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PROMINENT RESEARCHERS AND SUPPORTERS OF WESLEY MEDICAL RESEARCH IN 2015 ANNOUNCED



Peter Allen, WMR Board Chairman, presenting award to Ms Vanessa Thorsen from The Thorsen Foundation for the VIP Supporter of the Year



His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Chief Patron of WMR pictured in the middle with Mrs Bobbie Brazil (left) and Mr Lyn Brazil (right)

COVER STORY

Over 80 guests who are prominent drivers, researchers and supporters in the medical research arena and beyond gathered to celebrate collaborative achievements of WMR at the Annual Achievements Function on 24th February.

The Governor of Queensland, His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, presented awards in recognition of the outstanding personal and professional contributions made towards improving patient care and quality of life. The Governor is the Chief Patron of Wesley Medical Research.



Winners of UCH Paper of the Year – Dr John Lumley (left) and Dr Andrew Stevenson (right) with Dr Susanna Mantovani, winner of WMR Researcher of the Year

"Tonight is the occasion to recognise our valuable supporters and collaborators who have displayed tremendous effort in advancing medical research and making WMR a leader in the field of clinical research. As many of us will understand, medical research is never a solo effort. Much financial support and people power are required to be able to relieve patients of their pain and suffering as quickly as possible," said Prof David Paterson, CEO & Director of Research of Wesley Medical Research (WMR).

Dr Jamie Trapp was awarded the Highest Impact Paper funded by WMR for his investigation into the accuracy and precision of radiation beams in radiotherapy. Dr John Lumley and Dr Andrew Stevenson were awarded the UnitingCare Health (UCH) Paper of the Year 2015 for their research publication on rectal cancer. Dr Susanna Mantovani took home the WMR Researcher of the Year 2015 for publishing the greatest number of high impact factor papers as a WMR-funded researcher.

The Thorsen Foundation won the VIP Supporter of the Year 2015 for their enduring commitment to endeavours at Wesley Medical Research in women's health, prostate cancer and neurology throughout the past years. Mr Lyn and Mrs Bobbie Brazil from the Brazil Family Foundation won the Philanthropist of the Year 2015 for injecting \$5 million into neurological research.

Five clinical researcher awards were announced. Prof Pam McCombe, Dr Sarah Olson, Dr Les Thompson, Dr James Cameron and Prof MaryLou Fleming were recognised for their substantial voluntary contribution to the Clinical Trials Centre, Tissue Bank, Fundraising, Data Management Office and Research at WMR respectively.

The Media Partner of the Year 2015 was Westside News. Mr Aaron Davis, WMR's Chief Operations Officer was awarded Organisational Supporter of the Year 2015 for his valuable impact in helping the organisation achieve its mission.

FROM THE CEO

The first three months of 2016 have been busy and exciting for our researchers.

As you know, Wesley Medical Research (WMR) has a clear mission to promote research across all of the hospitals within UnitingCare Health (UCH) – The Wesley Hospital, St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital, the Sunshine Coast Private Hospital and St Stephen's Hospital, Hervey Bay. Clinician-researchers at these hospitals both care for patients and undertake research to improve treatment strategies.

In February, we celebrated the success of these clinician-researchers at our annual Achievements Function. Nominees for our "blue-ribbon" UCH Researcher of the Year Award were Professors John Fraser, Pamela McCombe and Michael Schuetz. Professor Fraser, who is Director of the Intensive Care Unit at St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital, was the author of more than 30 scientific publications in 2015 and was awarded this year's UCH Researcher of the Year. You will read about the other awardees elsewhere in this Research Update. All nominees and award recipients are to be congratulated for their outstanding contribution to improving patient care.

2016 PROMISES TO BE A VERY PRODUCTIVE YEAR FOR WESLEY MEDICAL RESEARCH.

The popular Advocates evenings are a wonderful opportunity to hear about our advances in health and medical research. This year we will also introduce Wesley Medical Research Breakthrough events, at suburban venues, to further inform the public about our research efforts. I look forward to leading WMR through the year, as our researchers contribute to improving the health of people in Queensland and further afield.

