

Understanding Mental Health in Youth with Type 1 Diabetes: A National Routine Screening Initiative

Research Theme	☐ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre (Mental Health and Wellbeing Theme)
Start Date	February 2026
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Keely Bebbington, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Other Supervisors	Dr Anna Boggiss, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Project Outline	Youth living with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) experience psychological distress at rates two to four times higher than their peers without diabetes, while one-third of parent's report trauma and distress persisting years after diagnosis. Despite these concerning statistics, Australia's most recent national data on diabetes-related distress dates back to 2016, creating a critical knowledge gap. While international guidelines recommend comprehensive psychosocial screening, many Australian clinics struggle to implement these recommendations due to limited mental health expertise. The research project will leverage valuable data from screening programs across Western Australia, South Australia, and Queensland, using validated diabetes-specific measures to conduct a longitudinal assessment of diabetes distress and quality of life across multiple Australian states. Research activities may include analysing large-scale psychosocial screening data over time, conducting qualitative research with families and clinicians to examine the facilitators and barriers to screening, or developing recommendations for improved screening practices. This research will provide essential evidence to transform psychosocial care for Australian families living with T1D, directly informing clinical practice guidelines and supporting psychosocial service development.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☒ Masters ☐ MD ☒ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Psychology, or related field initiative and dedication Strong written communication skills High level of organisation and time management skills Excellent ability to work independently and as part of a team Great interpersonal skills and willingness to collaborate with community members, healthcare professionals, and young people
Ethics Approval	☐ Obtained ☐ Not Obtained
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
For more information, please contact	Dr Keely Bebbington Keely.Bebbington@thekids.org.au

Adapting the Diabetes Stigma Assessment Scale for Youth with Type 1 Diabetes

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre (Mental Health and Wellbeing Theme)
Start Date	February 2026
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Keely Bebbington, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Other Supervisors	Prof Jane Speight, The Australian Centre for Behavioural Research in Diabetes (ACBRD) Dr Anna Boggiss, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Project Outline	Youth living with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) frequently encounter stigma that can significantly impact their mental health and diabetes care. While the Diabetes Stigma Assessment Scale – Type 1 Diabetes (DSAS-1) provides a validated tool for adults, no equivalent exists for paediatric populations, creating a critical gap in identifying and addressing stigma among young people living with T1D. Youth may experience stigma differently than adults due to developmental emphasis on personal identity, peer relationships and establishing their own autonomy. Without age-appropriate tools, healthcare providers cannot accurately assess stigma's impact nor develop targeted support. This project aims to adapt and validate the DSAS-1 for paediatric use, creating the first comprehensive youth diabetes stigma assessment tool. Research activities may include interviews with youth, pilot testing, psychometric validation, and examining associations with clinical and mental health outcomes.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☒ Masters ☐ MD ☒ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Psychology, or related field initiative and dedication Strong written communication skills High level of organisation and time management skills Excellent ability to work independently and as part of a team Great interpersonal skills and willingness to collaborate with community members, healthcare professionals, and young people
Ethics Approval	☐ Obtained ☐ Not Obtained
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
For more information, please contact	Dr Keely Bebbington Keely.Bebbington@thekids.org.au

Neurodiversity and Type 1 Diabetes: Tailoring Care for Youth with Unique Needs and Strengths

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre (Mental Health and Wellbeing Theme)
Start Date	February 2026
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Anna Boggiss, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Other Supervisors	Dr Keely Bebbington, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Project Outline	Living with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) requires daily attention to a complex interplay of factors, including fluctuating blood glucose levels, dietary intake, hormone levels, and emotional wellbeing. For neurodiverse youth and their families, these demands are often amplified due to unique sensory sensitivities, challenges in social interaction, behavioural preferences, and differences in executive function. While neurodiverse youth living with T1D may benefit from protective factors such as strengths in advanced reasoning and increased parental involvement, clinical outcomes for this population are not fully understood. The proposed project will address key evidence gaps by establishing the prevalence of neurodiversity in youth living with T1D in Australia and explore associations with important clinical and psychosocial outcomes. Depending on degree types, interviews with key stakeholders may also be conducted to identify unmet needs, barriers, and facilitators to care to inform neuro-affirming and safe clinical practices. The project aims to lay the groundwork for tailored models of care to support neurodiverse youth living with T1D and their families and inform interventions that better address the unique needs of this population.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☐ Masters ☒ MD ☒ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Psychology, or related field initiative and dedication Strong written communication skills High level of organisation and time management skills Excellent ability to work independently and as part of a team Great interpersonal skills and willingness to collaborate with community members, healthcare professionals, and young people
Ethics Approval	☐ Obtained ☐ Not Obtained
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
For more information, please contact	Dr Anna Boggiss Anna.Boggiss@thekids.org.au

