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MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Filling gaps in falls prevention: West Australian doctor awarded prestigious national Fellowship

Using best practice to prevent further falls in older people is the goal of Dr Nicholas Waldron, who has just received a NICS Fellowship from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), co-sponsored by Western Australia Department of Health.

Dr Waldron, an Advanced Trainee in Geriatric Medicine from Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, will use the NICS-WA Health Fellowship to undertake a two-year implementation project to improve the assessment of patients who have suffered a fall, using best practice strategies.

"Falls contribute to over 1,000 deaths in Australia each year. Those who survive often suffer a marked decrease in quality of life as they become physically frail and lose independence," explains Dr Waldron.

"Interventions to correctly assess and manage patients with a fall can significantly decrease further risk. My program will therefore focus on assisting patients attending the emergency department at Armadale Kelmscott Memorial Hospital who have fallen and are at risk of further falls."

NHMRC Chief Executive Officer, Professor Warwick Anderson has welcomed this opportunity. "We congratulate Dr Waldron and look forward to working with WA Health. This partnership will allow us to support a program which we believe will help reduce the incidence of falls and resultant injuries and deaths in older Australians initially in Western Australia and which can be applied across the country."

Dr Waldron will join nine other health professionals from Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland as 2008 NICS Fellows

Release ends.

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For more information about the other NICS Fellows and the NICS Leadership Program :
www.nhmrc.gov.au/nics

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Note to editors

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is Australia's peak body for supporting health and medical research. As part of the NHMRC, the National Institute of Clinical Studies (NICS) works to improve health care by getting health and medical research into practice.

The NICS Leadership program, which was launched in 2003, directly contributes to closing evidence-practice gaps by supporting health professionals to undertake practical projects that aim to improve health outcomes for people by getting high quality evidence into everyday clinical practice in particular health settings.

The two-year, part-time Fellowships are open to early- to mid-career health professionals across the health care spectrum, including doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, paramedics, health care managers, and policy makers.

The Fellowships provide an annual stipend as well as professional development opportunities, training programs in evidence implementation, mentorship, and opportunities to network with and learn from world-class experts who come to Australia as part of NICS' Visiting Experts program.

Applications for NICS Fellowships 2009 open at the end of May 2008.

Western Australia Health: Western Australia's public health system aims to ensure healthier, longer and better lives for all Western Australians and to protect the health of our community by providing a safe, high quality, accountable and sustainable health care system. www.health.wa.gov.au