



Government Funding for Health and Medical Research in the Spotlight

The importance of government funding for health and medical research was in the national spotlight earlier in the year, in part due to the grass roots campaign of ASMR and the unity of the medical research sector in communicating to politicians and the public. We asked three high level politicians from Government and Opposition: The Hon. Mark Butler MP — Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, The Hon. Peter Dutton MP — Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing and The Hon. Adam Bandt MP — Greens — Federal Member for Melbourne for their views on health and medical research funding.

t's an exciting time to be involved in health and medical research. Research is experiencing a significant growth phase through ICT developments and the mapping of the human genome, among other things. There is pressure for research institutes, universities and hospitals and health services to work more closely together. The disease burden continues to change with the growth of chronic diseases and the impact of an ageing population. It's critical that research be translated into improved clinical practice quickly, and that these imperatives be seen as part of the broader health reform agenda.

Since the establishment of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 75 years ago, the Commonwealth Government has been a consistent supporter of health and medical research. Government expenditure continues at record levels through the NHMRC. The 2011 Federal Budget provided a 4.3% increase in funding to the NHMRC. Furthermore the Government has committed \$700 million to building and upgrading health and medical research and training facilities across Australia. On top of this there is a significant investment by industry and State governments and, to a lesser extent, non-government organisations and through philanthropy.

The Wills Review changed the landscape for researchers in Australia. But it's been more than 10 years since that review. Given this environment, it is timely for Government to consider how we can best optimise the future environment for carrying out health and medical research in this country.



The Hon. Mark Butler MP

— Minister for Mental Health and Ageing

Following the budget I announced a review of health and medical research. Since then I have been talking to the sector about Terms of Reference for the review, and the type of people we need to engage to consider how we optimise the future of research in Australia. We need people who have a comprehensive understanding of the current investment of both government and the private sector, including industry, non-government organisations and philanthropy. We need people who can focus on what the Government's investment is buying, and how the Commonwealth government can get greater buy-in and involvement from business.

In the next few weeks I will be announcing the Terms of Reference and the panel for the review. And then it will be over to them — and you — to look at what the future holds for health and medical research in this country. It's a discussion we don't have very often — get engaged and have your say. I look forward to the debate, and to a bright future for health and medical research.

The Hon. Mark Butler MP Federal Member for Port Adelaide, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing

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The Hon. Peter Dutton MP Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing

edical research in Australia is an area of international excellence. It punches above its weight in the world. Its successes are numerous and priceless.

That its continuance, development and future could be threatened by savage Budget cuts was, until this year, unthinkable. That our current Government could even consider slashing hundreds of millions of dollars in funding to this vital area was bereft of any sensible judgement.

Governments well know that investment in health and medical research makes both good health and economic

sense with estimates that every dollar invested can return up to five dollars in long term economic benefit.

Life-saving or life-enhancing breakthroughs may come at any time, but they do not come cheaply and take years to develop.

On that basis alone, the commitment of any Government must be to ensure a sustainable and reliable source of funding that underwrites long term research projects and provides stability for a workforce that contains some of our best and brightest intellects — scientists who can easily be lured away if they are not valued here.

Over the life span of the previous Coalition Government funding for health and medical research was increased fivefold to an annual Federal provision of \$700 million. The increase in funding had bipartisan support. It was seen as a priority — one essential to Australia's ability to deliver high quality health care into the future.

The Coalition remains committed to providing predictable policy settings that are so important to those in health and medical research and at the last election promised to inject an additional \$200 million in funding and to work with the NHMRC to develop a structure where funding would be indexed.

The Government, unfortunately, has introduced uncertainty going forward and that is of great concern. It must redress that situation to ensure that Australia remains a world leader in health and medical research with all the benefits it provides across our health and education sectors.

The Hon. Peter Dutton MP Federal Member for Dickson, **Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing**



The Hon. Adam Bandt MP — Federal Member for Melbourne

t is too often the case in politics that we are required to argue the obvious. Defending funding for health and medical research is, in my view, straightforward in a country that has developed the cochlear implant, the cervical cancer vaccine, and sleep apnoea devices — not to mention Florey's role in penicillin.

