous contribution in reviewing not only the large number of EOI and applications received, but additionally this year for their involvement in the CRF's new initiative of funding two mid-career Research Fellowships. This work demands many volunteer hours and is very much appreciated.



**Professor Kevin Forsyth**  
Co-opted by the Board, CRF  
Research Committee Chair

Additionally, we are indebted to the international research community, whose support with the peer review process is essential. The list of independent reviewers who participated in the 2021 grants round can be found on page 9.

On behalf of the Committee, I thank the Board for their support, and for their forward thinking, and I look forward to working with them in building on the research capability in this state.

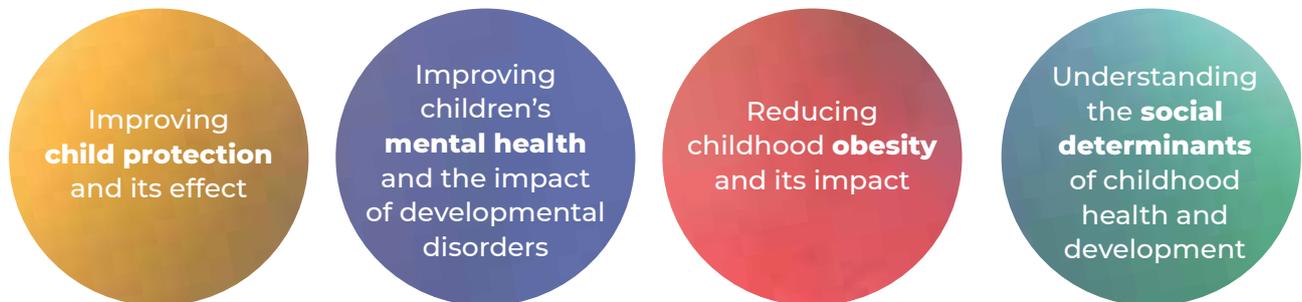
# Our Research Commitment

The Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation is committed to supporting quality research into the cause, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of any condition, which may affect the general health, education or welfare of children.

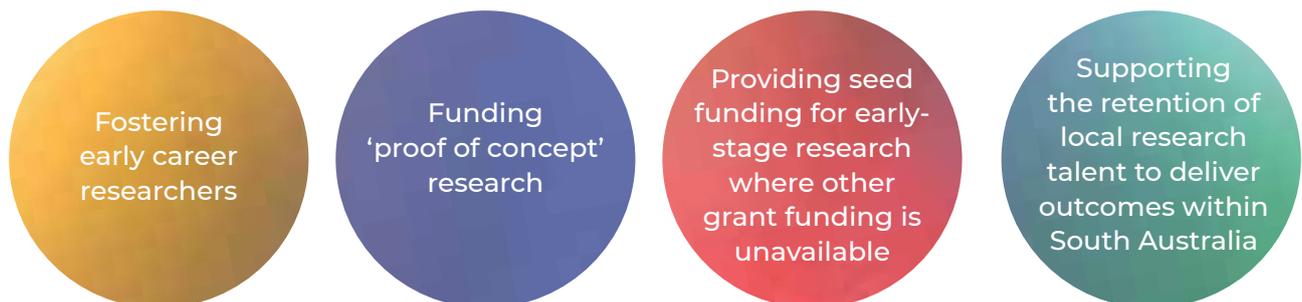
Each year, the Foundation dedicates around \$1.5M towards basic science, clinical studies, and community-based studies in the children's research fields of allied health, fertility and pregnancy, education, environment, dentistry, nursing, medicine,

mental health, midwifery, welfare and protection, and social sciences, within South Australia.

In 2021, we continued with our commitment to foster research excellence in our priority areas of



We also remained committed to supporting research careers and capability in South Australia by



# At a Glance

What our Funding Supported in 2021



Creating Healthy Relationships to Reject Domestic Violence

Feeding Practices and Anaemia Rates in Aboriginal Infants

Ear Disease and Hearing Impairment



Early Intervention in Schools to Prevent Ongoing Sexual Abuse and Harm on Children