Supporting Youth Living with T1D and Disordered Eating Behaviours

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre (Mental Health and Wellbeing Theme)
Start Date	February 2026
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Anna Boggiss, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Other Supervisors	Dr Keely Bebbington, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Project Outline	Youth living with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) face unique vulnerabilities to disordered eating behaviours due to the required daily focus on food intake, weight monitoring, and insulin doses. The intersection of medical necessity and typical adolescent developmental concerns creates conditions where diabetes-specific eating disorders can emerge, including insulin omission for weight control. While international research indicates higher prevalence rates of disordered eating behaviours among youth living with T1D compared to their peers without diabetes, comprehensive and current data for Australian youth remains limited and little is known what identification and intervention strategies may be most appropriate. The research program's overall aim is to lay the groundwork for trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate models of care that better support the unique needs of youth living with T1D and disordered eating behaviours. Research projects will vary by degree level and address critical knowledge gaps by characterising disordered eating behaviours among youth living with T1D, examining associations with clinical outcomes and psychosocial functioning, mapping current referral pathways, and conducting interviews with young people, families, and healthcare providers to identify barriers to disclosure and perspectives on current screening practices.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☒ Masters ☐ MD ☒ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Psychology, or related field initiative and dedication Strong written communication skills High level of organisation and time management skills Excellent ability to work independently and as part of a team Great interpersonal skills and willingness to collaborate with community members, stakeholders and young people
Ethics Approval	☐ Obtained ☐ Not Obtained
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
For more information, please contact	Dr Anna Boggiss Anna.Boggiss@thekids.org.au

Measuring What Matters Most for Youth Living with Type 1 Diabetes

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☒ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre (Mental Health and Wellbeing Theme)
Start Date	February 2026
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Anna Boggiss, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Other Supervisors	Dr Keely Bebbington, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Project Outline	Understanding the experiences and challenges faced by youth living with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) and their families is essential to providing care that meets their unique needs. To accurately measure these experiences, Person-Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) are vital, as they capture individuals' subjective health experiences, including physical, mental, and social wellbeing. In this research agenda, we hope to identify the PROMs used among youth living with T1D and consult with international youth living with T1D, families, clinicians and researchers to inform a consensus on the most appropriate PROMs to be used in routine clinical screening. Depending on degree type and research interests this may include conducting systematic reviews to uncover existing measurement tools and identify critical gaps, facilitating focus groups with families to capture their unique perspectives, or collaborating with international stakeholders, clinicians and researchers through expert consensus studies using Delphi study designs, or creating new psychometric tools to fill measurement gaps.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☒ Masters ☐ MD ☒ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Psychology, or related field initiative and dedication Strong written communication skills High level of organisation and time management skills Excellent ability to work independently and as part of a team Great interpersonal skills and willingness to collaborate with community members, stakeholders and young people
Ethics Approval	☐ Obtained ☐ Not Obtained
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
For more information, please contact	Dr Anna Boggiss Anna.Boggiss@thekids.org.au

Effects of Brief Meditation on the Overall Well-being of Adolescents with T1D and Caregivers