The benefits of well-funded medical research to international improvements in human health are immense, but on the domestic front, a secure research stream maintains Australia's competitive strengths in attracting top scientists and investment.

Despite this logic, Australia's brightest medical scientists were required to ward off rumoured cuts of \$400m in the 2011 federal budget. I was pleased to support thousands of Australia's medical scientists, many of whom work in my electorate of Melbourne, campaign for funding. Together, we rallied in capital cities, presented the case widely to media and increased public awareness about the value of research funding. I was able to speak personally to the Prime Minister to convey my concerns about the rumoured cuts and accept a 12,000 strong petition to table in the federal Parliament.

Thankfully, this campaign was successful and the federal Government has committed to continue supporting health and medical research at existing levels. In addition, the first review of health and medical research funding has been announced. This will be an opportunity for further improvements to funding arrangements — such as longer-term grants to enable more secure employment for researchers who currently endure short-term contracts.

I am concerned about cuts of \$54.1 million to other research programs. It is disappointing that funds to the Cooperative Research Centres and the Collaborative Research Network funding programs have been cut back. This highlights the need to continue campaigning for science and research funding. I will be ready to join you in any future campaigns — however obvious the argument.

The Hon. Adam Bandt MP Federal Member for Melbourne — Greens

ASMR Research **Awards**

ASMR offers two Research Awards annually. These awards support a postgraduate student member of the ASMR nearing completion of their studies or a recently graduated (2 years maximum) postdoctoral member to undertake a short period of research in a laboratory outside of Australia (\$5,000) or in a distal laboratory (\$2,000) within Australia. The award specifically excludes support for conference attendance and travel for an extended period of postdoctoral studies. Applicants for these awards must have been members of the ASMR for at least 12 months immediately preceding the year in which the Award application is to be considered. Applications close September 29, 2011

Application forms are available from www.asmr.org.au/ Researchfund.html





ASMR President
Emma Parkinson-Lawrence
at the Melbourne MRW® Dinner

President's Report

The pressure of global economic decline coupled with the recent natural disasters created an environment where government was scrutinizing budgets of all departmental portfolios and agencies including Health and Ageing

and the NHMRC. ASMR launched its grass roots campaign on March 3rd urging all members to write to their MP's, the Treasurer and the Ministers for Finance and Health. Individual and affiliate society members as well as our associate patient groups were alerted; these networks reach over 100,000 Australian stakeholders in HMR. Medical Centres in key, strategic electorates were targeted and encouraged to display our information sheets/letters and urge patients to write to their local member. ASMR also submitted a letter, co-signed by the Australian Health and Hospitals Association, Research Australia, Business Council of Australia and Consumers Health Forum of Australia to the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

After ASMR had initiated its campaign, a report in the Adelaide Advertiser suggesting a \$400 million cut to the NHMRC budget evoked alarm in the health and medical research (HMR) sector. However, after undertaking responsible due diligence, we believe that the \$400M was a figure related to the 2008 Federal Budget and was not an amount under consideration to be cut from the 2011/12 NHMRC budget. On the back of this, the HMR community rallied together in a very public campaign of an apparently passionate, dedicated and unified sector that is working as one for the health and welfare of Australians and indeed the world population. Government maintained investment in the NHMRC but the sector must continue to educate and inform the community and government in a way which will have a positive impact beyond the scope of one federal budget. Health and medical research means many things to many people but it is primarily about the positive health and economic returns it brings to the community. A key message to community and government is that HMR underpins the whole of health and ASMR believes it is the duty of government to invest at a level appropriate to the needs of the people of Australia.

The Federal government has initiated a review of HMR in Australia. The Terms of Reference are currently being established with a final report expected by August 2012. ASMR participated in a round table research review discussion with members from agencies representing the HMR sector. Draft Terms of Reference prepared by

the government, were discussed and suggestions arising from the forum were incorporated into an updated document that was disseminated for further consultation. ASMR would like to thank those members who submitted comments to the draft document. Comments have been included in our response to government. ASMR advocates for at least another round table discussion with other HMR agencies and the expert review panel to discuss the breadth of material to be examined for each of the terms of reference. ASMRs position has been that any call for a review should have the support of all agencies representing the HMR sector and has been encouraged by the interactions thus far.