Reducing Transmission of Mitochondrial Heteroplasmy from Mother to Child



Genetic and non-genetic causes of Cerebral Palsy

Creating Positive Futures for Children at Risk

Mental Health in Refugee Children with Disability



Virtual Reality Helping Children with Intellectual Disabilities

Developmental dysplasia of the hip

Insomnia in Children with Autism



Reducing Treatment Side Effects For Children with Brain Cancers

Childhood Medulloblastoma

Developing Novel Treatments for Children with Epilepsies



Understanding Links between Maternal and Childhood Obesity

Linking Homeless Children to Community Services

Improving Child and Adolescent Gut Health

# 2021 Research Grant Recipients

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## Using biomechanical tools as a clinical decision-making tool for children with developmental dysplasia of the hip

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**Dr Jasvir Bahl**  
**[Early Career Researcher]**

**The University of Adelaide**

**Clinical Study**

**\$39,020**

Developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH) is a childhood condition with abnormal formation of the ball and socket of the hip joint. Late diagnosed cases ( $\geq 3$  months) have increased in South Australia since the 1990s. These children have high rates of arthritis in early adulthood, attributed to abnormal hip joint biomechanics. Major surgery may be performed to improve hip joint alignment but there is no evidence that surgery improves loading or reduces arthritis risk. This study will be the first to investigate the relationship between hip joint anatomy and biomechanical loads in children with DDH, to guide clinical decision making.

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## Novel linkage to study childhood disability and the genetic and non-genetic causes of cerebral palsy

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**Dr Jesia Berry**

**The University of Adelaide**

**Improving children's mental health and the impact of developmental disorders**

**Community Based Study**

**\$96,480**

Cerebral palsy (CP) is the most common physical disability of childhood. We have pioneered gene discovery in the aetiology of CP. However, the interaction between genes and other risk factors remains unknown. We propose to retrospectively follow 450,000 SA families over a 29-year period, including 845 where a child has CP. For at least 18% of the CP children we have precise genetic diagnosis, brain imaging and maternal risk factor questionnaire data. This whole-of-population linkage will examine temporal trends in paediatric complex chronic conditions and the genetic and non-genetic causes of CP using perinatal, biobank, register, hospitalisations, and deaths data.

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## What helps young people create healthy relationships and reject domestic violence?

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**Dr Fiona Buchanan**

**University of South Australia**

**Improving child protection and its effects**

**Community Based Study**

**\$78,038**

Domestic violence is at endemic proportions nationally and there is no indication that the numbers are falling. Children who are raised in homes where there is domestic violence are at risk of perpetrating or becoming victims of violence later, in their own adult relationships. Yet many people who have grown up with domestic violence reject violence and abuse in their own adult partnerships. The proposed study gains new knowledge from the lived experiences of young people who have experienced domestic violence as children, to inform policy and practice in health, welfare and education to support children.

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## Reducing developmental disorders and other side effects with novel proton radiation treatment for children with brain cancers

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**Miss Mikaela Dell'Oro**

**University of South Australia**

**Improving children's mental health and the impact of developmental disorders**

**Basic Science**

**\$96,794**

Tumours of the central nervous system comprise 20% of all childhood cancers. They are characterized by high incidence of long-term side-effects impacting somatic, neurologic, endocrine, and developmental/cognitive outcomes. With great excitement, proton therapy (PT) is soon to commence in Adelaide; however, questions remain about patient selection and the ability of PT to reduce treatment related side-effects. Our study will perform extensive computational simulations of paediatric brain tumour patients and complications attributable to radiation therapy in order to determine which patients are best suited for PT and to assess risks associated with the treatment.

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## Developing novel treatments for MTOR-related severe childhood epilepsies

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**Professor Leanne Dibbens**

**University of South Australia**

**Improving children's mental health and the impact of developmental disorders**

**Basic Science**

**\$98,000**

Epilepsy affects approximately 2% of children worldwide and 25% do not respond to existing medications. Recurring seizures in children disrupt learning, negatively impact self-esteem and diminish safety. We have identified mutations in genes of the MTOR signalling pathway in children with severe epilepsies, but do not yet understand how these lead to the excessive electrical activity in the brain that cause seizures. We will investigate this by using electrophysiological analyses in model organisms of MTOR-related childhood epilepsy. We will investigate the ability of several molecules to block MTOR activity to identify potential new therapies for childhood epilepsies.

