Alertness CRC scientist awarded Anne E Surratt Award for sleep research

At the recent International Sleep and Breathing Conference in Tampere, Finland, Alertness CRC PhD candidate and Adelaide Institute for Sleep Health researcher Ms Amal Osman was presented with the Anne E Surratt New Investigator Award for her presentation, ‘The upper airway is most collapsible during expiration in obstructive sleep apnoea’.

Each year, three prizes of US$1,000 are awarded to junior researchers whose presentations stand out to the scientific committee at the Conference. The Awards honour the late Anne Elizabeth Suratt; a student at the University of Illinois from 1994 to 1997 who tragically died in an airplane crash in May 1997 at Willard airport, where she was training to acquire flight instrument ratings.

Amal’s research focuses on people with obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA); a very common breathing sleep disorder in which people have interrupted breathing as a result of significant upper airway narrowing or complete obstruction of the airway.

In her presentation, Amal demonstrated how in a recent study, upper airway collapsibility varies throughout the breathing cycle. Specifically, Amal showed how the upper airway is significantly more collapsible during exhalation versus inhalation. These findings provide important information regarding when the airway is likely to narrow and obstruct, and the protective role that the upper airway muscles play in keeping the airway open. This, in turn, has the potential to help with the development of new, targeted therapies for people with OSA.

We congratulate Amal on her prestigious achievement.

Ms Amal Osman (centre) receives the Anne E Surratt New Investigator Award