



WORKING TO BUILD A HEALTHY AUSTRALIA  
[www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)

## MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday April 29, 2008  
For immediate release

### Filling gaps in neck injury management: Adelaide physiotherapist awarded prestigious national Fellowship

Improving the management of whiplash-associated disorders (WAD) is the goal of Dr V.S. Saravana Kumar, who has just received a NICS Fellowship from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), co-sponsored by TRACsa: Trauma and Injury Recovery and the Motor Accident Commission of South Australia (MAC).

Dr Kumar, a physiotherapist and lecturer at the University of South Australia, will use the NICS Fellowship to undertake a two-year implementation project, and will work with physiotherapists, chiropractors and consumers to address the gap between evidence and best practice in assessing and managing WAD.

“The prevalence of whiplash injuries is growing internationally and contributes to approximately 42 per cent of all compulsory third party claims,” explains Dr Kumar.

“Despite a range of costly treatment and rehabilitation options, many people with WAD remain in constant pain and develop long-term complaints. I’ll seek to improve their outcomes by implementing TRACsa’s new *Clinical guidelines for best practice management of acute and chronic whiplash associated disorders*.”

NHMRC Chief Executive Officer, Professor Warwick Anderson has welcomed this opportunity. “We congratulate Dr Kumar and look forward to working with TRACsa and MAC. Our partnership with organisations involved in specific areas of health care, allows us to harness our combined skills and knowledge to provide the highest level of support to our Fellows.”

Dr Kumar will join nine other health professionals from Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia as 2008 NICS Fellows.

Release ends.

Interviews: Meredith Cameron, T: 03 88660409 M: 0423 844 967 [meredith.cameron@nhmrc.gov.au](mailto:meredith.cameron@nhmrc.gov.au)

For more information about the other NICS Fellows and the NICS Leadership Program :  
[www.nhmrc.gov.au/nics](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/nics)

.../2

## **Note to editors**

**The National Health and Medical Research Council** (NHMRC) is Australia's peak body for supporting health and medical research. As part of the NHMRC, the National Institute of Clinical Studies (NICS) works to improve health care by getting health and medical research into practice.

The NICS Leadership program, which was launched in 2003, directly contributes to closing evidence-practice gaps by supporting health professionals to undertake practical projects that aim to improve health outcomes for people by getting high quality evidence into everyday clinical practice in particular health settings.

The two-year, part-time Fellowships are open to early- to mid-career health professionals across the health care spectrum, including doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, paramedics, health care managers, and policy makers.

The Fellowships provide an annual stipend as well as professional development opportunities, training programs in evidence implementation, mentorship, and opportunities to network with and learn from world-class experts who come to Australia as part of NICS' Visiting Experts program.

Applications for NICS Fellowships 2009 open at the end of May 2008.

## **TRACsa: Trauma and Injury Recovery**

TRACsa: Trauma and Injury Recovery is a centre of excellence focused on better treatment and recovery for people injured on the road or at work.

**[www.tracsa.org.au](http://www.tracsa.org.au)**

## **Motor Accident Commission**

The Motor Accident Commission is South Australia's Compulsory Third Party insurer and provides \$360 million each year in compensation to road crash victims. It manages the SA Government's road safety communications program and provides sponsorship funding for projects that aim to reduce the number and impact of road injuries and deaths.

**[www.mac.sa.gov.au](http://www.mac.sa.gov.au)**