

MARCH 2026

THE PARTNER NETWORK

BULLETIN



Kununurra, Western Australia

GET INVOLVED

Welcome to the PARTNER Network Bulletin where we bring members opportunities to participate in cutting-edge research and practical solutions to enhance healthcare in rural communities.

[Read More on our website](#)

Welcome to 2026

As we step into the New Year, we're excited about what's ahead for the PARTNER Network. We're grateful for the ongoing support, ideas, and commitment from our members and partners, and we look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen primary health research and care.



Currawong, Queensland



Darling Downs, Queensland



PARTNER Network Resources



[PARTNER Network Website](#)

[PARTNER GP training Module](#)

NETWORK UPDATES

Australian Clinical Trials Education Centre's (A-CTEC) Conference 2026

Early this March PARTNER Community Advisory Member Amy was invited to sit on a panel at the A-CTEC Conference 2026 in Melbourne, where she contributed to a discussion on the complexities in clinical trials and their impact on patients and carers. Amy did a fantastic job articulating consumer views, particularly from rural, remote and regional perspectives, and helped to highlight challenges that are often underrepresented in broader clinical research conversations.

Thank you, Amy, for your thoughtful insights and for representing consumer voices so effectively — your contribution is helping shape more inclusive and patient-centred clinical trials.



CAG member Amy at the A-CTEC Conference

PARTNER Updates

- PARTNER recognised World Cancer Day on 4 February and reflected on the diversity of cancer experiences under this year's theme, "United by Unique." We reaffirm our commitment to advancing high-quality research that improves outcomes, supports survivors, and addresses inequities in cancer care across our communities.
- As PARTNER enters the next stage of the program, we focus on building sustainability of the network. Building on the knowledge gained to date, we look forward to deepening established partnerships and fostering new collaborations that enhance research capacity and impact.
- On February 11 we celebrated National Primary Care Nurses Day. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all primary care nurses for their dedication, compassion, and outstanding contribution to our communities. Your commitment to patient care, advocacy, and wellbeing makes a lasting difference every day.
- In recognition of International Women's Day and this year's theme, "Give to Gain," we celebrate the women across our research network whose generosity in leadership, mentorship and collaboration strengthens our collective impact and advances better health outcomes for all.



Where Are We Now?



110 General Practices



30 approved trials



14 key health topics covered



33 sites participating across 20 unique trials

PARTNER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

DUE TO START RECRUITING IN 2026

▶ ROSELLA: Implementation of risk-stratified population screening for Australia's most common cancers

Summary: A hybrid effectiveness-implementation study of a genomic cancer risk assessment for melanoma, prostate, breast and bowel cancer. The study aims to determine how best to deliver cancer risk assessment via a DNA test at scale within general practice, to support personalised cancer screening recommendations for the Australian population.

CURRENTLY RECRUITING

DREAM

Summary: The primary aim of DREAM is to investigate the efficacy of duloxetine, compared with placebo, on leg pain intensity in people with chronic sciatica.

GP Requirements:

- Screening and enrolling patients
- May include follow up visits
- Dissemination of documents to the DREAM research team via email or fax

GP/Participants receive:

- Compensation for recruitment and screening

NATIONAL NEW



Supporting Healthy Futures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Summary: Improving the implementation of annual Health Checks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in mainstream general practices. Practices are randomly allocated to Usual Care or Care Enhancement groups.