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☒ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre
Start Date	February 2027
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Vinutha Shetty The Kids Research Institute & Perth Children's Hospital
Other Supervisors	Dr Mary Abraham The Kids Research Institute & Perth Children's Hospital
Project Outline	Type 1 diabetes (T1D) is one of the most common chronic diseases of childhood, associated with significant psychological burden for young people and their families. Adverse impacts on mental health are high for patients, families and caregivers. Adolescents represent a particularly vulnerable period, with high rates of diabetes distress, anxiety, reduced quality of life and declining engagement in self-management, all of which contribute to poorer glycaemic outcomes and an increased risk of long-term complications. Addressing mental wellbeing is therefore a major research priority within the Children's Diabetes Centre and has been identified as an unmet need by our Consumer Reference Group. Mind body intervention practice improves mental clarity, emotional well-being, productivity, and inner peace while reducing perceived stress and compulsive behaviours. However, young adults live very busy lives in modern society, and adding another responsibility to one's daily routine is not manageable for most people, as it would only increase stress and negative experiences. While many know that meditation is beneficial on a variety of outcomes, a common reason for not beginning meditation is that the time commitment is too great, or they do not know where to begin. This project will evaluate the feasibility of delivering a four-week smartphone-based guided meditation programme using the 3Cs (Consciousness, Cognition and Compassion) research platform, developed by our collaborating institution at Harvard. Thirty adolescents aged 12–18 years with T1D and thirty caregivers will be randomised to either a daily guided meditation intervention (7–21 minutes) or an attention-control condition involving neutral audio delivered through the same application. Following the feasibility study, consumer workshops will be conducted to co-design a larger multicentre randomised controlled trial (RCT).
Suitable For	☐ Honours ☒ Masters ☐ MD ☒ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in science Initiative and dedication Strong written communication skills High level of organisation and time management skills Excellent ability to work independently and as part of a team Good interpersonal skills
Ethics Approval	☒ Obtained ☐ Not Obtained
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
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What is the Prevalence of Obesity in WA Children and Adolescents with Type 1 diabetes?

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre.
Start Date	February 2026
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Aveni Haynes, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Other Supervisors	Dr Rebecca Pavlos, The Kids Research Institute Australia Dr Elizabeth Davis, The Kids Research Institute Australia & Perth Children's Hospital
Project Outline	The Western Australian Children's Diabetes database is a prospective, longitudinal diabetes registry containing data on all consenting children and adolescents diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in Western Australia since 1987. Ethics approval is currently granted to conduct epidemiological studies using deidentified data from this data collection to address research questions aimed at improving the lives of young people at risk of, or living with, the condition. Research is lacking on how to optimise treatment in young people who with type 1 diabetes who are also living with obesity, as both conditions adversely impact longer term health e.g. cardiovascular disease. Furthermore, obesity may influence glycaemia via insulin resistance in addition to the insulin deficiency characterising type 1 diabetes. As treatment options for obesity are increasing, and have been shown to have positive benefits, it is vital that more research is conducted to inform treatment guidelines for young people living with both conditions. This research aims to determine the prevalence of obesity in Western Australian young people living with type 1 diabetes, and investigate differences by age group at diagnosis, sex assigned at birth, socioeconomic status and region of residential postcode. The findings of this research will guide future initiatives aimed at improving the clinical care of these young people.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☐ Masters ☐ MD ☐ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Health Science or related degree Excellent organisational and communication skills. Desirable skills: Proficiency with Excel/SPSS/R/data analysis.
Ethics Approval	☒ Obtained ☐ Not Obtained
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
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What is the Burden of Cardiovascular Disease in Western Australian Children and Adolescents Diagnosed with Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes?

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre.
Start Date	February 2026
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Jeffrey Cannon, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Other Supervisors	Dr Aveni Haynes, The Kids Research Institute Australia & University of Western Australia Dr Matthew Cooper, The Kids Research Institute Australia Dr Michael Hancock, Perth Children's Hospital Professor
Project Outline	Childhood diabetes is associated with significant long term health complications and an average 14-year reduced life expectancy. Adverse clinical complications including cardiovascular outcomes are a significant contributor to the high morbidity and mortality associated with childhood diabetes. Previous research from our group, led by Dr Cooper, investigated the incidence of hospitalisations and risk factors for health complications experienced during early adulthood in children diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in Western Australia between 1992-2012. This project aims to determine the incidence of health complications and premature mortality in children diagnosed with type 1 and type 2 diabetes in Western Australia from 1992 to 2023, including an additional 10 years of new onset cases and follow-up period for those included in the previous study. Children with diabetes will be identified from the Western Australian Children's Diabetes Database (WACDD) maintained at Perth Children's Hospital and record linkage conducted by the Western Australian Data Linkage Unit (https://www.datalinkage-wa.org.au/) to the Hospitalisations and Morbidity Data System (HMDS) and Mortality Register to determine the incidence of cardiovascular outcomes in this cohort (Cooper et al, J Diabetes Complications (2017) 31(5):843-849). The findings of this study will not only be novel but also make a significant impact on informing future models of care for children diagnosed with diabetes which aim to minimise the risk of long-term adverse effects for individuals affected by this lifelong condition so that they can be prevented in future generations.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☒ Masters ☐ MD ☐ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Health Science, Epidemiology/Public Health related area Excellent communication, teamwork and organisational skills. Desirable skills: Proficiency with Excel/SPSS/R/data analysis.
Ethics Approval	☒ Obtained ☐ Not Obtained
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
For more information, please contact	Rebecca Pavlos rebecca.pavlos@thekids.org.au