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## Defining endotypes in infant bronchiolitis: the first step toward personalised treatment

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**Associate Professor Dani Dixon**

**Flinders University**

**Basic Science**

**\$93,493**

Bronchiolitis is the most common severe respiratory tract illness in infants and remains the dominant cause of infant hospitalisation. There is no specific treatment apart from respiratory support as disease mechanisms are unknown. Bronchiolitis is predominantly caused by viral infections that induce an immune response which varies between patients. We, and others, have found measurable biomarkers associated variably with severity, length and chronic morbidity of bronchiolitis. By modelling clinical characteristics with combinations of these biomarkers we aim to be able to identify representative cohorts (endotypes) of bronchiolitis as a first step toward personalised treatment regimens, enhancing individual care and recovery.

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## Creating positive educational futures for young people who are at risk of, or are already in, out-of-home care

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**Dr Priscilla Dunk-West**

**Flinders University**

**Improving child protection and its effects**

**Community Based Study**

**\$92,646**

The link between child abuse and related trauma on young people's educational engagement is clear. Statutory removal into out-of-home care can lead to behavioural issues that result in school exclusion or disengagement. This project applies an educational intervention to work with young people aged 14-17 at risk of, or who are already in, out-of-home care. Using a tailored, trauma-informed approach to education will improve future employment prospects and wellbeing for this cohort by helping them to feel hopeful about their futures and competent heading into independent living.

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## Children's problematic sexual behaviour in schools: Identifying and addressing collaborative responses to incidents

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**Dr Lesley-anne Ey**

**University of South Australia**

**Improving child protection and its effects**

**Community Based Study**

**\$99,919**

Problematic sexual behaviour (PSB) is behaviour that falls outside the age-appropriate range for children and can include peer-on-peer sexually abusive behaviour. Schools have been identified as a critical setting where children are exhibiting these behaviours. Early identification and intervention involving cross-agency services is important to prevent ongoing sexual abuse and harm. Schools are often the first point of detection, but little is known about how they respond and support children involved. This study will provide understanding about the potential for collaborative responses between schools and cross-agency-services. Outcomes will include research-based guides for policy and practice to support children affected by PSB.

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## Feeding practices and anaemia rates of South Australian Aboriginal infants and young children living in South Australia

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**Ms Karen Glover**

**SAHMRI**

**Reducing childhood obesity and its impact**

**Community Based Study**

**\$98,181**

Obesity starts early in life and early feeding practices including breastfeeding, timing and type of first foods are predictors. While we know little about feeding practices of Aboriginal infants and toddlers in SA, it is clear that these children carry a disproportionate burden of obesity and anaemia, possibly due to energy dense but nutrient poor diets. To fill these knowledge gaps, we will conduct a survey of feeding practices, weights and prevalence of anaemia in SA Aboriginal infants and toddlers. This information will determine the need for a targeted intervention to combat obesity and anaemia.

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## Promoting child and adolescent gut health through supplementation of novel fibre-clay hybrid biomaterials

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**Dr Paul Joyce**  
[Early Career Researcher]

**University of South Australia**

**Reducing childhood obesity and its impacts**

**Basic Science**

**\$39,990**

Health initiatives and nutritional interventions have been largely ineffective in curbing the rising trend of obesity in children and adolescents in Australia. Subsequently, new approaches for combating and preventing obesity early in life are urgently required. We have engineered a platform of particle-based, fibre-clay hybrid biomaterials that when supplemented with a typical Western diet are expected to improve the microenvironment of the gut, while also restricting fat and carbohydrate absorption. By mediating and promoting gut health early in life, this new approach has the potential to improve metabolic health and limit the onset of obesity in children and adolescents.

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## Does maternal obesity drive childhood obesity through interactions between the gut microbiome and gut endocrine cells?

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**Professor Damien Keating**

**Flinders University**

**Reducing childhood obesity and its impact**

**Basic Science**

**\$91,237**

There is clear evidence that children born to obese mothers have increased obesity and cardiac problems in childhood and beyond. However, little is understood about how this occurs. This project will undertake proof of concept experiments that will test whether interactions between the gut microbiome and neighbouring endocrine cells lining the gut wall drive these effects. We will combine molecular genetics, pharmacology, diet perturbations and fecal matter transfer in mice to determine whether interventions targeting the gut microbiome and gut-derived hormones can prevent childhood obesity in progeny derived from obese mothers.

