

# AAG SECG NEWSLETTER



IMAGE BY IN-PRESS PHOTOGRAPHY

## Welcome to the May/June AAG SECG Newsletter

Hello everyone!

It's been a huge few months for the AAG SECG group! It's great to see so many of you posting on socials about papers, confirmations, and exciting new work. We are a truly dynamic crew!

The past few months we've also been working hard behind the scenes to facilitate the 2025 Helen Barrie National Award. The applications this year rose 4 times the previous year - which is phenomenal and the papers were very high quality! We introduce the winners and will give you webinar information in this newsletter, please make sure to come along and support your fellow SECG-er!

Hopefully many of you put in abstracts for the AAG conference this year. Keep an eye on this newsletter and the AAG website over the coming months for bursary opportunities.

Finally, I'd like to say welcome to some new members in the Communications and Awards team - we would like to welcome Thomas Pace, Rakiza Hussein, and Thi Hien Nguyen to the team to join members Lysha Lee, Debbie Pu, Mehak Oberai and myself. We are very excited to hear your new ideas for our community!

Thanks so much to outgoing team members Chiara Nasari and Gizem Gemikonakli for your help over the last few years!

Cheers, Tricia  
AAG SECG Communications and Awards Lead

### Contents:

Communications and Awards Team Welcome

SECG and AAG Updates

2024-2025 Helen Barrie National Prize Announcement

The Art of Being Supervised

4 Daughters Walk Club

New Paper Spotlight

AAG Research Trust Grants

# SECG & AAG UPDATES

## REGULAR SECG CATCHUPS

### AAG QLD SECG COFFEE CATCHUPS [in person various locations]

The SECG AAG QLD Division invites you to our first in-person catch-up and networking opportunity.

We have three 'hubs' for our first "Coffee Catch-up." We look forward to identifying more hubs in the future (including a virtual hub).

#### Sunshine Coast

Where: Café C, Sippy Downs- University of the Sunshine Coast

When: Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May at 9 am

[Visit here to register for Sunshine Coast](#)

#### Gold Coast

Where: Elk Espresso, Broadbeach

When: Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 9 am

[Visit here to register for Broadbeach](#)

#### Brisbane

Where: NODO Southbank

When: Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 8 am

[Visit here to register for Southbank](#)

### AAG VIC SECG MONTHLY WEBINAR [Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May - 12.00 AEDT] via Zoom

AAG Victorian Division SECG are excited to announce the continuation of the AAG VIC SECG monthly webinar series in 2025, building on the success and positive feedback they received. The 30-minute webinars (20-min talk followed by 10-min Q&A) will be held monthly from 12.00-12.30pm AEST/AEDT on the second Wednesday of each month.

The presenter in May is Aisling McEvoy on the topic of sleep enhancement preferences in older adults and people living with dementia.

[Visit here for more information.](#)

## WEBINAR: HELEN BARRIE NATIONAL PRIZE

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025  
Live webinar via zoom  
1.00-2.10 AEST

This webinar will include presentations from the finalists of the [AAG SECG Helen Barrie National Prize](#) 2024-2025 round, acknowledging their outstanding research contributions to ageing research and practice.

Attendees will have the opportunity to hear about the innovative and impactful research, published by AAG members.

Check out our recent [Thursday Three newsletter article](#) for more information on Amanda, Dianna and Nehchal's papers.

[Visit here to register.](#)

## INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY

Join our May webinar celebrating  
International Nurses Day.  
[8<sup>th</sup> May 4-5pm AEST]

The Event will celebrate International Nurses Day by launching the Podcasts Series and hearing from a Panel to discuss a Novel approach to unite Gerontological Nurses across all settings.

The Podcasts will be structured around clinical cases from Nurses, additional expert opinion on the Clinical topic, Academic research on this topic, and salient learning points.

[Visit here to find out more and register.](#)

### HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE?

Let us know!