Once again ASMR MRW * in 2011 was a great success. This week provides the HMR sector a unique opportunity for demystifying the barriers between researchers, our community and government. It's a great way to show that researchers are just people trying to understand how things work and applying their findings to make the world a better place. This year's ASMR Medalist, Nobel Laureate Professor Barry Marshall, spoke passionately about personalised medicine being the future of medical research and his belief that we will be able to carry our own genome on a smart card in our pocket! There were two special moments that stood out for me this year: past ASMR presidents Dr. John Healy, Dr Peter O'Loughlin, Professor Maria Kavallaris, Associate Professors Bronwyn Kingwell and Rob Ramsay presenting highlights of the society's achievements over the last 50 years and at the ASMR Gala dinner in Launceston, when approximately 30 3rd year undergraduate students gathered around Professor Marshall listening intently as he expounded the rewards of a career in HMR. The success of ASMR MRW® is due to the dedication and hard work of the ASMR state committees, all of who volunteer their time; Catherine West and Priscilla Diment in the ASMR executive office; Maree Overall and ASN events and I would like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to all.

ASMR now turns its focus to the ASMR National Scientific Conference entitled "Indigenous health: Action on Prevention", which is being held in Cairns from the 13th to 16th November. Further details can be found in this newsletter and on the ASMR website.

ASMR is committed to supporting the professional development of mid-career health and medical research scientists and is again running executive style training in the form of a Professional Development Day. In 2011 this day will be held in venues around Australia in late October and will focus on fellowships and complementary careers. More details will soon be available on the ASMR website.

Emma Parkinson-Lawrence ASMR President

Conferences

The 5th Annual
National Dementia
Research Forum —
Dementia
Collaborative
Research Centres

An Australian Government Initiative

22-23 September 2011 Wesley Conference Centre, Pitt Street, Sydney

Keynote Speaker:
Ronald C Peterson, MD.,
PhD, Director of the Mayo
Alzheimer's Disease
Research Centre, USA.
www.dementia.unsw.edu.au/

4th New Directions in Leukaemia Research Meeting

25–28 March 2012 Novotel Twin Waters, Sunshine Coast, Queensland

www.ndlrconference.com/



Aiming for expert and fair peer review of NHMRC project grants



Professor Warwick Anderson, CEO, NHMRC

HMRC relies on researchers each year to select the best applications to fund. Researchers, the Australian Government (through the Australian National Audit Office) and the Australian public (who support our research through taxes) expect our processes to be as fair, effective, transparent and impartial as possible.

Minimising potential bias because of competing interests

The NHMRC/ARC/UA Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research identifies a conflict of interest as the "divergence between the individual interests of a person and their professional responsibilities such that an independent observer might reasonably conclude that the professional actions of that person are unduly influenced by their own interests".

As active researchers, peer reviewers may be thought to have inbuilt conflicts of interest. That is, if reviewers are applying in a funding round, they are competing for the same pool of funds as other applicants. However, the long established ethos in scientific peer review is that reviewers are expected to provide objective review and comment without bias and the Code requires all peer reviewers to act fairly, impartially and not allow personal prejudices to influence the peer review process.

We have a number of mechanisms to address conflicts of interest. NHMRC external assessors must declare potential conflicts of interest based on a summary of the application before they are given access to the full application. During the Grant Review Panel (GRP) process, members remain completely "blind" to the application and assessment of any grant application with which they have conflict of interest, both before and during the GRP meetings. They have no access to the application, peer review or rebuttals for these applications before the GRP meeting and leave the room during any discussion of these applications.

To further avoid conflicts of interest, neither Research Committee nor Council receive any detail of individual grants (or instructional or State breakdowns) when considering funding recommendations.

Gaining as much expert input as possible into the decision making of peer review panels

One of the challenges for NHMRC is the extraordinary breadth of Australian health and medical research submitted to us for potential funding, across the four pillars of biomedical, clinical, public health and health services research. Since the merging of the previous Medical Research Committee and the Public Health Research and Development Committee in 1996, all research approaches in any discipline relevant to health has been accepted by NHMRC for review. The support of research in any field or discipline across the four pillars helps us fulfil our role set out in the NHMRC Act.

