



**2021/22**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

**Arthritis**  
AUSTRALIA

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# 1. A message from our Chair



Kaylene Hubbard  
Arthritis Australia Chair

It has been a year of progress for Arthritis Australia, but also a year of consolidation and delivery. In my first year as Chair of the Board we have sought to focus on our objectives while at the same time looked forward to new horizons.

Together with our partners in the States and Territories and other national bodies, as well as our sponsors and supporters, we have pursued our vision of Freedom from Arthritis. The results and benefits of our activities this year are set out in detail in this report. However, there are a few key achievements that should be highlighted.

This year we launched MyPsA, a dedicated website for psoriatic arthritis and commenced work on MyAS for axial spondyloarthritis to add to our suite of online resources which already includes MyJointPain, MyBackPain MyRA. We are very pleased with the ongoing engagement with these websites by Australians with arthritis.

We continued, with the support and partnership of the State and Territory Affiliated arthritis organisations, universities and medical and health professionals, to roll out the National Arthritis Action Plan. These projects are funded by the the Australian Government and are focused on initiatives to help people with arthritis get the information, care and support they need to live well with arthritis.

Throughout the year we have worked with Research Australia to develop a national consumer driven strategy for arthritis research. We are excited at the opportunity this presents and look forward to launching the report later in the year and working with stakeholders to address its recommendations.

Our research program again coordinated the delivery of grants to many dedicated researchers, and we also awarded the first of two Paediatric Rheumatology Scholarships.

We have continued to engage with the highest levels of government, through our strong Federal Election Platform and ongoing engagement with the new government and elected members. I would like to particularly note the contribution to the Parliamentary Inquiry on Childhood Rheumatic Illnesses.

These and other achievements of the past year are testament to the commitment and hard work of the staff, members of the Board, our Committee members, our Consumer and Scientific Advisory Panels and other volunteers who participate in steering and project committees, focus groups, testing and reviews, surveys, and our other activities. I would like to acknowledge the strong support we receive from our State and Territory Affiliated arthritis organisations, other national body partners, including the Accessible Design Alliance, the Australian Rheumatology Association, and our generous sponsors and supporters.

Over the coming year our priorities will be:

- Continuing delivery on the National Arthritis Action plan;
- Considering the final report and recommendations from Research Australia and developing our response and implementation plan; and
- Working with our partners to continue to advocate for the needs of people with arthritis.

*Kaylene Hubbard*

## 2. A message from our CEO



Jonathan Smithers  
Arthritis Australia CEO

I am delighted to report on a year of progress and positive change. My first contribution towards our annual report was written only a few months after my appointment. Now that my feet are well and truly under the table, I have a much better perspective of the journey we are on in delivering the strategic objectives set by the Board and projects, particularly those facilitated by the Federal Government under the National Strategic Action Plan.

A few months into the financial year our long-standing colleague Franca Marine retired from the organisation. Franca has given extraordinary and dedicated service to Arthritis Australia and to consumers throughout her tenure as Manager of National Policy and Government Relations. We owe Franca a great debt for her contribution and are delighted to build on her legacy.

The National Strategic Action Plan grants continued to dominate the landscape of our activities, to coordinate proper and meaningful dispersal of the funds with a wide variety of delivery partners. We are already seeing the fruits of these labours as some of the

projects within the grants are completed, notably the delivery of our new website for psoriatic arthritis, MyPSA. This was also co-funded by educational support grants from commercial partner donors to whom we are very grateful. A more detailed report on all the National Strategic Action Plan Grants appear on page 10.

We have now commenced work on the next dedicated website for axial spondyloarthritis, MyAS, utilising the same technology and having learnt from our previous experiences. We are looking forward very much to adding this suite of digital information resources and complementing our existing offering.

Our advocacy, early in the year, was somewhat frustrated by the pandemic and is now led by our new colleague, Louise Hardy, who joined us from the Royal Australasian College of Physicians into the position vacated by Franca. We have however made up for lost time with significant parliamentary engagement on many fronts including significant contribution to the Parliamentary Inquiry on Childhood Rheumatic Illnesses and then a very strong Federal Election Platform and campaign.

With serious shortages of tocilizumab (Actemra®) and abatacept (Orencia®) in 2021 and early 2022, Arthritis Australia worked closely with the Health Minister, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), the Australian Rheumatology Association and pharmaceutical companies to manage supply and ensure consumers had access to the right information and support during an incredibly challenging time. This included webinars where consumers could ask their questions directly to the TGA

and pharmaceutical companies involved. Fortunately, both shortages have now eased. A comprehensive report appears on page 9.

The Accessible Design Division, (page 12) is a very exciting and evolving part of our delivery and our strategy for serving consumers. We continue to lead a group of 11 consumer charities in coordinated advocacy to improve design through the Accessible Product Design Alliance.

We have worked closely with Research Australia throughout the year, developing a national consumer driven strategy for arthritis research to deliver on our own strategic plan. This included detailed engagement with a wide range of consumers and the research community across Australia. We are looking forward very much to the final report and to addressing the recommendations, which will flow from it.

Our research program (detailed report page 15) is an area of our work, of which we are very proud. The coordination of grants from our generous donors, support for our expert peer review process and then administration of numerous grants over multiple years as well as the communication of research outcomes, is a considerable undertaking but one which we know consumers both want and need in furtherance of our mission.

One of our strategic pillars relates to organisational sustainability which has continued to be a focus this year. The upgraded finance function is working well and truly embedded under the leadership of our Finance Manager, Fahima Fouzdeen. We have also continued work

on updating and reviewing numerous policies and ensuring compliance with principles of good governance, assisted by our Company Secretary, John Butt.

The work which I have detailed, and much else besides, is undertaken and facilitated by my colleagues (page 27). I am proud to have the opportunity of leading such a dedicated team who have worked tirelessly through the lockdowns and uncertainties during the year without any interruption in service.

