



Fracture Alliance

Making the first break the last

Newsletter #8 – July 2021

Twelve months ago, with a backdrop of lockdowns and restrictions, members of the SOS Fracture Alliance convened with interested parties to look at creating a National Fragility Fracture Registry (FFR). The team also invited parties from New Zealand so that we could follow the example set by the Australian and New Zealand Hip Fracture Registry, ensuring trans-Tasman cooperation.

Having received a small, unencumbered research grant from Amgen, the first step was to reach out to as many facilities that may have a Fracture Liaison Service (FLS) or Secondary Fracture Prevention program.

With an agreed 31 facility level questions, the team reached out to determine a baseline of care across the country. Once this was underway, the committee started creating the patient level minimum data set. With the initial minimum data-set now determined, the committee chair, Dr Kirtan Ganda, is in process of developing a HREC approved protocol so we can begin collecting patient data.

The team has also created a website at FragilityFracture.com.au which will be the address for general updates and the home page of the Australian Fragility Fracture Registry. The online registry has been made available for testing and will be ready to go live when the ethics approval is given.

Having completed the facility level survey, minimum dataset and website, the committee applied for a second round of funding from Amgen and was successful.

Overall, the Fragility Fracture Registry has achieved a lot in the last 12 months, and we hope to produce our first National Fragility Fracture report in 2022. For more information or to have your facility participate in the FFR, go to the Registry's website FragilityFracture.com.au.



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SOS Fracture Alliance Activities

SOSFA Strategic Plan 2021-2023

The SOSFA Governing Committee is pleased to announce the publication of our renewed Strategic Plan for 2021-2023. This recognizes the success of our original Strategic Plan from 2017-2019 and builds on those successes as we move forward into a new election cycle in a post-COVID world.

The first strategic direction SOSFA will pursue in this three-year period is to “Build the case for Australian SFP Programs”. This will center on further developing our three main projects: integrated primary care based SFP demonstrator programs, electronic case finding tool facility implementation and an SFP/FLS Registry.

The second strategic direction will be continuing to raise awareness of the issue of secondary fractures – through both direct advocacy efforts with Federal, State and Territory Governments and broader advocacy with both the wider Australian public and the medical profession.

[The full Strategic Plan 2021-2023 can be found on our website.](#)

Dr Bianca Wong appointed to SOSFA Governing Committee



The Australian Nation SOS Fracture Alliance is pleased to announce that the last vacancy on the Alliance's Governing Committee has been filled by Dr Bianca Wong BSc MBBS FRACP.

Dr Wong is currently a Staff Specialist in Geriatric Medicine and Perioperative Geriatrician at Northern Adelaide Geriatrics Service and a Honorary Clinical Senior Lecturer at the University of Adelaide. She brings to the Governing Committee not only her expertise as a geriatrician, but extensive familiarity with the South Australian healthcare system.

The Governing Committee thanks Dr Wong for accepting Appointment to the Committee and looks forward to working with her.

SOSFA Submission to the ‘Draft National Preventative Health Strategy’ consultation

In April 2021 the SOS Fracture Alliance made a submission to the Australian Department of Health's Draft National Preventative Health Strategy consultation as part of our on-going advocacy for secondary fracture prevention.

The Strategy is intended to provide the overarching, long-term approach to prevention in Australia by working to build systemic change to ensure the best of health for all Australians.

SOSFA is broadly supportive of the Strategy in concept and the principles it establishes but believes absence of osteoporosis and secondary fractures from the Focus Area is a key omission given their large but preventable burden on the health system.

[Read the full SOSFA Submission on our website.](#)

Natural Language Processing Electronic Case Tool Project Update

The SOSFA NLP electronic case identification tool project concluded in late 2020 and found that both of the electronic tools being tested significantly improved the proportion of patients with minimal trauma fractures being identified. A Poster describing the project was presented at the 30th Australia and New Zealand Bone Mineral Society's Annual Scientific Meeting and a copy of the [Poster is available on the SOSFA website](#). SOSFA has [published a video summary of the project findings here](#).

Currently a more in-depth publication analyzing the projects finding has been submitted to the journal *Osteoporosis International*.

Currently SOSFA is looking for more facilities across Australia that are interested in trialing electronic case tools, with the aim of establishing pilot sites in every State and Territory health system to see how the tools perform in these diverse operational environments.