This makes NHMRC a broader funding body than some other countries' medical research organisations. Due to the breadth of research submitted, NHMRC panels are almost always multidisciplinary (exceptions are those disciples such as immunology and microbiology in which some hundreds of applications are submitted each year). To address this, we use external assessors to provide the expert peer review that all members of the GRP need in their considering the applications.

Confidentiality versus transparency and addressing perceptions

We emphasise the confidentiality of peer review to protect applicants' intellectual property. It is grave misconduct for peer reviewers to disclose the contents of a grant or exploit their inside knowledge. On the other hand, NHMRC processes must be as transparent as possible and we must guard against claims that GRPs are 'inside jobs'; a claim that has been made in the past.

NHMRC balances confidentiality and transparency by ensuring that decisions on who will assess applications, the construction of GRP membership, and the final scoring of applications are undertaken by different people. To ensure that no one person unduly influences the consideration of each application, NHMRC:

- Uses the expert NHMRC Academy for independent advice on GRP members and external assessors;
- Uses independent GRP Chairs;
- Rotates GRP memberships;
- Has highly respected independent GRP observers to report independently to the CEO;
- Requires all panel members to vote individually and confidentially on specific assessment criteria for each and every grant;
- Ensures that Research Committee and Council are blind to individual grants and institutional and geographic outcomes, and
- Reports the outcomes each year in the public domain (including statistics).

This year, over 8,000 external assessors will assess 3,508

ASMR Mentoring Program

The ASMR invites members who are 2-12 years postdoctoral to participate in the ASMR Mentoring Program. Applications are accepted all year round and the program is free to ASMR members.

For additional information and application forms please visit www.asmr.org.au/Mentor.html

Professional Development Days are being planned for several cities in late October.

For more information please contact:

Dr Juliet Taylor, **ASMR Research Careers** Convenor juliett@unimelb.edu.au



Project Grant applications. Their reports will be considered by 37 separate GRPs with over 400 members. This diversity of input is an assurance that decision making is widely dispersed and not concentrated in the hands of a few individuals.

My article about the review process for Project Grants in the NHMRC *Research Tracker* newsletter, gives more detail.

In closing, I'd like to thank the thousands of Australian researchers who contributed to the peer review of all our annual funding schemes this year. Around 10 000 researchers are providing the crucial expertise to ensure that the Australian community can be assured that their tax monies support the best research possible.

Professor Warwick Anderson CEO, NHMRC

ASMR Medical Research Week® 2011

A SMR Medical Research Week® was again a huge success in 2011 thanks to the hard work and time of the ASMR State Committees and the high caliber of all the events organised. Celebrated across the country from 2nd to 11th June 2011, the week focused the attention of the nation on the research and achievements of Australia's health and medical researchers.

Outreach events such as Trivia nights, Science in the Cinema evenings, the Schools Quiz, Science in the Pub, High School Career Days held during MRW® and the inaugural Invite a Scientist to Dinner event in Victoria to be held in August, help to promote health and medical research to the general public. ASMR MRW® and the Medalist Tour received excellent media coverage this year, including radio broadcasts on 3RRR, and numerous radio and newspaper interviews, as well as the televised National Press Club Address by the 2011 ASMR Medalist Nobel Laureate Professor Barry Marshall, bringing ASMR and ASMR MRW® to the homes and cars of millions of Australians.

A primary goal of ASMR MRW® is to celebrate and acknowledge the breadth of talent amongst health and medical researchers of Australia. The Young Investigator forums, Student Conferences and Scientific Symposia held in many of our capital cities, showcased Australia's medical research and provided fabulous networking opportunities for our scientists. Many awards were presented to worthy early career investigators during the Week. Congratulations to all those recognised for excellence in Medical Research this year.