It is also a great pleasure to work collaboratively with a wide-ranging of stakeholders, first and foremost our Affiliate arthritis organisations in the States and Territories and the Australian Rheumatology Association together with so many other industry partners.

In the next year, we are looking forward to continuing our success in providing information resources, advocacy and research for and on behalf of consumers and towards our mission of Freedom from Arthritis.

*Jonathan Smithers*

**“I wish to thank Arthritis Australia for your collaboration with my Department during this highly challenging global tocilizumab (Actemra®) shortage”**



**- Minister Hunt  
Former Health Minister**

## 3. About Us

### Providing information and support to people living with arthritis.

Arthritis Australia is Australia's leading national arthritis charity. We work in collaboration with Affiliated arthritis organisations in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia to deliver information and support to people living with more than 100 types of arthritis.

Our vision is to achieve freedom from arthritis for the more than four million Australians of all ages who currently live with arthritis and for the many more who will develop these conditions in the future.

To achieve our vision, our key strategies are to provide information and support to people affected by arthritis, to fund research into better care and potential cures, and to advocate for policy and programs to ensure people with arthritis get the treatment, care and support they need.

We also work in partnership with peak health organisations, the Federal Government and national corporations to support collective goals and to seek funding to sustain our organisational purpose and activity.



#### Consumer support

We provide comprehensive information resources to help people live well with arthritis and, through Affiliated state and territory arthritis organisations, deliver a comprehensive range of information, education and support services.



#### Research

We are the leading non-government funders of arthritis research in Australia and work in partnership with the university and medical sector to support and advocate for increased funding for research into arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions.



#### Advocacy

We advocate to the government and industry for policies, programs and funding for initiatives to ensure everyone facing the challenge of arthritis gets the care and support they need to live their best possible life.



#### Sustainability

To help fund and support our activities to achieve our organisational vision, we develop partnerships with national organisations with aligned values.



#### National partnerships

We work collaboratively with Affiliated arthritis organisations and other peak health organisations to develop and deliver national programs and to support our common goals of improving the health and wellbeing of people living with arthritis.

## 4. Highlights

VALUE OF PROJECTS



**\$404,000**

THAT SUPPORT AFFILIATES

**\$716,500**



in  
funding  
for  
research  
and  
training

**501,917**

Visitors to our  
six different  
websites



**9,598**

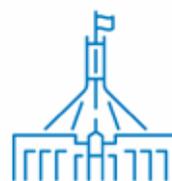
calls to the  
Arthritis Infoline  
and head office



**28,065**

social media  
followers

AUDIENCE REACH OF



**3.5 million**

DURING THE PARLIAMENTARY  
INQUIRY ON CHILDHOOD  
RHEUMATIC ILLNESSES

## 5. Consumer support

### Helping people live well with arthritis through information and support.

Providing information and support is an important part of improving the lives of people living with arthritis, and their carers and family. We continue to work with consumers and healthcare providers to deliver tailored support, specific to individual needs.

This year we have launched one new website and continued to improve the information available across our existing resources.



#### MyPsA - supporting people with psoriatic arthritis

In August 2021 Arthritis Australia launched MyPsA., a website to support people living with psoriatic arthritis. The website provides information on a comprehensive range of topics including treatment options, self-management tips, support services, and how to manage pain, mental health, and fatigue. People who register to the website can build tailored profiles and receive customised information relevant to their experience with psoriatic arthritis.

The site has garnered over 12,000 visitors in the past year.



#### MyAS – supporting people with axial spondyloarthritis

Following the success of MyRA and MyPsA, work is well underway on a website for people living with axial spondyloarthritis, called MyAS.

Axial spondyloarthritis (axSpA) refers to inflammatory arthritis that affects the spine. The two main types of axSpA are ankylosing spondylitis (AS) and non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis (nr-axSpA). AS and nr-axSpA affect around 150, 000 Australians. Receiving a diagnosis can take up to 10 years, with women often waiting longer to receive a diagnosis than men.

Building on the same architecture of its sibling websites MyPsA and MyRA, MyAS will customise information to support people living with AS and nr-axSpA to help manage their condition. People who register to the website can also access surveys to help measure the effect of their arthritis overtime.

“Looks great. I wish there was something like this 20+ years ago, to help me navigate my AS.”



– MyAS consumer comment

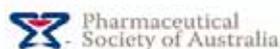
## Targeted Therapies Alliance

Arthritis Australia continued to work in partnership with a consortium of other national health organisations representing specialists, pharmacists, consumers, and research experts, to deliver a three-year Government funded program to optimise the quality use of biologic medicines. These medicines, known as biological disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs, or 'bDMARDs', have made a significant improvement in the management of inflammatory conditions like rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and ankylosing spondylitis. The Alliance has developed a range of evidence-based educational resources, tools, and interventions to support consumers, specialist prescribers, pharmacists, nurses and other bodies to achieve the best possible health and economic outcomes from the use of these medicines.

A range of resources for people with rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and ankylosing spondylitis, as well as other conditions is now available, including translations: <https://www.nps.org.au/bdmards>

### + TARGETED THERAPIES ALLIANCE

Helping consumers and health professionals make safe and wise therapeutic decisions about biological disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (bDMARDs) and other specialised medicines. Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health through the Value in Prescribing bDMARDs Program Grant.



The consortium also works closely with the key dermatology and gastroenterology organisations.

The Australasian College of Dermatologists, Psoriasis Australia, Gastroenterological Society of Australia and Crohn's & Colitis Australia.



## Arthritis Australia website

The Arthritis Australia website continues to play a crucial role in providing important information to consumers and health professionals.

More than 449,500 unique users visited the website in the 2021/22 financial year.

“An excellent resource can’t wait to use for my own needs and share with others in the AS community”

– MyAS consumer comment



## Arthritis Australia social media



Our Facebook community is 24,000 followers strong across the nation and remains an important source of real-time consumer insight and information sharing.



