The HOPE Foundation for Research on Ageing

Preparing New Zealand for an Ageing Future

The amount and variety of research related to ageing continues to grow each year. I have been impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication of students and their research teams at several events.

The New Zealand Association of Gerontology conference will be held in Christchurch from 2-4 December. The HOPE Foundation for Research on Ageing has a close relationship with NZAG, as it is New Zealand's main academic meeting for ageing research. The conference has grown considerably in both size and attendance over the years. We are sponsoring the poster session, and several of our scholars will be presenting. Registration is open to all: https://gerontology.org.nz/nzag-events.

I recently attended the Australian and New Zealand Hip Fracture Registry's annual Hip Fest. The registry was established to help hospitals audit and evaluate their care against agreed standards to improve clinical performance. A fragility fracture registry also exists. Considerable dedication has gone into establishing these registries, which provide an objective way to identify variation in performance and improve care. New Zealand performs well in some areas, but there is room for improvement in others. We need similar objective measures across more areas of healthcare, particularly during periods of major system change, to ensure intended benefits are achieved without unintended harm. Registry data is publicly available, so see how your local hospital is performing: https://anzhfr.org/registry-reports/.

The Ministerial Advisory Group on Aged Care has released its report, *A Place to Grow Old: Securing the Future of Aged Care*. While it is not government policy, it has cross-party support regarding the overall direction of travel. Numerous reports have highlighted challenges facing aged care, including rising costs and future availability of residential care beds. It is now time to act.

Dr Maree Todd
Geriatrician
Chair of the Foundation



There is much to like in the report, although several recommendations will require further refinement. Government contributions to residential care fees no longer cover the full cost of a standard bed, leaving providers to charge premium room rates and, in some cases, close facilities.

The principle of “free healthcare” is not in question, but home-based support services and residential care extend beyond healthcare alone. They also include accommodation and daily living costs, which remain the responsibility of those who can afford them, as is the case throughout society. The report aims to support care closer to home. Both home-based and residential services will be encouraged to provide more restorative care, enabling earlier supported discharges and recovery programmes after illness or hospital admission.

Achieving this will require investment, a more skilled workforce, and stronger community support. It will also be critical to ensure services are integrated across the continuum of care used by older people. However, these changes are not a solution to hospital bed shortages or workforce shortages among specialists and GPs.

The report contains 40 recommendations. The advisory committee is keen to see them

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From the Chair

implemented as a coordinated package rather than through a piecemeal approach.

This is also a time for research. We must carefully measure outcomes and monitor the impact of any changes. We cannot afford to get it wrong.

Although it is a lengthy document, it is clearly written with a summary version - https://www.health.govt.nz/publications/a-place-to-grow-old-securing-the-future-of-aged-care

We know learning new things is good for your brain, so enjoy the reading and give those brain cells a workout!

Feedback is welcome

Maree Todd

HOPE Scholar Updates

From Seattle to Amsterdam, being a PhD student is exciting. Not only are you focussed on a topic which you are passionate about, but you talk with like-minded people about your project and attend overseas conferences.

All posters can be accessed from our website—https://hopefoundation.org.nz/scholars/research-findings

Jayanthi Nagalingam: 90 Years of Resilience, Community, and Healthy Ageing: A Privilege to Learn from Pukekohe's Indian Elders

PhD candidate, Auckland University of Technology. Main Supervisor: Dr Kay Shannon

What does healthy ageing look like in practice?

In June, HOPE Scholar, Jayanthi Nagalingam found part of the answer in a room filled with more than 40 older members of the Pukekohe Indian community - individuals whose families helped shape a remarkable chapter of Aotearoa New Zealand's migration history.

The story of Pukekohe and the Indian community is one of perseverance, belonging, and community spirit. From as early as 1911, many settlers from India, and later Fiji, made the Bombay Hills and the Franklin region their home. Through hard work and determination, they established successful market gardens, built livelihoods, purchased land, and laid the foundations for what would become the Pukekohe Indian Association in 1936.

