

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Monday, 9 November 2015

University of Tasmania attracts \$6.78 million for health and medical research

The University of Tasmania's national and world standing in health and medical research will be driven further by \$6.78 million in Federal funding announced today.

Funded projects will cover a range of areas from blindness, dementia and cardiovascular health, to whether krill oil can delay the need for knee surgery.

Announced today, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grants were secured by University of Tasmania researchers in the Faculty of Health and the Menzies Institute for Medical Research.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Brigid Heywood said the grants were highly competitive and the University's success spoke to the quality of the institution's research.

"Our University is committed to delivering research that has a real impact for the community in Tasmania and around the world," Professor Heywood said.

"This funding, which represents a significant investment in medical research in Tasmania, will deliver exactly that – new ideas and new knowledge that will one day help to improve the health of untold numbers of people."

"Our University has an excellent reputation in health and medical research and we continue to strengthen and build on that standing."

The results announced today follow last month's announcement of NHMRC Dementia Fellowship grants, in which the University secured more than \$1.5 million in funding for two projects.

NHMRC Projects

- Associate Professor Kathryn Burdon (Menzies Institute for Medical Research), *Gene identification for Keratoconus – a blinding eye disease*, \$912,880.
- Professor Graeme Jones (Menzies Institute for Medical Research), *A randomised trial of krill oil for osteoarthritis of the knee*, \$751,491.
- Doctor John Lin (Faculty of Health), *Detection and manipulation of neuronal activities with a synthetic optogenetic activity-reporting transcription system*, \$391,012.
- Doctor Costan Magnussen (Menzies Institute for Medical Research), *Understanding the early-life pathways for adult type-2 diabetes using existing data from seven cohorts of the International Childhood Cardiovascular Cohort (i3C) Consortium*, \$336,419.
- Professor James Vickers (Faculty of Health), *The Tasmanian Healthy Brain Project: a longitudinal intervention study to reduce the risk of ageing-related cognitive decline and dementia*, \$878,792.

Early Career Fellowship

- Doctor Martin Schultz (Menzies Institute for Medical Research), *EXERTION: the EXERcise stress Test collaboration*, \$314,644.

Career Development Fellowship

- Associate Professor Alex Hewitt (Menzies Institute for Medical Research/Faculty of Health), *Molecular profiling of blinding diseases*, \$463,652.

Research Fellowship

- Professor Alison Venn (Menzies Institute for Medical Research), *Epidemiological approaches to improve understanding of the causes, prevention and management of cardiovascular disease*, \$622,655.

Practitioner Fellowship

- Associate Professor Alex Hewitt (Menzies Institute for Medical Research/Faculty of Health), *Molecular profiling to identify therapeutic targets for blinding diseases*, \$467,961.

The above funding totals represent the individual grants awarded. This funding brings with it additional research block funding making a combined total of \$6.78 million to