GP Requirements:

- Install PEN CS for remote data extraction
- 10 min staff survey
- Clinical record audit of 20 health checks
- Promote patient survey
- Care enhancement group - participate in staff training
- GPs - participate in training as appropriate

GP/Participants receive:

- \$4,200 - \$8,500 depending on group allocation
- Data-based feedback
- 2 x \$30 gift cards for completion of two 10-min online surveys (staff)
- \$100 gift card for participation in a webinar (staff)
- \$50 gift card per month for 12 months for Study Champions in CE group

Recruiting in VIC, QLD NEW

ASSURE-Echo

Summary: Thickening, reduced mobility and narrowing (stenosis) of the aortic valve is a common problem that occurs with ageing. An echocardiogram ("echo") is the single most useful test to identify this. Widespread use of echo to screen for this problem is not currently feasible because an expert sonographer is needed to acquire these images. Access to echo is especially limited in rural and remote Australia. ASSURE-ECHO aims to identify the feasibility and value of AI-guided echocardiography for AS screening in the community

GP requirements:

- Identify eligible patients
- Disseminating invitation letters
- Ensure a consultation room is available when a clinic is booked
- No active role for GPs as active cardiologist involved

Participants Receive:

- Free heart screening and echocardiography.

Recruiting in TAS

NEW

Internet-delivered primary care for shoulder pain

Summary: Rotator cuff-related shoulder pain is common, affecting around 1.8 million Australians, with 40% experiencing disability beyond 12 months. This project aims to compare the effectiveness of internet-delivered care, with or without telehealth in addition to usual care, versus usual care alone on pain and disability, waiting times, quality of life, global change, and psychological/cognitive outcomes such as outcome expectations.

GP Requirements:

- Identify eligible patients
- Contact patients and share study information
- Promote the project within the practice using a poster

Participating GPs Receive:

- Financial reimbursement
- Education on the latest research in shoulder pain
- Opportunities to improve patient care

NATIONAL



MedCan 3: Medicinal Cannabis

Summary: People with advanced cancer may experience a wide range of distressing and difficult-to-manage symptoms. MedCan 3 aims to reduce symptom burden in patients with advanced cancer by assessing the effect of escalating doses of THC/CBD 1:20 versus placebo on total symptom distress scores.

GP Requirements:

- Referrers continue to provide normal clinical care
- Trial staff prescribe, dispense drug & monitor patients

Recruiting in QLD

OPTIMAS-GP: The Optimal Implementation of Antimicrobial Stewardship in General Practice

Summary: Combating antimicrobial resistance is a global health priority. The OPTIMAS-GP study will investigate the most effective ways to implement evidence-based antimicrobial stewardship activities in general practice. Co-designed with consumers and doctors, the study aims to safely reduce antibiotic prescriptions for respiratory tract infections, with sustainability of these activities a key aim.

Recruiting in TAS, VIC

REST UP: Research and Evaluation Study of digital Treatment of insomnia in Underserved Populations

Summary: REST UP is evaluating an interactive digital CBTi program called Bedtime Window in aims to improve access to CBTi in rural and regional Australia. Practices will be allocated to either the self-guided digital CBTi, GP-guided digital CBTi, or augmented usual care (control) group, with control patients receiving access to the program once the study is complete.

GP Requirements:

- Nominate (or self-nominate) a practice champion to send email/SMS EOIs to eligible patients via the EMR and act as the primary contact for the study.
- For those in the GP-guided group, complete a concise online training module to support patient onboarding and provide follow up consultations (~ 3 visits).

Participating GPs Receive:

- GPs - Mentoring from GP investigators and access to CPD points in the measuring outcomes category.
- GP/Practice - \$200 voucher for the practice champion, plus \$100 for each patient recruited (aim of 10).
- Patients - Free digital CBTi access and 3 x \$30 vouchers for completing study surveys.

NATIONAL



Kalgoorlie, Western Australia

COLCOT-T2D: COLchicine and non enteric coated aspirin in the Cardiovascular Outcomes Trial of patients with T2D

Summary: People with type 2 diabetes are more likely to develop cardiovascular disease. The COLCOT-T2D trial aims to evaluate the efficacy and safety of colchicine and non enteric-coated aspirin, used either in combination or alone, to improve cardiovascular outcomes in high-risk patients with type 2 diabetes.

