



# MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



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## New Director for Menzies Research Institute

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Daryl Le Grew and Chairman of the Menzies Research Institute Board, Dr Dan Norton today announced the appointment of a new Director of the Menzies Research Institute.

Professor Simon Foote will take up the reins as Director of the Menzies Research Institute next week. He has spent the last ten years at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI).

“Until recently Professor Foote was the Joint-Head of the Genetics and Bioinformatics Division at the WEHI. He has a strong research record in genetics and in the susceptibility to disease,” Professor Le Grew said.

“He is no stranger to the work of the Menzies Research Institute - he has worked with our genetics staff on successful Multiple Sclerosis research.”

Dr Norton says the appointment of an eminent researcher like Professor Foote is an important step for the expansion of the Menzies Research Institute, which is well equipped to expand its research activities.

“Our plan for the future is to deepen our research and more completely investigate disease causes.

“To do this, we will need to increase our recruitment and research collaborations.

“The Board is confident that Professor Foote’s track record – his experience as well as his national and international links – will lead the Menzies Research Institute through in this direction,” Dr Norton said.

Medically trained at the University of Melbourne and the Royal Melbourne Hospital, Professor Foote’s PhD was on genes that control drug resistance in the malarial parasite. He completed his postdoctoral studies at the Whitehead Institute at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he played a pivotal role in early work involving the Human Genome program. His research at WEHI was on how humans respond to infectious, epidemic-prone diseases, such as malaria.

Professor Foote will move to Tasmania with his wife and three children.

The appointment of a new Director comes after a review of the governance structure for the Menzies Research Institute. The Council of the University of Tasmania determined recently that the Institute will operate as a corporate entity established within the legal framework of the University.

Professor Le Grew said the University Council had appointed a new Board to oversee the coming period of growth and development. He said the Board will be responsible for vision, strategy and oversight of the Institute’s overall performance.

“The new Board includes Dr Dan Norton as Chairman and Mr Damon Thomas, Sir Guy Green and Dr David Boadle as Directors. An eminent research scientist in health science will be appointed to the Board in the near future,” Professor Le Grew said.

The Menzies Research Institute, part of the University of Tasmania, is one of Australia’s leading population health research organisations. Through nationwide studies and international collaborations, the Menzies Research Institute explores the environmental and genetic causes of a range of diseases, including cancer, multiple sclerosis, cardio vascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, epilepsy and infant health. The Tasmanian Government proudly supports the work of the Institute as a Tasmanian Icon.

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