

National Centre for Neuroimmunology and Emerging Diseases

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Postal Address:

National Centre for
Neuroimmunology and
Emerging Diseases

Griffith University Gold
Coast

G40, Mailbox 68

SOUTHPORT QLD 4222

<https://www.instagram.com/>



NCNED contact:

(07) 5678 9283 or
ncned@griffith.edu.au

Our Mission

The National Centre for Neuroimmunology and Emerging Diseases (NCNED) is a research team located at Griffith University on the Gold Coast. Led by Professor Sonya Marshall-Gradisnik, the team has a focus on Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS), long COVID and Gulf War Illness (GWI).

Our mission is to translate research findings into preventative medicine, social and clinical care and public health outcomes. By collaborating with local, national and international research institutes, we aim to create sustained improvements in health and health care for not only those affected by ME/CFS, long COVID and Gulf War Illness, but also other immune disorders.

NCNED CONDUCTING CLINICAL TRIAL INTO LONG COVID



Long COVID describes the presence of various COVID-19 symptoms three months after infection lasting for at least two months. To date, there is no evidence-based treatment for long COVID.

In August of this year, NCNED commenced a clinical trial of Low Dose Naltrexone (LDN) among people diagnosed with long COVID. This trial is ongoing and is open to residents of Australia meeting eligibility criteria including: being aged between 18 and 65 years of age; having a BMI of between 18.5 and 29.9, as well as a diagnosis of long COVID with associated symptoms.

The trial aims to determine if treatment with LDN improves fatigue, cognitive and health-related quality of life in adults with long COVID (LC). If this is the case, LDN may offer a safe and cost-effective treatment for long COVID and potentially, similar disorders.

The study involves completion of a series of online questionnaires and a randomised placebo-controlled trial with dose escalation.

If you would like to be involved in this research, we would welcome your interest and request for further information via the NCNED email: ncned@griffith.edu.au or phone (07) 5678 9283.

We wish to acknowledge Mineral Resources Limited for the funding received enabling the commencement of this collaborative Clinical Trial.

Thank you very much for your continued support, we are dedicated to helping people who live with ME/CFS, long COVID or GWI by investigating potential therapeutic targets.

APPRECIATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GRANTING ORGANISATIONS, AGENCIES, BENEFACTORS AND FUNDRAISERS

Thank you to the Stafford Fox Medical Research Foundation, McCusker Charitable Foundation, the Mason Foundation, Talei Stewart, the Alison Hunter Memorial Foundation, the Blake Beckett Foundation, Mr Adrian Flack, the Buxton Foundation, the Henty Community, Change for ME Charity, ME/CFS/FM Support Association QLD Inc., the ACT ME/CFS Society, ME/CFS and Lyme Association of WA Inc., MERUK, Dr John Hamwood and the National Health and Medical Research Council.



PUBLICATIONS

Jacob Batham (featured right), together with NCNED researchers, has published a systematic review titled *"Autoimmunity's Enigmatic Role: Exploring the Connection with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome"*. This publication highlights evidence suggestive of immune dysregulation in ME/CFS, the variability and inconsistency across current literature that cannot deduce ME/CFS as an autoimmune disease and the urgent need for further characterisation and investigation in understanding the autoimmune and immunodysregulatory nature of ME/CFS. You can access the article via the link below:

<https://bmccimmunol.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12865-024-00657-5>



Ms Breanna Weigel (left) and NCNED researchers report novel research findings in a new Quality of Life Research publication *"A pilot cross-sectional investigation of symptom clusters and associations with patient-reported outcomes in ME/CFS and Post COVID-19 Condition"*. None of the four symptom clusters identified in this study were unique to ME/CFS or long COVID. Associations between symptoms and patient reported outcomes among people with long COVID resembled early stages of ME/CFS. The extensive negative associations between symptoms and patient reported outcomes in both cohorts reiterate the need for shared, multidisciplinary approaches to care for people with ME/CFS and people with long COVID. To read more about the findings, go to:

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11136-024-03794-x>

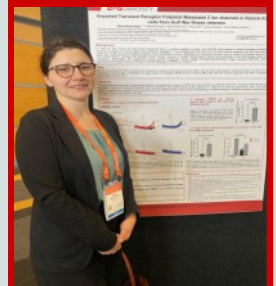
CONFERENCES

World Congress on Military Medicine, Brisbane, Australia



In accord with NCNED's current research into Gulf War Illness, our research team (Dr Natalie Eaton-Fitch, Professor Sonya Marshall-Gradisnik and Ms Etienne Martini Sasso, pictured left to right), participated in the 45th ICMM World Congress on Military Medicine, hosted by the Australian Defence Force in Brisbane, September 22nd to 27th.

NCNED PhD Candidate, Ms Etienne Martini Sasso (featured right), was invited to present NCNED research findings. The title of this presentation was "Impaired TRPM3 Ion Channels in Natural Killer Cells from Gulf War Illness (GWI) Veterans" and is a continuation of NCNED research from our recent GWI TRPM3 ion channel findings.



10th International Conference on Public Health 2024, Bangkok, Thailand

In August, NCNED PhD Candidate, Ms Breanna Weigel, presented at the *10th International Conference on Public Health 2024* hosted in Bangkok, Thailand. In her presentations, Breanna discussed preliminary findings from an ongoing systematic review and provided an update on results from the NCNED's Longitudinal Quality of Health Study. These studies serve to highlight the lived experiences of people with ME/CFS or long COVID. This research contributes to guiding reforms to Australian healthcare policies to improve care accessibility and health outcomes for Australians who live with these conditions.

Breanna and the NCNED team would like to sincerely thank all the study participants who have been a part of this research, as well as the conference organisers for the opportunity to share our findings.

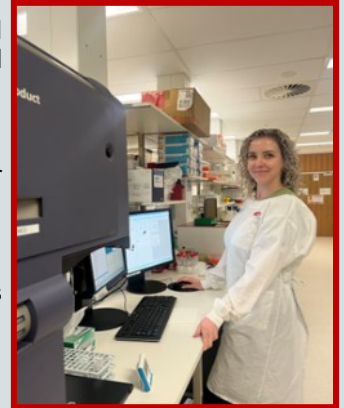


STUDY INTO GULF WAR ILLNESS

NCNED researcher, Ms Jessica Dwyer, has recently commenced her Masters of Medical Research studies. Jessica's laboratory-based project is a longitudinal investigation of Natural Killer cell cytotoxicity among people with Gulf War Illness (GWI).

Jessica's Masters will include examining changes in Natural Killer cell cytotoxic function among people with GWI when compared with healthy people. These changes will be investigated over 12 months using flow cytometry and multiplex cytokine analysis.

Jessica and the NCNED team are looking forward to undertaking this important research which will aid the development of a diagnostic test for GWI. To find out more or be a part of this research, please get in contact with us at ncned@griffith.edu.au or on (07) 5678 9283.



PIONEERING RESEARCH REPLICATED WORLDWIDE

NCNED world leading ion channel and calcium discoveries in the pathomechanism of ME/CFS are being undertaken to be replicated internationally.

For the past 8 years, NCNED has pioneered research into ion channels and calcium in the pathomechanisms of ME/CFS and long COVID, as well as more recently in Gulf War Illness (GWI).

Our numerous novel discoveries and publications in these areas have recently gained recognition from independent researchers as potential pathomechanisms for ME/CFS.

We are even more heartened to see other researchers following NCNED's ion channel and calcium research and discoveries and now undertaking these investigations. It is very exciting to see further recognition with the replication of our work occurring internationally.

This is good news for the ME/CFS community.



Griffith University's National Centre for Neuroimmunology and Emerging Diseases' research team express their appreciation to all our supporters.