Jayanthi was deeply honoured to be invited to speak at the Pukekohe Indian Association on "Healthy Ageing: Staying Strong in Body, Mind and Community." The topic felt especially meaningful given the lived experiences of those in attendance. These elders embody healthy ageing - not simply through physical wellbeing, but through their resilience, social connections, cultural identity, and commitment to supporting one another.

One of the most rewarding parts of the day was speaking with several older Indian women whose parents and grandparents were among the pioneering families of Pukekohe. Their stories offered a powerful reminder that behind every



thriving community are generations of sacrifice, courage, and vision.

In celebration of International Yoga Day with this year's theme on Healthy Ageing, they also enjoyed an engaging chair yoga session. The enthusiasm, laughter, and active participation in the room demonstrated that ageing well is not just about adding years to life - it is about adding life to years.

Jayanthi left feeling inspired, humbled, and grateful. Being immersed in a community with such rich historical roots reinforced an important lesson: healthy ageing is deeply connected to a sense of purpose, belonging, culture, and community ♡.

The stories of Pukekohe's Indian elders deserve to be heard, not only because they are part of our past, but because they continue to teach us valuable lessons about living well, ageing well and building stronger communities for the future.

Scholarships allow scholars to devote more time to their research. Scholarships relieve financial stress allowing career development opportunities which may not otherwise be available if the student is required to work

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Huynh Trieu An (Ann) Tran (Way): Embodied Identity – Making a connection between dementia prevention and dance movement therapy in Aotearoa, New Zealand

PhD candidate, University of Auckland. Main Supervisor: Prof Suzanne Purdy

HOPE Scholar, Ann Way has had the opportunity to share preliminary findings from Stage 1 of her research at three international conferences: the Australasian Society for Behavioural Health and Medicine conference in Auckland (February), AD/PD – Advances in Science & Therapy in Copenhagen (March), and the International Dementia Conference in Sydney (June).

A central focus of these presentations has been the exploration of how Dance Movement Therapy can support connection, agency, and quality of life for people living with Mild Cognitive Impairment and their care partners. Presenting this work has further strengthened an understanding that knowledge is shared not only through words, but also through presence, movement, emotion, and relationships.

The AD/PD conference in Copenhagen provided a valuable opportunity for interdisciplinary dialogue with neuropsychologists, medical practitioners, and pharmaceutical representatives. Discussions reinforced the importance of integrating pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches while supporting individuals and families to live well with neurodegenerative conditions.



The theme of the International Dementia Conference in Sydney, *"The Whole Person, The Whole Point,"* resonated strongly with this research. It reflected a core principle that people living with cognitive impairment remain whole individuals who deserve purpose, autonomy, belonging, and opportunities for meaningful living.

These experiences have strengthened a commitment to advocating for embodied, relational, and arts-based approaches within contemporary dementia care, while highlighting how innovation can emerge at the intersection of different disciplines.

Poster detailing Ann's research can be downloaded from our website—*https://hopefoundation.org.nz/scholars/research-findings*

Cassie Xi Wang: Healthy ageing in a smart urban future: Co-designing with Asian older adults in Auckland

PhD candidate, Auckland University of Technology. Main Supervisor: Dr Cath Conn

This year has been busy and rewarding for Cassie. Earlier this year, Cassie presented at the **12th International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies for Ageing Well and e-Health (ICT4AWE)** in Benidorm, Spain, with the work subsequently published as a full conference paper, *Playing to Be Heard: Rethinking Participation in Digital Ageing through Governance-Oriented Gamification* (https://www.scitepress.org/Link.aspx?doi=10.5220/0014693900004027).

In September, Cassie commenced the co-design phase of her PhD project exploring healthy ageing and smart urban futures. This work was shared through oral presentations at the AUT Postgraduate Research Symposium; a lightning talk at the FHES Research Roadshow, and a presentation at the CAHRE National Symposium focused on the health and wellbeing of Asian and other ethnic minority communities in New Zealand.

