

Professor Kelvin Kong, ASMR Medalist 2021

A Man on a Mission

Addressing the National Press Club today, Professor Kelvin Kong, ASMR Medalist 2021.

Professor Kong is a man of action, the quintessential 'quiet achiever'.

Raised in a community where he and his family experienced both the conscious and unconscious bias of society towards black people, he is Australia's first Indigenous ENT surgeon.

There are many differences between the daily life experiences of First Nations and non-Indigenous people. A good example is the experience for each group with the healthcare system. Understanding the concept of overt and covert racism is a crucial step towards achieving healthcare parity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

The drive for Professor Kong's work has been the life experience of his community, working to highlight the devastation of poor hearing health at an early age and the impact it has on growing and learning. His work has simultaneously shown that there are many non-medical barriers holding back our children. *"This understanding allows us to instigate change in health systems, which will hopefully help the development of our next generation, so that they do not have to endure inequalities of the past"*.

Professor Kong believes, *"It should be, that no matter who you are, no matter where you live in this amazing country; that your access, your engagement, your experience, and your treatment pathway are equivalent. We need research to ensure we get the equity required"*.

Ten times more Aboriginal people than non-Aboriginal people suffer from ear diseases and hearing loss. Hearing loss impairs the development of talking and listening skills, it negatively impacts learning, affects self-esteem and behaviour, and it increases the likelihood of getting involved in the criminal justice system.

Professor Kong's passion is to make a difference by reducing the risk of hearing loss. He has seen the positive and direct impact this can have on a child's ability to learn and develop. *"The change that we see is remarkable - we can take them from limited hearing and language skills to fully functioning teenagers with real employment prospects."*

News Editors/Chiefs of Staff, please note:

WHAT: National Press Club Address

WHEN: 12:30, Tuesday 8th June 2021

WHERE: 16 National Court, Barton, Canberra.

WHO: ASMR Medallist 2021 Professor Kelvin Kong BSc, MBBS UNSW FRACS

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