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## Helping children with intellectual disabilities develop real-world life skills in virtual reality

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**Mr Stefan Michalski**  
[Early Career Researcher]

**University of South Australia**

**Improving children's mental health and the impact of developmental disorders**

**Clinical Study**

**\$39,026**

Learning life skills is challenging. This is particularly true for children with intellectual disabilities (ID). Mastering life skills builds confidence, self-esteem and independence. It is therefore critical to find effective ways for training essential life skills such as cooking, shopping and housekeeping. We know that hands-on learning yields better outcomes than traditional school-based learning in children with ID. Yet, the time, logistics and resources to provide hands-on training are often limited. Virtual reality (VR) may offer a powerful solution for children with ID to practice essential life skills in a safe environment that simulates real-world scenarios.

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## **Linking homeless children and their families to community health and wellbeing services: Using a Nurse Practitioner model of care to improve child health outcomes**

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**Dr Yvonne Parry**

**Flinders University**

**Understanding the social determinants of childhood health and development**

**Community Based Study**

**\$90,713**

Current models of health care do not meet the needs of the 22% of Australian children living in housing instability/homelessness. These children have poorer access to health services and appointment compliance, increased Emergency Department (ED) utilisation, and overall poorer mental and physical health outcomes. An embedded, Nurse Practitioner(NP) model of care for disadvantaged/vulnerable children will lead to enhanced access to health care and increased uptake of referrals leading to improved health outcomes. The project findings will be translated to health service decision makers to inform more appropriate models of health delivery for homeless children currently missing out on urgent acute care.

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## **A new therapeutic target for childhood medulloblastoma**

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**Professor Stuart Pitson**

**University of South Australia**

**Improving children's mental health and the impact of developmental disorders**

**Basic Science**

**\$97,986**

Medulloblastoma is the most common brain cancer in children. While the current treatment of surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy can increase survival rates for some children with medulloblastoma, this treatment often causes severe side effects and life-long disabilities. Thus, new therapies for medulloblastoma are desperately needed. We have identified a new therapeutic target for medulloblastoma, supported by compelling experimental data, and have developed new inhibitors of this target that offer promise for development as a medulloblastoma therapy. This proposal outlines the pre-clinical evaluation of this approach with successful outcomes likely to lead to future clinical trials for the treatment of medulloblastoma.

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## **Identifying therapies that reduce transmission of mitochondrial heteroplasmy from mother to child**

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**Professor Rebecca Robker**

**The University of Adelaide**

**Improving children's mental health and the impact of developmental disorders**

**Basic Science**

**\$92,000**

One Australian baby is born every week with a severely disabling form of mitochondrial disease or 'mito', and most die before age five. Mitochondria (the 'powerplants' in cells) are entirely inherited from mothers: mitochondria in the egg are replicated during development to populate all fetal tissues. A woman's eggs commonly contain a mixture of mitochondria (called heteroplasmy) but there is no understanding of how they segregate into different fetal tissues and under what circumstances disease results. This project will conduct preclinical testing of selected pharmaceuticals for their ability to reduce heteroplasmy transmission in order to identify preventative mito therapies.

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## **A randomised controlled trial of cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia in children on the autism spectrum**

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**Dr Michelle Short**

**Flinders University**

**Improving children's mental health and the impact of developmental disorders**

**Clinical Study**

**\$98,634**

Children with autism experience a markedly higher prevalence of sleep problems than their peers (78% versus 26%), predominantly insomnia (Couturier et al., 2005). Thus, research into sleep problems is a core recommendation in NICE autism guidelines for children. This research will be a world-first clinical randomized controlled trial testing the efficacy of the gold standard insomnia treatment, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for insomnia (CBTi) including sleep restriction in children with autism. Autistic children with co-occurring insomnia have significantly worse outcomes than those without. Untreated, insomnia frequently has a chronic course, impacting school, family, social, mental health and vocational outcomes.

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## **Optimising the early detection of ear disease and hearing impairment among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged under 8-years**

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**Dr Jacqueline Stephens**

**Flinders University**

**Understanding the social determinants of childhood health and development**

**Community Based Study**

**\$95,487**

All children should be able to hear well. However, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children experience some of the highest levels of ear disease and hearing impairment in the world which can lead to lifelong consequences. In South Australia, children under 8-years undergo hearing assessments coordinated by a state-wide program led by Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia. We propose a modification to current assessment protocols by replacing time consuming and technical audiometry with simpler and quicker otoacoustic emission testing in a bid to increase testing rates and increase the early detection and expedited care for these children.

