**Australian Longitudinal Study on Women’s Health (ALSWH)**

University of Queensland and

University of Newcastle

# Background

The ALSWH is a collaborative study based at the Universities of Newcastle and Queensland which has been collecting information on three birth cohorts of women (1973-1978, 1946-1951, 1921-1926) since 1996. The overarching aim of the ALSHW is to provide a strong, valid evidence-base which can be used by Commonwealth and State Governments for prioritising health policy and planning. The study sample size at the time of the first survey in 1996 was 40,394. The study sample was selected randomly from the Medicare Australia database with intentional over-sampling of women living in rural and remote areas. Women from each cohort are invited to complete survey forms once every three years. ALSWH is funded by the Federal Department of Health and Ageing (DOHA) and managed by staff at the University of Queensland and is planned to continue accruing data until 2016.

# Information recorded on the study database includes:

* GP preference and satisfaction
* Access to health care providers, hospital admissions, dates of birth and details of children
* Marital status, income, education, employment, housing
* Reproductive history
* Lifestyle risk factors, physical activity, mental health
* Health factors including diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, asthma, cancer
* Surgical procedures, medications, social support, approach to life, provide care / need care
* Partner violence, time use, participation status

# Previous linkage projects conducted through CHeReL include:

Risk factors for emergency and non-emergency caesarean births among women in NSW. This study identified factors that put women at risk of having a caesarean birth. Data from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women’s Health has been linked with the Midwives Data Collection. Researcher: Dr Deborah Loxton, University of Newcastle.

A life course perspective in the identification of risk factors for adverse birth outcomes. The aims of this project were to determine a clear set of long- and short-term risk factors for adverse birth outcomes (stillbirth, congenital conditions, neonatal death, premature birth and low birth weight) and to specify mediators that might act to buffer the impact of risk factors on adverse birth outcomes. Researcher: Dr Deborah Loxton, University of Newcastle.

Quality of life, physical and emotional health in mid & older survivors of cancer. This study measured the affect being a cancer survivor on physical activity, general and mental health and quality of life ratings compared with older adults with no history of cancer. Researcher: Dr Efty Stavrou, Cancer Institute NSW.

Australian Longitudinal Study on Women’s Health Data Linkage Project – linkage of ALSWH records with NSW Admitted Patient Data Collection, NSW Central Cancer Registry and NSW Perinatal Data Collection. Researcher: Dr Deirdre McLaughlin, University of Queensland.

# Availability of data for studies:

This data is available to researchers for further study subject to approval from the Data Custodian and appropriate ethics committees. For further information and a list of variables available for data linkage projects please contact the Data Custodian, Dr Annette Dobson. A list of variables available for data linkage projects can also be accessed on the CHeReL website at: <http://www.cherel.org.au/external-datasets>

# Data custodian

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