Our Instagram page is our best performing social platform with a 114% increase in reach compared to 2020-21.



Our Twitter performance has remained stable, providing real time content and updates for our advocacy efforts, focusing on our parliamentary engagement.



**501,917 visitors** to our six websites   
**9,598 calls** to the Arthritis Infoline and head office   
**28,065 social media followers** across all platforms

# 6. Advocacy

## Speaking up for arthritis

Arthritis Australia has continued our strong national advocacy for better support for consumers and investment in research, as well as continuing to deliver on the implementation of the National Strategic Action Plan for Arthritis, with our Commonwealth grants.

### Parliamentary inquiry on childhood rheumatic illnesses

On 8 March Arthritis Australia appeared at the inquiry of the Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport into childhood rheumatic diseases to advocate for better services for children and families living with arthritis, following our consumer survey and submission. Working with a media agency to raise public awareness of the issue and advocate for our recommendations, we achieved cumulative audience reach of 3.5 million.

The interim report of the inquiry was released on 31 March, with a range of recommendations including for Commonwealth funding for paediatric rheumatology training positions and clinics to bring access to treatment in Australia up to international standards. While awaiting the Government's response, Arthritis Australia has continued to advocate for the recommendations.

### Election campaign and parliamentary engagement

Our Federal Election Platform and advocacy campaign #1in7witharthritis raised awareness of the prevalence of arthritis and key issues with politicians, and garnered strong engagement from consumers. We sent a copy of our election platform and campaign flag to every federal MP and senator – a number of MPs posted their flag photos to social



media. Hundreds of consumers used our campaign website to email their local MP to tell them about the impact of arthritis in the community and advocate for more support. We also received a response to our election platform from the Coalition, Labor and the Greens.

Since the election, we have engaged strongly with the new parliament, strengthening our existing relationships with key MPs and senators, and meeting new parliamentarians, particularly those with a health background. We have also continued to engage with the Department of Health, industry and non-government organisations, and have made submissions on key consultations including the National Medicines Policy review.



*Pictured left to right: Senator Carol Brown (Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Arthritis), Andrew Wilkie MP and Senator Catryna Bilyk*

## Action Plan Grants

Three grants were awarded to Arthritis Australia by the Department of Health in 2020 under the Chronic Conditions Prevention and Management funding scheme, to implement the National Strategic Action Plan for Arthritis. These grants are a four year investment by the Federal Government totalling \$4 million. Each grant has their own objectives and are being delivered by different collaborative groups.



## Action Plan Grants

1. Consumer Awareness and Education Grant
2. Information, Education and Support Grant
3. Health Professional Education and Training Grant

### Arthritis - Consumer Awareness and Education Grant

This grant is being conducted via the States and Territories Affiliate arthritis organisations together with Arthritis Australia. It focuses on delivering four core project streams to benefit and empower the consumer, these are:

- i. To develop culturally appropriate arthritis information and education resources that address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- ii. To develop a website to provide tailored information, tools and support for people with psoriatic arthritis, called MyPsA.
- iii. To develop new information resources to promote exercise and support people with: moderate to severe arthritis-related pain, fibromyalgia, and for inactive people with arthritis.
- iv. To develop and disseminate consumer-focussed guides for rheumatoid arthritis and juvenile arthritis, so they know what care they should receive.

My PSA was successfully completed and launched, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources progressing well, and other projects kicking off in FY22-23.

### Arthritis - Information, Education and Support Grant

This grant covers two consumer-centric enhancement projects towards the Arthritis Infoline and kids camps for juvenile idiopathic arthritis children.

Objectives:

- i. To enhance the National Arthritis Infoline - a support program to assist people with arthritis to proactively manage their condition.

- ii. To expand the reach and coverage of the JIA kids camp programs.

Successful roll-out of the National Arthritis Infoline Framework in 2021 led to a promotional campaign in 2022. The campaign included several media elements delivered via social media, radio, internet advertising and other forms of local promotion. The national radio advertising campaign was broadcast on Nine Radio networks as well as separate local radio campaigns.



The delivery of the planned face-to-face camps to children with JIA were postponed in line with public health safety precautions related to COVID-19. A re-design of the program will see the ACT and NSW affiliate arthritis organisations run kids camps with novel approaches to encourage and facilitate attendance from new and remote participants.

### Arthritis – Health Professional Education and Training Grant

The objectives of this grant are to deliver two core projects:

- i. To develop e-Learning education modules for the management of osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, accessed digitally by a range of health professionals that provide clinical care for arthritis consumers. This project is being delivered by a consortium of seven partners comprising of: University of Sydney, University of Melbourne, Arthritis and Osteoporosis Western Australia, Curtin University, Monash University, Australian Rheumatology Association, and Arthritis Australia.

- ii. To develop and make publicly available an Australian Living Guideline for the Management of Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA). This project is seeking to present the best available, current scientific evidence and offer clinical recommendations to assist decision making in the management of JIA. It is being produced by a consortium comprising of the Australia and New Zealand Musculoskeletal Clinical Trials Network, the Australian Rheumatology Association, and Cochrane Musculoskeletal.

This year, the intellectual content of the osteoarthritis e-Learning program was leveraged to publish a textbook for healthcare professionals and prelicensure clinicians. This will offer two forms of evidence-based resources on osteoarthritis management, a digital and a tactile one. There are currently no other textbook/manuals for osteoarthritis management written for healthcare professionals, making this the first training manual that will be dedicated for healthcare professionals on evidence-based osteoarthritis management based on core capabilities.

The JIA living guideline now comprises three recommendations which relate to the treatment of uveitis, the use of methotrexate in the management of JIA, and the use of glucocorticoids in the management of JIA. The guideline is undertaking the National Health and Medical Research Council approval program.