**PROF DAVID PATERSON,
CEO/DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH**



FROM THE CHAIRMAN



What diverse opportunities there are now to support the Wesley Medical Research's ABB Tissue Bank - opportunities not even remotely conceived when it was established 10 years ago.

The Tissue Bank continues to provide cancer tissue samples, blood and related clinical data to researchers. It has grown and broadened greatly into the largest bio-repository in Queensland and a nationally significant facility for researchers.

ABB AND ITS PREDECESSOR MINCOM PROVIDED THE SUBSTANTIAL AND LONG-TERM FUNDING NEEDED TO SUSTAIN THE TISSUE BANK THROUGH ITS FORMATIVE YEARS, WITH VALUABLE EARLY INPUT FROM SEALY AUSTRALIA.

The expanding Tissue Bank now presents multiple opportunities for donors and sponsors – not only to carry on ABB's fine underpinning sponsorship but also to help fund the general cancer, melanoma, brain and autism specialties, specific equipment and other emerging needs.

The work of Wesley Medical Research relies on people and businesses for funding. There is no more rewarding and direct way to contribute to research than to help run and grow the Tissue Bank.

**PETER ALLEN
CHAIRMAN**

DID YOU KNOW?

2820 patients have consented to donate tissue to the WMR Tissue Bank for medical research

Motor neuron disease **strikes 400** Australians each year

SUPPORTING THE ABB WMR TISSUE BANK – AN INVALUABLE RESOURCE FOR RESEARCHERS

The ABB WMR Tissue Bank has been playing a major role in accelerating the processes of finding better diagnostics, treatments and cures across a broad range of clinical disciplines since its establishment in 2007.

With the funding and support from ABB (formerly Ventyx and Mincom) since 2011, the Tissue Bank has not only established a strong foundation, but it has also grown and flourished into becoming one of the key bio-resources in Queensland and the state's biggest tissue repository for medical research.

In 2015, the ABB WMR Tissue Bank supported over 36 research projects in cancer, fertility, men's & women's health, nutrition and neurology, and expanded with the creation of three new specific tissue banks. The Australasian Skin Cancer Tissue Bank (ASCTB) is the first to collect both melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer samples in Australasia. The Queensland Brain Tumour Bank (QBTB)

is a collaborative venture with neurosurgeons across Brisbane, led by Dr Sarah Olson, aiming to collect and make available tumours in the brain and the central nervous system for research into cures or treatments. Launching officially at the end of March 2016 is the Australian Autism Biobank, an essential element to Autism CRC, a nationwide autism research program.

The continuous achievements and new ventures of the WMR Tissue Bank would not be possible without vital funding from ABB in the past five years. As their tenure of funding the WMR Tissue Bank comes to an end, we ask for your support in securing the continuous operations of this valuable research facility and resource for the coming years.



Tissue Bank Laboratory Assistant Rebecca Rogers explaining storage of tissue samples in -80C freezers.

The WMR Tissue Bank supports research across a broad range of clinical disciplines. Whether you are interested in ovarian cancer, prostate cancer, neurology, cardiovascular research or rehabilitation, you can direct your donation to those areas within our Tissue Bank and help provide ongoing services to researchers in a specific field.

Your donation today will accelerate research into discovering treatments and cures for a variety of diseases and conditions tomorrow. All funds raised will go directly into the running costs of the WMR Tissue Bank.

PLEDGE YOUR SUPPORT NOW

Visit www.wesleyresearch.org.au /donate or call our fundraising office on **07 3721 1774** to arrange bank deposits or enquire about sponsorship opportunities (in part or in full).

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NEUROLOGICAL RESEARCH AT WMR



Neurological research promises to be an exciting and highly productive area for WMR in 2016. Supported by a number of philanthropists, our neurology research programs have enabled neurologists and other

researchers in Australia's leading academic institutions to improve the lives of people with neurological diseases and those who care for them.

In late 2015, the Brazil Family gifted \$5 million for research into neurodegenerative diseases, particularly motor neurone disease and multiple sclerosis.

FOLLOWING NATIONAL ADVERTISING, 25 APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING FROM WMR HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FOR NEUROLOGIC RESEARCH PROJECTS. SUCCESSFULLY FUNDED PROJECTS WILL BE ANNOUNCED LATER THIS YEAR.

