



# Extending the boundaries: linking allied health and economics

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Economist
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# Fremantle Collaboration





## Collaborator

- Jane Bringolf
- Professor Al Cook
- Prof. Martin Ferguson-Pell
- Dr Lloyd Walker
- Rob Garrett
- David Hobbs
- Desleigh deJonge
- Natasha Layton
- Agata Molenda
- Dr Ingrid Schraner
- Prof. Marilyn Waring
- Dr Marcia Scherer

## Origin

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ILC National  
University of Alberta USA  
University College London

Novitatech SA  
Novitatech SA  
Novitatech SA

University of Queensland  
OT Practice Melbourne  
University of Western Sydney  
University of Western Sydney  
Auckland University NZ  
Institute for Matching Person  
and Technology New York

# Assistive Technology enabling activities

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Why is  
Assistive  
Technology  
important?

# Assistive Technology Abandonment

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Abandonment rates of up to 50% are reported in the international literature



## Demographics: ABS 2003

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**People with disabilities:** 19% of the population have a profound or severe core-activity limitation

**Aging population:** 17% of the population are aged 60 years and over, and 51% of those have a reported disability

**Carers:** 2.6 million carers providing some assistance to those who needed help because of disability or age



# Fremantle Collaboration

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- Occupational Therapy
- Sociology
- Medicine
- Psychology
- Rehabilitation Engineering
- Economics



# Disciplines & Domains of Concern

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- Occupational therapists
- Rehabilitation engineers
- Sociologist
- Economist
- Psychologist
- Function; occupation
- Design; AT performance
- Equity; socio-political factors; rights
- Buyers and sellers of AT; use of resources; evaluation tools
- Models of practice (MPT); introduction to ICF



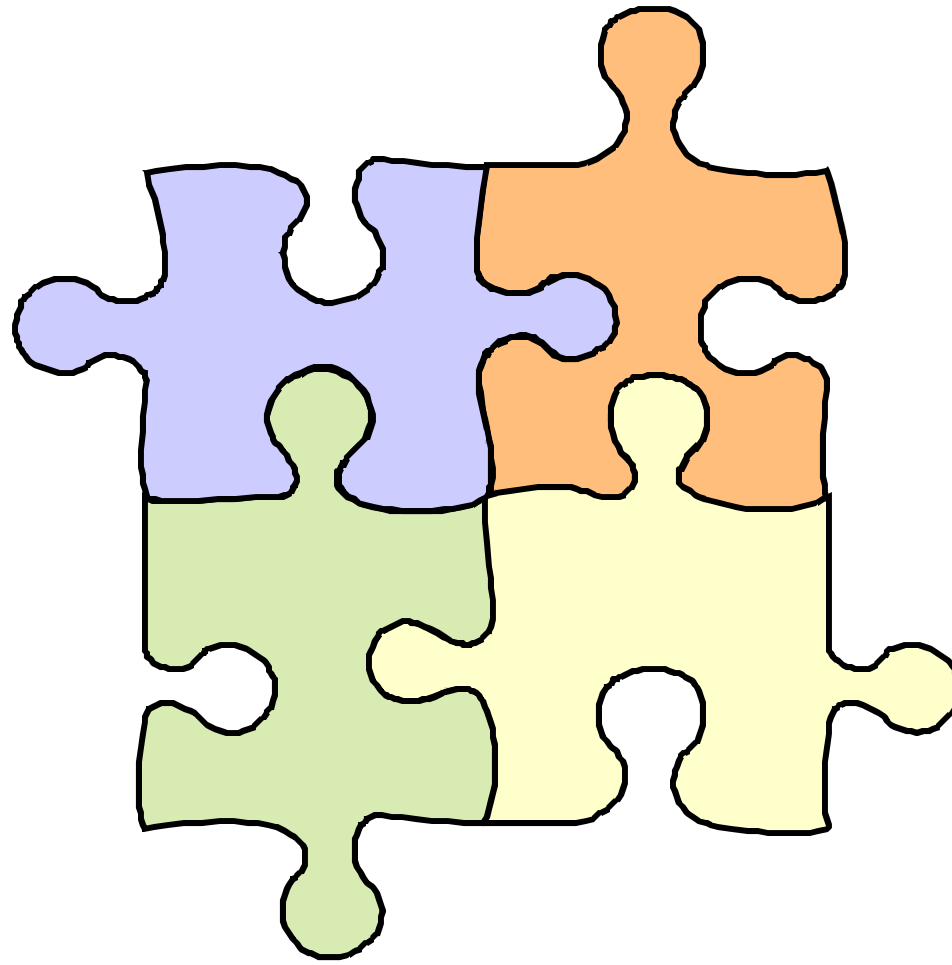
What happens when an economist, a sociologist, an occupational therapist and an engineer look at a problem?

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# Professional Identity

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# Underpinning Beliefs

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- Respect for the individuals with whom we work: their individuality, their own expertise and knowledge, and their right to self-determination and decision-making
- A sense of privilege around our participation in the lives of individuals with disabilities
- Commitment to empowering those individuals



# Shared Standpoints

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- **Deep concern regarding:**
  - Current service delivery
  - Implications of demographic trends
  - Implications of public policy



## Outcomes: Research Topic

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Assistive Technology  
in Australia:  
Economic analyses  
from a user standpoint

# ATS Definition (Fremantle Collaboration 2006)

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An Assistive Technology System (ATS) is a combination of hard and soft technologies with paid & unpaid care work



# Research evidence is a lever for policy change.

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# Strategies enabling collaboration

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- Explicit Shared Beliefs
- Language
- Dialogue
- Bracketing
- Explicit Standpoints





## Explicit Standpoints

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- Taking a person-centered approach guided by both clinical client-centered practice models and feminist standpoint theory to include civil and human rights perspectives.
- Focus on the economic actors and their implicit and explicit incentives in AT service delivery and in the AT marketplace.



## Common Tools

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Commitment to use of the WHO **International Framework of Functioning, Disability and Health** (ICF) as our framework, which has officially been adopted by the Australian Government as a common tool amongst Australian disability/rehabilitation organisations and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.



# Sector Impact

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Careful consideration of the related and discrete issues in both disability and ageing sectors.



# Take home message

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Look outside one discipline



# Authors

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