Evaluating the prevalence of contact dermatitis with technology use in Type 1 diabetes

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre.
Start Date	February 2026
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Mary Abraham, The Kids Research Institute Australia & Perth Children's Hospital
Other Supervisors	Dr Vinutha Shetty, The Kids Research Institute Australia & Perth Children's Hospital
Project Outline	Diabetes technologies (pumps and sensors) are regularly used for management of Type 1 diabetes as part of standard care. However, this has led to an increase in contact dermatitis. Young children and those with history of allergies, skin reactions are more likely to be susceptible. The reactions are sometimes significant enough to warrant cessation of device, trial of different devices and dermatology and immunology inputs are sought to help the child with Type 1 diabetes continue use of these technologies. There is lack of data on the prevalence of these skin reactions and the clinical severity. This project is aimed to gather preliminary evidence on the prevalence and the evaluate the risk factors predisposing them to these reactions. This proposed research study is a cross-sectional study. All children with Type 1 diabetes utilising diabetes technology will be eligible. All identified eligible participants will be invited to respond to an online survey which will be designed based on clinical and research diabetes team in conjunction with the dermatology department. A validated questionnaire will be used to assess skin reaction. Clinical and glycaemic data will be captured from the WA Children's Diabetes Database. The findings of this study will help inform the clinical pathway for children commencing diabetes technologies and to improve education to health care professionals in addressing these issues to provide more comprehensive care.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☐ Masters ☐ MD ☐ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Health Science, Education Excellent communication skills. Desirable skills: Proficiency with Excel/SPSS/R/data analysis
Ethics Approval	☐ Obtained ☒ Not Obtained
Funding	☐ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
For more information, please contact	Rebecca Pavlos rebecca.pavlos@thekids.org.au

Evaluating the lived experiences of caregivers of infants with hyperinsulinism commenced on continuous glucose monitors at diagnosis

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health			
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre.			
Start Date	February 2027			
Chief Supervisor/s	Ass Clin Prof Mary Abraham, The Kids Research Institute Australia & Perth Children's Hospital			
Other Supervisors	Dr Vinutha Shetty, The Kids Research Institute Australia & Perth Children's Hospital			
Project Outline	Continuous glucose monitors (CGM) are regularly used for management of Type 1 diabetes as part of standard care. CGMs are also subsidised for Hyperinsulinism (HI) and offered as an adjunct tool glucose monitoring tool to monitor for hypoglycaemia. The sensitivity of CGM in detection of hypoglycaemia is 50% with a high negative predictive value of >95%. However, there is minimal data on the lived experiences of CGM use in newborns and infants with HI. Our centre is one of the few centres worldwide commencing CGM in the newborn period in babies with HI and hence the project has the opportunity to provide evidence in this space. This proposed research study is a qualitative research project. All newborns with hyperinsulinism utilising CGM will be eligible. A semi structured interview will be offered to families to explore the caregiver perspectives of CGM use on anxiety, sleep and impact on their daily lives. The findings of this study will help inform the clinical pathway for newborns with HI commenced on CGM and to improve education to families to provide more comprehensive care.			
Suitable For	☒ Honours	☒ Masters	☐ MD	☐ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Health Science, Psychology, Education Excellent communication skills. Desirable skills: Proficiency with Excel/SPSS/R/data analysis			
Ethics Approval	☐ Obtained ☒ Not Obtained			
Funding	☐ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group			
For more information, please contact	Rebecca Pavlos rebecca.pavlos@thekids.org.au			

Evaluating the impact of the DiabHQ App for patients and families living with Type 1 Diabetes.

