

Visiting researchers

Dr Kisho Kobayashi joined us almost two years ago as a Research Fellow from Yamanashi in Japan. He is a paediatric endocrinologist who is mostly working in the laboratory with Dr Vince Russo. His work is focussed on understanding the damaging effects of low blood sugar on brain cells. Working with human nerve cells in plastic dishes, Kisho has unravelled some of the complex molecular mechanisms regulating cell survival during sugar deprivation, and importantly has shown that a growth factor, IGF-1, may help protect vulnerable cells. One day this may lead to new treatments to protect the brain in this dangerous situation for children with diabetes.

We were recently privileged to have a visit and lecture from Kisho's mentor, Professor Shin Amemiya, who visited our Centre for three days. He was also hosted by Kisho and his wife Sachiko and daughter Nana. Kisho, who is also working on new treatments for diabetic eye disease, will be with us for another year, funded by a joint grant from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Dr Xin Ying is a visiting Post-doctoral Research Fellow from China, who joined us in mid-2002. She is a paediatric endocrinologist who is also working in the laboratory with Dr Vince Russo. Her work involves various aspects of the effects of low blood sugar on the young brain, and she is also working on interactions between various growth factors in the control of early brain growth and damage repair. Her work is important in pointing to new potential therapies for damage to the young brain. Xin Ying is with us until June of this year.



Dr Vince Russo, Professor Shin Amemiya, Dr Kisho Kobayashi, Professor George Werther

Our visiting clinical fellows

Dr Ciara McDonnell is from Ireland, and arrived in Australia four years ago to train in paediatrics at the RCH. Having worked as Registrar in Endocrinology, she joined us as the Novo-Nordisk Clinical Fellow in Paediatric Endocrinology a year ago. She is working on a number of clinical research projects, having recently published her study of iodine deficiency in Victorian schoolchildren see over page. Her major study, toward a Doctorate in Medicine, is on hypoglycaemia or low blood sugar in children with diabetes. Working with Dr Fergus Cameron and Prof George Werther, as well as diabetes educator Rebecca Gebert, she is using a new continuous glucose monitor to measure minute-to-minute blood sugars. She expects to be able to characterise the subtle effects of low blood sugar on various aspects of brain function and coping mechanisms. She recently announced her engagement to Jason.

Dr Clarissa Carvalho is from Brazil, also having joined us a year ago. Her husband Bruno is training in Neurology at the Austin Hospital. Clarissa recently was awarded a highly competitive International Pharmacia Fellowship to fund her research over the next twelve months, on the effect of topical eczema treatments (cortisone) on bone density. Working with Dr Fergus Cameron, she will be examining the possibility that excess cortisone is absorbed through the skin and causes thinning of bones. She will use our bone densitometer, acquired three years ago with funds donated from Lillian Frank's Special Events Committee and other sources, to document bone health in a group of children with severe eczema. These will be important findings in future management of this common condition. Clarissa is also an expert Samba dancer and passionate about Brazilian soccer!

Clarissa and Ciara both also work in our clinical service seeing patients on the wards and in the out-patient clinics.



Dr Ciara McDonnell with Mr Michael Goetschke, Managing Director Novo Nordisk

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We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of these donors, and their ongoing support of the work in the Centre.

Contact us

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Like to know more?

Interested in seeing what we do? Please contact our office to organise for a tour of the facilities. The Centre hosts tours regularly to enable insight into our research.

There are many ways in which you can assist, including donating much-needed funds, your time and equipment or sponsoring a program or a component.

For more information please contact our office on (03) 9345 7057.

Details of Sponsorship Program Packages can be provided. Any suggestions or offers of assistance will be welcomed.

Your support is greatly appreciated. If you wish to donate funds, by cheque or credit card, please complete the donor form. ▶

How does your support help us

In 2002 your support of close to \$300,000 assisted in many areas of the Centre's vital research. The major uses of these included:

- salary support for clinical research doctors and research scientists
- allowing support for our scientists and doctors to present their findings at local and international meetings
- purchased vital high tech equipment
- covered costs of publication and subscriptions to international journals; and
- development of educational tools and videos.

The sprint to help kids with diabetes

David Baxter continued to support children with Diabetes through meeting his goals within the Tattersalls Champions Dreams Program. These funds assisted the purchase of continuous glucose monitors for use in routine clinical care and research. This new technology allows our dedicated doctors and nurses to provide more precise and safe management for children with diabetes and their families.

7th Annual Inverloch Diabetes Ball

Kerrie, Ross and Carla Beauglehall, together with the Inverloch Community raised the tremendous figure of \$20,000.00. These funds continue to support our Diabetes Complications Screening, and in addition contribute towards the work of our Clinical Research Fellow, Dr Ciara McDonnell. Thank you for your continued support.

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