

## HOT NORTH researchers gather in Darwin

**22 May, 2018**

The HOT NORTH research initiative will be holding its inaugural [Annual Scientific Symposium](#) at Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies) in Darwin, from 24 to 25 May, 2018.

The symposium will bring together some of Australia's leading tropical health researchers and clinicians to discuss the latest developments and findings of research into tropical health issues and to plan for future research projects.

People living in northern Australia face diverse and complex health problems, as evident from the very high rates of skin infections, diabetes, rheumatic heart disease and chronic kidney disease. In addition, there are the challenges of tropical and vector borne diseases and the ever-increasing threat of antibiotic resistance and emergence and spread of "super bugs".

In some parts of the Northern Territory, up to 70 per cent of Aboriginal infants will be infected with scabies by their first birthday. In recent years adult-onset diabetes has been increasingly recognised to be occurring in adolescents, young adults and pregnant women.

Darwin has the highest incidence rate of melioidosis of anywhere yet reported globally.

North Queensland has faced repeated dengue incursions from the north and has been impacted by the epidemic of multidrug resistant tuberculosis in Papua New Guinea.

To address these and other emerging tropical health problems HOT NORTH, a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)-funded research program led by Menzies, was established in 2017.

HOT NORTH Director Professor Bart Currie says through a multidisciplinary collaboration involving eight of Australia's leading health research organisations, HOT NORTH aims to improve health outcomes in the Tropical North while building the capacity of northern Australia by attracting and retaining health care professionals and scientists.

"More than \$1.5 million has been allocated to fund 36 research projects and a number of teaching workshops since HOT NORTH was established.

"Why would you work anywhere else in Australia? For anyone seeking innovative tropical research projects that will jump start their career there is no better place to be, in my opinion, than the tropical north of Australia," said Professor Currie.

With over 120 participants set to attend, presentations and discussions will focus on the research themes driving HOT NORTH's core business. Sessions will include clinical and research developments in skin health, respiratory health, antimicrobial resistance, chronic diseases, and vector borne and emerging diseases.

Presenters from a wide range of Australia's leading health organisations will share their thoughts on the future of tropical health and infectious disease control and surveillance; supporting, growing and retaining healthcare professionals and scientists; and improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

HOT NORTH researchers are based at the following research organisations:

- Menzies School of Health Research
- James Cook University
- Telethon Kids Institute
- Marie Bashir Institute & The University of Sydney
- Doherty Institute & The University of Melbourne
- South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute
- QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute
- Burnet Institute

To read more about HOT NORTH visit [www.menzies.edu.au/HOTNORTH](http://www.menzies.edu.au/HOTNORTH). The Annual Scientific Symposium program is available [here](#).

**Event location:**

Menzies Auditorium, John Mathews Building (Bldg 58), Royal Darwin Hospital Campus

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**Menzies School of Health Research**

Menzies School of Health Research is one of Australia's leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving Indigenous, global and tropical health. Menzies has a history of over 30 years of scientific discovery and public health achievement. Menzies works at the frontline, joining with partners across the Asia-Pacific as well as Indigenous communities across northern and central Australia. Menzies collaborates to create new knowledge, grow local skills and find enduring solutions to problems that matter.

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