In 2014, Mr John and Mrs Wendy Thorsen made a significant financial contribution for research into Huntington's Disease and Friedreich's Ataxia. This research focuses on the sleep patterns of patients affected by these conditions and you can read more about it on P.5 of this newsletter.

WMR fosters a strong culture of research at UnitingCare Health (UCH) Hospitals – The Wesley Hospital, St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital, The Sunshine Coast Private Hospital and St Stephen's Hospital, Hervey Bay. These hospitals are blessed with a number of Australia's leading neurologists who care for patients with conditions such as stroke, Parkinson's Disease, motor neurone disease, Huntington's Disease, multiple sclerosis, chronic headaches and epilepsy. Working closely with allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists and speech therapists, clinicians are continuing to improve the lives and care of patients with neurological conditions.

DR JAMIE TRAPP CONTRIBUTES TO MEDICAL RESEARCH WITH WMR FUNDING

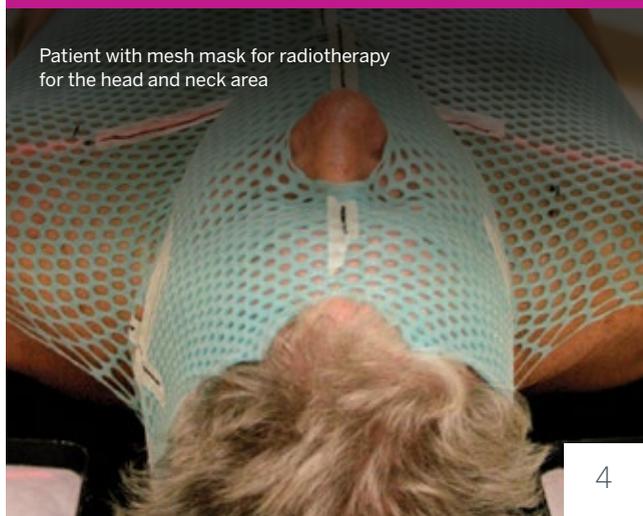
Awarded the Highest Impact Paper funded by WMR at the Achievements Function 2016 for publishing five papers with a high impact factor in 2015, Dr Jamie Trapp and his research team are looking to bring the discoveries from their investigation into radiation beams in radiotherapy treatments to patients in the near future.

"This research was driven by the desire to deliver better radiotherapy to patients; as physicists, the way we can contribute is to improve the radiotherapy beams," said Dr Jamie Trapp. A major challenge of radiotherapy treatment is to deliver a radiation dose that can irradiate the whole tumour while simultaneously avoiding or minimising irradiation of healthy tissue close by. This can be particularly difficult for tumours with an irregular shape or for those located in close proximity to critical structures.

Researchers Dr Jamie Trapp, Prof Christian Langton, Dr Richard Knight, Dr Tanya Kairn and Mr John Kenny have been investigating the accuracy and precision of radiation beams used in radiotherapy treatments since 2011 with hopes to improve outcomes for patients.

"Our enthusiastic team of physicists and radiation oncologists want to improve radiotherapy so it can become an option for more patients in the future, and with fewer side effects," Dr Trapp said.

Patient with mesh mask for radiotherapy for the head and neck area



PATIENT & RESEARCHER: FROM BOTH ENDS OF CLINICAL RESEARCH

The WMR Clinical Trials Centre drives the translation of scientific research results into clinical applications. Healthcare-related trials are conducted to evaluate new ways of managing a disease for both tolerability and effectiveness. With the strong focus in clinical research at WMR, the Clinical Trials Centre forms an important part of our research.

A research nurse at the WMR Clinical Trials Centre, Tracy Grierson, discovered what it is like to be a patient and a researcher for the same trial simultaneously.

"I found it fascinating. I learned things about my physiology that you normally wouldn't have access to. As part of the protocol, I had to sit in a chilled room for 3 hours to make me uncomfortably cold before undergoing PET scans. It was gruelling and the cold was unpleasant, but it reminded me of the need to provide a thorough explanation of the more onerous activities people may be asked to tackle in a trial and how it may make them feel."

"This patient experience was very useful for the collection of data from clinical trials as a researcher. Without brave volunteers we would not have the advances in healthcare we enjoy today. As a researcher, working with new medications in trials is like peering into a crystal ball and seeing our potential future."

