

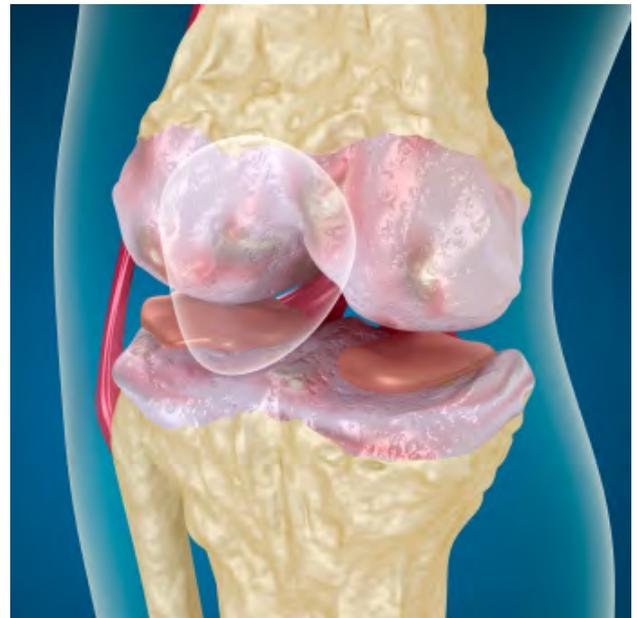
# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## A Patient's Journey

**Dr Joanne Curry of the School of Computing, Engineering and Mathematics together with Dr Kathy Tannous of the School of Business and Professor Anneke Fitzgerald of Griffith University are using innovative modelling and management techniques to improve the coordination of patient care for people with osteoarthritis in various healthcare settings, including hospitals. This research has been funded by Hunter New England Local Health Network.**

'Surgical treatment of osteoarthritis (OA) contributes to growing healthcare costs and a range of alternative health care models and approaches have been tried with various outcomes', says Dr Curry. 'So far there has not been a coordinated approach to the provision of best practice conservative healthcare for people with OA and clinical practices often diverge from the current guidelines for care of this condition. The Royal Newcastle Centre is trialling an Osteoarthritis Chronic Care program to improve the coordination of care and interdisciplinary management of people with OA. Central to this model is face to face participant access to clinical staff and health service resources. Our research team will be developing and trialling a model of the complete OA patient's "journey" with a view to increasing the use of evidence-based conservative care and management.'

Using innovative healthcare improvement techniques, a model will be developed and verified using information on acute, community and private care environments and the complete patient journey of osteoarthritis patients from initial diagnosis to implementation of their care programs. An economic analysis of the costs involved will show the costs for both the health service provider and the patient. The patient journey models will be developed using a new modelling technique known as Essomenic. This approach will not only provide a



representation of the current journey but will also facilitate the identification and visual analysis of opportunities for improvement in care services for OA patients.

Providing the best possible patient care for people with osteoarthritis from initial diagnosis to ongoing treatment plans will not only improve their quality of life, but will also save money for their health care providers (as well as themselves). The use of an improved model of patient care may also be adapted for other health care settings for the benefit of the Australian community.

**Project Title:** Incorporating Patient Journey Modelling into the Osteoarthritis Chronic Care Program Trial.

**Funding has been set at:** \$50,174

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