## UPCOMING AAG EVENTS

**AAG SA PRESENTS:**  
**Risk for dementia: Revealing the role of modifiable factors**  
[13<sup>th</sup> May 3.30-5.30 ACST]

In this seminar, Dr. Kirk Erickson, Visiting Research Fellow funded by The Hospital Research Foundation and a leading expert from AdventHealth Florida, will discuss the latest research on how lifestyle interventions support brain health. Attendees will gain valuable insights into evidence-based strategies for promoting cognitive well-being and shaping the future of dementia prevention.

[Visit here to register](#)

**AAG NSW PRESENTS:**  
**Research Careers Outside Academia**  
[Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June  
1.00-2.30 AEST]

For new and emerging career researchers, academic positions at universities are thought of as the primary career path post-PhD or after a post-doc. However, a career in academia is not always straightforward, often being highly competitive or scarce in positions. Careers outside of academia are an exciting path for new and emerging researchers to utilise their skills and expertise in fulfilling and meaningful roles, especially in aged care and gerontology.

This webinar aims to provide new and emerging researchers with valuable insights into career opportunities outside of academia, either in gerontology/aged care, or other organisations. Presenters will discuss their experience moving into their research roles outside of academia and give advice to our audience on moving into research roles outside of academia.

[Visit here to register](#)



# 2024-25 HELEN BARRIE NATIONAL AWARD

The Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2024-25 Helen Barrie National Prize, recognising outstanding contributions to ageing research and practice. The prestigious award, administered by the AAG's Student and Early Career Group (SECG), saw record-breaking participation this year with four times the number of applications received than in previous years. This exceptional response reflects the SECG's successful community-building efforts and increased visibility and demonstrates the growing interest in gerontological research among students and early career researchers. We are delighted to recognise these outstanding researchers whose work contributes significantly to our understanding of ageing and improves the lives of older Australians.

## Winner: Amanda Cross, Monash University

Amanda Cross has been awarded the top prize for her groundbreaking research titled "**Prevalence of strong anticholinergic use in residents with and without cognitive impairment and frailty: Analysis from 106 nursing homes in 12 Asia-Pacific and European countries.**" Her work provides valuable insights into medication management for elderly populations across multiple international settings.

Read it here: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39303422/>



## Finalist: Dianna Vidas, University of QLD

Dianna Vidas received the runner-up award for her innovative study, "**Family Caregiver Experiences of Using a Mobile App for Music-based Training to Support Dementia Care.**" Her research explores technology-assisted interventions that support both caregivers and those living with dementia.

Read it here: <https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3613904.3642308>

## Special Prize for Intergenerational Practices: Nehchal Kaur Narual, Deakin University

The AAG SECG Helen Barrie National Special Prize for research on intergenerational practices, sponsored by the Australian Institute for Intergenerational Practice (AIIIP), was awarded to Nehchal Kaur Narual for their work "**Role of governance in place making in intergenerational living and learning campuses for seniors and teenagers.**"

Read it here: <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/jpmd-05-2024-0043/full/html>



The Helen Barrie National Prize honours Dr. Helen Barrie, a Senior Research Fellow at the University of South Australia and Director of The Australian Alliance of Social Enterprise. As a social gerontologist and geographer, Dr. Barrie has dedicated her career to studying Australia's changing and ageing population and the implications for society and communities. A passionate AAG member since 2006, she was instrumental in developing the student section of the organization, served as both State and National President, and was awarded life membership in 2017.

## WEBINAR: HEAR FROM THE WINNERS LIVE!

Hosted by Dr Helen Barrie and Dr Tesfahun Eshetie (Professional Development and Events Lead for SECG), hear from the three prizewinners as they present their research at our zoom event.

TUESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> MAY 1.00-2.10PM AEST.

