

The George C. Patton Fellowship in Adolescent Health and Wellbeing



Professor Patton launching 'Our future: A Lancet Commission for adolescent health and wellbeing', London 2016

The George C. Patton Fellowship in Adolescent Health and Wellbeing honours and extends the legacy of Professor George C. Patton AO MBBS MD FRANZCP FRCPsych.

Professor Patton (1954–2022) was a global leader in adolescent health whose multiple landmark studies and evidence-based advocacy brought attention to the significance of health and wellbeing across this critical developmental stage, both in Australia and globally. A medical graduate of The University of Melbourne, Professor Patton trained in child and adolescent psychiatry in the UK, where he also undertook research training in epidemiology. On his return to Melbourne, he joined the nascent Centre for Adolescent Health where he was instrumental in establishing a series of cohort studies including the Victorian Adolescent Health Cohort Study (which subsequently led to one of the world's first intergenerational cohort studies), and later, the Child to Adult Transition Study (CATS). He was responsible for a wide range of groundbreaking studies, including the Gatehouse Project, and for using data from the global burden of disease study to bring visibility to adolescent health.

Professor Patton was a greatly valued and admired member of the VicHealth, The University of Melbourne, Centre for Adolescent Health and Children's Campus communities. He served as the Director (1997–2003), and then Director of Research (2003–2022), of the Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) Centre for Adolescent Health. His own VicHealth Research Fellowship (2004–07) set the stage for a full time research career, subsequently supported by continuous NHMRC fellowships. A powerful communicator and convenor, he led a series of landmark reports for The Lancet, including the highly influential 2016 Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing. His strategic advice was much valued by various UN agencies and multilaterals, including WHO, UNICEF, PMNCH and the World Bank.

Professor Patton had a passion for advancing the health of adolescents, locally and across the world. He was zealous about measurement, and excited to work towards creating better data collection systems to measure the determinants, behaviours and outcomes that affect adolescents now and for generations ahead. Highly creative in his thinking, unrestrained by the ideas of the times, and a generous collaborator, he was hugely committed to supporting the next generation of research leaders, who he long considered his greatest legacy.

The George C. Patton Fellowship in Adolescent Health and Wellbeing

This Fellowship reflects the shared commitment of three partner organisations:

- The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)
- The University of Melbourne
- The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) Centre for Adolescent Health

Term

The Fellowship will be awarded for a three-year term by The University of Melbourne and will be based at the RCH Centre for Adolescent Health at the Children's Campus.

Funding

Funding will align with The University of Melbourne academic salary levels, A6-B1, subject to experience. The Fellowship is considered full time but can be paid at a percentage of 1 FTE to accommodate clinical work or related activities.

Eligibility

Eligible early career researchers are expected to pursue postdoctoral research in an area of relevance to adolescent health, consistent with Professor George Patton's research interests. Candidates may apply if they are within 5 years of completing their PhD (relative to opportunity) and are a Victorian resident.

Application

Applications for the inaugural Fellowship (2025-27) will open in September 2024. Following completion of an application form, shortlisted candidates can expect to be interviewed for the Fellowship.

Linked to the RCH, The University of Melbourne and the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, the Centre for Adolescent Health is based at the Children's Campus, Melbourne.

Please inform Professor Sawyer's EA, Mrs Laura Griffith, if you would like the application form to be shared with you once it becomes available (laura.griffith@rch.org.au).

Please contact Professor Susan Sawyer, Director, Centre for Adolescent Health with any wider inquiries (susan.sawyer@rch.org.au).

