Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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New database designed to drive better outcomes for national health sector, thousands of patients

The University of Tasmania has joined the national Wound Management Innovation Cooperative Research Centre (Wound CRC) in a venture focused on an issue which costs the health sector $3 billion per annum, and afflicts 430,000 Australians at any given time.

Wound CRC Chief Executive Officer Dr Ian Griffiths said the University was chosen because of its strength in health research coupled with innovative use of data, along with a track record of working effectively at the interface of research and industry.

Under the two-year project, led by Senior Research Fellow Dr Ivan Bindoff, the CRC, University and industry partners will produce a database to capture, analyse and drive improvements in wound management at both a sectoral and individual level.

“One of the issues we have now, because wound management falls across a range of health disciplines, is a lack of centrally available data,” Dr Griffiths said.

“Much of the recording of wound management differs from place to place and it is often in hard copy. This makes it difficult to get a clear picture, to establish benchmarks and identify areas for improvement.

“The CRC deployed research-based best practice into clinical settings and have found significant patient improvement and cost efficiencies. We know there is scope for improvement.

“Health professionals, researchers and the industry sector, both nationally and internationally, are already expressing interest in this development.”

The partnership and project were announced today at the University of Tasmania attended by leading national and global wound care solutions providers from 3M, Hartmann, and Acelity.
University Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Brigid Heywood said a series of projects by Dr Bindoff, using technology to drive better community and individual health outcomes, formed the basis of the CRC’s confidence in the partnership.

“Our University is demonstrably very good at working with other organisations and industry to generate innovation which creates value or provides solutions to significant problems,” Professor Heywood said.

“Tasmania is quite distinctive as a research environment because of its small scale and connectedness, but large and complex enough to make such research meaningful.

“We see this project as an example of what is possible if we get the Tasmanian knowledge economy right.”

Dr Bindoff, a University of Tasmania alumnus, has been responsible for delivering several significant eHealth projects. Dr Bindoff’s team has a strong record in delivering projects that leverage previously untapped sources of health and medical data in innovative ways to drive improvements in healthcare.

More recently they’ve also been making use of games technology to motivate behavior change. He and his team developed Quittr, an innovative smartphone game that rewards players for engaging in behaviors which help them stop smoking.

“The University’s specific strengths in health - along with data, knowledge and decision-making systems - makes it the ideal environment for my research interests,” Dr Bindoff said.

“The high level of connectedness with Tasmania’s health system, along with the number of co-appointments between the University and health service providers, makes work possible here that would be a challenge, or not possible at all, elsewhere in the country.

“When properly designed and applied, technology can improve outcomes across the board – a better experience for the healthcare provider, better data for the decision makers, and most importantly, improved health for the patient.”

**Information released by:**
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