

the Australian Society *for* Medical Research



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February 19, 1997

ASMR WELCOMES RESOLUTION OF NHMRC COMMITTEE CHAIR ISSUE

In response to the announcement by the Minister for Health Dr Michael Wooldridge of the new Chairs for NHMRC and its ancillary committees, and within the context of media speculation on possible interference in the appointment by Senator Harradine, the Australian Society for Medical Research announced today that it welcomes the resolution of the appointments issue. The circumstances surrounding the resolution are however outrageous. If the decision on the appointment of the chair came down to the political influence of one individual, who is neither medically or scientifically trained, then the interests of health and medical research in this country are not being adequately served.

"This issue is not about the acceptability or otherwise of any individual candidate" said Dr Scott, President ASMR. "It is about building public confidence in the process". He said, "given the severe budgetary constraints on the health and medical research system in this country, now more than ever, there is a need to focus on the issues of improving our health and medical research infrastructure. Health and medical research touches everyone in this community and the health of Australians is too important to the future of the nation to be sidelined by issues that do not relate directly to these problems."

Dr Kieran Scott
President, ASMR

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