



Australian Government

National Health and  
Medical Research Council

N H M R C

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Filling gaps in smoking cessation: Melbourne pharmacist receives prestigious NICS Fellowship

Improving the management of nicotine withdrawal in Melbourne Health's inpatients is the goal of Mr Michael Frank who has just received a NICS Fellowship from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and funding partner, Melbourne Health.

Mr Frank is a pharmacist at The Royal Melbourne Hospital. He will use his NICS-Melbourne Health Fellowship to undertake a two-year implementation project to address an important evidence-practice gap in smoking cessation.

'One in five Australians smoke despite the fact that it is the single greatest cause of preventable death and illness in Australia. People are receptive to accept help to quit smoking when admitted to a smoke-free environment like the Royal Melbourne, but effective therapies like nicotine replacement are not routinely offered. My project will provide education and develop and implement a customised guide to support the appropriate prescribing of nicotine replacement therapies across the hospital.

NHMRC Chief Executive Officer, Professor Warwick Anderson has welcomed this opportunity. "We congratulate Mr Frank on his NICS-Melbourne Health Fellowship. Assisting people to stop smoking while in hospital is an important part of their care and I'm sure we will see Mr Frank's work taken up by other hospital settings around Australia."

Mr Frank will join five other health professionals from Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales as 2009 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](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/nics)

.../2

#### 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.

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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.

### **Melbourne Health**

Melbourne Health is a major public health provider in Victoria, Australia. We provide comprehensive acute, sub-acute and community-based health care programs to about one-third of metropolitan Melbourne's population, as well as general and specialist services to regional and rural Victorians and statewide services. For more information: <http://www.mh.org.au>

**Applications for NICS Fellowships 2010 open in July 2009.**