



International Centre for Future Health Systems News



UNSW
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Future Health Systems

International Centre for Future Health Systems (ICFHS) News June 2026

Message from the Directors



Welcome to the June 2026 edition of the International Centre for Future Health Systems (ICFHS) newsletter.

As we reach the midpoint of the year, we are struck by both the scale of the challenges facing health systems and the extraordinary opportunities to shape a healthier future. Across Australia and around the world, health systems are responding to growing pressures arising from an ageing population, increasing rates of chronic disease, workforce shortages, climate change, rapid technological advances, and rising expectations of patients and communities. These challenges reinforce the need for evidence-informed policy, multidisciplinary collaboration and implementation research that translates knowledge into meaningful improvements in care.

At the International Centre for Future Health Systems, our mission is to improve health systems through research, policy and advocacy that advances equitable, sustainable and person-centred care. Working in partnership with consumers, clinicians, governments, industry and researchers, we are developing and evaluating innovative solutions that strengthen health systems and improve outcomes for individuals and communities.

This edition highlights the breadth of our work across primary care, health workforce, digital health, implementation science, climate and health, and health equity. You will read about new research collaborations, emerging evidence, educational initiatives, and the growing impact of our partnerships both nationally and internationally. These activities reflect our commitment not only to generating high-quality research but also to ensuring that evidence is translated into policy and practice where it can make the greatest difference.

A particular highlight has been the continued growth of our collaborations across the UNSW community and with our partners across Australia and internationally. We are also delighted to welcome Professor Jennifer DeVoe as a prestigious Green Fellow to ICFHS.

We would like to thank our staff, students, collaborators, advisory members, funding partners and supporters for their ongoing commitment and enthusiasm. Your expertise, creativity and dedication are helping to build a Centre that is already making an important contribution to health systems reform.

We hope you enjoy this edition and encourage you to connect with us as we continue to build partnerships that will shape the future of healthcare in Australia and globally.

Best wishes

Professor Michael Kidd AO FAHMS & Professor Patricia M. Davidson FAAN
Directors
International Centre for Future Health Systems

ICFHS researcher profile

Alexandra (Alex) Martiniuk

**Professor of Hospital Transformation & Future Health Systems
International Centre for Future Health Systems, UNSW**



Background & expertise

Alexandra (Alex) Martiniuk is Professor of Hospital Transformation and Future Health Systems at the International Centre for Future Health Systems, UNSW. She is a former NHMRC Investigator, NHMRC Translating Research into Practice (TRIP) Fellow, and Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Fellow. Trained as an epidemiologist and biostatistician, and previously a registered psychologist, Professor Martiniuk brings a deeply interdisciplinary perspective to health systems transformation and implementation science.

Research focus & impact

Her work is driven by a commitment to improving health outcomes at population scale. Rather than focusing solely on individual clinical encounters, her research examines how health systems, policy, implementation, and models of care can improve the lives of millions of people. Equity is central to her approach with a strong belief that every person's life, future health, and access to care matters.

Professor Martiniuk takes on this role at a time of profound challenge for health systems globally, characterised by ageing populations, rising chronic disease burden, constrained financial resources, and rapid advances in precision medicine and digital health. Despite these pressures, she remains optimistic about the future of healthcare and sees her role as helping to generate new evidence to improve systems and care, as well as translate evidence across disciplines, sectors, and healthcare systems. She advocates for care that is delivered closer to where people live, shifting healthcare beyond institutional walls and into homes and communities.

She is also concerned by growing public distrust in science and institutions, and emphasises the need to listen widely and to reconnect fragmented systems, disciplines, and communities to strengthen healthcare and public confidence. Her work focuses on bringing together diverse expertise and perspectives to improve health outcomes and system performance.

Global health leadership

One of Professor Martiniuk's most influential bodies of work has been in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV in collaboration with the Malawi Ministry of Health. Working with a multidisciplinary international team, she helped implement and evaluate the Option B+ model of care — an approach that, at the time, had limited evidence and was not widely adopted internationally. The research demonstrated that the model of care dramatically reduced transmission of HIV from mother to baby from approximately 45% to 3.9%, preventing HIV infection in approximately more than 120,000 Malawian children each year. Described by UNICEF and WHO as "remarkably effective," the approach informed WHO "Treat All" guidelines and, by 2019, had been adopted by 115 countries as a global standard of care. Professor Martiniuk's research program, including more than 30 publications in this area, contributed significantly to the evidence base supporting the effectiveness, feasibility, and scalability of this transformative model of care.



Our Highlights



International Centre for Future Health Systems (ICFHS) welcomes Professor Jen DeVoe - a global expert in primary care

We are delighted to welcome Professor Jennifer DeVoe as a Green Fellow. She is not new to Sydney, spending time at UNSW as a medical student. [Read more.](#)



As primary care funding declines, equity weakens

A new study, led by ICFHS researchers Dr Rafal Chomik, Dr Shona Bates and Adjunct Associate Professor Michael Wright, shows that primary care is receiving a declining share of Australia's health funding, despite growth in overall national health expenditure. [Read more.](#)



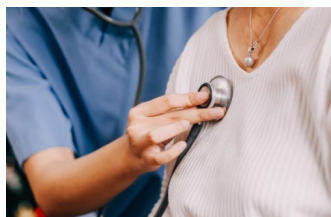
Rethinking multidisciplinary team care in primary practice