Register here: <https://www.aag.asn.au/EventDetail?EventKey-WEB250513>





# The Art of Being Supervised: Reflections of a Graduate Researcher

by Lysha Lee

Whilst candidature milestones, methodologies and publication writing are hot topics in the higher degree by research candidate journey (and rightly so), I wasn't told much about the supervisor-supervisee relationship as a PhD candidate. It wasn't until I recently attended a university workshop that I've been prompted to reflect more deeply about this crucial aspect of the graduate research experience. Graduate research is a process of evolving into an independent researcher. While much of our focus naturally gravitates towards the 'technical' skills, it is equally important to understand and learn how to be a good supervisee. As my university states, "the quality of your relationship with your supervisors will be one of the most important factors in your success".

*Disclaimer: I acknowledge that there are alternative higher degree by research paths, but will mostly be referring to the doctoral journey, based on my experiences.*

## Understanding Supervision

*What is Supervision?* Supervision in the context of graduate research is a collaborative relationship between the student and their supervisor(s). It is a partnership aimed at guiding the researcher through their academic journey, providing support, feedback, and mentorship.

*Supervising ≠ Teaching.* This might seem obvious, but it is crucial to understand that supervision is not the same as teaching. We cannot be "taught" a PhD. Supervision is about guidance, mentorship, and facilitating your growth as an independent researcher.

*Why things can get prickly.* From personal experiences, observations and discussion with fellow graduate researchers, two common issues supervisees face seem to be:

- Communication and working styles - As we progress through our candidature, we're likely learning about our supervisors' working and communication styles, just as they are learning about us. This process occurs simultaneously with our evolution as researchers, adding another layer of complexity to the relationship.
- Cultural differences - In 2020, close to 30% of students enrolled in Australian universities were from overseas (Universities Australia, 2021). In conversations with my fellow international candidates, navigating cultural differences and the dynamics of that relationship can be challenging. Is it appropriate to say that? What is the best way to express it? What am I expected to do? This is certainly something that needs to be navigated by both parties at the table.

## Key Pointers to Support Your Journey

- Team supervision - Supervision should be done with you, not to you. It's a collaborative process where your input and agency are crucial.
- Recognising your strengths - Think about what unique strengths you bring to the table. Draw from your self-knowledge, life experience, past reflections and gut feeling. Consider both the 'soft' and 'hard' skills. In my case, I bring technical knowledge in a new research methodology, professional experience in my research area, a definite burning passion for it, and creativity!
- Embrace the dynamic nature - The supervisory relationship is not static. It evolves as you progress through your candidature. Context is also key – what you need from your supervisors in your first year may be very different from what you need in your final year.
- Seeking support - Don't hesitate to reach out for support beyond your immediate supervisory team. This could include your graduate research coordinator, university counselling and psychological services, student or academic services, and even your wider professional network. I've found it particularly valuable to speak with researchers outside my immediate lab or organisation. This often provides different perspectives and insights. However, remember that everyone's supervision journey is unique – you don't need to (and probably won't) be on the exact same path as your colleagues.

## Final Ramblings

Apart from some individuals who are outliers, this is most likely your first time pursuing a PhD – so don't forget it is all a learning journey (and probably is even if it isn't your first). Being intentional and reflective about your supervisor-supervisee relationship is an art that can enhance your graduate research experience. Your graduate researcher journey is about more than the final thesis – it's about your evolution as an independent researcher, and your supervisory relationship can play a crucial role in this transformation.

Lysha  
s222363984@deakin.edu.au



## INNOVATIVE IDEAS

# 4 Daughters Walk Club

## What?

4 Daughters Walk Club (4DWC) is an initiative of Kristina Chelberg, who is a Dementia Australia Research Foundation Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at University of Technology Sydney. 4DWC is an opportunity to walk, talk and coffee for women who have a parent living with dementia. Based on the Gold Coast, the walking group aims to grow an informal community for women who are supporting a parent (or other family member or friend) who lives with dementia.

The walking group meets once a month to talk and walk about experiences of supporting parents through a dementia diagnosis to engaging with aged care services and beyond.

