

QIMR Berghofer Community Advisory Group (CAG)

Member profiles



Mr Peter Button

Co-Chair (Consumer / Community member)

In his professional career, Peter's expertise was in project consultancy, management, research, planning and advice around construction and urban/rural planning, tourism and human resources. He worked as a team player and leader on a range of projects for community-based organisations, agencies, industry, and State and Federal Government. Peter has also owned and operated a bed & breakfast and is an experienced overseas aid operator serving time in local communities in Vietnam, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

Since retiring back to Brisbane, Peter has given considerable time to being involved as a consumer, with lived and carer experience, in the development of advice, co-design and advocacy work on a range of health services and research projects, both regionally, state wide and nationally. Peter is also an ambassador for **Beyond Blue**, and has contributed to extensive co-design work with them. In his spare time Peter also assists the **Australian Business Volunteers** to recruit volunteers for communities suffering from geographic isolation or may have suffered from major catastrophes, such as flooding and bushfires.



Dr Nancy Cloake

Co-Chair (CCI Lead)

Consumer and Community Involvement (CCI) Lead

Nancy is responsible for coordinating the Institute's Consumer and Community Involvement Program called **Better Health Together**, which sees community members and people with lived experience of illness or chronic conditions partner with the Institute to influence, shape and co-deliver research projects. She supports both researchers and members of our community at all stages of the research cycle, ensuring involvement is meaningful for all.

Nancy trained as a medical researcher with a focus in novel treatments for Multiple Sclerosis, a devastating autoimmune condition, earning her PhD in 2015. Since leaving the laboratory bench she has held roles in communicating research, inspiring curiosity in science within the community and attracting support for research innovation. She has a keen interest in discoveries that improve human life and human health, and a passion to ensure this knowledge is built upon and shared so it may help those with the greatest need.



Mrs Brydget Barker-Hudson
Consumer / Community member

Brydget has a background in both medical and environmental research and community management with experience in development of management area, agricultural legislation and intellectual property. Brydget currently works in dispute resolution and restorative conferencing.

Her diverse career interests have included working for marine sustainability, particularly dugong management, as a communicator, and advocate. Brydget has also been a Remedial Educator in Aboriginal and Islander communities, conducting scenario playing in agricultural emergency situations and providing management education focussing on better communications. She also worked for the **International Finance Corporation** to implement the development of the Mediation Unit of the National Court in Papua New Guinea, an integral part of the Court system.

Brydget is very involved in her community and a proud **Rotarian** in Queensland and New South Wales. Since the late nineties Brydget has led and served on many boards / panels / tribunals usually in roles where her specialist knowledge and experience abuts community development and protection.

Brydget also has a history with QIMR Berghofer, the Institute being the reason she and her late husband relocated to Australia. He was a medical entomologist working with the Institute to research Dengue, Ross River and other arboviruses. More recently, Brydget and her Rotary Club have been liaisons between the Institute and local communities, so our researchers may conduct important scabies research in the Mt Isa area.



Dr Lachlan Harris
Research Staff (Cancer Research Representative)
Team Head, Cancer Neuroscience

Lachlan's research focuses on cellular quiescence, a reversible hibernation-like state, adopted by brain cancer cells to evade chemotherapy and radiotherapy. His team aims to identify novel therapeutic approaches targeting these quiescent cells to overcome treatment resistance and improve outcomes for brain cancer patients.

Lachlan earned his PhD from The University of Queensland in 2017, focussing on brain development. He next undertook a four-year postdoctoral training fellowship at The Francis Crick Institute in London, where he added to the understanding of how quiescence is controlled in brain cells and how it changes during the aging process. In June 2021 he returned to Australia to continue his research at QIMR Berghofer and apply these findings to brain cancer. He established the Cancer Neuroscience lab at the Institute in January 2023.



Mrs Carol Humphries
Consumer / Community member

Carol is a former medical scientist in both the UK and Australia, with publications in the field of blood transfusion and expertise in quality management of blood products. Carol has also had a career in secondary, primary and vocational education. She worked as a school governor and board member for **Westminster College** in the UK, and taught literacy to adults where English was a second language in small classes or as a private tutor. She has also tutored TAFE students requiring extra assistance with mathematics.

After leaving fulltime work Carol kept busy as a member of the **Association of Independent Retirees**, serving as a branch chairman, and giving back to her community. And while living in Tasmania she was a consumer representative for the **HealthConnect Tasmania Implementation Advisory Group**, which worked on the implementation of e-health records.

Carol also has lived-experience of both bowel and endometrial cancers, and a family history of dementia. This and her career in the health service, drives her interest to continue pursuing opportunities to be involved in medical research as a consumer.



Dr Kartik Iyer
Research Staff (Mental Health & Neuroscience Representative)
Senior Research Officer, Brain Modelling Group

Kartik's research involves developing diagnostic algorithms and applying these to complex brain imaging and medical data. These tools aim to provide clinicians with accurate predictions of a patients' prognosis and outcome trajectory. This technology is specifically designed for infants and children, including children with neurological disorders, neurodisability and complex mental health disorders.

