

### **Sustainability in health care: Evaluating the determinants involved in sustaining acute stroke care delivery**

**Presenter: Linda Francis**

**Supervisors: Professor David Dunt,  
Professor Dominique Cadilhac**

**Monday 14th December 11am–12pm via Zoom**

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The field of implementation science – implementing evidence-based research into practice – is rapidly growing, but very little information about the sustainability of implemented interventions has been available. This study addressed the field of sustainability research in the context of acute stroke care.

Acute stroke care has undergone major advancements in recent years. The establishment of specialist stroke teams in hospitals has reduced mortality and disability. As part of supporting improved access to best practice stroke care the Victorian Government funded the implementation of several strategy recommendations to improve care for patients through the Stroke Care Strategy for Victoria program.

The aim of this study was to evaluate the determinants that impacted the sustainability of the funded strategy recommendations by the Victorian government 2 years after financial support for the program ceased. Three priority stroke treatments across the select Victorian hospitals in regional and urban areas were evaluated including the establishment of specialist stroke units, Transient Ischaemic Attack clinics, and swallow screening programs.

Various determinants were identified as important for overall sustainability. The culmination of qualitative and quantitative research undertaken as part of this doctoral research provides guidance for future frameworks to inform the assessment of sustainability of implemented interventions.



Linda Francis is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Health Policy, Melbourne School of Population Health and a research fellow at the Florey Institute of Neurosciences and Mental Health. Her doctoral research has focused on the use of sustainability theory to explain the results of an evaluation of evidence-based care delivery in acute stroke.

Through her work she has developed a strong interest in implementation science in health care. Linda has previously worked in the stroke/neurology field as a clinical Speech Pathologist and project manager for the Department of Health, Victoria. Her PhD was partially funded by the Melbourne Brain Centre, The Royal Melbourne Hospital.