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## **Supporting mental health and wellbeing for children from migrant and refugee backgrounds with disability**

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**Associate Professor Anna Ziersch**

**Flinders University**

**Improving children's mental health and the impact of developmental disorders**

**Community Based Study**

**\$91,723**

Refugee children experience higher rates of disability, including mental health and developmental disorders, than non-refugee children. In addition, migrant and refugee children with disability can experience negative mental health impacts as a result of their disability. They also face multiple potential service access barriers including issues with diagnosis, language and service navigation, a lack of culturally responsive services, and varying service eligibility – however, there is limited research examining this. This project will examine mental health support needs and engagement with services, and provide recommendations for promoting mental health and wellbeing for migrant and refugee children and their carers.

## 2021 Application Statistics

| Category                    | EOI 2021 By Cat (% Of Total) | Shortlisted For FGA (% Of Total) | Eoi Success Rate By Cat | Funded             | GA Success    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Basic Science (BS)          | 65 (48%)                     | 14 (36%)                         | 21% of BS               | 7 (39%)            | 50% of BS GA  |
| Community Based Study (CBS) | 38 (28%)                     | 12 (31%)                         | 32% of CBS              | 8 (44%)            | 57% of CBS GA |
| Clinical Study              | 33 (24%)                     | 13 (33%)                         | 40% of CS               | 3 (17%)            | 33 % of CS GA |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>136 (100%)</b>            | <b>39 (29% EOI)</b>              |                         | <b>18 (46% GA)</b> |               |
| ECR                         | <b>33 (24%)</b>              | <b>8 (21%)</b>                   | 23% of ECR              | <b>3 (17%)</b>     | 38% of ECR GA |

## 2021 Funding by Administering Institution

| ORGANISATION                  | GRANTS    | % OF TOTAL  |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Flinders University           | 7         | 39%         |
| SAHMRI                        | 1         | 6%          |
| The University of Adelaide    | 3         | 17%         |
| University of South Australia | 7         | 39%         |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>18</b> | <b>100%</b> |



# Highlights and Collaborations 2020-2021

## New Fellowships to Advance Research into Childhood Disability and Disease in SA

We inaugurated two fixed-term, three-year CRF mid-career Fellowships to support mid-career researchers to pursue ground-breaking advances in childhood health, welfare or education. This new Fellowship program will invest close to \$1M into the prevention and/or management of childhood disability and disease, in South Australia.

Designed for mid-career researchers, and to be South Australian-led, the program also addresses improving quality of life for young people and adults resulting from childhood disability and disease.

Fellowships to commence in July 2021 were awarded to Dr Zlatko Kopecki, Future Industries Institute Foundation Fellow (Senior Research Fellow) at University of South Australia, and Associate Professor Luke Grzeskowiak (Practitioner Fellow) at Flinders University.

### Dr Zlatko Kopecki, CRF Fellow in Childhood Wound Infections

Dr Kopecki's Fellowship in Childhood Wound Infections will aim to understand the bacterial composition of blister wounds in children with epidermolysis bullosa (EB), which will inform the development of more targeted approaches to combat infection and guide clinical EB management and antibiotic stewardship.

### Associate Professor Luke Grzeskowiak, CRF Fellow in Medicines Use and Safety

Associate Professor Grzeskowiak's goal with his Fellowship in Medicines Use and Safety is to establish a sophisticated and robust approach for routinely evaluating medication safety and effectiveness during pregnancy and lactation to optimise birth outcomes and future child health.

## Our Collaborative Network

7NEWS continued to take the developments and outcomes of research funded by the CRF into the households of South Australian families through its regular nightly news bulletins. Exclusives were aired through 2021, including a student wellbeing pilot to reduce stress and anxiety, learning life skills via virtual reality; a game-changer for children with intellectual disabilities, and cutting-edge treatment to help children and young adults who are battling brain cancer.

## Partnering to Build Research Careers and Development

Our partnership with Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA) entered its 14<sup>th</sup> year delivering the Annual PhD Excellence Awards; designed to build research excellence and career development in children's health and development in South Australia.

Together, the CRF and HDA also launched the Schools Communicator Award; a new initiative to help emerging researchers to showcase their research to South Australian high school students with the aim of getting them excited about the amazing opportunities open to them in health science or science career pathways.