Kartik has a background in Biomedical Engineering and Computational Neuroscience, and obtained his PhD from the University of Queensland in July 2015. His expertise ranges across interdisciplinary fields of clinical neurophysiology, machine learning, childhood neurodevelopment, and neurological disorders.



Dr Michelle King
Consumer / Community member

Michelle is a sociologist, lawyer and advocate working in the University sector. Her research explores legally recognised decision-making, and how law works in practice for people with disabilities and other impairments to their legal capacity (including in health and aged care). She also has lived experience in complex health and disability as a parent and supporter of her 24-year-old daughter, Daelle, who has profound intellectual and multiple disabilities.

Health consumer and disability advocacy lies at the intersection of Michelle's lived experience as a health consumer, as a carer to her daughter, and her research work. She currently holds leadership and member roles on multiple advisory panels and groups at national, state, and local levels, and has a longstanding commitment to professional and effective representation of consumers and carers within health, research, and policy systems.

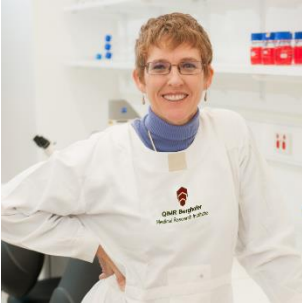
Michelle is currently a Research Fellow at the **Queensland Aphasia Research Centre**, coordinating the lived experience and co-design elements of research on communication, inclusion, and decision-making in aged care.



Dr Katie Lineburg
Research Staff (Infection & Inflammation Representative)
Senior Research Officer, Translational and Human Immunology

Katie's research focus is understanding the mechanism of how T-cells (immune cells) respond to viruses and infections so that this may be manipulated to create a treatment called immunotherapy, where a patient's own immune system is "trained" to better fight virus-associated cancers and infection-related diseases. This technology has shown great success for treating head-neck and brain cancers, as well as post-transplant infectious complications and Multiple Sclerosis. Her expertise also extends to stem cells, from harnessing their regenerative capacity to treat spinal cord injuries to manipulating cell signalling in order to improve the outcome of stem cell transplantation in patients with blood cancers.

Katie also studied a Masters of Science Communication, and never misses an opportunity to use the skills gained to inspire curiosity in science. She thoroughly enjoys sharing her research by helping with public tours of the Institute and speaking engagements out in the community.



Professor Amanda Spurdle

Research Staff (Population Health Representative)
Group Leader, Molecular Cancer Epidemiology

Amanda's research focuses on the molecular epidemiology of cancer. Her team explores different ways to understand if a genetic variation will actually have clinical importance for an individual's risk of developing cancer. Amanda leads an international consortium of researchers, called **ENIGMA**, all working on this topic, aiming to ultimately improve how we use clinically genetic information for management of breast and ovarian cancer. She also actively contributes to the *Clinical Genome consortium*, which is working to have diagnostic testing laboratories adopt consistent procedures of interpreting genetic variants in routine clinical practice. Through these and other fora, including the *Australian Genomics* research initiative, Amanda actively campaigns for the ethical national and global sharing of genomic data for clinical benefit.

Amanda has been a scientific researcher since 1987. She commenced her career and studies in genetics in South Africa, before taking a junior position at La Trobe University, Melbourne in 1994. She moved to QIMR in 1997 to undertake post-doctoral research into the role of low-risk genetic variants in breast and ovarian cancer. In 2004, Amanda set up the Molecular Cancer Epidemiology lab at the Institute, expanding her research to include high-risk genetic variants, particularly the role of BRCA1/2 in breast, ovarian and hereditary cancers.



Ms Nicki Walsh

Consumer / Community member

Nicki is a HR and people and culture management professional who has worked for local, regional and global organisations. Alongside her professional career she has volunteered her time to mental health, disability and parenting services, championing change in organisations and services in the areas of consumer advocacy, diversity, inclusion, and equality.

Nicki has lived and living experience of mental health challenges, disability and chronic illness, and is a carer for two wonderful young people that are living their own chronic disease and mental health journeys. She hopes that her active involvement will lead to more meaningful interventions for consumers, particularly at the intersection of mental health and chronic disease/medical trauma.

Nicki is currently working as the Statewide Consumer Carer Coordinator – Perinatal and Infant Mental Health at the **Queensland Centre for Perinatal and Infant Mental Health**, Children's Health Queensland. In this role she is proud to use her lived experience to support other families across Queensland to ensure their needs are met by the mental health service system, and that their voices are heard when developing and shaping programs, services, policies and practices.



Mrs Sue Williamson
Consumer / Community member

Sue has worked as a registered nurse and in health administration positions in rural south western Queensland her entire career, and she has witnessed many improvements in the prevention, detection, and treatment of various diseases through medical research.

Since her retirement from the full time workforce, she has been involved as a health consumer representative at local, state, and federal levels for various opportunities, including recent appointments to the *Commonwealth Immunisation Research Consumer Advisory Group* and the *Drivers of under-vaccination National Surveillance Research Project*. She is also a consumer representative on the *Queensland Teletrial Steering implementation group* which aims to improve access to, and participation in, clinical trials for rural, regional, and remote Australians.

Sue, her friends and family members have also been participants for medical research projects related to their health situations, and Sue encourages others to participate where they can so that potentially life changing advances in medicine are possible.