GP requirements:

- Identify eligible patients
- Disseminate study information via letter or email
- Conduct baseline and 6-monthly visits (may be completed by a practice nurse or a Curtin University research nurse)
- Provide medical updates (with patient consent) for an approximately 3-year follow-up period

Participating GPs Receive:

- Up to \$800 reimbursement per completed participant
- Site training and support

Recruiting in WA

THE PARTNER NETWORK

EQUIPP: EQUipping the general Public to prevent and overcome chronic Pain

Summary: The project aims to test a method of co-designing and delivering public messaging and education about chronic pain in rural populations.

GP Requirements:

- Undertake the Adelaide University Pain Revolution Local Pain Educator (LPE) Program
- Co-design the EQUIPP intervention with their local community
- Attend an information and training session on the co-designed intervention
- Assist with advertising and promoting the project to potential community participants
- Practices are invited to attend an information and training session about the co-designed intervention

Participants Recieve:

- \$130/hr (\$260-290 total/workshop)
- Travel allowance of \$40 total/workshop

Recruiting in SA & VIC

PIA-STUDY: Probucol in Alzheimer's Study

Summary: Scientists have discovered that a build-up of molecules in the blood may cause damage to brain capillaries, potentially contributing to Alzheimer's disease. The primary objective of this trial is to evaluate the efficacy of Probucol (Lorelco) on cognitive performance in patients with Alzheimer's disease (AD) over a 104-week treatment period.

GP Requirements:

- Identify and refer eligible patients
- Distribute trial brochures
- May assist in gathering baseline data (by negotiation)

Participating GPs Receive:

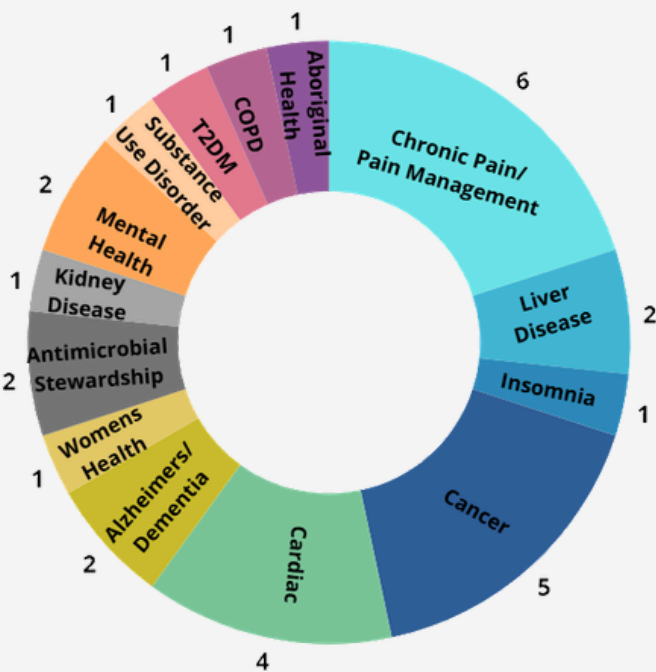
- Training materials and ongoing support

Recruiting in TAS, SA, WA



Queensland

PARTNER Research Areas



EASY-AS: Early valve replacement in severe ASYmptomatic Aortic Stenosis

Summary: The EASY-AS trial is investigating the most effective way to manage people with severe but asymptomatic aortic stenosis. It addresses a fundamental unresolved question in cardiology: the relative benefits of early aortic valve replacement (AVR) versus watchful waiting in asymptomatic patients with severe aortic stenosis.

GP Requirements:

- Patient identification and referral
- Distribution of trial information

NATIONAL



Do any of these research projects interest you?

A **PARTNER State Coordinator** will be in touch soon to offer more information. Alternatively please email the partner-network@unimelb.edu.au with any enquiries!

Do you have a research study recruiting in rural primary care clinics?

complete our investigator-led clinical trial enquiry form.

[click here to enquire](#)