President-Elect Paul Dawson, MRW® Convenor Naomi Rogers and President Emma Parkinson-Lawrence with 2011 ASMR Medallist Nobel Laureate Professor Barry Marshall



Current and past — ASMR Presidents at the Melbourne MRW® Dinner

For many, the highlight of ASMR MRW® is the opportunity to attend one of the Gala Dinners held around the country. The opportunity to glam up and share an evening with friends and colleagues saw hundreds of researchers and friends of ASMR wine and dine at glamorous venues such as Sydney's Doltone House, the Melbourne Hilton on the Park, the Citigate Sebel Hotel in Brisbane and the Adelaide Pavilion. In addition, this year was the first time a Gala Dinner was hosted in Launceston, marking it the inaugural Gala Dinner held outside a capital city. Professor Marshall was inspirational in his addresses at these dinners, alerting us to the importance of thinking outside the square, investing in fundamental research, and persisting with our goals and research careers despite hurdles that may present along the way. He also provided insight into the benefits of health and medical research discoveries made in Australia, and how they directly benefit the Australian population. His sentiments echo the ASMR philosophy that medical research is "saving lives and saving money".

This year the Gala Dinners also gave us the opportunity to celebrate ASMR's 50th Anniversary. While there are other events planned as part of ASMR's golden celebratory year, it was wonderful to share the history and future directions of our Society with so many people around Australia at the Gala Dinners. A brief history and highlights tour of ASMR was provided by an ASMR Past President at each of the dinners. It was magnificent to showcase our activities over the past 50 years and to highlight many notable achievements by our members with so many supporters of ASMR.

Although ASMR MRW® has drawn to a close the State Committees still have many plans for further public outreach activities that will take place over the coming



Dr Tania de Koning-Ward receives the Commonwealth Health Minister's Award for Excellence in Health and Medical Research from the Hon. Mark Butler MP — Minister for Mental Health and Ageing

ASMR participation in Science Alive in South Australia and as part of the Shopping Trolley Science event in conjunction with SciTech in Western Australia (to mention but a few!). We encourage you to keep an eye on the ASMR website for further details of these and other events

months. Notably, there will be a Careers Day in NSW,

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the state committee convenors and members for their dedication, enthusiasm and hard work in planning and running ASMR scientific and community events throughout the year. Thanks also to the ASMR Directors, Cath West and Priscilla Diment from the ASMR Executive Office, as well as Maree Overall and her team at ASN Events for all their help and hard work in helping make ASMR MRW® a huge success.

Naomi Rogers, Steven Polyak and Kristen Nowak — **ASMR Medical Research Week®** and Media 2011

Prize Winners from ASMR MRW® 2011

Prizes for excellence in health and medical research were awarded across the nation during ASMR MRW®. Some of the worthy winners are listed below:

National

Commonwealth Health Minister's Award for Excellence in Health and Medical Research Tania de Koning-Ward, Deakin University

ACT

Best Oral Presentation: Christina Spry

Oral Presentation Runner-Up: Sharon Pok

Best Poster Presentation: Tegan Dolstra

New South Wales

The University of Sydney Medal for Best Overall Presentation: **Frances Byrne**

NSW Government Postdoctoral Award for Excellence in Medical Research:

Justin Lees

Miltenyi Biotec Award for Best **Student Oral Presentation: Meredith Kelleher**

The University of Western Sydney Student Presentation Prize:

Jonathan Burdach

Queensland

Queensland Health and Medical Research Awards

Clinical Researcher Category, Joint Winners:

Suzanne Chambers and Michael **Breakspear**

Senior Researcher Category: **Susan Woods**

Post-Doctoral Researcher Category: **Kelly Anne Smith**

Post-Graduate Student Category: **Kylie Alexander**

South Australia

Ross Wishart Memorial Award: Sarah Thompson

Best Oral Presentation: Jacqueline Noll

Best Oral (Early Career Researcher) Presentation:

Melanie Sutton-McDowall

Best Oral (Honours) Presentation: **Erin McGillic**

Victoria

Victorian Premier's Award for **Health and Medical Research:** Wen Oiu

ASMR Victorian Student Symposium Best Oral Presentation:

Sarah Wilkinson

Western Australia

Department of Health Awards: Javier Koh and Melanie McCoy

Curtin University Awards:

Jasreen Kular, Russell Wong and Christopher O'Dea

Edith Cowan University Award: Vinith Menezes

University of Western Australia Award:

Maria Albertsen

Murdoch University Award: Alison Louw

partnership with Merck Millipore, invite early career medical researchers to apply for an award of AUD\$6000 for expenses related to travel to an

international meeting.