**\$1,529,367**

Grants to fund quality, South Australian-led research to improve the health, education and welfare of children

**\$250,000**

Channel 7 CRF Chair for the Prevention of Childhood Disability, dedicated to research defining the origins and early diagnosis of childhood disability

**\$32,500**

CRF HDA Scholars PhD Excellence Awards, helping to build excellence and career development in children's research in SA

## **Australasia's first Chair for the Prevention of Childhood Disability (mid 2016 to mid-2021)**

CRF concluded its fifth year of funding the inaugural Chair for the Prevention of Childhood Disability; a comprehensive multi-disciplinary research program focused on defining the origins and early diagnosis of childhood disability. This program helped to expand on the successful work and capabilities of the existing Adelaide Neurogenetics Research Program, established by Professor Jozef Gécz in 2000, to understand more about the genetic basis of early childhood learning and movement disabilities, intellectual disabilities, early onset epilepsies, and autism. Professor Jozef Gécz will retain the title of Channel 7 CRF Honorary Chair for the Prevention of Childhood Disability.

## **Sponsoring Initiatives for Early Career Researcher Collaborations**

Our support of the Australian Society for Medical Research in South Australia (ASMR) continued as a sponsor of Medical Research Week<sup>®</sup> 2021. We also welcomed the opportunity to be the lead sponsor of ASMR's new High School Careers Day; an interactive, virtual event aimed at stimulating awareness and interest at high school level in STEM careers. CRF proudly aligns with ASMR and its shared vision to foster excellence in Australian health and medical research, and the forum it provides for early career researchers, including graduate students and postdoctoral scientists, to establish collaborations and present their work among peers in a professional environment.

**\$3000**

CRF HDA Schools Communicator Award, a new initiative to help emerging researchers communicate and inspire high school students about STEM career pathways



# An Invitation to Partner with Us

Each year, the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation dedicates around \$1.8M to children's research.

Our hope is to increase the amount of funding and the number of research grants given, which can only be done with your financial support.

Whatever the size of your business, its values and brand aspirations, our Fundraising people welcome your enquiry.

If you would like to learn more about forming a partnership with the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia, we'd love to hear from you.

Our Honorary Board also includes well-known and highly respected leaders in their field of expertise. Please review Our People on page 8 as you may wish to contact them directly.

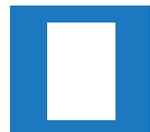
**Please contact us on  
(08) 8202 8258, [crf@crf.org.au](mailto:crf@crf.org.au)  
or go to [www.crf.org.au](http://www.crf.org.au).**

The Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation offers a range of opportunities for businesses and communities across Australia to be at the forefront of improving children's lives through research, including:



### Match Funding:

establish a dollar-for-dollar research grant partnership with the Foundation.



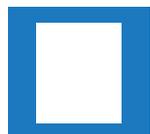
### Sponsor a Research Grant:

be the exclusive benefactor of a grant and align your brand with innovation in children's research.



### Sponsor an Early Career Researcher:

play an active role in growing research careers for South Australians, in South Australia.



### Research Breakthrough Challenge:

an exclusive opportunity to partner with us.

Company giving and fundraising initiatives are also a great way to actively support children's research, such as:



### Workplace Giving:

include the Foundation in your payroll giving program and consider supporting your employees' efforts by matching it.



### Run a Fundraising Activity:

nominate the Foundation as your charity of choice for workplace fundraisers, raffles and more.



### Make a Donation:

little or large, once a year, or month by month - every donation helps us realise our vision to improve the health, education and welfare of Australia's children.

# Financial Report 2020 – 2021

## Statement Of Financial Position

(Summary Financial Report) As at 30 June 2021

|                                  | 2021              | 2020              |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                                  | \$                | \$                |
| <b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>            |                   |                   |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents        | 2,257,843         | 3,032,385         |
| Trade and Other Receivables      | 1,056,384         | 1,046,930         |
| Other Assets                     | 62,965            | 57,144            |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>      | <b>3,377,192</b>  | <b>4,136,459</b>  |
| <b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>        |                   |                   |
| Investments:                     |                   |                   |
| Capital/Convertible Notes        | 4,312,061         | 3,653,455         |
| Investments in Listed Companies  | 42,051,143        | 32,742,996        |
| <b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>  | <b>46,363,204</b> | <b>36,396,451</b> |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>              | <b>49,740,397</b> | <b>40,532,910</b> |
| <b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>       |                   |                   |
| Trade and Other Payables         | 371,278           | 115,625           |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b> | <b>371,278</b>    | <b>115,625</b>    |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>         | <b>371,278</b>    | <b>115,625</b>    |
| <b>NET ASSETS</b>                | <b>49,369,119</b> | <b>40,417,285</b> |
| <b>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</b>         |                   |                   |
| Fair Value Reserve               | 15,250,125        | 6,638,024         |
| Accumulated Surplus              | 34,118,994        | 33,779,261        |
|                                  | <b>49,369,119</b> | <b>40,417,285</b> |