Another significant highlight was a successful pitch of a research-informed business idea through AUT's Ara Tipu Start-Up Programme. Cassie was awarded $5,000 in He Kākano seed funding, supported by The King's Trust, to explore how her research could be translated into a practical venture with real-world impact – congratulations Cassie.

Jacob Mathew: Decoding brain dynamics – A novel approach for neurodegenerative diseases

PhD candidate, University of Auckland. Main Supervisor: Dr Vickie Shim

HOPE Scholar, Jacob Mathew visited the University of Washington in Seattle which provided the opportunity to work alongside leading experts in brain magnetic resonance elastography (MRE), an emerging MRI technique used to investigate the brain's mechanical and dynamic properties.

MRE is showing significant promise as a sensitive biomarker of neurodegeneration in ageing populations and forms a key part of this research. The visit offered valuable hands-on experience in processing brain MRE data and an opportunity to collaborate with researchers at the forefront of this field. The knowledge and skills gained will be directly applied when local MRE scanning begins in New Zealand next year.

The experience has also informed the development of a systematic review examining how brain MRE is being used to better understand neurodegenerative diseases. Jacob extends sincere thanks to the HOPE Foundation and its donors for making this valuable learning opportunity possible.



Jacob in Seattle 2026

Following the Seattle visit, research was presented at the 10th World Congress of Biomechanics in Vancouver, attended by approximately 4,000 delegates. Jacob's presentation showcased a machine-learning approach for detecting brain

deformation using computational head models and was recognised with a Best Abstract Award.

Adding to these achievements, this work has recently been published in the *Journal of Biomechanics* (doi: 10.1016/j.jbiomech.2026.113497), further contributing to the growing body of research aimed at improving our understanding of brain health and neurodegenerative disease.

Olivia Sutherland: Cognitive frailty and anxiety in older adults: A scoping review

PhD candidate, Massey University. Main Supervisor: Prof Fiona Alpass

Olivia successfully completed her PhD confirmation in February and has made excellent progress with her research. Data collection is now nearing completion, with more than 180 older adults from the community interviewed over the past year about their physical and cognitive wellbeing. The next phase of the project will focus on data analysis and the preparation of research publications exploring the associations between cognitive impairment and physical frailty, mental health outcomes, and the relationships between cognition, frailty, and anxiety among older New Zealanders.

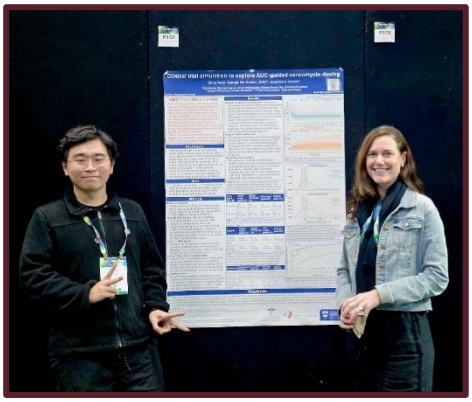
In July, Olivia was honoured to present findings from her literature review, *Anxiety and Cognitive Frailty in Older Adults: A Scoping Review*, at the International Association of Geriatrics and Gerontology (IAGG) Conference in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. This valuable opportunity allowed her to share her research on an international stage and learn from leading gerontology researchers, clinicians, and students from around the world. Olivia has also submitted her scoping review for publication in a peer-reviewed academic journal.



Olivia at IAGG 2026

Zack Wang: Population pharmacokinetic-pharmacodynamic modelling of antibody therapies in Alzheimer's Disease

PhD candidate, University of Auckland. Main Supervisor: Assoc Prof Jacqueline Hannam



Zack and Jqcqueline at WCP 2026

Throughout 2026, Zack has actively shared his work at national and international conferences, helping to advance research in clinical pharmacology, pharmacometrics, and Alzheimer's disease. In July, Zack attended the 27th Annual Population Approach Group of Australia and New Zealand (PAGANZ) Meeting at Monash University in Melbourne, where he presented his clinical trial simulation framework research as both a poster and an oral presentation. He also presented at the 20th World Congress of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (WCP2026) in Melbourne. Following these meetings, Zack travelled to Sydney to meet with researchers at the University of Sydney, the Kolling Institute, and Westmead Hospital, strengthening international research collaborations and exploring future opportunities for collaborative work.