If you are interested in taking part in this trial, or know a facility that might be interested and we should contact, please let SOSFA Governing Committee member Dr Mark Kotowicz know at mark.kotowicz@deakin.edu.au.



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Secondary Fracture Prevention Projects

SOSFA is currently involved in two real-life studies testing how secondary fracture prevention may be improved in primary care.

Both projects involve private radiology practices and an electronic search tool that continuously scans the practice's data bases and automatically identifies reports that describe a fracture. A fracture coordinator then makes the referring physician (usually the GP) aware of this finding and encourages them to investigate whether this fracture is due to osteoporosis. Follow-up contacts are planned after 3 and 6 months to see whether the doctor has initiated investigations and, if osteoporosis has been found, treatment according to current guidelines.

The first study is running now in Sydney's Eastern suburbs and is supported and funded by the Central and Eastern Sydney PHN. The second study is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council and has recently gained approval by a Human Research Ethics Committee. This study will shortly commence in Western Sydney and is expected to run for two to three years.

Results from the Eastern Suburb study so far suggest that GPs and patients are receptive and welcoming of the new model. The future will show whether the model is clinically and cost effective.

SOSFA Submission to the 2021 ONZ FLS Standards Consultation

In June 2021 the SOS Fracture Alliance was invited by Osteoporosis New Zealand to provide a submission on their consultation for proposed Clinical Standards for Fracture Liaison Services (FLS) in NZ.

The Alliance is aware not only of the importance of high quality FLSs as the current 'gold standard' for fracture prevention, but also of the similarities of the Australian and New Zealand health systems.

As such the Alliance was pleased to provide input into this ONZ consultation. We believe that establishing FLS Clinical Standards in NZ will strengthen the case for establishing similar standards in Australia, where none currently exist.

In principle the Alliance supported the proposed standards, but recommended some modifications of and additions to the draft KPIs for the ONZ Standards.

[See the full SOSFA submission on our website.](#)

SOSFA Chairperson Professor Markus Seibel awarded Australia Day Honours



Professor Markus Seibel, Chair of the SOS Fracture Alliance, has been appointed a Member in the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to medical research and to endocrinology. This award recognises the important work Markus has done over the last several decades, including the development of biochemical markers of bone turnover, which are now used as diagnostic tests worldwide.

Congratulations Markus!



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From the Members

ANZ Falls Prevention Conference Update

The ANZ Falls Prevention Society's 9th Biennial Australian and New Zealand Falls Prevention Conference will now be held virtually on:

Wednesday 1st - Friday 3rd December 2021

We have engaged a state-of-the-art virtual conferencing platform that will bring everything you've come to expect from ANZFPS conferences. You'll be able to network with fellow delegates, participate in discussion groups, live Q&As and more. The theme remains 'Live Stronger for Longer'; a call to action to stay healthy and active in later life. 'Live Stronger for Longer' our theme but also a philosophy we hope to advocate for.

[Registrations are now open](#) with early bird prices available until 10th September 2021:

Full (early-bird): NZD \$130

Student/Concession (early-bird): NZD \$80

Full (standard): NZD \$180

Student/Concession (standard): NZD \$130

We're excited to have confirmed two fantastic keynote speakers for the ANZFPS virtual conference - Dr. Teresa Liu-Ambrose and Professor Dawn Skelton.

Dr. Teresa Liu-Ambrose is the Director of The Aging, Mobility, and Cognitive Health Lab as well as Vancouver General Hospital's Falls Prevention Clinic, Dr Liu-Ambrose is a Canada-based physical therapist whose research focuses on understanding the role of exercise in promoting cognitive and mobility outcomes in older adults.

Professor Dawn Skelton is a professor in Ageing and Health at Glasgow Caledonian University and a regular on the falls prevention speaker circuit. Skelton is the Director of not-for-profit, Later Life Training Ltd, a company specialising in training health professionals to implement effective physical activity and exercise programmes with older people and stroke survivors.



9th Biennial
Australian and New Zealand
Falls Prevention Conference
LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

For all those who still love to gather, there will also be some activities in Auckland and Sydney the day prior on Monday 29th November 2021.

