

MEDIA RELEASE

Leading QLD stem cell scientist becomes Chief Scientific Officer of the Australian Stem Cell Centre

Monday 18 June, 2007. Melbourne, Australia:

The Australian Stem Cell Centre's Chairman, Professor Vicki Sara, today announced the appointment of Professor Melissa Little to the position of Chief Scientific Officer of the Centre.

Professor Sara welcomed Professor Little to the Australian Stem Cell Centre (ASCC).

Professor Little, who is being seconded to the Australian Stem Cell Centre, is currently based at the Institute for Molecular Biology (IMB) at the University of Queensland leading a team researching the application of stem cell technologies to treat chronic kidney disease.

Professor Little's role will involve an integral position as the head of the scientific program at the Centre, developing strategy, scientific review and management.

One of Professor Little's first major tasks is to consolidate and enhance the Brisbane-based groups funded by the ASCC.

The establishment of a Queensland division of the ASCC will be based at the University of Queensland in Brisbane.

"We aim to provide this rapidly developing Brisbane group with more resources, specific support services and direction all leading towards more cohesive national research results," said Professor Little.

"We are also looking to develop synergy across the entire scientific program of the ASCC, engaging all of our researchers, no matter where they are based, enabling the long term vision of the Centre and capitalising on the national and local geographical advantages these growing groups offer," she said.

"Australians have high expectations of stem cell research. We need to be both clever and resourceful in all areas of science management to ensure results that can be delivered as soon as possible and of the highest quality."

The Brisbane group of the Australian Stem Cell Centre is one of two major geographical groups of stem cell scientists funded by the Centre.

The main stem cell group is located in Melbourne on the Monash University campus, where the Centre is headquartered.

Professor Sara said, “Reinforcing the group in Queensland by bringing them closer together and directly supporting them with more services in their home state, will work towards ensuring they achieve their goals faster. With help and effective collaboration with the Melbourne group, we will all capitalise on our individual strengths and generate a more complete momentum toward delivering results.’

The Centre currently funds scientists at the Mater Medical Research Institute and in three research institutes of the University of Queensland, the Institute for Molecular Bioscience, the Australian Institute for Bioengineering and Nanotechnology and the Queensland Brain Institute.

End

For further information:

Michelle Singe
Public Affairs Director
Australian Stem Cell Centre
03 9271 1115
0423 056 952

Background

Groups funded by the ASCC in Brisbane include:

Prof Kerry Atkinson: Mater Medical Research Institute
Prof Melissa Little: IMB / University of Queensland
A/Prof Justin Cooper-White: AIBN / University of Queensland
A/Prof Lars Nielsen: AIBN / University of Queensland
Prof Peter Gray: AIBN / University Queensland
Dr Sean Grimmond: IMB / University Queensland
Dr Brent Reynolds: QBI / University Queensland
A/Prof Andrew Perkins: IMB / University Queensland

Background to the Australian Stem Cell Centre

The Australian Stem Cell Centre is Australia’s Biotechnology Centre of Excellence. The Centre has partnered with nine leading Australian universities and research institutions and brings together a critical mass of

outstanding Australian stem cell research that is internationally competitive and recognised.

The Centre's principal objective is to integrate a national multi-institutional research and discovery program to develop treatments for serious disease through the application of stem cells and related technologies.

The Australian Stem Cell Centre is funded by the Australian and Victorian Governments.