*"Was blown away with the info I was given on the phone and in the mail. Thank you very much!"*

- Infoline user

# 7. Accessible Design Division

Advocating to government and industry to improve product and packaging accessibility.

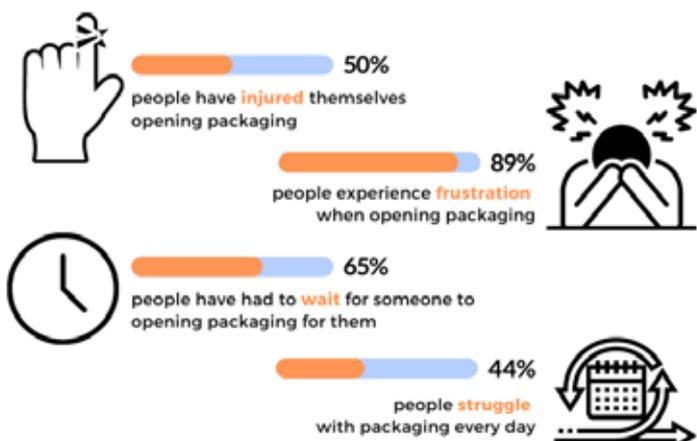
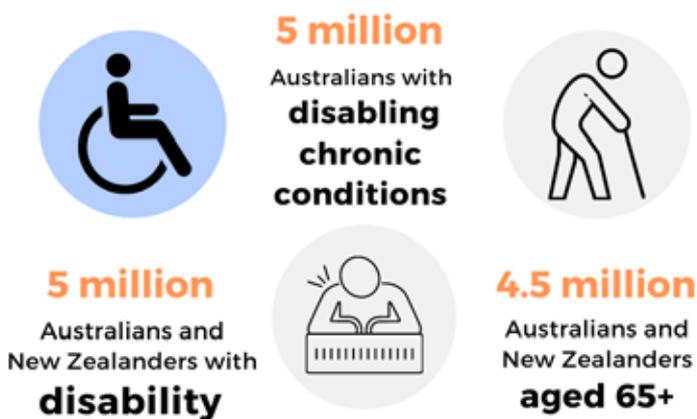


## Accessible Product Design Alliance – Position Statement Launch

Arthritis Australia leads the Accessible Product Design Alliance which is a group of 11 not-for-profit health consumer organisations. The group released a joint position statement to highlight the struggle with inaccessible products and packaging experienced by their 5 million consumers living with chronic conditions and disability across Australia and New Zealand.

The position statement expressed that products and packaging should be designed to be accessible for all consumers, regardless of their level of ability. Inaccessible products and packaging can cause day to day frustration for people without disability, but for those who have a chronic condition or a disability these products and packaging can become impossible. Inaccessible products and packaging can cause unnecessary physical pain, discomfort, stress and frustration, and can undermine a person's health, independence and self-esteem. With the population ageing, and the increasing prevalence of people with chronic conditions and disability, accessible products and packaging should be at the forefront of design.

The Accessible Product Design Alliance has been established to advocate to government and industry to improve access to products and packaging that are easy to use for consumers with physical and other impairments. The objectives of the Alliance are to support the development of more inclusive product and packaging design through awareness raising, research, and the adoption by government and industry of systemic changes to policy and standards that incorporate accessible design principles. The launch received substantial media coverage, particularly on the ABC with stories by both Nas Campanella and Indira Naidoo.



## 'That's a Wrap' the best and worst packaging of 2021

Our Accessible Design Division's annual social media campaign is designed to gauge the best and worst packaging arthritis consumers interact with. It provides critical insights into the experiences of our arthritis community and helps the Division target problematic packaging formats.



The 2021 campaign was our most successful yet. It received a record breaking number of nominations and votes for both the best and worst categories. We also achieved some great traction with a number of companies who had products nominated in the worst category, reflecting the importance of providing this platform for the consumer's experience.

### Worst Packaging of 2021

Although we had some familiar foes we also had some new culprits, the worst offenders of 2021 were:

**5 – Zip lock bags** – this was a debut entry in our list, with feedback indicating that they have become more challenging in recent years, especially for products like wraps and frozen fruit. Factors impairing the users experience include the ability to grip the product and the strength required to open the seal, as well as the ease to which they would reseal.

**4 – Squeeze-and-turn child resistant bottles** – packaging that requires simultaneous actions are often challenging for the arthritis community, so products like toilet cleaners and mouth wash being described as completely impossible isn't a surprise. The danger these packaging poses is that the lids will not be reattached due to the pain they cause, which then renders the child resistant features redundant. Manufactures need to undertake research and user testing to find a balance to make these type of closures child-resistant and meet the needs of those with reduced dexterity and hand strength.

**3 – Plastic bottles** – Sadly it sounds like some of our community are left to go thirsty when it comes to water bottles and soft drink bottles. A trend of smaller and harder to grip caps was identified by voters. Our community also shared stories of needing to ask strangers in public places or grandkids at home to access their drinks. Others used tools to try and break the initial seal, with one person hurting both their front teeth and cutting themselves with a knife during their battles, highlighting the danger tools can pose.

**2 – Arthritis medication packaging** – disappointingly there are several arthritis medications that continue to be nominated, with our community describing them as "impossible to open", "seems like a cruel joke" and "there must be a better way". Past research has shown that hard to open packaging can mean that patients are unable to take their medication in a timely manner, which is extremely concerning. We also hear alarming stories of loved ones using tools like knives to open packaging, sometimes destroying the cap to get it open. Others described the pain and anxiety they felt when confronted by the task of opening certain medicine packaging.

