



THE HON MARK BUTLER MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW NHMRC PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY HEALTH COMMITTEE

The Australian Government today announced the establishment and membership of a new Principal Committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council – the Prevention and Community Health Committee (PCHC).

The Committee's major role is to provide NHMRC's CEO, Professor Warwick Anderson, with advice on issues in community and public health, as well as prevention of illness.

PCHC will provide expert advice on promoting and maintaining good health and wellbeing, including such matters as public and environmental health, illness prevention, community and health consumer issues, and healthy ageing.

The Committee will have a key role in supporting NHMRC's relationship with the proposed National Preventive Health Agency and will advise on issues as diverse as health literacy, prevention of the transmission of infection, drinking water and dietary standards.

PCHC is one of two new committees established for NHMRC's 2009-2012 triennium, the other being the Health Care Committee. They join three other NHMRC committees that have served Australians and the country's health and medical researchers for many years.

PCHC members will serve a three-year term to 30 June 2012 and will be chaired by Professor Kerin O'Dea, the Director of the Sansom Institute's Division of Health Sciences at the University of South Australia. Professor O'Dea is an expert in nutrition and public health.

She will be joined by eight other highly-qualified committee members including Professor Mike Daube, a specialist in public health and its advocacy, and Sebastian Rosenberg, a strong consumer advocate who believes in forging partnerships with the community.

Like NHMRC's other Principal Committees, its members have expertise across a wide range of medical, clinical and public health activities.

The establishment of the PCHC is in line with the government's commitment to expanding the use of prevention in maintaining the health of all Australians.

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Members of NHMRC's new Prevention and Community Health Committee

Chair

Professor Kerin O'Dea AO

Professor O'Dea is Director of the Sansom Institute for Health Research at the University of South Australia. She is a nutrition scientist and public health researcher who has made major contributions to understanding the relationship between diet and chronic diseases. She was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 2004 for 'service in the areas of medical and nutrition research, to the development of public health policy, and to the community, particularly Indigenous Australians'.

Members

Professor Louise Baur

Professor Baur is Professor in the Discipline of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Sydney and a Director of the Prevention Research Collaboration in the School of Public Health, also at the University of Sydney. She is a consultant paediatrician at The Children's Hospital at Westmead, where she is Director of Weight Management Services. She is also Co-Chair of NSW Health's Aboriginal and Population Health Priority Taskforce. Among a range of community activities, she is a Director of World Vision Australia.

Dr Kyllie Cripps

Dr Cripps is an Indigenous research fellow with the Onemda VicHealth Koori Health Unit at the University of Melbourne. Her research interests include issues relating to Indigenous family violence, sexual assault and child abuse including policy development and program/service delivery. She is currently leading an ARC project called *Building and supporting community led partnerships to respond to Indigenous family violence in Victoria*. Dr Cripps has taught Aboriginal Health to nursing students and also provides training and support to professional bodies and organisations dealing with the aftermath of violence.

Professor Mike Daube

Professor Daube is Professor of Health Policy at Curtin University and Director of the Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA. He was previously Director General of Health for Western Australia and Chair of the National Public Health Partnership. He is currently Deputy Chair of the National Preventative Health Taskforce, President of the Public Health Association of Australia, President of the Australian Council on Smoking and Health, President of the WA Heart Foundation, Chair of the WA Alcohol and Drug Authority, and is on various other committees and editorial boards. He has been a consultant on public health issues for many international health agencies and governments.

Dr Tony Hobbs

Dr Hobbs is a Rural GP obstetrician in Cootamundra, NSW. He chaired the external Reference Group developing Australia's first National Primary Health Care Strategy. He is the immediate past chair of the Australian General Practice Network. He is the current chair of the Riverina Division of General Practice and Primary Health. Dr Hobbs has a strong interest in Primary Health Care reform and has been involved in developing an innovative integrated Primary Health Care Centre in Cootamundra.

Professor Ian Olver

Professor Olver is a medical oncologist, CEO of the Cancer Council Australia, Clinical Professor, Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney and Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Adelaide. He graduated from University of Melbourne, being subsequently awarded an MD for a project on clinical trial methodology. He also has a PhD from Monash University in bioethics. After serving on several ethics committees in Victoria and South Australia and the American Society of Clinical Oncology Ethics Committee, he chaired the Cancer Institute NSW Research Ethics Committee for multi-centre cancer trials and currently chairs the Medical Oncology Group of Australia Ethics Sub-committee.

Professor David Roder AM

Professor Roder works under contract for Cancer Australia, the National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre and the Cancer Institute NSW and heads research at Cancer Council SA. He was previously Director of Epidemiology in SA, Board member of the International Association of Cancer Registries, and WHO consultant on cancer registration in Penang, Sarawak and Mongolia. He is a member of the national BreastScreen committees and Cervical Screening National Safety Monitoring Committee, and chairs the NSW Cancer Screening Advisory Committee and the Advisory Board of the Biostatistics Collaboration of Australia. He has authored approximately 160 journal publications and was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2000 for contributions to cancer epidemiology.

Mr Sebastian Rosenberg

Mr Rosenberg has worked in health since 1989, beginning as research advisor to the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer. He has worked in a variety of policy roles for both the Commonwealth and state governments. He has been Deputy CEO of the Mental Health Council of Australia since 2005, overseeing the publication of the seminal *Not for Service* report and preparing numerous subsequent papers into aspects of innovative mental healthcare. Mr Rosenberg is also a Senior Lecturer at the Brain and Mind Research Institute at the University of Sydney and is currently undertaking a PhD focusing on national mental health policy and accountability.

Professor Steve Wesselingh

Professor Wesselingh is currently Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Monash University. He was previously Director of the Burnet Institute, which specialises in infectious diseases, immunology and public health. Initially trained as an infectious diseases physician, Professor Wesselingh was awarded an NHMRC Neil Hamilton Fairley Fellowship to continue studying the neuroimmunology of HIV at the John Hopkins University, Baltimore. He has a vision of high quality medical and public health research

leading to appropriate biotechnology and health systems that will improve the health of people in Australia and the poorly resourced countries of the region.