Zack shared his research locally in Christchurch at the Australasian Society of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists and Toxicologists (ASCEPT) New Zealand Annual Scientific Meeting, and a range of Auckland-based and online research events including student and early-career

audiences through presentations at the HealtheX Conference at the University of Auckland.

A major focus of Zack's research this year has been Alzheimer's disease progression modelling. Working alongside Associate Professor Jacqueline Hannam and Professor Nick Holford, Zack has been developing innovative approaches to better understand disease progression and treatment response. The team has secured access to participant-level data from the TRAILBLAZER-ALZ 2 donanemab clinical trial and is preparing analyses to investigate how long treatment benefits may persist after therapy stops, as well as why treatment responses vary between individuals.

Diwakar Khanal: Perspectives and experiences of migrant care workers in aged residential care in New Zealand

PhD candidate, University of Canterbury. Main Supervisor: Dr Tiina Vares



Diwakar at TASA 2025 Melbourne, Australia

Diwakar is focussing on the four findings chapters of his PhD research. These chapters will be developed into journal articles following the anticipated submission of his thesis in May 2027. Some results will be presented at the 2026 Conference for the Social Sciences in Auckland in December.

Diwakar has also joined a collaborative team comprising his supervisor and two researchers from Taiwan to develop a symposium proposal for the 2027 Transforming Care Conference (TTC), which will be held in Taipei, Taiwan, from 28-30 June 2027. This international collaboration provides an exciting opportunity to contribute to global discussions on care, ageing, and social research.

Diwakar is deeply grateful for the support provided through the HOPE Foundation Scholarship, which has enabled him to pursue these valuable academic opportunities, engage with wider research communities, and grow in confidence as an emerging researcher. The scholarship's support continues to play an important role in advancing his research journey and professional development.

Support Research on Ageing – make a DONATION

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06-0201-0030580-00

Congratulations to HOPE Scholars who have graduated since the last newsletter

Dr Alison Talmage (University of Auckland): Voices in Harmony: Development of a Handbook for Neurological Choir Facilitators, through Practice-Based Action Research

Dr Brieonie Jenkins (Massey University): The relationship between loneliness and quality of life in informal dementia caregivers



HOPE Scholar Updates

Annie Meates: Advance directives in New Zealand -The law, the lawyer, the user

PhD candidate, University of Auckland. Main Supervisor: Prof Mark Henaghan

Being a recipient of a HOPE Foundation scholarship has impacted Annie's research in a very positive way. As an older researcher, Annie realises her topic is very relevant to all New Zealanders aged 65 years and over (of which there are more than 850,000). Knowing this has certainly given Annie the enthusiasm and the drive to continue this research. The research is an empirical study with a socio-legal realist approach which looks to identify some reasons for the low uptake of documents in New Zealand.

Annie's study has been extended to include advance directives and advance care planning. The main empirical material is from qualitative semi-structured interviews with 3 different groups and includes the law and how it impacts the real world. Initially, there were to be 2 interview groups. First, lawyers in practice who promote and complete enduring powers of attorney; and second, a group aged 65 -80 who have an enduring power of attorney. Since completing a further University of Auckland 12-week programme at the Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE), Annie has added a third group to include a range of health professionals identifying which documents are used and how they are being used.

Annie says the results from these interviews are hugely interesting and likely to be impactful. She cannot wait to share these research findings at a later time.

Further snippets

Congratulations to **Jayanthi Nagalingam** for 'Best Presentation Award' at the CAHRE (Centre for Asian and Ethnic Minority Health Research and Evaluation) 2026 Conference in September for her oral presentation titled: *"I'm just not part of the furniture sitting there and dying away":* Transnational ageing and belonging among older Indian migrants in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Kushalata Baral, in coordination with U3a Taradale, had an opportunity to present her research on 'When to stop driving?' at Summerset retirement village (Napier) in August, with around 75 older people attending the event. There were presenters from Age Concern, AA and more.