The above Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## Statement of Profit or Loss & Other Comprehensive Income

(Summary Financial Report) For the year ended 30 June 2021

|  | 2021             | 2020               |
|--|------------------|--------------------|
|  | \$               | \$                 |
| <b>INCOME</b>                                  |                  |                    |
| Other Income                                   | 473              | 16,925             |
| Refund of Research Grant (previous years)      | 183              | 25,975             |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>                            | <b>656</b>       | <b>42,900</b>      |
| <b>EXPENDITURE</b>                             |                  |                    |
| Administration Fees                            | 159,478          | 156,579            |
| Advertising                                    | 9,859            | 6,162              |
| Audit Fees                                     | 15,836           | 15,300             |
| Legal Fees                                     | 7,546            | 1,755              |
| Meeting Expenses                               | 11,421           | 11,000             |
| Postage, Stationery and Telephone              | 2,403            | 2,410              |
| Research Grants                                | 1,162,451        | 1,017,379          |
| Research Support                               | 36,625           | 32,500             |
| Research Chair Support                         | 250,000          | 250,000            |
| Sundry Expenses                                | 6,505            | 7,742              |
| Website  | 15,590           | 11,751             |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>                       | <b>1,677,714</b> | <b>1,512,578</b>   |
| Deficit before Financial Income                | (1,677,059)      | (1,469,678)        |
| Financial Income:                              |                  |                    |
| Dividends Received                             | 1,404,995        | 1,521,608          |
| Interest on Investments                        | 19,831           | 18,113             |
| Franking Credit Refund                         | 449,998          | 486,710            |
| Revaluation of Investments                     | 141,967          | -                  |
| <b>Net Financial Income</b>                    | <b>2,016,791</b> | <b>2,026,431</b>   |
| <b>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>                    | <b>339,732</b>   | <b>556,753</b>     |
| Net change in fair value of financial assets   | 8,612,101        | (4,522,661)        |
| Total other comprehensive income for the year  | 8,612,101        | (4,522,661)        |
| <b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR</b> | <b>8,951,833</b> | <b>(3,965,908)</b> |

The above Statement of Profit or Loss & Other Comprehensive Income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## Statement of Changes in Equity

(Summary Financial Report) For the year ended 30 June 2021

|                            | <b>Fair Value Reserve</b> | <b>Accumulated Surplus</b> | <b>Total Equity</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
|                            | <b>\$</b>                 | <b>\$</b>                  | <b>\$</b>           |
| Balance at 1 July 2019     | 11,160,685                | 33,222,508                 | 44,383,193          |
| Total comprehensive income | (4,522,661)               | 556,753                    | (3,965,908)         |
| Balance at 30 June 2020    | 6,638,024                 | 33,779,261                 | 40,417,285          |
| Balance at 1 July 2020     | 6,638,024                 | 33,779,261                 | 40,417,285          |
| Total comprehensive income | 8,612,101                 | 339,732                    | 8,951,834           |
| Balance at 30 June 2021    | 15,250,125                | 34,118,993                 | 49,369,119          |

The above Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## Statement of Cash Flows

(Summary Financial Report) For the year ended 30 June 2021

|   | 2021               | 2020             |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
|   | \$                 | \$               |
| <b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>                             |                    |                  |
| Cash receipts in the course of operations                               | (14,622)           | 656,152          |
| Cash payments in the course of operations                               | (1,422,060)        | (1,576,886)      |
| <b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>                            | <b>(1,436,682)</b> | <b>(920,734)</b> |
| <b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES</b>                            |                    |                  |
| Dividends and franking credits received                                 | 1,854,993          | 2,008,319        |
| Interest received   | 3,195              | 18,113           |
| Payments for investments  | (3,970,450)        | (3,275,898)      |
| Proceeds from sale of investments                                       | 2,774,403          | 2,488,719        |
| <b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>                        | <b>662,141</b>     | <b>1,239,253</b> |
| Net (decrease)/increase in cash held                                    | (774,541)          | 318,519          |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year</b> | <b>3,032,385</b>   | <b>2,713,864</b> |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year</b>       | <b>2,257,843</b>   | <b>3,032,385</b> |

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

# Financial Summary

## Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia Incorporated (the Association) is an Association incorporated and domiciled in Australia. The address of the Association's registered office is 341 Port Road, Hindmarsh, South Australia. The principal activity of the Association is to promote and advance the research into the cause, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of conditions which affect the general health, education and welfare of children. The Association is a not-for-profit entity for the purpose of preparing the financial statements.

