



Media Statement



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Michelle O'Byrne
Minister for Health

Professor Daryl Le Grew
Vice Chancellor, UTAS

North West UTAS radiation science scholarships launched today

A scholarship program designed to ensure the North West retains university graduates who are trained to operate specialised equipment including a future MRI machine and linear accelerator was officially launched today.

Round One of the Elphinstone Scholarship in Medical Radiation Sciences was jointly launched today by the University of Tasmania, the Elphinstone Group, the Tasmanian Government and the North West Area Health Service, at the University of Tasmania's Rural Clinical School.

The \$1.2 million bonded scholarship program will run for six years and will be co-funded by the Elphinstone Group and the Tasmanian Government.

"The Tasmanian Government is determined to invest in the health outcomes of people living on the North West Coast," Ms O'Byrne said.

"Together with the Australian Government, we are investing more than \$30 million in a new Cancer Care Centre at North West Regional Hospital (NWRH) to provide this region with comprehensive cancer care services.

"A future magnetic imaging machine (MRI) has also been funded for the NWRH through a generous donation by the Elphinstone Group and family.

"To provide these services in the North West we need to invest in the training of specialised health professionals.

"Today's launch is an important step in the joint investment plan for the future of cancer care services in this region," Ms O'Byrne said.

University of Tasmania Vice-Chancellor, Professor Daryl Le Grew, welcomed the announcement today saying that the scholarships would provide significant financial support to students to pursue studies in medical radiation sciences.

“The University is committed to serving the needs of all Tasmanians. This will especially help our students gain the knowledge and skills required to forge a career in medical radiation sciences to service in particular the North West Coast,” Prof Le Grew said.

Scholarships will be offered to two North West Year 12 students who gain a place to study a Bachelor of Medical Radiation Sciences at the University of Tasmania.

In return, the students will enter into a contract with the North West Area Health Service (NWAHS) to work in the North West region for a three year period, beginning within five years of graduation, subject to employment positions being available within that time.

Prof Le Grew said the Elphinstone Scholarship covers all HECS fees, accommodation, transport and other associated costs, including text books, for the duration of the students’ studies.

Successful scholarship recipients will also be given employment within the NWAHS during university holidays to encourage them to retain links with the region.

Ms O’Byrne said the Tasmanian Government was grateful to the Elphinstone Group and family for their generous donation to the scholarship program, and their earlier donation of \$1.3m towards an MRI machine.

“Elphinstone Group Executive Chairman Dale Elphinstone is passionate about the provision of cancer services on the North West Coast,” Ms O’Byrne said.

“The Tasmanian Government would like to thank him for his generosity and foresight in contributing to this valuable scholarship program.”

The structure of the Elphinstone Scholarship in Medical Radiation Sciences (4.6 year degree) is as follows:

- Year 1 and 2 (UTAS, Launceston campus) - \$20,000 per year to cover accommodation and travel, HECS fees and an allowance for books and equipment.
- Year 3 and 4 (Charles Sturt University, Wagga): \$21,000 per year to cover accommodation and air travel, HECS fees and an allowance for books and equipment.
- Year 5 residency (6-8 months) - \$14,000 to cover accommodation, HECS fees and an allowance for books and equipment.

Professor Le Grew said that for the first two years of this scholarship program, applications will be open to second year Medical Radiation Science students as well as Year 12 students, so as not to disadvantage those students who had already begun their degree.

Applications will be open until late November. To access an application form for the Elphinstone Scholarship in Medical Radiation Sciences, visit www.utas.edu.au/foundation

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