

Centre of Research Excellence in Disability and Health (CRE-DH)



The Centre of Research Excellence in Disability and Health (CRE-DH) was launched on the 27/06/17. The centre was launched by the Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Alistair McEwin, with a panel event featuring the Commissioner, media personality Julie McCrossin, writer and performer Emily Dash, and journalist and appearance activist Carly Findlay. See photos or read the transcript at <http://credh.org.au/launch-event/> of the event.

The centre aims to identify cost-effective policies that improve the health of people with disabilities in Australia. The centre involves an impressive range of local national and international researchers, practitioner and people with a lived experience of disability <http://credh.org.au/>

The centre's webpage states the following:

While 15% of the world's population have a disability, they have largely been ignored by public health research, practice and policy. Research clearly shows that on traditional indicators of health, Australians with disabilities fare particularly badly in global terms – they have the lowest relative income and one of the lowest levels of labour force participation of all the OECD countries. An Australian with a disability is more likely to be unemployed, live in inadequate and unaffordable housing, have not completed school, and live in financial stress. They may face discrimination in all aspects of their lives including their experience at school, with the health system, getting a job, and their family situation. All of these aspects contribute to their poorer

health. Reducing these inequities would substantially improve the health of Australians with disability. Improving their health will also increase the overall health of the population, and significantly reduce health and welfare expenditure.

Solving the problem of disadvantage

Solving the problem of disadvantage and the consequent poor health of people with disabilities requires a robust knowledge base to inform policy reform. This is why the CRE-DH is important. The Centre of Research Excellence in Disability and Health is a world first; it aims to gather the evidence needed to guide social and health policy reform for people with disabilities in Australia. We bring together an interdisciplinary group of researchers with stakeholders from the health and disability sectors, state and federal governments, and disability consumer representative groups – who are embedded in the research design and development. In collaboration with people with disabilities, service providers, non-government organisations and other stakeholders, we will identify the key and emerging issues affecting Australians with disabilities. Based on these ongoing consultations we will document how these vary between people with and without disabilities over time, across different geographical areas and between subgroups of the population. Our team is characterised by diversity – from public health academics to disability advocates, health economists and policy analysts – all of whom are focused on reducing disadvantage for people with disabilities.

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Our research

We will map the spatial distribution of social, economic and health inequities between people with and without disabilities; apply cutting-edge epidemiological methods to establish the main social determinants of health of people with disability; build the first ever cost-effectiveness model to estimate the health impacts and value for money of policy interventions for people with disabilities, and embed stakeholders in the research process so that they are involved in the co-production of knowledge.

Capacity building

A major focus of the CRE-DH is to produce a skilled research workforce in disability and health. This

means we will train early-career researchers and PhD students and build the research capacity of academics and policy-makers across sectors to respond to the pressing problem of people with disabilities' poor health.

Note from the editor:

We look forward to the results of research from this Centre. How their work will assist people with an intellectual disability is still an unknown. ●