The Merck Millipore

Award for Medical

The Australian Society for

Medical Research, in

Research

The Merck Millipore Award for Medical Research recognises outstanding translational medical research conducted by early career postdoctoral scientists

For eligibility requirements and to obtain an application form, go to: www.asmr.org.au/ Awards.html

Applications should be emailed to Dr Rachel Burt: burt@wehi.edu.au by 5:00 p.m. on Friday 7th October 2011.

ASMR 50th National Scientific Conference

INDIGENOUS HEALTH: ACTION on Prevention

Cairns Convention Centre, Cairns, Queensland

November 13th – 16th

Sessions to include:

- Primary and preventative health care
- Mental and psychosocial health
- Maternal and child health
- Infectious disease
- Amplifiers of chronic disease

2011 Firkin Orator:

Sir Mason Durie Massey University, New Zealand

2011 Edwards Orator: Dr Sandra Eades

Baker IDI, Australia

To submit your abstract and register please visit: www.asmr-nsc.org.au



A look back at the Campion Ma Playoust Memorial Award

As a PhD student in the laboratory in Professor Thomas Kay at Walter and Eliza Hall Institute, I was encouraged to present my work on a regular basis. It was towards the end of 2002 when my research projects were moving at full pace. This was also the year when the Australian Health and Medical Research Congress was held in Melbourne. The congress was an excellent opportunity for me to obtain feedback on my work from an external audience. What I presented turned to be of interest to quite a broad audience, in part because of the novel technology I was employing at the time, and I was presented with the Campion Ma Playoust Memorial Award at this meeting.

The award was obviously very gratifying, but it also served two important functions. Firstly, scientists outside my own institute became aware of me, which helped with the establishment of professional networks. Secondly, the monetary prize helped fund a tour of potential postdoc laboratories in United States. I felt that it was very important to get further training outside

Australia. I chose to go to the laboratory of Dr. Dan Littman at New York University, and ended up staying for six years. It was an exceptional scientific experience. It was also fun, because we had access to cutting edge technologies and equipment long before most others.

I returned to Australian at the start of 2010 to the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute, armed with all that I had learnt overseas. My research group has been growing steadily ever since. It is composed of a mixture of wet and dry lab scientists and students, and we continue to work on a variety of scientific questions.

Looking back, I have to say that the Campion Ma Playoust Memorial award, and the ASMR more generally, was an important facilitator of my career development. It is heartening see that up and coming young scientists of today continue to benefit from the award and from the other activities of the ASMR.



Dr. Mark Chong, Campion Ma Playoust Memorial Award winner 2002

Dr. Mark Chong, QEII Fellow, Walter and Eliza Hall Institute

The Campion Ma Playoust Memorial Award formed part of a momentous end to my PhD. I attended the Australian Health and Medical Research Congress in Brisbane in 2008 where the ASMR had their annual scientific program. I remember giving my talk vividly as it was in the biggest auditorium I had ever seen and I don't think I got much sleep the night before! It was such an honour to receive the award and to be placed amongst a group of successful scientists whom had also been recipients in previous years.

I began to look for jobs over the months that followed receiving the Campion Ma Playoust Memorial Award. The economic downturn had started and it was clear that during this time every award and publication was an asset for a PhD student to help get you noticed and make you more attractive to employers. I was fortunate to receive an offer for postdoctoral work at the School of Women's and Infants' Health at the University of Western Australia. As an added bonus when I was told of my offer of employment, I was given the opportunity to move to the United States to work with their collaborators at Cincinnati Children's Hospital for a period of time, and then return back to the group in Perth. The collaboration between these groups has existed for 21 years, and still continues, with the team producing very high quality research in premature birth and neonatal respiratory care. I packed my bags, got my visa and headed to the United States. Cincinnati itself was a challenging city, however the facilities available and wealth of knowledge to be gained at Cincinnati Children's cannot be spoken of highly enough. My mentors Professors Alan Jobe and Suhas Kallapur

provided me with a unique opportunity to further my scientific training and to both I am truly grateful.

