

# National Centre for Neuroimmunology and Emerging Diseases

July 2019

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## Our Mission

*The National Centre for Neuroimmunology and Emerging Diseases (NCNED) is a research team located at Griffith University on the Gold Coast. Led by Professors Sonya Marshall-Gradisnik and Donald Staines, the team has a focus on Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS).*

*Our mission is to translate research findings into preventative medicine, social and clinical care, and public health outcomes. By collaborating with local, national and international research institutes, we aim to create sustained improvements in health and health care for not only those affected by ME/CFS but also other immune disorders.*

## 14th Invest in ME Research International Conference, London

Co-Director of NCNED, Professor Donald Staines, recently presented at the 14th Invest in ME Research International ME Conference in London on the 31st of May. Professor Staines represented NCNED and presented research on "Transient Receptor Potential Ion Channels in the Aetiology and Pathomechanism of ME/CFS". This presentation was a collection of research that has been undertaken at NCNED in the area of TRP's in the aetiology and pathomechanism of ME/CFS.



## Welcome to NCNED



NCNED is delighted to introduce Ms Kay Schwarz (Acting Office Manager) who will be carrying out the duties of Ms Vivienne Hughes whilst she is on leave for an extended period. Kay brings to the team many years of experience in a supporting role and is looking forward to using her skills and knowledge to the benefit of both the Centre and our valued ME/CFS patients.

## NHMRC ME/CFS Report Released

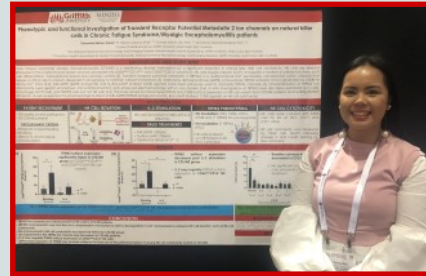
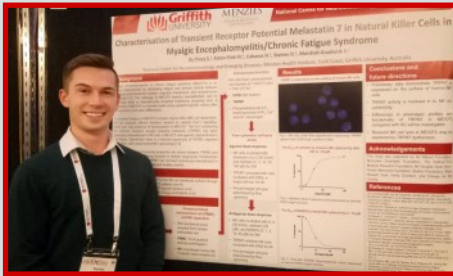
The ME/CFS Advisory Committee Report was finalised and submitted to the NHMRC Chief Executive Officer. Professor Sonya Marshall-Gradisnik was a member of this ME/CFS Advisory Committee. This report advises the NHMRC CEO on the current needs for research and clinical guidance for ME/CFS in Australia.

The report can be found at: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/mecfs-advisory-committee-report-nhmrc-chief-executive-officer>



## 19th International Congress of Mucosal Immunology Conference

On 18th July NCNED researchers Cassandra Balinas and Stanley du Preez attended the 19th International Congress of Mucosal Immunology Conference in South Bank, Brisbane. This conference exclusively focused on the interface between the immune system and the environment at mucosal surfaces. Both researchers presented posters entailing the novel identification and characterisation of TRP's from ME/CFS patients. Improving the functionality of these channels following drug modulation is currently being undertaken at NCNED.



## FASEB Science Research Conference



NCNED researchers Dr Helene Cabanas, Ms Cassandra Balinas and Mrs Natalie Eaton-Fitch attended the reputable FASEB Science Research Conference in Lisbon. This four day conference brought together an interdisciplinary group of scientists specialising in ion channel regulation and the link to disease.

Dr Helene Cabanas presented new pharmacological data using the gold standard patch clamp technique.

## Collaboration with University Clinic Eppendorf (UKE), Hamburg

Franziska Möckl from Professor Andreas Guse's Laboratory, University Clinic Eppendorf (UKE) in Hamburg, is undertaking a collaborative research project with NCNED.

Franziska has nearly completed her very important research at NCNED where she has been undertaking research into the role of a specific pharmacological agent for improvement in immune cell function.



## 2019 Organization for Human Brain Mapping Conference



Dr Leighton Barnden, NCNED, recently presented MRI data from NCNED at the 2019 Organization for Human Brain Mapping Conference titled "Connectivity within the brainstem is impaired in chronic fatigue syndrome".

Leighton's research reported significant differences were found between ME/CFS and HC for connectivity within the brainstem. Impaired brainstem connectivity can explain reported autonomic and compensatory structural changes in CFS as previously reported by NCNED (Barnden, 2015, 2016), and may also explain the impaired cognitive performance, sleep quality and pain of ME/CFS.

## Expansion of research site

We are inviting patients formally diagnosed with ME/CFS and healthy individuals to participate in an upcoming investigation to continue NCNED world class research in the area of calcium receptors, signalling and pharmaceutical intervention. NCNED will be further expanding our research in VICTORIA.

Please contact us by email at [ncned@griffith.edu.au](mailto:ncned@griffith.edu.au) or call (07) 5678 9283 for further information.