THE WMR CLINICAL TRIALS TEAM IS CURRENTLY RECRUITING FOR AN INFECTED DIABETIC FOOT ULCER STUDY.

Visit www.wesleyresearch.org.au/CTregister to register your interest.

SLEEP PATTERNS IN PATIENTS WITH FRIEDREICH'S ATAXIA AND HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE.

Huntington's disease (HD) and Friedreich's ataxia (FA) are two devastating and terminal diseases. Unfortunately there is no cure for either disease, which leads to a sense of deep frustration for patients and their families.

Our understanding of the cause of symptoms of these diseases is still evolving. Although considered primarily neurological, we now know that non-neurological symptoms can develop before the disease is apparent or diagnosed. Sleep and circadian rhythms are one of the key aspects found to differ in these pathologies, and can provide explanation to the patients' immune function, respiratory, metabolic and neural alterations and reduced quality of life.

WMR Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Dr Susanna Mantovani, is analysing the sleep-awake patterns and the circadian rhythms of HD and FA patients by comparing this data with those of the healthy general population. A better understanding of sleep-wake and circadian disturbance will improve current clinical practice through earlier detection with the emergence of and changes in symptoms. These discoveries are anticipated to result in earlier and more effective interventions to improve patients' quality of life.



WMR WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE THORSEN FOUNDATION FOR SUPPORTING DR SUSANNA MANTOVANI AND SPONSORING RESEARCH INTO THESE RARE, NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS.

DID YOU KNOW?

25 Australians are diagnosed with neurodegenerative diseases everyday on average, and one in seven of those will be under 50 years of age.

CHRISTMAS AT INDOOROOPILLY WRAPS UP \$21K FOR CHILDREN'S MEDICAL RESEARCH



Ms Leah Mienert, Centre Manager, Indooroopilly Shopping Centre presents cheque to Prof David Paterson, CEO & Director of Research at WMR.

Shoppers at Indooroopilly Shopping Centre opened their hearts and pockets over 24 days in December and raised \$21,758 for children's medical research projects at Wesley Medical Research (WMR).

Customers were invited to make a donation in return for having their gifts wrapped in designer wrapping papers from Camilla, Sambag and Manning Cartella prints.

A TEAM OF 150 VOLUNTEERS RECRUITED BY WMR EASED THE LOAD ON THOUSANDS OF BUSY CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS PREPARING FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON.

One of the WMR volunteers summed up the thoughts of many: "It felt good listening to customer's stories about Christmas. Some lovely stories and some sad, but I felt humbled that people shared them with such honesty. Most of all people were happy, joyous for the season, and excited about the celebrations ahead."

BEQUEST: A TANGIBLE GIFT TO FUTURE GENERATIONS

Planning for the future is important, and your decision to leave a bequest to WMR is an enduring investment that can be directed to a range of vital research programs and projects.

Bequests received in the past have made possible our international collaborative lymph node imaging in prostate cancer research project (MAGNIFI) and a range of projects in cardiovascular research.

If you have already included a bequest to WMR in your Will or are considering it, please let us know. We would like to thank you personally and share our appreciation with you.

Apart from supporting researchers and clinicians, we believe in sharing our knowledge by providing opportunities to hear from our CEO and experts in various clinical disciplines.

If you have left a gift for WMR or nominated WMR as a beneficiary in your Will, you can become a member of the CEO's Circle.

If you, your family and friends are interested in volunteering a few hours for Mothers' Day gift wrapping in late April and early May, we would love to hear from you.

Your support will aid women's medical research projects.

Please send your name, email address and mobile number to

rknapp@wesleyresearch.com.au

or phone **07 3721 1774**.

CEO's Circle members have a profound impact on WMR.

As a member you will receive:

- An invitation to a private dinner hosted by the CEO
- Personal acknowledgment of your gift by the CEO
- Special recognition in donor lists
- Opportunity to meet researchers at WMR at the Advocate Events and Achievement Functions.

All notifications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Your donation through a bequest is a generous and powerful gift leaving a lasting legacy which will be cherished beyond your lifetime.

If you would like more information on making a bequest, please call the Bequest office on **3721 1774**.