After my time in Cincinnati, I returned to my current position and am continuing my postdoctoral research in Perth. I am now part of the Centre for Neonatal Research and Education based at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, directed by Professors Jane Pillow and Karen Simmer. My research focuses on neonatal respiratory advancement, predominantly using molecular techniques to identify various ventilation strategies that give the least amount of injury to infants already compromised by breathing difficulties. Professor Pillow has given me opportunities to be involved in both bench science and clinical research in our team and has provided me with the chance to expand my strengths in areas beyond science. I have recently been accepted into an MBA program at the University of Western Australia, which I will complete while continuing my current research.

While talking with my mentors over the years, on more than one occasion they have said that when they looked at my CV as a potential candidate, a stand out point was my awards and in particular the Campion Ma Playoust Memorial Award. I have no doubt that receiving the Campion Ma Playoust Memorial Award in 2008 gave me an extra edge and has resulted in my successes thus far.

Dr. Clare Berry, Research Fellow, Centre for Neonatal Research and Education, School of Women's and Infants' Health, The University of Western Australia



Dr. Clare Berry, Campion Ma Playoust Memorial Award winner 2008



ASMR Directors 2011

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Dr Antiopi Varelias — Queensland Convenor

Contact details from www.asmr.org.au/Statebranch.html

Call for nominations of Directors of ASMR

Nominations are now being called for election to the ASMR Board. Seven current directors Terms of Office expire at the November 2011 AGM. Further information and the Nomination Form are available at *http://www.asmr.org.au/Nom11.pdf*. Nominations are required at the executive office by no later than September 1st.

The ASMR is the peak professional body representing medical researchers in Australia. The Society has a long and successful track record of public, political and scientific advocacy with a reputation for integrity second to none. ASMR has been a key player in the NHMRC Budget successes of the last twelve years (doubling of government investment in 1999 and 2006) and will continue to pursue appropriate investment in NHMRC through clearly articulated and evidence based submissions supported by the sector. This is an important and exciting time to be on the ASMR board and we do encourage a wide representation of the membership from across all sectors. Directors are elected for a term of two years and must be prepared to accept portfolio responsibilities and attend three board meetings a year in March, September and at the National Scientific Conference in November. Being an ASMR director is a rewarding experience and an opportunity to make a solid and valuable contribution to H&MR in Australia.

Affiliate Members of ASMR

Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI) Australasian College for Emergency Medicine Australasian College of Dermatologists

Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine

Australasian Gene Therapy Society Inc Australasian Menopause Society

Australasian Sleep Association
Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy

Australasian Society for HIV Medicine Inc Australasian Society for Immunology

Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases

Australasian Society for Psychiatric Research

Australasian Society of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists and

Toxicologists

Australian and New Zealand Association of Neurologists Australian and New Zealand Bone & Mineral Society
Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists

Australian and New Zealand Obesity Society

Australian and New Zealand Society for Blood Transfusion Australian and New Zealand Society for Cell & Developmental Biology Inc Australian and New Zealand Society of Nephrology

Australian Atherosclerosis Society Australian Diabetes Society

Australian Neuroscience Society Inc

Australian Physiological Society

Australian Rheumatology Association Australian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Inc

Australian Vascular Biology Society

Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand

Clinical Oncológical Society of Australia

Ear Science Institute Australia
Endocrine Society of Australia
Fertility Society of Australia
Haematology Society of Australia and New Zealand

Health Innovations Research Insitute (HIRi)

High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia

Human Genetics Society of Australasia Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation Institute of Mind & Behavioural Sciences

Lions Eye Institute Limited

Nationál Association of Research Fellows

Nutrition Society of Australia Inc Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand

Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obestetricians and Gynaecologists Royal College of Nursing Australia

Society for Free Radical Research (Australasia)

Society of Obstetric Medicine of Australia and New Zealand

The Australian College of Ambulance Professionals

The Australian Medical Students' Association Ltd The Australian Society for Parasitology

The Bionics Institute of Australia

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia The Society for Reproductive Biology

Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand Transplantation Society of Australia and New Zealand

Western Australia Biomedical Research Institute

Associate Members of ASMR

Arthritis Australia

Australian Red Cross Blood Service Australian Respiratory Council

Clifford Craig Medical Research Trust

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