**1 – Jars** – both plastic jars and glass jars with metal lids are challenging for consumers with arthritis to open, with many communicating that the experience was painful and required strength beyond their capabilities. This resulted in users having to wait for assistance from loved ones, employ creative opening methods to break the seal or resort to using tools. Interestingly a previous winner of the best packaging

**"My hands don't have enough strength or dexterity and it's too painful. I have to ask someone else to do it, every single time!"**

- 'That's a Wrap' consumer comment

(and nominee again this year in the best category) was the orbit closure on jars, found on products like Ocean Spray cranberry sauce. We encourage companies to integrate design innovations like this into their packaging to prevent unnecessary pain for users as well as the need to resort to creative opening methods or tools like knives.

### Best Packaging of 2021

We had a great variety of nominations this year, but the WINNER was the small sized Morning Fresh dishwashing liquid. The smaller size bottle was described as being easier to hold, while the pop top nozzle allowed for easy open and closure when washing dishes.



### Working with industry - PIDA Accessible Packaging Design Special Award 2022

The Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design Awards (PIDA) is designed to recognise companies and individuals who are making a significant difference in the packaging industry in both Australia and New Zealand. Our Accessible Design Division is proud to support the PIDA Accessible & Inclusive Packaging Design Special Award. Recognition of accessibility through an industry award is another way the Division educates and raises awareness of the issue.

The winners for 2022 were:

**Bronze** – Nestlé Purina Australia for its packaging of Nestlé Purina Total Care (Pet Accessories).

**Silver** – Caps & Closures for its EzyGrip Cap.

**Gold** – Glaxosmithkline (GSK) for its new integrated closure for Voltaren Osteo Gel 12 Hourly.



The Voltaren Osteo Gel 12 Hourly packaging's tamper evidence and cap can be opened in one simple action and can use larger motor movements like the palm of your hand or edge of a desk to complete the action. Combined with a low opening force, arthritis consumers found it easy and intuitive to use during testing.

The built-in tamper evidence removes the need for internal foil seals which is common in this packaging format and generally requires a high level of fine motor movements.

It's fantastic to see these innovative accessible designs in the marketplace.





Research is a key pillar of our important work.

## 8. Research

**Research is a vital part of Arthritis Australia’s vision of freedom from arthritis. We invest in research to further the knowledge, the skills of healthcare providers and available treatments for people living with arthritis.**

We distributed \$716,500 in research and training funding for the year 2021 – 22. The majority was expended through the National Research Program (details on page 17). In addition, we contributed to the funding of the Florence and Cope Chair of Rheumatology at the University of Sydney, currently held by Prof David Hunter.

### **National Strategy on Arthritis Research – Research Australia**

We commissioned Research Australia to develop a consumer driven national strategy for arthritis research. This included a detailed review of Australia’s arthritis research landscape including the funding allocations historically, and trends in meeting contemporary population needs and expectations. Priority areas were identified through a research gap analysis, alignment to the National Strategic Action Plan for Arthritis and input from over 100 consumers living with arthritis (osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and juvenile idiopathic arthritis).

The findings and recommendations from this review will be launched at Parliament House, Canberra in November 2022, aiming to galvanise a strategic and collaborative approach to research that is meaningful to people living with arthritis.

### **Paediatric Rheumatology Scholarship**

We funded one Paediatric Rheumatology Scholarship to the value of \$120,000.



## National Research Program 2021-22

Our National Research Program is conducted annually. Assoc Prof Helen Benham was the Chair of our Research Grants Assessment Committee in 2021 for the awards distributed in 2022. In 2021-22 we awarded 2 fellowships, 1 scholarship, 11 project grants and 4 grants-in-aid.

Recipients of the research funding and their research is outlined below. To read a summary of each recipients work visit [www.arthritisaustralia.com.au/programs-research/](http://www.arthritisaustralia.com.au/programs-research/)

## FELLOWSHIPS

### Ken Muirden Overseas Training Fellowship

#### Dr Aravinthan Loganathan

ACT Health- Rheumatology NSW /ACT Training program, Canberra Hospital  
Research Project: \$100,000

#### *Fellowship in Inflammatory Myositis, Interstitial Lung Disease and Data Science*

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA) (Ken Muirden Estate)

### Dr Laura Ross

St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne  
Fellowship: \$50,000.00

#### *Breathlessness in systemic sclerosis*

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### Mr Brian Pulling

University of South Australia  
Scholarship: \$25,000.00

#### *Evaluating and targeting unhelpful beliefs about osteoarthritis and activity in those with painful osteoarthritis*

From funds donated by: Arthritis Foundation of Australia

## PROJECT GRANTS

### Dr Zhixiu Li

Queensland University of Technology  
Project Grant: \$30,000.00

#### *Identification of biomarkers in ankylosing spondylitis*

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

### Dr Ranjeny Thomas

The University of Queensland  
Project Grant: \$30,000.00

#### *Linking the presence of live ileal-derived bacteria in the joint as a triggering factor for the development of spondyloarthropathy*

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

### Dr Katherine Martin

Walter Eliza Institute of Medical Research (WEHI)  
Project Grant: \$15,000.00

#### *Targeting a novel pathogenic neutrophil subset in SLE*

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

### Prof Bill Vicenzino

The University of Queensland  
Project Grant: \$30,000.00

#### *A combined program of education and exercise versus general advice for ankle osteoarthritis: A feasibility randomised controlled trial*

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

### Assoc Prof Jeanette Thom

University of NSW  
Project Grant: \$15,000.00

#### *A combined program of education and exercise versus general advice for ankle osteoarthritis: A feasibility randomised controlled trial*

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

### Prof Suzanna Proudman

Central Adelaide Health Network Inc (Royal Adelaide Hospital) and University of Adelaide  
Project Grant: \$15,000.00

#### *Defining independence in the context of remission from the patient perspective: A qualitative study*

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

“Thank you for considering me for this opportunity – it would be a privilege to contribute to the good work done by Arthritis Australia.”

