

## **VALSAMMA EAPEN MBBS., DPM., PhD., FRCPsych., FRANZCP., FAHMS**

**Career Summary:** Eapen is Scientia Professor and Chair of Infant, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, UNSW Sydney; a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Senior Research Leadership Fellow; Director of NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Child and Family Health in Priority Populations; Stream Director for Early Life Determinants of Health (ELDoH) Clinical Academic Group within SPHERE (Sydney Partnership for Health Education Research and Enterprise), an Advanced Health Research Translation Centre; and Clinical Academic at South-Western Sydney Local Health District.

After graduating in Medicine in Kerala, India, Eapen continued postgraduate training in India (National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bangalore), and the UK (University College London Hospital) with advanced training in Child Psychiatry (Great Ormond Street Hospital Rotational Scheme) and PhD from University of London with research on Tourette Syndrome undertaken at the National Hospital for Neurology, Queen Square, London.

**Research Outputs and Professional Contribution:** Known internationally for expertise in neurodevelopmental disorders, Eapen is currently part of research programs totalling 40 million in funding and has authored >500 peer reviewed articles (e.g. Nature Reviews, BMJ, Neuron, Cell, Lancet (Child and Adolescent Health), JAMA Pediatrics, Nature Medicine), 6 books, >50 book chapters, international resources (e.g. Tourette Association of America), podcasts, print, radio, and TV engagements. Eapen leads the field, 4<sup>th</sup> worldwide by scholarly output for topic 'Child Development/Early Intervention' and 1<sup>st</sup> in Australia for topic 'Tourette /Tic Disorders' with H-index of 65 and >21,500 citations. In view of her significant contributions, she was awarded the highest honour title of Scientia Professor by UNSW Sydney (2024), Senior Researcher Award by RANZCP (2024) and inducted as Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences (2025).

Eapen holds a number of editorial roles including Sentinel Reader, McMaster Online Rating of Evidence; Cochrane Developmental, Psychosocial and Learning Problems group; Editorial Board, BMC Psychiatry; Academic Editor, PLOS One; Editors-in-Chief and Executive Committee, International Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions (IACAPAP); and previously Deputy Editor, Asian Journal of Psychiatry (2017-2019). Other key roles include President, International Neuropsychiatry Association; Chair, Bi-national Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, RANZCP. In the context of WPA, Eapen is currently serving as a **Board Member & Zonal Representative** for Oceania and Co-Chair for the Section of Psychiatry in Developing countries with a focus on the Pacific and South East Asia. She has served as the Director, Early Years Program, Autism Co-operative Research Centre (2016-2022); Governing Council, International Brain Research Organization (IBRO) (2006-2008); Member, Working group, WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office for the project "Awareness About Mental Health" (2007); Member, Executive Committee, South Asian Forum Psychiatry International (2005-2007).

**National roles, Community Engagement/Participation:** Australian Government advisory roles including National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Children's Expert Advisory Group (CEAG) (2024-); Autism Child & Family Outcome Strategy (2013-2020); Ministerial appointment to Autism Policy (2018-2022); National Autism Guideline Implementation (2020); National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) functional assessment framework (2019); NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation Transition Care Network (2019-); National Autism Diagnosis Project (2021-); Autism Early Intervention- evidence synthesis (2020) and guideline (2022); National Early Years Strategy (2023), and National Mental Health Commission Preschool Check ( 2023-); Board Director (voluntary) Karitane Parenting Services, Sydney, Australia (2014-2025). Other current roles include Member, Australian Mental Health Prize Committee; Australian Rotary Research Committee; Starlight Health

Professionals Advisory Board; Board Director (voluntary) and Medical Publicity Liaison Officer, Tourette Syndrome Association Australia.

**Teaching and Training:** Eapen has organised several national and international conferences including Co-Chair, International Neuropsychiatric Association Congress, Melbourne, Australia (2024); Biological Psychiatry Conference, Cape Town, South Africa (2026); Scientific Committee, World Congress of Psychiatry Mexico (2024), Prague (2025) and Stockholm (2026); RANZCP Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry conference, Scientific Committee, Christchurch, NZ (2024); Organising Committee, Noosa, Australia (2023); and organised training programs including IBRO Neuroscience School, UAE (2011); Child psychiatry and Neurodevelopmental disorders training in UAE (2015); Vietnam (2016); Cambodia (2019); Iraq (Child psychiatry advanced training- online 2019-), and Ophelia program for Pacific Island nations (online 2020-). Eapen's book "Where There is No Child Psychiatrist" (Cambridge Publications 2013) is used to up-skill professionals internationally in developing countries (World Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2021; Issue 21) including her work via the Ophelia lunch time seminars for mental health staff from Pacific countries; training of health professionals in Cambodia via Ministry of Health, a USAID-funded program developing and delivering a one year training program for medical practitioners in Vietnam on assessment and management of intellectual and developmental disabilities, and contribution to MindEd UK Department of Health program.

**Collaborations and international standing:** Eapen is regularly invited to write review articles on Tourette Syndrome (e.g. Nature Reviews Disease Primer; BMJ) and to present at international conferences (44 in the last 5 years including plenary/key note sessions); current collaborations include Autism Homozygosity Mapping Collaborative; Obsessive Compulsive Foundation Genetics Collaborative; Psychiatric Genomics Consortium; International DEPRESSD Collaboration on the classification of Major Depression; International consensus statement for adolescents with ADHD and substance use; advisor to Dubai Autism Guideline; the Universitas U21 Autism Research Network with University of Birmingham; University of Connecticut, USA; University of Auckland, NZ; Waseda University, Japan; and McMaster University, Canada).

**Research Impact/Translation:** Eapen's work developing the world's first autism specific Quality of Life measure – Quality of Life in Autism (QoLA) scale [Eapen et.al. 2014] – has been disseminated (and translated to several different languages) to >118 teams across 41 countries including: (i) National Health Service UK Improving Quality of Life in Autism Home Visual Supports program; (ii) the National Association of Special Schools Incubator Program UK; (iii) Department of Education 'Starbus' school inclusion peer program Hungary; (iv) transcultural work across seven countries including India, and received the 2024 Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (GAPIO) Honorary Distinguished Fellow Award.

Eapen's "Watch Me Grow" electronic program and weblink for completion by parents has been disseminated in Australia and internationally with a view of providing equitable access to early identification of child developmental problems in the preschool years. The social impact of Eapen's work on inverse care law has been shared with global bodies such as World Vision, UNICEF Child's Rights Taskforce on inequities in access to child health etc.

Eapen was part of the development of the Australian National Guidelines for Autism (2017); ADHD (2022); and Supporting autistic children guideline (2022). Eapen's work with south-west Sydney schools involving children from refugee background found that the parental school engagement and children's wellbeing were interlinked and led to the Department of Education's response using cultural brokers serving a liaison/ co-ordinator function between schools and recently arrived migrant families. This model has been utilised internationally.