

The Australian Stem Cell Centre is the first Australian Biotechnology centre of Excellence

An embryonic stem cell has the unique capacity to renew itself indefinitely.

Stem cells are the body's own biological repair kit.



Australian Stem Cell Centre

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Media Release

The Australian Stem Cell Centre Appoints Emeritus Professor Graham Macdonald as Independent Chair

Monday, 29 September 2008, Melbourne Australia:

The Australian Stem Cell Centre (ASCC) is pleased today to announce the appointment of Emeritus Professor Graham Macdonald to the role of Independent Executive Chair of the Interim Board.

Professor Macdonald brings a wealth of experience in clinical medicine, basic biomedical science and in the field of licensing and commercialisation to the Australian Stem Cell Centre. He has had an outstanding career first as an academic nephrologist and then moving into the pharmaceutical industry and holding the positions of Medical Director and External Licensing Coordinator at Merck Sharp and Dohme (Australia) during which he successfully brokered a number of high profile agreements including a US\$100 million-plus deal with AMRAD (now Zenyth Therapeutics) to develop a new asthma treatment.

Professor Macdonald has been a leader in Australia in driving international commercialisation opportunities for researchers and biotechnology companies. He has taught numerous medical students and as an academic nephrologist at the Prince Henry and Prince of Wales Hospitals Clinical School of the University of New South Wales, he undertook a number of research projects involving PhD students. He has also pioneered a number of initiatives to support and build the capacity of Australian biomedical science including research scholarships, commercial training for science and medical graduates, sponsorship of conferences and representative bodies, and funding research projects

"The wide experience across the spectrum, from research to commercialisation, which Professor Macdonald brings, will allow the Centre to build upon its current high quality research" said Interim Board Member Professor Edwina Cornish. "He is well placed to lead the Centre in its transition to a more inclusive model that will underpin stem cell research in Australia".

"I look forward to working with the Interim Board and with the Australian Government who support the Australian Stem Cell Centre to develop a sustainable model for the Centre's future" said Professor Macdonald.

Professor McDonald's scientific expertise and international reputation will be significant advantages to the Centre and will ensure Australia reputation in this competitive field.

The ASCC Interim Board Members: Professor Edwina Cornish (Monash University), Professor David Siddle (University of Queensland) and Dr Henry De Aizpurua (Howard Florey Institute).



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About Emeritus Professor Graham Macdonald

Professor Macdonald recently retired from his former position of External Licensing Coordinator Merck Sharp & Dohme, Australia which he held since 2001. For three years prior to that he was Medical Director at Merck Sharp & Dohme (Australia), responsible for clinical research, regulatory affairs, medical legal review of promotional materials and medical information services. Between 1974 and 1998, Professor Macdonald was an academic nephrologist at the Prince Henry and Prince of Wales Hospitals Clinical School of the University of New South Wales. His research interests centred on the role of the uridine nucleotides in vascular modulation and sodium metabolism. Other significant projects included non-pharmacological control of high blood pressure and interaction of cardiovascular risk factors, psycho social disorders in patients on dialysis with emphasis on thirst mechanisms, high blood pressure in pregnancy, the role of gut peptides in regulating renal sodium excretion, and normal and disordered regulation of angiotensin II receptors in various disease states.

About the Australian Stem Cell Centre

The **Australian Stem Cell Centre** is Australia's Biotechnology Centre of Excellence. The ASCC partners with leading Australian universities and research institutions, and brings together a critical mass of outstanding Australian stem cell research that is internationally competitive and well regarded.

The ASCC's vision is to undertake research of the highest quality in the stem cell field, in order to discover and ultimately commercialise new therapies for human disease.

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

For further information or to arrange an interview, contact:

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