At the University of Auckland there will be six workshops across the day! All workshops are three hours of teaching, plus a break for morning or afternoon tea. [Registrations are open now!](#)

Morning Workshops 9:00am - 12:30pm

1. Steady As You Go: A Peer-Led Model
2. A National Systems Approach to Falls and Fracture Prevention in New Zealand
3. Falls Prevention in ARC: Best Practice and New Things

Afternoon Workshops 1:30pm - 5:00pm

4. Falls Prevention Exercise for Community Settings. Getting Them Going and Doing the Right Thing
5. Managing People with Osteoarthritis. Getting the Basics Right
6. Building Blocks for Designing Exercise Programmes for Older People That Make a Difference

The Sydney Workshop "Exercise to Prevent Falls in Older People" will be a hybrid model with a half-day of online lectures (done in your own time) and a half-day face-to-face workshop. More details will be made available soon.

Finally, there is a \$5000 Travel Fellowship available to support an ANZFPS member who is currently completing a research higher degree or completed in the last four years.

To find out more contact the ANZFPS Secretary Anna Hatton at a.hatton1@uq.edu.au.



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Introducing Healthy Bones Australia



Osteoporosis Australia officially rebrand as 'Healthy Bones Australia' in February 2021 to reinforce the importance of prevention, in response to the concerning 173,000 broken bones sustained by the Australian population last year.

The patient organisation also called for Australians to "prioritise their bone health", by learning the risk factors for, and how to best prevent, brittle bones and osteoporosis.

This announcement coincided with the publication of an article by Healthy Bones Australia experts in MJA Insight, presenting preliminary findings and recommendations from their recent Inaugural National Consumer and Community Forum.

The Forum was convened to hear directly from people of different ages living with osteoporosis, and to address health system barriers to improving Australian's bone health.

[The article, titled 'Osteoporosis: setting a new agenda', can be accessed here.](#)

SOSFA Governing Committee Member Professor Jacqui Close celebrated on International Women's Day 2021



The theme for International Women's Day 2021 was '*A challenged world is an alert world and from challenge comes change. So, let's all choose to challenge*'. This theme was particularly relevant to women in medicine in light of the disproportionately low numbers of women in senior leadership roles.

To help mark the day [members of the British Geriatric Society honored the women](#) in geriatric medicine who had been personal inspirations, challenged the status quo through exceptional leadership, and promoted gender equality in healthcare. SOSFA Governing Committee Member Professor Jacqui Close was celebrated for her inspirational leadership approach across the realms of clinical care, leadership and academia.

Congratulations Jacqui!



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Projects and Publications of Interest

9th Fragility Fracture Network (FFN) Global Congress

It has been announced that FFN 2021 will take place virtually from 28–30 September 2021. The congress motto “Ensuring Smooth Transitions in Fracture Care and Management” points out that post-fracture care requires involvement of professionals from multiple disciplines as well as involvement of family and friends.

FFN 2021 will provide you a complete virtual experience where you can take part in every aspect of the congress – all from the comfort of your home. All session recordings will be available on-demand for three months after the congress, so you can attend all the sessions you want at your own pace and re-watch the ones most relevant to you.

More details about the virtual platform will be available soon. However [the program is available on the FFN website now](#).

[Registrations are currently open](#), with early bird rates available until the end of July 2021. Get in quick!

And if you missed them at the time- the recordings for the FFN 2020 Regional meetings, including the Asia-Pacific Regional meeting hosted by FFN Malaysia, [can still be viewed online](#).

Fragility Fracture Network (FFN) Clinical and Policy Toolkits

Following the 8th FFN Global Conference in 2020 the Fragility Fracture Network launched two toolkits to support the [Global Call to Action](#) initiated at the 6th FFN Global Conference in 2016.

The first toolkit is the “FFN Clinical Toolkit” which provides a practical guide for healthcare workers to implement the first three pillars of the Global Call to Action.

The second toolkit is the “FFN Policy Toolkit” which provides guidance and support for healthcare workers seeking to engage with policymakers to bring about changes to policy that will enable widespread implementation.

Both toolkits are available in a range of languages and can be downloaded for free [from the FFN website](#).

Centre of Research Excellence- Prevention of Fall-related Injuries launched!



