

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Menzies welcomes international expert in nutrition and disease

One of Australia's foremost experts on the role of nutrition in disease is to join the University of Tasmania's Menzies Institute for Medical Research.

Professor Wendy Oddy is a scientist of international renown and is currently based at the Telethon Kids Institute in Western Australia. She will join Menzies as Professor of Nutritional Epidemiology in December this year.

Professor Oddy leads the nutrition research in the West Australian Pregnancy Cohort (Raine) Study, based at the University of Western Australia. The cohort was established between 1989 and 1991 to determine how events during pregnancy and childhood influence health in later life. Using data from this study, which is entering its 26th year, and from numerous other Menzies-based studies, Professor Oddy's work at Menzies will focus on the impacts of nutrition on health in infancy, childhood, adolescence and adulthood.

Professor Oddy said she was honoured to be appointed as the inaugural Professor of Nutritional Epidemiology at Menzies, where she will lead the new Nutritional Epidemiology Group. "I hope that my role as a public health nutritionist will strengthen the very significant ties that Menzies has with the community, with the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services and in translating research outcomes into practice and policy. It is my intention to expand leadership and knowledge at Menzies of the relationship between nutrition and disease, from infancy to adulthood," Professor Oddy said.

Professor Oddy completed her PhD in 2000 on the relationship between breastfeeding and childhood asthma. She has also conducted research into the nutritional determinants of heart disease and mental health risk.

The Menzies Director, Professor Tom Marwick, said Professor Oddy would bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to Menzies. "Professor Oddy has an outstanding research record in Australia and internationally and we are proud to be welcoming her to Menzies. Her area of expertise fits very well with our population health research and our

determination to focus on the illnesses that have the greatest impact on the Tasmanian community.”

Professor Oddy is visiting Menzies this week.

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