- National Research Program recipient



**Dr Claire Owen**

Austin Health- VIC

Project Grant: \$25,000.00

***Prospective Validation of 18F-FDG Whole Body PET/CT as a Diagnostic Test for Polymyalgia Rheumatica***

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

**Assoc Prof Mike Doran**

Queensland University of Technology

Project Grant: \$25,000.00

***Chondrocytes from CRISPR-edited BMSC***

From funds donated by: Arthritis Foundation of Australia

**Dr Feng Pan**

University of Tasmania

Project Grant: \$15,000.00

***Unravelling Metabolic Mechanisms in knee Osteoarthritis Pain***

From funds donated by: Arthritis Foundation of Australia & Private Donor

**Dr Julia Kuliwaba**

The University of Adelaide

Project Grant: \$30,000.00

***Cellular senescence as a therapeutic target for knee osteoarthritis***

From funds donated by: Arthritis South Australia & Arthritis Foundation of Australia

**Dr Kai Chen**

University of Western Australia

Project Grant: \$30,000.00

***Bone marrow adipose tissue in the osteoporotic bone***

From funds donated by: Arthritis South Australia & Arthritis Foundation of Australia

**GRANTS-IN-AID****Dr Suellen Lyne**

University of Adelaide

Grant-in-Aid: \$10,000.00

***The Healthcare Burden of Giant Cell Arteritis in South Australia- Rheumatology Department***

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

**Dr Madeleine Bryant**

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital SA

Grant-in-Aid: \$15,000.00

***Validation and integration of Patient Reported Experience Measures in outpatient rheumatology care in Australia***

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

**Dr Joshua Zadro**

The University of Sydney

Grant-in-Aid: \$15,000.00

***Stratified care integrated with eHealth for low back pain***

From funds donated by: Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA)

**Dr Andrea Bruder**

La Trobe University

Grant-in-Aid: \$15,000.00

***Is running bad for my knee? A study using novel MRI techniques to investigate knee health in young runners at high-risk of knee osteoarthritis.***

From funds donated by: Arthritis NSW & Arthritis Foundation of Australia

“Thank you once again to Arthritis Australia for the ongoing research support.”



- Grant recipient comment

# 9. Board & Governance

## Board Members

Ms Kristine Riethmiller  
- Chair until November 2021

Ms Kaylene Hubbard  
- Chair from November 2021  
- Treasurer until November 2021

Mr Paul Ritchie  
- Treasurer from November 2021

Prof Susanna Proudman  
- Deputy Chair & Medical Director

Ms Charlotte Bachali  
- Consumer Director

Ms Margaret Stone  
- Independent Director

Dr Ian Dover  
- Independent Director from  
November 2021

## Company Secretary

Mr John Butt

## Chief Executive Officer

Mr Jonathan Smithers

## Patron

His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AS DSC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

## Emeritus Directors

Ms Ita Buttrose AC OBE  
Dr Mona Marabani MBBS  
Prof Patrick McNeil

## Council of Advice Members

Mr Nigel Corne - Chair (NSW)  
Ms Kate Templeman (QLD)  
Ms Sylvia Caratti (WA)  
Mr David Waterford (SA)  
Ms Hilary Fowler (NT)  
Ms Frankie Forsyth (TAS)

## Consumer Advisory Panel

Ms Charlotte Bachali - Chair  
Ms Jill Berensen  
Ms Cecilia Donohoe  
Mr Ben Horgan  
Ms Ruth Lee  
Ms Sharon Lee  
Ms Kerry Mace  
Mr Anthony Marshall  
Ms Gayle McNaught  
Ms Fiona Naughtin  
Ms Alison Park  
Dr Christine Walker  
Mr Hugh Watson  
Ms Shirani Wright

## Scientific Advisory Panel

Prof Susanna Proudman - Chair  
Prof Kim Bennell  
Ms Linda Bradbury  
Prof Andrew Briggs  
Dr Fiona Goldblatt  
Prof Ian Harris  
Prof David Hunter  
Mr David Menzies  
Prof Mark Morgan  
Prof Lorimer Moseley  
A/Prof Jane Munro  
Prof Michael Nicholas  
Prof Debra Rowett  
Prof Deborah Turner  
Dr Emily Webb

## Grants Assessment Committee

Dr Helen Benham - Chair  
Prof Graeme Jones  
Prof Susanna Proudman  
Dr Tania Crotti  
Assoc Prof Jenny Walker  
Prof Rana Hinman  
Dr Lauren Host  
Dr Helen Keen  
Prof Chris Little  
Assoc Prof Mandana Nikpour  
Ms Charlotte Bachali  
Ms Michelle Graham

# 10. Financial overview



## Treasurer's Report

Paul Ritchie  
Arthritis Australia Treasurer

I am pleased to present the audited financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2022. This financial year, alike many businesses and members of the community, brought substantial challenges. Despite this, Arthritis Australia has reported a surplus of \$217,826 as compared to a surplus of \$7,186 in the previous year.

This year's result is mainly due to higher dividend receipts from our investment portfolio and general donations. Costs remained steady and in some cases lower, which offset some increases to staffing costs from historic salary adjustments.

The total revenue for the year was \$3,251,899. The organisation saw a net reduction in equity of \$437,003, almost entirely the result of the revaluation of the investment portfolio.

### RESTRICTED FUNDS

Restricted funds consist of specific-purpose bequests and donations and funds from National Strategic Action Plan grants and other federally funded projects.

Restricted Funds reported a net surplus of \$190,637. This is mainly due to higher dividend receipts than previous years.

The total restricted funds under administration have experienced a net reduction of \$419,390 due to the revaluation of the investment portfolio.

### UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Unrestricted funds support our operational costs and consist of public donations and bequests. Additional funding is from Accessible Design (the accessible packaging advisory division) and fees from trademark licences. Federal government grant funding includes an element of contribution towards operational costs. This year has seen an increase in donations and bequests as compared to previous years.

Unrestricted Funds produced a modest surplus of \$27,189.

There has been a net reduction in the total unrestricted funds under administration of \$17,613.

### INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE

Total investment at the end of the financial year was \$7,036,363 as compared to \$6,345,472 in 2021. During the 2022 financial year, all corners of investment markets were affected by persistently high inflation and the corresponding efforts and intention of central banks in rising interest rates.

Continued volatility is foreshadowed in the short to medium term, and the velocity and quantum of rate rises will be critical to the investment markets outlook. The portfolio is positioned with a diverse range of return drivers and exposures aimed at reducing impact of rising interest rates and inflation, including private equity, private debt and real assets.

### CASH POSITION/LIQUIDITY

The Cash Position as at 30 June 2022 was \$2,272,565, a decrease of \$1,923,563 from last financial year end. This is mainly due to the distribution of National Strategic Action Plan payments, Research obligations and other contracting parties, together with the purchase of investments.

### BALANCE SHEET

Accumulated equity at the end of the financial year reduced by \$437,003 to \$6,390,500. This is almost entirely as a result of the revaluation of the investment portfolio.

There were no major variances recorded in the movement of the other Balance Sheet items.

### OUTLOOK

The ongoing impacts of the pandemic continued to be felt into this financial year, combined with geopolitical shocks, inflationary pressures and general economic uncertainty. Despite these challenges, I am very proud of the balanced and prudent response to manage the financial health of the organisation together with the service requirements, delivering information, programs and advocacy for Australians affected by arthritis. I would like to thank the CEO, staff, volunteers and fellow Directors for all their hard work.

Though the financial result for the year was satisfactory, we are aware of the potential disruption in the global economy and impact on the Australian government fiscal position and challenges in the foreseeable future to the containment and competition for funding from providers, in particular the newly elected Federal Labor Government. To that end, the Executive Management and the Board are continuously reviewing the sustainability of the operation and to focus and broaden revenue streams.

In consideration of the exposure of the organisation to the market as a result of the significant investment portfolio, the Board is regularly reviewing strategies in conjunction with our investment fund manager to manage volatility in the current environment.

# Financial position

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION As at 30 June 2022

	Note	2022	2021
		\$	\$
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	4	2,272,565	4,196,128
Receivables	5	230,741	260,729
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>2,503,306</b>	<b>4,456,857</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Financial Assets	6	7,036,363	6,345,472
Property, Plant & Equipment	7	28,730	27,548
Right of Use Asset	8	22,519	112,603
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>7,087,612</b>	<b>6,485,623</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>9,590,918</b>	<b>10,942,480</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Payables	9	3,117,798	3,921,935
Provision for employee benefits	10	46,644	52,291
Lease Liability	10	23,528	91,234
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>3,187,970</b>	<b>4,065,460</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>			
Provision for Employee Benefits	10	12,448	25,988
Lease Liability	10	-	23,528
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>		<b>12,448</b>	<b>49,516</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>3,200,418</b>	<b>4,114,976</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>6,390,500</b>	<b>6,827,504</b>
<b>Accumulated Funds</b>			
Contractually restricted funds		5,909,225	6,328,612
Unrestricted funds		481,275	498,892
		<b>6,390,500</b>	<b>6,827,504</b>

# Profit & Loss

## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME for the year ended 30 June 2022

INCOME	Note	2022	2021
		\$	\$
<b>Donations/fundraising</b>			
General		2,696,545	3,372,583
Affiliates	11	137,750	127,750
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,834,295</b>	<b>3,500,333</b>
<b>Membership Fees</b>		880	800
<b>Investments</b>			
Interest		334	10,480
Dividends		416,195	238,569
<b>Total</b>		<b>416,529</b>	<b>249,049</b>
<b>Government stimulus</b>			194,158
<b>Other</b>		195	577
<b>Total Income</b>	2	<b>3,251,899</b>	<b>3,944,917</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Research	3	741,500	824,665
Education & Awareness		1,316,316	2,070,400
Administration		782,340	860,366
Fundraising		89,514	78,398
Depreciation		101,465	95,271
Lease Interest		2,938	8,631
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>3,034,073</b>	<b>3,937,731</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	18	<b>217,826</b>	<b>7,186</b>
<b>Other Comprehensive income</b>			
Net (Loss)/Gain on revaluation of Financial Assets		-673,404	787,407
Profit on Disposal of Investment		18,575	95,084
Other Comprehensive (Loss) / Income for the Year		-654,829	882,491
Total (Loss) / Income for the Year		-437,003	889,677
Surplus/(Deficit) attributable to members of the entity		217,826	7,186
<b>Total Comprehensive (Loss)/Gain Income attributable to members of the entity</b>		<b>-437,003</b>	<b>889,677</b>

# Revenue & Expenditure

Following is the summary of revenue & expenditure of Arthritis Australia

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<b>ASSETS HELD</b>	<b>\$9,590,918</b>
<b>LIABILITIES HELD</b>	<b>\$3,200,418</b>

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## REVENUE

Funding for consumer projects, resources & information	\$1,167,261	36%
National Research Program sponsorships/donations	\$716,500	22%
Income from other Sources	\$814,148	25%
Investment Income	\$416,529	13%
Accessible Design	\$137,460	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,251,899</b>	<b>100%</b>



## EXPENDITURE

Funding for consumer projects, resources & information	\$1,083,084	36%
National Research Program sponsorships/donations	\$741,500	24%
Employee Expenses	\$607,701	20%
Other Expenses	\$510,915	17%
Accessible Design	\$90,873	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,034,073</b>	<b>100%</b>



## 11. Donors & supporters

We are extremely thankful to our donors and supporters who have helped to advance our work in raising awareness, delivering education and support services, providing annual research grants and developing advocacy programs. Many have contributed expertise, time, funding, goods and services.

