

The Menzies Foundation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THIRD MENZIES RESEARCH CENTRE TO BE ESTABLISHED

The Sir Robert Menzies Memorial Foundation has announced a third Menzies Research Centre - the Menzies Centre for Public Health Policy and Practice - an independent think-tank to examine the performance and community expectations of the nation's health system.

A grant of \$675,000 over five years has been awarded jointly to The Australian National University and the University of Sydney.

The joint venture will be under the direction of Mr Robert Wells at the ANU and Professor Stephen Leeder at the University of Sydney.

The Menzies Centre for Public Health Policy and Practice will undertake research in such fields as the financing of health systems and the effects of spending priorities on the equity and the appropriateness in health care.

Mr Robert Wells said the centre aims to provide the Australian people with a better understanding of the health system and what it provides.

"Our aim is to bring independent, informed and balanced debate into health policy and one of our key activities will be an annual Sir Robert Menzies Health Policy Colloquium, which will bring experts and the public together to look into the state of health policy in Australia," he said.

Professor Stephen Leeder said the new centre would undertake data analysis to form a clear picture of what health care is provided in Australian hospitals and in primary care – its effects for example in medication prescribing, with the aim of providing better patient care.

"But we're not just conducting research, we also want to be involved in the translation of that work into policy and in educating future health professionals and policy makers", said Professor Leeder.

"Education and communication will be key parts of the centre's activities. It will sponsor regular seminars, lectures and education programs and will participate in masters degree coursework and PhD programs."

The centre will provide expert commentary on government health spending priorities for the public and technical media.

The successful joint application from ANU and Sydney University was chosen from a field of thirty-nine applications from around Australia for this prestigious award.

Since its inception in 1979, the Menzies Foundation has committed over \$20 million to health research, education and scholarships including the establishment of the highly successful and internationally recognised Menzies School of Health Research in Darwin and the Menzies Research Institute in Hobart.

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