Researchers from the International Centre for Future Health Systems include Dr Shona Bates, Professor Deborah Saltman, Professor Patricia Davidson, and Associate Professor Michael Wright, published a perspective piece to help develop thinking around what multidisciplinary team care looks like in primary practice. [Read more.](#)



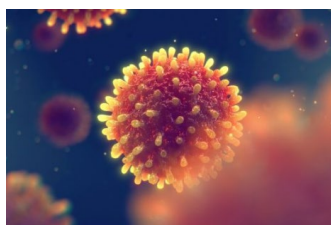
ICFHS review of mental health systems in Pacific Island countries

Dr Jialing Lin, Professor Patricia Davidson and Professor Michael Kidd AO, from the International Centre for Future Health Systems (ICFHS), have led an international team in a review of mental health systems across Pacific Island countries. The study has been published in The Lancet Regional Health – Western Pacific. [Read more.](#)



How expectations shape health care experiences

In this invited commentary in the Lancet Primary Care, Senior Research Fellow Dr Shona Bates at the International Centre for Future Health System responds to a recent international study by Todd Lewis and colleagues examining patients' expectations of care which found expectations vary according to age, gender, income, education and cultural background. [Read more.](#)



Integrated Primary Care Improves Early Detection of Chronic Liver Disease

Research led by Dr Cathy O'Callaghan, Ms Margaret Williamson, Mr Alenda D.M. Putra and Assoc Professor Margo Barr from the UNSW International Centre for Future Health Systems (ICFHS) has highlighted the promise and challenges of implementing an integrated care program within Australian general practice settings to identify patients at risk of advanced chronic liver disease. [Read more.](#)



An evidence-based model for co governance between government and communities

Dr Shona Bates and Associate Professor Fiona Haigh from the International Centre for Future Health Systems, with colleagues from the UNSW Social Policy Research Centre, led the development of an evidence-based model of co-governance – recently published in the Australian Journal of Public Administration. [Read more.](#)



E-cigarettes likely to cause lung and oral cancer

A paper released on 31 March 2026 in Carcinogenesis, [1] by UNSW Professor Bernard Stewart AM, and ICFHS Adjunct Associate Professor Freddy Sitas, shows that e-cigarettes are likely to cause lung and oral cancer. [Read more.](#)

Our People



ICFHS congratulations Dr Jude Page on the award of her PhD

Jude Page recently completed a multidisciplinary PhD with the International Centre for Future Health Systems (ICFHS) examining a novel form of imagery, exploratory visuals developed through her work on person centred assessment and care planning. [Read more.](#)

Our publications

[Distributed Health Literacy Among People with Intellectual Disability, Their Supporters and Healthcare Professionals: A Scoping Review](#)

By Maryann Barrington, Karen Fisher, Ben Harris-Roxas, Julian Trollor, **Catherine Spooner**, Julie Christensen, Janelle Weise

[Emergency department burden of e-scooter injuries in Victoria, Australia: A statewide analysis of injury patterns and prevention implications, 2022–2025](#)

By Lisa Sharwooda, Jane Haymanb, Ehsan Rezaei-Darzib, Caitlin Laskac, David Eagere, **Alexandra Martiniuk**

[General practice incentives: a review of the international literature](#)

By **Mark Harris**, Joel Rhee, **Margo Barr**, Anurag Sharma, Ben Harris-Roxas, Mary Burns, Kate Marshall, Rula Ali, **Anthony Sunjaya**, Cathelijne van Kemenade, **Michael Kidd**

[Feasibility study of a colorectal cancer e-care plan for shared follow-up survivorship care](#)

By **Jane Taggart**, Melvin Chin, Winston Liauw, David Goldstein, Kerry Uebel, Kylie Vuong, Phil Mendoza-Jones, **Mark Harris**

[Mental health systems in Pacific Island countries and territories: a scoping review of current evidence](#)

By **Jialing Lin**, **Xinrui Wei**, Peixin Han, Tinghsuan Hsu, Jiaying Sun, Carey Marr, Rong Liu, Rohina Joshi, Minh Cuong Duong, Odille Chang, Xiwen Qin, Jinfeng Ding, Christine Y. Lu, **Patricia Davidson**, **Michael Kidd**

- [The carcinogenicity of e-cigarettes: a qualitative risk assessment](#)
By Bernard Stewart, Henry Marshall, Billie Bonevski, Hayley Griffin, Ashley Hopkins, Malinda Itchins, Cassandra Mazza, Natansh Modi, Marissa Ryan, Megan Varlow, **Freddy Sitas**
- [Historical parallels between harms of tobacco and e-cigarettes](#)
By **Freddy Sitas**, Bernard Stewart
- [Developing an evidence-based model to implement co-governance](#)
By **Shona Bates**, Ciara Smyth, Ilan Katz, Bingqin Li, **Fiona Haigh**
- [Acceptability of an integrated care program to identify patients at risk of advanced chronic liver disease in Australian primary care settings](#)
By **C. O'Callaghan**, M. Williamson, D. Prince, A. D. M. Putra, J. Miller, P. Chomley, **M. Barr**
- [Taking multidisciplinary team care from policy into primary care practice](#)
By **Shona Bates**, Deborah Saltman, **Patricia Davidson**, **Michael Wright**
- [Potential use of patient expectation data for primary care improvement](#)
By **Shona Bates**
- [Two Decades of Primary Care Funding in Australia: A Descriptive Time-Series and Distributional Analysis](#)
By **Rafal Chomik**, **Shona Bates**, **Michael Wright**

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