

16 February 2012

Menzies bids farewell to Ethics Chairman, Dr Michael Nixon

The Menzies School of Health Research has thanked the retiring chairman of the Human Research Ethics Committee for his commitment and dedication to the ethical review of research studies in the Northern Territory.

The Human Research Ethics Committee of the Northern Territory Department of Health and Menzies School of Health Research consider the ethical aspects of human research conducted by the Department and Menzies as well as other organisations which do not have their own human research ethics committee.

Dr Michael Nixon joined the Ethics Committee in 2003, and chaired from 2004 until December last year.

Menzies Director Professor Jonathan Carapetis said it was an honour and privilege to host Dr Nixon.

“For the past nine years Dr Nixon has worked tirelessly. His vast knowledge, corporate memory and experience in ethics in human research has been invaluable.

“He has advocated and supported the ethical review of research studies and his commitment and his service to the ethics committee, the Department of Health, Menzies School of Health Research, the community and the general public should be applauded.”

Ethics Administration Officer Maria Scarlett thanked Dr Nixon for his extraordinary leadership.

“His incredible contribution to the Ethics Committee over such a long period is highly commendable; not to mention his commitment to undertaking his responsibilities which surpasses the requirements of his role.

“In addition to his full time employment and the six to eight hours per week he commits as chairman, he took on responsibilities on the Harmonization of Multi-centre Ethical Review Reference Committee at the National Health and Medical Research Council and other extracurricular activities.

Dr Nixon has also guided the Ethics Committee’s accreditation process securing its position as a lead Ethics Committee under the National Health and Medical Research Council’s guidelines.

During his time as chairman, Dr Nixon also oversaw the growth and expansion of the Aboriginal Ethics Sub Committee and Human Research Ethics Committee.

In his farewell speech Dr Nixon thanked all members of the Aboriginal Sub Committee and main ethics Committee for their support and encouragement, as well as the secretariat of Menzies.

“I appreciate everyone’s contribution to the important work of trying to find ways of improving Indigenous disadvantage. It is indeed a privilege and a pleasure to have worked with so many outstanding people and wished them well in their continuing work.”

Following Dr Nixon’s recommendations, movement towards an electronic submissions and communications system for the Ethics Committee is now underway.

ENDS