## Basis of Preparation

The summary financial reports of the Association have been prepared on historical cost basis except for investments classified as financial investments which are measured at fair value.

A full description of the accounting policies adopted by the Association is provided in the Association's full consolidated financial report.

This financial report was authorised for issue by the Directors on 10 November 2021.

The Association's functional and presentational currency is Australian Dollars.

## Statement by the Board

The summary financial statements and other specific disclosures are a summary of and have been derived from the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation's full financial report for the financial year. Other information included in the summary financial report is consistent with the Association's full financial report.

The Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation recorded a Net Financial Income of \$2M. This included \$1.8M in Dividends Received (including Franking Credits Refund). The summary financial report does not, and cannot be expected to, provide as full an understanding of the financial performance and position, financing and investing activities of Foundation, as the full financial report.

A copy of Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation's Annual Financial Report, including the Independent Audit Report, is available to all members, and will be sent to members without charge upon request.

Dated at Adelaide this 10th day of November 2021.  
Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



.....  
Director



.....  
Director



# Independent Auditor's Report

To the members of Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia Incorporated

## Report on the Summary Financial Report

### Opinion

We report on the *Summary Financial Report* of the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia Incorporated (the Association) as at and for the year ended 30 June 2021. The Summary Financial Report is derived from the audited financial report of the Association.

In our opinion, the accompanying Summary Financial Report of Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia Incorporated is consistent, in all material respects, with the Audited Financial Report, in accordance with the basis of preparation described in the Financial Summary to the Summary Financial Report.

The *Summary Financial Report* comprises:

- Summary statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021;
- Summary statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, Summary statement of changes in equity, and Summary of cash flows for the year then ended; and
- Related notes.

### Scope of the Summary Financial Report

The Summary Financial Report does not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards applied in the preparation of the Audited Financial Report. Reading the Summary Financial Report and this Auditor's Report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the Audited Financial Report and our auditor's report thereon.

### The Audited Financial Report and our auditor's report thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the Audited Financial Report in our auditor's report dated 10 November 2021.

### Emphasis of matter – basis of preparation and restriction on use and distribution

We draw attention to the Financial Summary to the Summary Financial Report, which describes the basis of preparation.

The Summary Financial Report has been prepared to assist the Directors of the Association for the purpose of fulfilling the Directors' financial reporting responsibilities under the *ACNC Act 2012* and the *Associations Incorporation Act 1986 (SA)*. As a result, the Summary Financial Report and this Auditor's Report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

This Auditor's Report is intended solely for the Directors of Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia Incorporated and should not be used by or distributed to parties other than the Directors of Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia Incorporated. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this Auditor's Report, or on the Summary Financial Report to which it relates, to any person other than the Directors of Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia Incorporated or for any other purpose than that for which it was prepared.



## Other Information

Other Information is financial and non-financial information in Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of South Australia Incorporated's annual reporting which is provided in addition to the Summary Financial Report and the Auditor's Report. The Directors are responsible for the Other Information.

The Other Information we obtained prior to the date of this Auditor's Report was the Statement by the Board.

Our opinion on the Summary Financial Report does not cover the Other Information and, accordingly, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the Summary Financial Report, our responsibility is to read the Other Information. In doing so, we consider whether the Other Information is materially inconsistent with the Summary Financial Report or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

We are required to report if we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this Other Information, and based on the work we have performed on the Other Information that we obtained prior to the date of this Auditor's Report we have nothing to report.

## Responsibility of the Directors for the Summary Financial Report

The Directors are responsible for the preparation of the Summary Financial Report in accordance with the basis of preparation described in the Financial Summary to the Summary Financial Report, including their derivation from the Audited Financial Report of the Association as at and for the year ended 30 June 2021.

## Auditor's responsibility for the Summary Financial Report

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the Summary Financial Report is consistent, in all material respects, with the Audited Financial Report based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with *Australian Auditing Standard ASA 810 Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.



Sheenagh Edwards  
Partner

Adelaide

10 November 2021

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Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation of SA Inc

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