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre.
Start Date	February 2026
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Rebecca Pedruzzi, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Other Supervisors	Ms Helen Clapin, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Project Outline	Type 1 diabetes (T1D) is the most common chronic disease in children, resulting in long-term morbidity and reduced life expectancy, however it has been shown that these adverse consequences can be prevented with effective treatment and good self-management. Despite intensive research, guidelines, new therapies and innovative technologies, fewer than 1 in 5 children and young people living with T1D in Australia achieve international glycaemic control targets that are associated with reduced complications. Diabetes management is complex, requiring an estimated 180 health-related decisions per day, and with only four clinic visits per year, effective self-management is critical. The DiabHQ patient app, scheduled for implementation at Perth Children's Hospital in Q3 2025, has been co-designed with consumers to support families and patients in self-management. Functionality includes access to health data and pathology results, the ability to create a care circle, access to resources, appointment management and access to triage support. The proposed project will explore the impact of the DiabHQ app on a range of outcomes. Qualitative and quantitative methods will be used to assess app usage and the acceptability, usability and usefulness of the app, as well as measuring its impact on diabetes self-efficacy, health and well-being outcomes, and clinical processes. Findings will inform future app development and provide evidence for broader uptake at paediatric diabetes clinics across Australia and New Zealand.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☒ Masters ☐ MD ☐ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in health science, or related field initiative and dedication Strong written and verbal communication skills High level of organisation and time management skills Excellent ability to work independently and as part of a team Great interpersonal skills and willingness to collaborate with community members, healthcare professionals, and young people
Ethics Approval	☐ Obtained ☒ Not Obtained
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
For more information, please contact	Dr Rebecca Pedruzzi Rebecca.Pedruzzi@thekids.org.au

Understanding experiences of children and families in Move to Improve: a qualitative study

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, Move to Improve
Start Date	February 2027
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Claire Willis, The Kids Research Institute Australia
Other Supervisors	Mrs Emily Davey, Perth Children's Hospital Prof Elizabeth Davis, The Kids Research Institute Australia & Perth Children's Hospital
Project Outline	Chronic health conditions comprise a major proportion of childhood disease burden, with high co-occurrence between physical conditions and mental health disorders. Physical activity has established benefits for improving physical and psychosocial outcomes of children with chronic health conditions. Despite this evidence, and the recognised role of exercise as medicine, coordinated, tertiary-based physical activity intervention services for children with chronic disease are yet to form part of routine clinical care. To address this, a team of researchers, clinicians, families, and young people at Perth Children's Hospital have co-designed a physical activity program called Move to Improve (M2I). A pilot trial is underway, with over 100 children and families from 5 participating conditions (cancer, cerebral palsy, stable neurological conditions, post-burn injury, and type 1 diabetes) referred to date. Understanding the lived experience of children and families is essential in the evaluation of interventions, providing insight into the acceptability, relevance, and impact of clinical care. The proposed study aims to explore the experiences of children and primary caregivers following participation in M2I, to inform upcoming expansion of the intervention across a broader cohort of children at PCH.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☒ Masters ☐ MD ☐ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in exercise science/physiology, physiotherapy, dietetics, psychology, health science, or related degree High level of organisation and time management skills Excellent ability to work independently and as part of a team Strong written communication skills Well-developed interpersonal skills and willingness to work together with clinicians, young people, and families
Ethics Approval	☒ Obtained ☐ Not Obtained
Funding	☐ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
For more information, please contact	Dr Claire Willis Claire.willis@thekids.org.au

Impact and sustainability of implementing physical activity in routine clinical care: clinician perspectives

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health		
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, Move to Improve		
Start Date	February 2027		
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Claire Willis, The Kids Research Institute Australia		
Other Supervisors	Mrs Emily Davey, Perth Children's Hospital Prof Elizabeth Davis, The Kids Research Institute Australia & Perth Children's Hospital		
Project Outline	Move to Improve (M2I) is an 8-week physical activity program co-designed by and for children with chronic health conditions and their families at Perth Children's Hospital (PCH). M2I is delivered by a multidisciplinary team including a physiotherapist, exercise physiologist, dietitian, and clinical psychologist to support children improve active living behaviours and psychosocial wellbeing. It is currently being piloted with children with cancer, cerebral palsy, stable neurological conditions, burn injuries, and type 1 diabetes. A scale-up trial of Move to Improve is upcoming. This trial aims to generate evidence of integrating physical activity into routine clinical care across a larger, diverse clinical cohort. Effective implementation strategies for embedding M2I as an ongoing clinical service will also be determined. Knowledge and practice of clinicians delivering Move to Improve is integral to this, providing critical insight into how the intervention is delivered, adapted, and experienced in practice. The aim of this study is to explore the perspectives of clinicians delivering Move to Improve at PCH. A mixed methods approach will be employed to understand the impact of Move to Improve, and factors affecting implementation and sustainability. Findings from this study will help shape the delivery of a clinical service model at PCH.		
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☒ Masters ☐ MD ☐ PhD		
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in exercise science/physiology, physiotherapy, dietetics, psychology, health science, or related degree High level of organisation and time management skills Excellent ability to work independently and as part of a team Strong written communication skills Well-developed interpersonal skills and willingness to work together with clinicians, young people, and families		
Ethics Approval	☒ Obtained ☐ Not Obtained		
Funding	☐ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group		
For more information, please contact	Dr Claire Willis Claire.willis@thekids.org.au		