### Thank you for your support

#### Awareness and education

Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care  
AbbVie Pty Ltd  
Australian Institute of Packaging  
Australian Rheumatology Association  
Eli Lilly Pty Ltd  
Gilead Sciences  
Janssen-Cilag Pty Ltd  
Menarini Australia  
Novartis Australia  
Pfizer Australia Pty Ltd  
Sandoz  
UCB Australia Pty Ltd

#### Parliamentary Friends of Arthritis in the 46th Parliament

Senator Carol Brown, Convenor, the Senate, Canberra  
Hon Dr David Gillespie MP, Co-convenor, House of Representatives, Canberra  
Hon Dr Mike Freelander MP, Co-convenor, House of Representatives, Canberra

#### 2021-2022 Donations of \$500+

Estate of Leslie Edward Allen  
The Gabriele Ross Ankenbauer Legacy  
Robert Branchi  
Helen Cavill  
Laurence Charleson  
Adam Cogar  
John Coutts  
The Crozier Family Fund  
Laurent Dapremont

Miriam Davies  
Estate of Jean Elliott  
Susan Farrell  
Christopher Flavelle-Smith  
In Memory of John Francis  
Irene Froyland  
Alan Goodfellow  
Libby Higgin  
Alan Hutchison  
Anne Jones  
Andrew Lear  
Cassandra Le-Grand  
David Motteram  
Thu Ngo  
Estate of Gordon Frank Palmer  
Estate of The Late Hazel Pickworth  
John Quinlan  
Eugenia Raskopoulos  
Paul Scott  
Wai Hung Frederick Sham  
Jonathan Shead  
Andrew Strang  
Meridy Taite  
Nadia Talent  
Amanda Ugo  
Ellie Waight  
Bruce & Maureen Wallis  
Christine Woodruff (Glow Worm Foundation)

#### 2021-2022 Fundraising of \$500+

Elly Baker  
Julia Cois  
Saul Falconer's 'The Demon Mark' book launch  
Ruth Frydman  
Andrea and Stu Jansen  
Danielle Loughnan  
Miki McGuinness  
Peter Orenstein

# Our supporters

Thank you for your support



# 12. Arthritis information & contacts

**For all arthritis information:**  
**Arthritis Infoline 1800 011 041**  
[www.arthritisaustralia.com.au](http://www.arthritisaustralia.com.au)

**Arthritis Australia**  
 Level 2/255 Broadway  
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 E: [info@arthritisaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@arthritisaustralia.com.au)  
[www.arthritisaustralia.com.au](http://www.arthritisaustralia.com.au)  
 Jonathan Smithers  
*Chief Executive Officer*

## AFFILIATE OFFICES

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 Rebecca Davey  
*Chief Executive Officer*

### Arthritis New South Wales

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 Crows Nest NSW 2065  
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 North Ryde NSW 1670  
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 E: [info@arthritisnsw.org.au](mailto:info@arthritisnsw.org.au)  
[www.arthritisnsw.org.au](http://www.arthritisnsw.org.au)  
 Alex Green  
*Chief Executive Officer*

### Arthritis Northern Territory

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 PO Box 452, Nightcliff NT 0814  
 P: 08 8948 5232  
 E: [info@aont.org.au](mailto:info@aont.org.au)  
[www.aont.org.au](http://www.aont.org.au)  
 Hilary Fowler  
*Secretary*

### Arthritis Queensland

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 E: [info@arthritis.org.au](mailto:info@arthritis.org.au)  
[www.arthritis.org.au](http://www.arthritis.org.au)  
 Alex Green  
*Chief Executive Officer*

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[www.arthritisaustralia.org.au](http://www.arthritisaustralia.org.au)  
 Steve Morris  
*Chief Executive Officer*

### Arthritis Tasmania

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 E: [info@arthritisaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@arthritisaustralia.org.au)  
[www.arthritisaustralia.org.au](http://www.arthritisaustralia.org.au)  
 Jackie Slyp  
*Chief Executive Officer*

### Arthritis Western Australia

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 17 Lemnos St  
 Shenton Park WA 6008  
 PO Box 34, Wembley WA 6913  
 P: 08 9388 2199 F: 08 9388 4488  
 E: [general@arthritisaustralia.org.au](mailto:general@arthritisaustralia.org.au)  
[www.arthritisaustralia.org.au](http://www.arthritisaustralia.org.au)  
 Ric Forlano  
*Executive Director*



No matter who you are, or your experience with arthritis, we're here to help you manage your symptoms and get on with life.  
[www.arthritisaustralia.com.au](http://www.arthritisaustralia.com.au)



A consumer support website dedicated to rheumatoid arthritis.  
[www.myra.org.au](http://www.myra.org.au)



A consumer support website dedicated to psoriatic arthritis.  
[www.mypsoriaticarthritis.org.au](http://www.mypsoriaticarthritis.org.au)



A consumer support website dedicated to axial spondyloarthritis.  
[www.myas.org.au](http://www.myas.org.au)



Information and self-management plans tailored for people who have joint pain or been diagnosed with osteoarthritis.  
[www.myjointpain.org.au](http://www.myjointpain.org.au)



Information and self-management for people living with low back pain.  
[www.mybackpain.org.au](http://www.mybackpain.org.au)



Online support for Australians living with rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis and psoriatic arthritis.  
[www.empowered.org.au](http://www.empowered.org.au)

## 13. Our team



Jonathan Smithers  
CEO



Franca Marine  
National Policy &  
Government  
Relations Manager  
(until 9/21)



Louise Hardy  
National Policy &  
Government  
Relations Manager  
(from 9/21)



Fahima Fouzdeen  
Finance Manager

### Follow Us



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[linkedin.com/company/  
arthritis-australia](https://linkedin.com/company/arthritis-australia)



Alex Brayshaw  
Accessible Design  
Manager



Patricia Aviet  
Administration



Maryanne Ng  
Project Manager



Courtney Brown  
Project Officer



Lindsey Parks  
Digital & Social



Hannah Atkin  
Special Projects  
(until 9/21)



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