

EMBARGOED UNTIL 7 AUGUST 2013



MEDIA RELEASE

RHH Research Foundation celebrates at Research Excellence Dinner

The Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation will celebrate local health and medical research this evening at its 2013 Research Excellence Dinner, hosted in partnership with St.LukesHealth.

Following the announcement of its first round of annual grant funding in January, the 2013 Research Excellence Dinner provides an opportunity to acknowledge this cohort of grant recipients, while also showcasing the considerable achievements of a number of current researchers.

As the Foundation's Chief Executive Officer, Ms Heather Francis 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 across Tasmania."

"The evening will feature presentations by current researchers, both emerging and highly skilled, who will showcase how their findings directly contribute to the wellbeing of our community statewide. A particular highlight will also be the keynote address by special guest Simon McKeon, Australian of the Year 2011 and Chair of the National Strategic Review of Health and Medical Research," she said. "The recommendations of the McKeon Review, released in April 2013, will shape future medical research directions locally and nationally over the next decade and it is an honour to welcome Simon as our key speaker for this year's celebration."

Investigative studies supported by the RHH Research Foundation are selected via a rigorous assessment process undertaken by the Foundation's Scientific Research Advisory Committee, a panel which is endorsed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC).

"Facing a highly competitive field of applications from inspired health professionals, only projects and researchers of excellence can be selected to pursue their investigations. Even then, in every funding round we are overwhelmed with applications from a community of eager researchers. This demonstrates a need for continuing and increased support from across our general and business communities for this vital work."

"We would naturally like to support all aspiring researchers who are eager to join us in pursuing our objectives of investigating those diseases and conditions which, per capita, are more prevalent in Tasmania," she said.

RHH Research Foundation CEO, Heather Francis, explained that the annual Research Excellence Dinner was an equally important opportunity to thank supporters, both individual and corporate, for their ongoing generosity which enables this valuable work to continue.

"As a completely independent entity, the Research Foundation is appreciative of the ongoing generosity that has been shown across the Tasmanian community. On this occasion - the most significant event in our research calendar, we'd particularly like to highlight the support shown by St.LukesHealth. Demonstrating their understanding of the vital role of medical research in delivering better health outcomes, St.LukesHealth have enabled us to showcase the research work of local doctors, nurses and allied health professionals which has once again been generated through our annual grants program," she said.

Chair of St.LukesHealth, Mr Chris Dockray, explained that the dinner was an tangible way of recognising and celebrating the work of Tasmanian clinicians who pursue research endeavours. “The work of the Foundation not only delivers valuable research outcomes, it enables our broader community to enjoy better health care from those involved at the cutting edge of their chosen specialisations. We know that their investigations make a positive difference to the working environment in our local hospitals while also delivering enhancements in patient care – both within the hospital setting and across our broader community statewide.”

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

-Ends-

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

Media event: CEO Heather Francis
Clinical grant recipient: Dr Michele Callisaya

12.30pm, Wednesday 7 August
Mercure Hadleys, Murray Street
Ballroom Foyer

The RHH Research Foundation would like to acknowledge the following businesses for their generous support

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Research projects awarded for 2013:

Starter grants for 2013

Neuroprotective function of novel short chain-quinones. *A/Prof Paul McCartney.*

Management of post-operative pain and the progression to persistent post-operative pain.
Dr Chris Orlikowski.

The physical and chemical stability of amoxicillin, daptomycin and quinupristin/dalfopristin in Dianeal, Extraneal or Fresenius peritoneal dialysis solution under three different storage conditions. *Mr Troy Wanandy.*

Clinical grants for 2013

The role of epigenetic changes in the progression of clinical disease in Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia Type 1 (MEN1) - Prof John Burgess.

Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia Type 1 (MEN 1) is an inherited condition characterised by development of endocrine gland tumours. MEN 1 occurs at relatively high prevalence in the Tasmanian population. This study will investigate the epigenetic (noncoding genetic) factors which affect disease expression in this condition.

Effect of vitamin D supplementation of the currently used dosage regime of 400 IU/d on vitamin D levels in infants - Prof Graeme Jones.

As part of demonstrating the feasibility of conducting a large scale randomised controlled trial on vitamin D supplementation on bone health, this study will provide the first Australian data on the effect of vitamin D supplementation of the currently used dosage regime of 400 IU/d on vitamin D levels in infants.

Towards a better understanding of uraemic molecules - Prof Matthew Jose.

Spirolactone in myocardial dysfunction with reduced exercise capacity (STRUCTURE) - Prof Thomas Marwick.

Examining the role of blood lipids and apolipoproteins on the progression of MS in a prospective clinical cohort - Prof Bruce Taylor.

Current ongoing research grants

Tasmanian Familial Haematological Malignancy study. *Dr Elizabeth Tegg, RHHRF Research Fellow.*

Environmental and genetic factors that influence the onset and progression of multiple Sclerosis. *A/Prof Bruce Taylor, RHHRF Research Fellow.*

Establishment of the NW Practice Development Unit. *Dr Judi Parson, RHHRF Research Fellow.*

Grant to assist in 2011-13 with the employment of a post-doctoral Research Fellow. *Prof Matthew Jose.*

Grant to assist in 2011-13 with the completion of further post-doctoral studies. *Dr. Victoria Trubody.*

Establishment of national IPF database. *Australian Lung Foundation IPF Registry.*

Outcomes of antithrombotic therapy in a new era: The Tasmanian experience – Dr Leanne Chalmers.