

Federal Government allocates \$2.5 Million for Sleep Research

\$2.5 million has been awarded by the Federal Government to establish a Centre for Clinical Research Excellence in Interdisciplinary Sleep Health (CRISH).

Chief Investigator Professor Ron Grunstein, Head of Sleep and Circadian Research, Woolcock Institute of Medical Research said, “Adequate sleep is as important as exercise and diet. Sleep loss and sleep disorders contribute to mortality, chronic disease, mental health problems and the economic health burden.

“This funding will allow us to establish an international network of leading sleep researchers and physicians to investigate the biology of sleep, and look at ways to prevent and treat sleep disorders.”

It is expected that the research outcomes from CRISH will impact on policies governing road safety, shiftwork health, the treatment of insomnia and the management of obstructive sleep apnea.

The Centre will be based at the Woolcock Institute of Medical Research in Sydney which houses a state-of-the-art sleep research facility and staff with extensive experience in administering international, multidisciplinary teams of investigators.

The \$2.5million will fund CRISH for five years. Part of this funding will be used to establish eight doctoral training positions in both the clinical and research areas of sleep.

The Access Economics Report: Wake Up Australia estimated that in 2004 sleep disorders cost \$10.3 billion and affected over 1.2 million Australians (6% of the population). The most common sleep disorders were obstructive sleep apnea and insomnia.

The report identified sleep disorders underlie 9.1 per cent of work related injuries, 8.3 per cent of depression and 7.6 per cent of non work-related motor vehicle accidents.

The Woolcock Institute of Medical Research is an independent non-profit research organisation based in Sydney. Established as the Institute of Respiratory Medicine in 1988, the goals of the Woolcock are to improve the respiratory and sleep health and well being of all Australians through research, education, clinical care, and disease prevention. The Woolcock employs over 100 scientists, clinicians, and researchers working in a state-of-the-art research facility in Glebe. The Woolcock is one of the top six such research institutes in the world.

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