The Centre of Research Excellence- Prevention of Fall Related Injuries officially launched in March 2021. This CRE is funded by the NHMRC and brings together a diverse team of researchers that will collaboratively develop and evaluate strategies in fall prevention that will have the best chance of reducing Australia’s rising rate of fall-related injuries. Their mission is to develop and implement evidence-based strategies to prevent fall injuries.

One of the first programs of this CRE is ongoing webinar series which aim to dig into key areas in this field, with a webinar occurring every six weeks. [The first webinar](#) celebrated the launch of the CRE and presented a multidisciplinary evidence-based perspective on what needs to be done to prevent falls and falls injuries in Australia. [The second webinar](#) was focused on how researchers can best have their voice heard in advocacy efforts, presented by Professor Andrew Wilson the Director of the Menzies Centre for Health Policy.

The next webinar is scheduled for Wednesday July 28th at 1pm AEST and will feature three separate presentations on falls prevention interventions. [Find out more and register to attend the webinar here](#).



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International team aims to make musculoskeletal health a global priority

An international research team has found that despite being the world's leading cause of pain, disability and healthcare expenditure, the prevention and management of musculoskeletal health, including conditions such as low back pain, fractures, arthritis and osteoporosis, is globally under-prioritised and have devised an action plan to address this gap.

In response to a targeted call by the [Global Alliance for Musculoskeletal Health \(G-MUSC\)](#), headquartered at the University of Sydney, the international team of researchers mapped the current global landscape for the prevention and management of musculoskeletal health, identified current trends in national health policies and developed a blueprint to prioritise musculoskeletal health reform efforts in eight key areas.

Professor Lyn March, from the University of Sydney's Faculty of Medicine and Health, said the blueprint was structured around critical areas for health systems reform, including community education; leadership and governance; health financing models; service delivery models that support integrated and person-centred care; equitable access to medicines and technologies; building capacity in the health workforce to deliver the right care at the right time; population health surveillance; and research and innovation.

The work will now be considered by global agencies such as WHO and shared widely across countries, organisations and disciplines so that musculoskeletal health is integrated with other health reform initiatives in lifecourse and ageing, rehabilitation, non-communicable disease, and injury and trauma.

[Download the full report here.](#)

COVID-19 and Fragility Fractures

A paper published by Kayani B, Onochie E, Patil V, et al. in *The Bone and Joint Journal* titled "The effects of COVID-19 on perioperative morbidity and mortality in patients with hip fractures" highlighted the negative effects the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic have on fragility fractures.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many patients continue to require urgent surgery for hip fractures. However, the impact of COVID-19 on perioperative outcomes in these high-risk patients was previously unknown.

The study found that hip fracture surgery in COVID-19-positive patients was associated with consistently worse outcomes compared to COVID-19 negative patients.

COVID-19-positive patients had increased risk of postoperative complications (89.0% (73/82) vs 35.0% (119/340) respectively; $p < 0.001$), more critical care unit admissions (61.0% (50/82) vs 18.2% (62/340) respectively; $p < 0.001$), and increased length of hospital stay (mean 13.8 days (SD 4.6) vs 6.7 days (SD 2.5) respectively; $p < 0.001$), compared to COVID-19-negative patients. And most concerning COVID-19-positive patients had increased postoperative mortality rates (30.5% (25/82) vs 10.3% (35/340) respectively, $p < 0.001$) compared to COVID-19-negative patients.

Given the already significant burden these fractures have in Australians and the Australian healthcare system, these findings further reinforce the importance of a comprehensive and effective COVID response in Australia to prevent a significant worsening of health outcomes in these areas.

The full paper can be found on [The Bone and Joint journal's website.](#)



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SOS FRACTURE ALLIANCE: MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

Representing over 3,000,000 individual members across Australia

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists

Australian College of Rural & Remote Medicine
WORLD LEADERS IN RURAL PRACTICE

COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Carers Australia

Australian Rheumatology Association

Public Health Association AUSTRALIA

HEALTHY BONES AUSTRALIA

move™
muscle, bone & joint health

Endocrine Nurses' Society of Australasia Inc.
ENSA

Australian & New Zealand Society for Geriatric Medicine

RMSANZ
Rehabilitation Medicine Society of Australia and New Zealand

ANZAC RESEARCH INSTITUTE

DAA
Dietitians Association of Australia

ANZONA
Australia New Zealand Orthopaedic Nurses Association



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