The impact of early morning exercise performance on acute post-prandial glucose time in range and 24h glycaemic control in youth with Type 1 Diabetes

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes
Start Date	February 2026
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Craig Taplin (The Kids, Perth Children's Hospital)
Other Supervisors	Professor Elizabeth Davis (Telethon Kid's Institute, Perth Children's Hospital) Dr Vinutha Shetty (Telethon Kid's Institute, Perth Children's Hospital) Associate Professor Timothy Fairchild (Murdoch University)
Project Outline	Although regular physical activity (PA) is a key recommendation for the management of Type 1 Diabetes (T1D), participation in exercise presents unique challenges for children living with T1D. These challenges result in them having significant barriers towards exercise-related diabetes management, with the most frequently reported barrier being fear of hypoglycaemia. Consequently, previous research has focused on the manipulation of exercise variables such as: i) exercise type; ii) intensity and; iii) duration, to provide the evidence needed to address the concerns relating to PA and T1D management. However, despite the availability of these evidence, PA levels in children remain lower than their non-T1D peers. As such, new contemporary methods of manipulating exercise variables are needed to help improve upon exercise prescription for children and adolescents living with T1D. The diurnal timing of exercise could be an important factor that has started to gain attention in recent times and may play a crucial role in T1D management during exercise performance. Hence, the overarching aim of the project is to explore the effect of a morning exercise session on acute glycaemic control measures when compared to a no-exercise control session in youth with T1D. This study will involve working with the team to recruit participants, supervise participants during in-clinic exercise sessions, and collect and analyse data.
Suitable For	☒ Honours ☒ Masters ☐ MD ☒ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Psychology, Health Science, Education, Health Promotion or related degree. Excellent communication skills
Ethics Approval	☐ Obtained ☒ Not Obtained
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group
For more information, please contact	Rebecca Pavlos rebecca.pavlos@thekids.org.au

Assessing physical activity levels and patterns of healthcare professionals and parents of children living with Type 1 Diabetes

Research Theme	☒ Chronic Diseases ☐ First Nations Health & Equity ☐ Infectious Diseases ☐ Precision Health ☐ Strong Beginnings ☐ Wellbeing & Mental Health			
Research Program	Diabetes and Obesity Research, The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre			
Start Date	February 2026			
Chief Supervisor/s	Dr Craig Taplin (The Kids, Perth Children's Hospital)			
Other Supervisors	Professor Elizabeth Davis (Telethon Kid's Institute, Perth Children's Hospital) Dr Vinutha Shetty (Telethon Kid's Institute, Perth Children's Hospital) Associate Professor Timothy Fairchild (Murdoch University)			
Project Outline	Healthcare professionals (HCPs) play an important role in promoting a physically active lifestyle by prescribing regular physical activity (PA) to children and adolescents living with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D), to improve their health and intervene in their T1D management. In this regard, HCPs possess the knowledge that puts them in a key position to advise on PA and T1D. Previous research has shown that HCPs lifestyle habits can potentially influence the attitudes and counselling of their patients. Additionally, previous research indicate that parents strongly determine the social and physical environment of their children and this influence may also provide an unexplored, but potentially important link between parents' PA levels and that of their children. As such, the overarching aim of the project is to assess both the HCPs' and parents' physical activity levels as measured by triaxial accelerometry (Actigraph GT3x). In addition, the project will examine the associations between HCPs/parental PA with that of their patient/child living with T1D.			
Suitable For	☒ Honours	☒ Masters	☐ MD	☒ PhD
Essential Skills & Qualifications	Undergraduate degree in Psychology, Health Science, Education, Health Promotion or related degree. Excellent communication skills			
Ethics Approval	☐ Obtained		☒ Not Obtained	
Funding	☒ Top-up scholarship offered by project group ☐ Full scholarship offered by project group			
For more information, please contact	Rebecca Pavlos rebecca.pavlos@thekids.org.au			