



## Enhancing clinical outcomes with music



**PRF** Dr Annemarie Lee, APAM, has secured a Physiotherapy Research Foundation Project Grant of \$16 980 to research the positive clinical outcomes for patients with chronic respiratory disease using self-selected music.

### Overview

This project is examining the impacts of listening to self-selected music during pulmonary rehabilitation in people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). There is evidence to suggest that not all people with COPD achieve significant improvement in shortness of breath and fatigue following pulmonary rehabilitation, and a method of distracting people from these symptoms when they are exercising, is by listening to music.

In an earlier study of individuals with COPD, we found that listening to music during a walking test increased the distance walked and reduced breathlessness

compared to not listening to music. This project will help us identify if listening to music when undertaking exercise training as part of an eight-week pulmonary rehabilitation program, offers a greater advantage for improving exercise capacity, symptoms, quality of life and motivation to maintain physical activity, compared to not listening to music.

### Forward focus

It is an exciting time to be involved in cardiorespiratory physiotherapy, particularly with the growing research opportunities and scope. In chronic respiratory disease, a growing area of focus will be maximising individual patient access to cardiorespiratory physiotherapy care, using technology and programs that involve minimal resources, or care that is undertaken outside of the hospital environment. The traditional cardiorespiratory patient has changed; it is more common for an individual to have multiple medical problems. One of the challenges in the profession is to consider the problems associated with multimorbidity, while maximising the care and clinical outcomes of these individuals.

### Importance of the funds

We have this project running at two sites in Canada and one in Australia. This funding will support the Australian site, which facilitates our efforts to generalise the findings to pulmonary rehabilitation

programs. In addition, it may assist with setting up future collaborative projects across the two countries. This grant will support the purchasing of songs for people in the intervention group, cover the cost of copyright, and fund an outcome assessor and a music therapist.

This project is the first stepping-stone in a program of research that is looking at adjuncts to pulmonary rehabilitation, including ways to manage comorbidities and identify alternative methods to maximise clinical outcomes for people with chronic respiratory disease.

I had minimal exposure to research as a new graduate but I was lucky enough to find my clinical passion in cardiorespiratory physiotherapy very early on, thanks to excellent clinical mentors. When I was just starting out as a physiotherapist, I wish I had been aware of the role that research would play in my career, as a clinician and an academic, and how it would lead me down an interesting path of clinical enquiry.

**Dr Annemarie Lee is a senior lecturer in physiotherapy at Monash University and a research fellow at the Institute for Breathing and Sleep. She completed her PhD at the University of Melbourne and her postdoctoral training at West Park Healthcare Centre, Toronto, Canada.**