## Why?

Research tells us that much of the navigating and advocacy work required to support people living with dementia using aged care services is performed by women – often daughters. The Royal Commission into Aged Care documented many stories of women’s care labour that can come with an emotional, physical and economic cost.[1] A parent’s diagnosis of dementia may also often be at a time when women still have school-aged children and significant career responsibilities – the so-called ‘sandwich generation’.

While various services exist to support primary care partners, there is not as much recognition and support for this next layer of care partners, who may be coordinating a range of clinical, aged care, government and financial services. This often requires complaint labour when services do not meet their obligations.

The idea of a walking club honours Kristina’s father who lives with dementia in residential aged care – who has always loved a good walk – and has four daughters who help support him and her mother using aged care services. Two of those daughters are now dementia researchers! Kristina’s sister Georgina Chelberg is a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the University of Canberra.



## Where?

4 Daughters Walk Club meets on the first Saturday of each month on the Southern Gold Coast, Queensland. The walk wanders a few kilometres along beautiful Currumbin beachfront then finish with a coffee and pastry at a local café.

For more details see:  
[4 Daughters Walk Club](#)  
[Instagram @KristinaChelberg](#)  
[KristinaChelberg@uts.edu.au](mailto:KristinaChelberg@uts.edu.au)

[1] Chelberg, K & Steele, L ‘Hidden in plain sight: Women and gendered dementia dynamics in the Australian Aged Care Royal Commission’ *Journal of Aging Studies*, Volume 71, 2024 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2024.101285>.

# NEW PAPER SPOTLIGHT

## Old habits die hard: Why ageing brains prefer autopilot

by UniSC PhD Candidate, Chelsea Hennessy

Imagine retiring after decades of commuting to work... would you ever catch yourself driving to the office out of habit? Our research explored why these "autopilot" moments might become more common as we age by comparing how younger and older adults balance automatic habits versus purposeful, goal-directed actions. Our findings show that older adults tend to stick with familiar habits, while younger adults more easily shift gears when needed. Interestingly, these differences weren't fully explained by age-related slowing and memory capacity. Our findings suggest that the ageing brain may actually benefit from this preference for habits, as it might help maintain and preserve functioning. This research also offers new insights into how we might better support older adults to promote healthy lifestyle changes by harnessing the power of habit formation to maintain longer independence!



Hennessy, C., Pace, T., Blatch-Williams, R., van Timmeren, T., de Whit, S., & Andrews, S.C. (2025) Switching Gears: Age-related differences in goal-directed and habitual behaviour. *Neuropsychology*, 39(4), 305-320.

**READ IT HERE:** <https://dx.doi.org/10.1037/neu0000997>

## AAG RESEARCH TRUST GRANTS !

Each year, the [AAG Research Trust](#) offers AAG members a range of competitive grants to support research, policy and practice. These grants are incredible opportunities, particularly for students and early career researchers, to pilot ideas, build capacity, and develop track record.

There are four opportunities in total, however two are specifically targeted for student and early career researchers.

[Hal Kendig Research Development Program](#) (opens 12 May)

[RM Gibson Program](#) (open now)

We encourage you to apply for these grants and get AAG support as you build your research in ageing!

## SECG ON SOCIAL MEDIA



### f FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/143911358969670/>

### LINKEDIN

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13564197>

### AAG on X

<https://twitter.com/gerontologyau> – use #AAGSECG for SECG news

### SECG BLOGS

<https://aag.asn.au/Web/Stay-Informed/SECG-Blogs.aspx>

### SECG on AAG WEBSITE

<https://aag.asn.au/Web/Web/Connect-Now/Network/student-and-early-career-group-secg-2.aspx>

## Have something to share?

If you want to contribute to any of the sections or have or have something to share we'd love to hear from you! The newsletter relies on your content to make it great! So let's make it great!



[https://uniofsunshinecoast.syd1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_a3Rqs7viisTqoPc](https://uniofsunshinecoast.syd1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a3Rqs7viisTqoPc)  
or [tking2@usc.edu.au](mailto:tking2@usc.edu.au)