

27 March 2012

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **RHH Research Foundation celebrates at inaugural Research Excellence Dinner**

The Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation will recognise local medical and health care researchers at its Inaugural Research Excellence Dinner to be held on Wednesday 28 March.

Following the announcement of over \$730,000 in funding for local medical and healthcare research in late 2011, the Dinner provides an opportunity to acknowledge the 2012 grant recipients, while showcasing the skills and achievements of current researchers.

As the Foundation's Chair Heather Chong explained, "The event is a formal celebration of excellence, a special occasion where we recognise the contributions that are being made in health and medical research, with local findings often having a flow on effect to a national and even international medical context."

"The event will feature several researchers, both emerging and highly skilled, who will showcase how their findings directly contribute to the wellbeing of the many Tasmanians who come into contact with the Royal Hobart Hospital as the state's primary public hospital."

Those acknowledged with certificates at the Dinner submitted applications which were subject to a rigorous independent peer review as part of the Foundation's annual grant round, once again attracting a highly competitive field of submissions. The Foundation's scientific research advisory panel, endorsed by the NH&MRC, undertakes the determination of research grants, a challenging task of selecting from the many excellent proposals seeking funding.

"We would naturally like to support all aspiring researchers who are eager to pursue our focus of exploring diseases and conditions which, per capita, are more prevalent in Tasmania. To this end, we will continue to seek further support from those in our community who wish to invest in our work, allowing us to further build upon an already significant level of funding for local health and medical research."

Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation CEO, Heather Francis, agreed and explained that the Dinner was an important way to thank supporters, both individual and corporate for their ongoing generosity that enables this valuable work to continue.

"As a completely independent entity, the Research Foundation is buoyed by ongoing generosity from across the Tasmanian community. It is the wonderful support that we continue to receive that enables us to fund the research work of specialist doctors, nurses and allied health professionals through our annual grants program," she said.

The RHH Research Foundation acknowledges and thanks all supporters and donors for their ongoing commitment to healthcare and medical research.



**For more info:** RHHRF CEO, Heather Francis - 0407 201 113

**Media event:** CEO Heather Francis  
RHHRF Chair, Heather Chong  
Research fellow grant recipient: Professor Bruce Taylor  
Clinical grant recipient: David Tuck  
Starter grant recipient: Mr Troy Wanandy  
Leading chronic respiratory disease research: Professor Haydn Walters

1.30pm, Wednesday 28 March  
Hotel Grand Chancellor  
Harbour View Room

## Research projects awarded for 2012:

### Research Fellowship

Environmental and genetic factors that influence the onset and progression of multiple Sclerosis. *A/Prof Bruce Taylor \$330,000 over three years.*

### Clinical Research Grants

Vitamin D and the immune response in asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and healthy subjects. *A/Prof Richard Wood-Baker, Dr NJ Stewart \$17,000.*

Multicentre randomised controlled trial of minimally invasive surfactant therapy in preterm infants 25-28 weeks gestation on continuous positive airway pressure. *Peter A Dargaville and Tony de Paoli \$25,000.*

A double-blind randomised controlled trial to evaluate the efficacy of 20,000 IU/wk cholecalciferol in reducing respiratory tract infection in a cohort of healthy young Adults. *A/Prof Bruce Taylor, Mr Steve Simpson Jr, Dr Ingrid van der Mei, Dr Niall Stewart and A/Prof Leigh Blizzard \$24,481.*

Core muscles in an elderly population: predictors and associations with physical function. *Dr Michelle Callisaya, Prof Graeme Jones, Dr Tanya Winzenberg and Prof Julie Hides \$9,000.*

Serum S100B as a predictor of neuropsychological recovery following traumatic brain injury. *David E Tuck, A/Prof C E Skilbeck and Mr Brett Clem \$15,000.*

Mild cognitive impairment, gait and falls – A population based Study. *Dr Michelle L Callisaya, A/Prof V Skrianth and A/Prof L Blizzard, Dr A Wood \$20,000.*

### Starter Grants

Do adaptive T regulatory cells or activated T cells dominate in cystic fibrosis? *Dr Sean Beggs, A/Prof Margaret Cooley, Dr Louise Roddam, Prof Heinrich Korner and Dr David Stock \$9,050.*

The effect of vitamin D and Interferon-beta on the immune response. *A/Prof Bruce Taylor, Dr N J Stewart and Mr Steve Simpson Jr \$10,000.*

Determining the mechanism underlying post-operative cognitive decline. *Dr Nico Terblanche, Dr Catherine Blizzard, Dr Anna King and Dr Tracey Dickson \$7,158.*

Automated control of inspired oxygen concentration in preterm infants. *Kevin I Wheeler, Peter A Dargaville and Dr Tim Gale \$10,000.*

Assessment of Cardiac Iron Deposition by MRI in Dialysis Patients. *Dr G S Kirkland and Dr M D Jose \$6,000.*