

Harnessing the power of stories
to improve health outcomes

Story as Intervention



AFRICAN PAIN
RESEARCH INITIATIVE
WORLD-CLASS PAIN RESEARCH

International speaker bio's

Prof Ben Colagiuri

Ben Colagiuri works at the University of Sydney, studying how health symptoms can be influenced by expectations. He will share his research on how learning from others can work to our benefit, in the context of pain treatments.

Dr Hemakumar Devan

Hemakumar Devan works in clinical pain management and research, in Aotearoa New Zealand. His work aims to empower people with persistent pain and their whānau (family and significant others). Hem will share his ongoing work with an Indigenous Māori community to co-produce a story-based, whānau-focused, opioid tapering intervention for people with chronic pain.



A/Prof Lauren Heathcote

Lauren Heathcote works at King's College London, on interventions to help cancer survivors rebuild trust in their bodies and support better mental health after cancer treatment. In her talk, Lauren will discuss the process of co-creating a set of short documentary-style films to shape adaptive 'body mindsets' and improve quality of life after childhood cancer, and the potential of this approach to bridge the gap between in-person care and digital healthcare.

Dr Felicity Braithwaite

Felicity Braithwaite is a physiotherapy-trained researcher at the University of Adelaide, Australia. She is passionate about working with people with lived experience to design strategies to improve pain care. Felicity will share her experience creating brief videos alongside people with osteoarthritis to share their stories in ways that inspire other people with osteoarthritis to try evidence-based management strategies.



Neuroscience
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Local panellist bio's

Yeukai Chideyai

Yeukai Chideya is a clinical social worker and researcher at Stellenbosch University, using creative, community-driven communication strategies to engage the public in impactful and empowering conversations about mental health. She aims to amplify the voices of those impacted by violence and trauma to improve practices and policies that promote healing and social justice.

Nwabisa Mlandu

Nwabisa Mlandu is a neuropsychologist who trained in the Department of Psychology at UCT. Her research interests lie in neuroethics, cross-cultural neuropsychology and neurotechnology, epilepsy, and improving quality of life in people living with neurodegenerative diseases.



Alicia Koedijk

Alicia Koedijk co-facilitates the Groote Schuur Hospital Chronic Pain Clinic's support group, bringing her own lived experience of chronic pain to help others share their stories and move towards wellbeing in the context of pain.

Prof Jackie Hoare

Jackie Hoare is a neuropsychiatrist and professor at UCT who has used patient narratives to help improve mental wellbeing and self-management among adults and adolescents with chronic illness.

A/Prof Tory Madden

Tory Madden (Director of the African Pain Research Initiative, UCT) will moderate a discussion amongst members of a local expert panel and the symposium audience, with the goal of exploring opportunities and ethical, locally appropriate strategies to harness stories to improve health interventions in South Africa.