

2022 Menzies Oration and Medallion presentation

14 October 2022

Australia's Chief Medical Officer, Professor Paul Kelly delivered the Menzies Oration last night, Thursday 13 October 2022, in the Menzies Auditorium on the Royal Darwin Hospital campus.

The Menzies Oration is an annual public address designed to stimulate robust and challenging discussion about the future of health in the Northern Territory, Australia and internationally.

The topic of Professor Kelly's presentation was: *Providing the best medical advice in a pandemic: an insider's view.*

The pandemic has been the biggest global story of almost the past three years, and as Australia's Chief Medical Officer during most of that time, Professor Kelly has had to provide advice to help guide Australia's response.

Professor Kelly has previously worked in the Northern Territory as a Principal Research Fellow with Menzies School of Health Research, as well as with the Centre for Disease Control in the NT Department of Health.

A public health physician and epidemiologist by training, Professor Kelly has more than 30 years' research experience and has published over 120 peer reviewed journal articles and book chapters.

He has supervised or mentored many trainees and post-graduate students and delivered lectures, workshops, seminars and conference talks nationally and internationally.

Professor Kelly is the Chair of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and has contributed his extensive public health and epidemiological knowledge and experience in the formulation of various plans and advice relating to COVID-19.

This has included the publication of statements and guidelines across a wide range of COVID-19 issues including incoming and outgoing travel, particularly regarding infection prevention and control at Australia's borders, aged care, hotel quarantine, public health measures such as social distancing and hygiene and the application of restrictions in response to community cases of COVID-19.

Menzies Director Professor Alan Cass said, "The Menzies Oration is an important annual event inspiring discussion about issues of national and international significance, with direct relevance to northern Australia. It was a great pleasure to have Professor Paul Kelly deliver this year's address."

Professor Joan Cunningham honoured with Menzies Medallion

Professor Joan Cunningham has been awarded the 2022 Menzies Medallion in recognition of her leadership in working towards improving equity of access to healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and her contribution to public health as a higher degree research supervisor and mentor.

The medallion was presented during last night's Oration.

The Menzies Medallion is the highest award offered by Menzies School of Health Research, and is awarded by the Menzies Board to groups or individuals who have made a considerable contribution to health, of relevance to the Northern Territory.

Professor Cunningham is a social epidemiologist with a core focus on equity in health and health care. Her work on the social determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health has illuminated critical shortcomings in health system performance and identified pathways to improve equity of access and outcomes.

Professor Cunningham joined Menzies in 1998, conducting seminal research, while also career mentoring and supervising researchers, developing their capacity to make a real and measurable impact to improve the health and wellbeing of First Nations people.

Menzies Director Professor Alan Cass said he was delighted the award was presented to someone who has made such important contributions both to improving health outcomes and to building research capability across Australia.

“I am very pleased to see Professor Cunningham receive this year’s medallion. Joan’s work has significantly contributed towards the goal of ensuring equitable access to healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Through her supervision and mentorship of emerging research leaders, her impact will be felt for decades to come,” Prof Cass said.

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Menzies School of Health Research

Menzies is one of Australia’s leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and a leader in global and tropical research into life-threatening illnesses, Menzies continues to translate research into effective partnerships and programs in communities across Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.