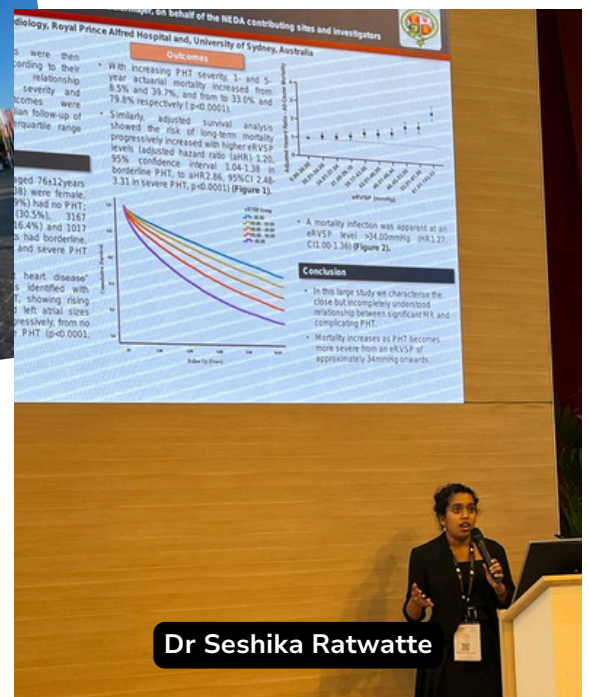


2023 TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP REPORTS

The following reports are sent in by our young Travelling Fellowship winners giving a report on their experience at the ESC 2023 in August 2023 and the AHA 2023 Scientific Sessions in November 2023.



2023 TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP REPORTS

Dr Seshika Ratwatte, ESC 2023

PhD Student University of Sydney and Adult Congenital Heart Disease Fellow at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney.

It was wonderful to have the opportunity to travel to the ESC Congress 2023 in Amsterdam with the support of a CSANZ Travelling Fellowship!

I am in my second year of PhD through the University of Sydney and am the Adult Congenital Heart Disease Fellow at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. I was very excited to attend and present at my first in-person, major, international conference! I had not had the opportunity prior due to the COVID hiatus.

I enjoyed the opportunity to present parts of my PhD at the conference, with four abstracts accepted as moderated e-poster presentations. These abstracts utilised data from the National Echo Database of Australia and related to pulmonary hypertension in left heart disease, specifically cohorts with significant i) aortic regurgitation, ii) aortic stenosis, iii) mitral regurgitation and iv) reduced left ventricular ejection fraction. Each project showed a graded and independent relationship between the severity of raised pulmonary pressures and subsequent mortality – even at low levels.

The chance to meet and hear from leaders across different cardiology sub-specialties was a highlight for me. I learnt very early in the conference that if you wanted to get a seat in a big session you had to arrive at least 20 minutes in advance! The volume and quality of research presented was unlike what I've previously experienced and was certainly motivating for me to expand my network and research moving forwards.

I'd like to thank my PhD supervisor Professor David Celermajer for his guidance, support and encouragement with my research. Many thanks also go to my NEDA collaborators and to CSANZ for their support of me presenting at this meeting!

Seshika's abstracts presented can be found on the ESC365 links below:

- Prevalence of pulmonary hypertension in reduced left ventricular systolic function and its influence on outcomes <https://esc365.escardio.org/presentation/269615>
- Prevalence of pulmonary hypertension in aortic regurgitation and its influence on outcomes <https://esc365.escardio.org/presentation/267031>
- Prevalence of pulmonary hypertension in mitral regurgitation and its influence on outcomes <https://esc365.escardio.org/presentation/269409>

TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP REPORT

Dr Stephanie Rowe at ESC 2023

Cardiologist at St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne

I was fortunate to be awarded the 2023 CSANZ ESC Travelling Fellowship which allowed me to attend my first in-person major international meeting. This year, the conference was held in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

I am a Cardiologist at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne and in my first year of my PhD. I was excited to present my abstract as a moderated poster in the session 'What more do I need to know about the athlete's heart?'. My research was entitled 'Cardiac remodelling in male and female athletes: An MRI assessment of cardiac size and its impact on cardiorespiratory fitness' and focussed on the strong positive relationship between increasing cardiac size and fitness in elite endurance athletes.

It was wonderful to meet our international collaborators in person as well as having the opportunity to network with leaders in our field. I particularly enjoyed the sessions on sports cardiology and cardiac genetics. The biggest takeaway for me was the new ESC guidelines for the management of cardiomyopathies which highlighted the important role of genetic testing and counselling. Outside of the conference, it was lovely to have the opportunity to explore Amsterdam and the surrounding area.

I am very grateful to the CSANZ for giving me this opportunity and supporting me in my PhD studies. This experience has helped expand my international network, and really inspired me for the coming years of my PhD.

Stephanie's abstract presented can be found on ESC365 link below:

Cardiac remodelling in male and female athletes: An MRI assessment of cardiac size and its impact on cardiorespiratory fitness <https://esc365.escardio.org/presentation/267908>

NB: unfortunately most of these ESC links are now not on open access due to the time since the meeting, hopefully you can find a colleague with ESC365 access if you are not a member of the ESC.

TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP REPORT

Dr Jonathan Sen at ESC 2023

Cardiology Advanced Trainee at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, QLD

I am a final year Cardiology Advanced Trainee at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane, as well as a PhD candidate with the University of Melbourne under the supervision of Professor Tom Marwick. It was an honour to attend the recent European Society of Cardiology meeting in Amsterdam in August 2023 with support from a CSANZ Travelling Fellowship. At the Congress, I presented the following three abstracts:

- Comorbidity is the driver of adverse outcomes in patients with moderate aortic stenosis: <https://esc365.escardio.org/presentation/267042>
- Derivation and validation of a risk score to predict mortality or heart failure-related hospitalization based on clinical and echocardiographic factors in moderate or severe aortic stenosis: <https://esc365.escardio.org/presentation/267041>
- Progression of different echocardiographic parameters of aortic stenosis have different clinical associations: <https://esc365.escardio.org/presentation/266578>

My research uses Big Data to investigate the ageing myocardium and aortic valve disease. Using unsupervised machine learning algorithms, my research found that comorbidities, beyond echocardiographic parameters, are key drivers of adverse outcomes in patients with moderate aortic stenosis. We developed a risk score as a decision support tool in risk stratification for patients with aortic stenosis. Additionally, demographic and clinical factors were also shown to impact the progression of aortic stenosis. This research highlights the need for clinicians to carefully consider comorbidities that predispose adverse outcomes when managing patients with aortic stenosis.

The ESC Congress was an excellent platform in which to immerse myself in the latest advancements in cardiology. The Hot Line, late-breaking science, and New ESC Guidelines sessions, particularly those on the latest advancements in heart failure, imaging, and valvular heart disease, were enlightening. During the “Valvular heart disease: echocardiography and beyond” and “The challenging management of moderate aortic stenosis” sessions, I engaged in discussions with others who shared a similar research interest. Meeting mentors and experts in the field offered unique insights and fostered professional relationships that will facilitate future collaborations. Overall, the experience inspired a sense of excitement and enthusiasm in further research endeavours.

This was an exceptional opportunity to present my research, learn from experts, and connect with like-minded colleagues. Attending this international Congress has significantly contributed to my growth as a cardiology advanced trainee and PhD Candidate, and has motivated me to continue contributing towards advancement of this field. I am grateful for the Travelling Fellowship that made this experience possible.

TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP REPORT



Dr Zhaleh Ataei AHA 2023

**Masters of Biomedical Science, University of Melbourne
Researcher, Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute**

A medical doctor undertaking a Master of Biomedical Science at the University of Melbourne. She has been doing a research project at the Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute for almost two years.

Attending the AHA conference for the first time was an incredible experience. I learned a lot from the bests in my field and got the chance to network with scientists in the same area.

I presented our study on how physical activity modified the risk of incident cardiovascular disease in women with early menopause and complicated pregnancy in the “hot topics in heart disease in women” session.

I am incredibly grateful to my family for their constant support throughout my life and to my supervisors, Associate Professor Erin Howden, Dr Sergio Ruiz-Carmona, and Dr Leah Wright, for all their guidance in these two years!

Special thanks to the CSANZ for their support in attending such a fantastic conference!

Please find Zhaleh’s presented abstract on the link below:

https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/circ.148.suppl_1.18857

TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP REPORT



Joshua Wong - AHA 2023

Cardiologist at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, VIC

It was a great privilege to be awarded the CSANZ Travelling Fellowship to attend the American Heart Association Scientific Session 2023 in Philadelphia, USA.

I was delighted to present research from my PhD at the AHA. My abstract examined the impact of cancer and chemotherapy on the development of heart failure in people with diabetes. This population study linked large datasets with the Australian National Diabetes Services Scheme and found evidence to suggest that cancer itself is a driver of heart failure in the diabetes population, regardless of prior chemotherapy prescription. The presentation was well received and sparked interesting discussion.

Cardio-oncology is a rapidly emerging field, so it was a highlight to learn and connect with the expanding global cardio-oncology community. America and Europe have well established cardio-oncology units and training programs and it was inspiring to learn valuable lessons to implement back home.

Another highlight of the conference was the presentation of the landmark SELECT Trial - which showed Semaglutide improved cardiovascular outcomes in obese/overweight people with established cardiovascular disease in the non-diabetic population. The excitement and attention to the main event presentation was electric with people spilling over into the hallways.

Philadelphia was absolutely stunning in the fall and I had enough Philly Cheesesteaks to last me a lifetime! I was also able to travel down to New York and meet with Dr Jennifer Liu, the Director of Cardiology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre to set up a future research collaboration for my PhD.

I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to my supervisor Professor Tom Marwick who is an invaluable source of constant guidance and mentorship and to CSANZ for their generosity and support of young clinician-researchers like myself - this experience would not have been possible without them.



Please find link to Joshua's abstract on the link below:

[Abstract presented at the AHA Scientific Sessions - November 2023.](https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/circ.148.suppl_1.14262#:~:text=Conclusion%3A%20Cancer%20diagnosis%20is%20associated,with%20HF%20irrespective%20of%20chemotherapy.)

https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/circ.148.suppl_1.14262#:~:text=Conclusion%3A%20Cancer%20diagnosis%20is%20associated,with%20HF%20irrespective%20of%20chemotherapy.