



PROUDLY SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH
ALL NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS

Media Release

March 6, 2019

MSWA FUNDED BRAIN PLASTICITY RESEARCH OFFERS HOPE FOR NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS

Using brain plasticity to repair a damaged brain is the underlying goal of research undertaken by Perron Institute researcher Associate Professor Jenny Rodger.

Now in her second year of a \$1 million fellowship funded by MSWA, Professor Rodger is investigating the use of repetitive non-invasive transcranial stimulation (rTMS) to drive brain plasticity for therapeutic outcomes.

As a special activity of International Brain Awareness Week 2019 (11 to 17 March) Professor Rodger and her students will appear at SciTech on Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 March from 11am-3pm to talk to visitors about some of the remarkable aspects of the human brain.

Associate Professor Rodger explained that the brain relies on electrical activity for its everyday functioning.

“Brain plasticity is the extraordinary ability of the brain to modify or rewire its own structure and function following changes within the body or in the external environment.”

“Changes in the brain’s own electrical activity act as a source of information to drive plasticity, whether through reorganising electrical circuits in the brain or generating new cells,” she said.

She has observed encouraging results with the use of non-invasive rTMS in preclinical models to:

- reorganise abnormal brain wiring to restore compromised function
- generate new brain cells
- increase the capacity for learning in normal and abnormal brains.

“My research to date has a key strength: the techniques and study design allow direct comparison between my preclinical models and human studies, providing strong evidence that my findings can be translated to humans,” said Associate Professor Rodger.

MSWA CEO Marcus Stafford AM, said MSWA is proud to fund Associate Professor Rodger’s investigations amongst its current program of investment in neurological research.

“The work taking place under the leadership of Associate Professor Jenny Rodger has a special significance for people living with neurological conditions,” said Mr Stafford.



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“The potential for therapies such as rTMS to increase and direct brain plasticity offers hope of rehabilitation and recovery for people affected by conditions such as multiple sclerosis, stroke, acquired brain injury and Parkinson’s disease.

MSWA is committed to research, and in particular supporting local researchers doing amazing things in WA. We are proud to support Associate Professor Rodger and other scientists from the Perron Institute.”

“Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we have provided a record \$3 million in neurological research funding in the 2018-19 year toward the search for causes, better treatments and cures for neurological conditions.”

ENDS

About MSWA:

MSWA provides vital support and services to people living with all neurological conditions in Western Australia, including multiple sclerosis, stroke, Parkinson’s Disease, Huntington’s Disease, Motor Neurone Disease and acquired Brain Injury.

MSWA has a team of more than 750 staff who work passionately to provide the best possible care to people across the Perth metro area and broader regional centres of Western Australia.

MSWA plays a vital role in educating the broader community, liaising with government and other relevant bodies on related issues, and advocating for the rights of all people with neurological conditions.

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