CoGs students

Community of Gerontology students (CoGs) hold regular meet-up session with students who are passionate about research in gerontology and human longevity. Contact the CoGs Liaison, **Jayanthi Nagalinam**, if you would like to meet this group (jayanthi.nagalingam@autuni.ac.nz).



HOPE Foundation for Research on Ageing with Maree at HealtheX 2026

In September, Maree Todd (Chair) attended **HealtheX**. This student-led conference celebrates health research at Waipapa Taumata Rau / the University of Auckland. The HOPE Foundation for Research on Ageing was pleased to sponsor the conference for the second consecutive year. There were 108 oral presentations, 48 posters, and 19 three-minute "elevator pitches," where researchers must explain their work in just three minutes using a single slide. This takes real skill! It was especially pleasing to see several HOPE Scholars presenting. While the conference was not primarily focused on ageing, it was encouraging to see such enthusiasm and cross-disciplinary engagement.

Further snippets

Recent research publications from HOPE scholars

Camon C, Kip E, Lord R, Decourt C, Prescott M, Clarkson J, Sandoval N, Vander P, van Veen J, Prokai_tatrai K, Correa S, Campbell R, Garratt M. 2026. Targeting estrogen to the brain via DHED does not seem to protect againste metabolic dysfunction in obese OVX mice. *Endocrinology*. doi: 10.1210/endocr/bqag082

Chen C, Napier S, Holroyd E, **Shannon K**. 2026. Organisational support for older nurses' continuation of practice: A qualitative interpretive descriptive study. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*. doi: 10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2026.105700

Gauld N, **Hikaka J**, Newsham S, Frampton C, Mylchreest R, Broot T, Buchanan S, Buetow S. 2026. Caregiving and respite for people with motor neurone disease: A national cross-sectional survey experiences and challenges. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*. doi:10.111/jocn.70548

Moyes S, Selak V, Plank L, **Hikaka J,** Kerse N. 2026. Hand grip strength and future hospitalisation in Māori and non-Māori New Zealand octogenarians: the LiLACS NZ cohort study. *New Zealand Medical Journal*.

Krinkel B, Yosaatmadja Y, Slayton M, Krinkel A, Copping J, Jeon J, Eu J, Kohagen K, Ashoorzadeh A, Smaill J, Flanagan J, Walker C, Merajver S, Loomes K, Squire C. 2026. A cryptic allosteric pocket shapes isoform-selective inhibition of human malic enzymes. *Protein Science 35(9):e70757*. doi: 10.1002/pro.70757

Way A, Leung J, Purdy S, Meekums B, Buck R. 2026. Mild cognitive impairment and dance movement therapy: A scoping review. *American Journal of Dance Therapy* doi:10.1007/s10465-026-09440-y

Wang X, Yang F, Trafford J, Qiu W, Conn C. What counts as care? Structural critique of digital health models. 2026, *Digital Health*. doi: 10.1177/20552076251411273

Younes S, Marques B, McIntosh J. An observational study of older adults' activities in urban public spaces. 2026. *Local Environment*. doi: 10.1080/13549839.2026.2669763

Study participants required

Are you supporting someone with memory loss who is currently driving or who has recently stopped driving?



HOPE Scholar, **Kushalata Baral**'s study aims to build an understanding of how decisions about driving cessation are made for people living with cognitive impairment.

Building on earlier research, the current phase involves an online survey seeking responses from over 500 people who have supported someone with memory loss through the decision to stop driving, The aim is to translate lived experience into evidence to inform clearer guidelines, stronger support systems, and more dignified transitions

This research is supported by Dementia New Zealand and Dementia Waikato.

My Crazy Grandma

Books can be purchased for $20 plus $6 postage.Complete the order form on our website

