

APS Psychology & Ageing Interest Group (PAIG) 2025 National Conference

*Lifespan lessons:
Empowering emerging psychologists in an ageing world*



When: Friday 28th November and Saturday 29th November

Where: Rooms 203/204, McElwain Building, University of
Queensland, St Lucia, Brisbane

Keynote Speakers

Dr Nancy A. Pachana (she/her)

Friday 28 November



Keynote address: Frameworks for empowering emerging geropsychologists and those they serve

Abstract: Early in one's career as a geropsychologist, having key frameworks to refer to are important for both working effectively with individual clients, as well as developing a solid professional mode of practice. In this talk I will briefly touch on three frameworks that orient one's practice: 1) ageism lenses; 2) the 4M's of Age Friendly Behavioural Health and practicing and living a Hierarchy of Flourishing.

Professor Nancy A. Pachana is Professor of Clinical Geropsychology in the School of Psychology at the University of Queensland. She is co-director of the UQ Ageing Mind Initiative, and Program Lead of UQ's Age Friendly University Initiatives. Her main research interests include anxiety in later life, early assessment of dementia and driving safety, and healthy retirement strategies. She has published over 350 peer-reviewed articles, book chapters and books on various topics in the field of ageing. She is also an avid birdwatcher and traveller.

Associate Professor Jessica Strong (she/her)

Saturday 29 November



Keynote address: Supporting Student Development through Gero-psychology Research

Abstract: Research in psychology is expansive, spanning clinical and health domains, arts, and sciences. This presentation will present on models of training to facilitate incorporation of undergraduate through doctoral students into a gero-psychology research lab. These strategies help students develop an interest and excitement about psychological research and how it is applied when working with older adults. The Age Strong PEI lab will demonstrate how this works with a brief discussion of a few current and ongoing projects, including one on dream content in older adults, and dementia rehabilitation.

Dr Jessica Strong (she/her), Ph.D., ABPP, is a licensed and Board Certified clinical geropsychologist and Associate Professor of Psychology, working at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown, PEI since 2019. She received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Louisville, specializing in Aging and Neuropsychology. Dr. Strong completed her clinical psychology residency and a clinical followed by a research post-doctoral fellowship at the Boston VA Healthcare System, affiliated with Harvard Medical School. Dr. Strong's research program focuses broadly on 1) aging and cognition, in particular how life experiences impact the cognitive aging process, 2) program development and evaluation of late life interventions for mental health and well-being, and 3) factors that influence students' likelihood to pursue a career working with older adults.

She is involved in clinical training and supervision at UPEI within the Doctor of Clinical Psychology program, completing neuropsychological assessments and providing mental health interventions to older adults. She supervises both undergraduate honours and graduate student dissertations on research projects with older adults.

Program

Friday 28 November 2025

8.30am	Registration
8.45am	Welcome Acknowledgement of Country
9.00am	Keynote: Frameworks for empowering emerging geropsychologists and those they serve Professor Nancy Pachana
10.00am	Morning tea and poster session
10.30am	Improving Psychological Treatment Outcomes in Anxious and Depressed Older Adults through Social Participation (SPAA Trial) Professor Viviana Wuthrich
10.45am	Ageing Wisely for Chinese-Speaking Older Adults: An Acceptability and Feasibility Study Dr Jessamine Chen
11.00am	Evaluation of a Wellbeing Group Program for Older Adults: The Healthy Ageing Service Wellbeing Skills Group Stephanie Perin and Grace Billing
11.15am	Operationalising Social Connection, Purpose, and Meaning in Co-Design with Aged Care Residents: A Case Study from a Co-Design Course Sophie Griffiths
11.30am	The Impact of Individual and Dyadic Hearing Difficulties on Cognitive Functioning Dr Gabrielle Picard
11.45am	Breaking Down Barriers: Exploring Mental Health Beliefs and Help Seeking in Older Adults Peta Prindiville
12.00pm	Lunch
1.00pm	Can Older Adults Learn Cognitive Restructuring? Age Differences in Skill Acquisition and the Role of Cognitive Flexibility Associate Professor Carly Johnco
1.15pm	How do the Psychosocial Concerns and Attributes of Older Adults with Life-Limiting Conditions Influence Meaning Making: An Integrative Review Caroline Edwards
1.30pm	Exploring the Social Splash: Aqua Fitness as a Pathway to Social Connection and Well-Being for Older Adults Amanda Bos
1.45pm	Drumming up Interest: A Pilot Trial of the Use of Therapeutic Drumming to Improve Wellbeing and Social Isolation in Aged Care Dr Romy Engelbrecht
2.00pm	Providing Psychological Therapy to Older Adults in the Transition Care Program Dr Ilonka Guse-Brennfleck

2.15pm	Choice and Decision-Making in Residential Aged Care: Consumer Lived Experiences of Choice and Decision Making in Residential Aged Care Jean Palalagi-Gunston
2.30pm	Afternoon tea
3.00pm	The Role of a Living Experience Advisory Group: A Case Example from the Nature Hubs Project Dr Cassandra Thomson
3.15pm	Staff Psychoeducation in Aged Care Psychology: Upskilling Aged Care Workers to be Mental Health Allies Dr Romy Engelbrecht
3.30pm	Panel discussion: Lifespan lessons (Empowering emerging psychologists in an ageing world) Panellists: Prof Nancy Pachana; Dr Jessica Strong; Prof Yvonne Wells; Prof Sunil Bhar
4.30pm	Break
5.30pm – 7.30pm	Dinner at St Lucy's, The University of Queensland, Blair Drive (ticketed event)

Saturday 29 November

8.45am	Welcome Acknowledgement of Country
9.00am	Keynote: Supporting Student Development through Gero-psychology Research Associate Professor Jessica Strong
10.00am	Morning tea
10.20am	Implementation of Depression Training for the In-home Aged Care Workforce Adjunct Professor Tanya Davidson
10.35am	"I Still Have Something to Give": Blood Donation in Later Life as a Generative and Emotionally Meaningful Act Dr Amanda Salmon
10.50am	Understanding the Experiences of Donors Aged 55+ Who No Longer Donate Ivy Tan
11.05am	Getting Real About Ageing by Destigmatising the Word "Old" Dr Anna Ring
11.20am	Feasibility, Acceptability, and Reliable Tests for Direct-to-Home Tele-Neuropsychological Assessment in Older Adults James King
11.35am	Exploring the Impact of Attention Training on the Attention Abilities of Community Healthy Older Adults Dr Mousumi Singh
11.50am	Break
12.00pm	AGM
1.00pm – 1.15pm	Closing and thanks

Poster Presentations

10am Friday 28th November

Using the Intersection of Healthy Ageing and Retirement Adjustment to Create Self-Guided Thinking Tools

Jane Dharam

To Know Me is to Understand Me: Digital Life Stories in Residential Dementia Care

Katrina Anderson, Annaliese Blair, Sunil Bhar, Rebecca Collins, Catherine Bateman, Michael Bird, Ian Cameron, Sue Kurrle, Victoria Traynor, Michelle Chate, Tracy Comans, Elaine Todd

Choose Your Own Adventure: An Interactive Learning Resource to Build De-escalation Competency

Cassandra Thomson, Alison Canty, Joanna Sun, Drew Stansbury, Huni Melissa Bollinger, Ian Smith