Welcome to 2009

Professor Kathryn North
Associate Dean

2008 was a challenging year in so many respects. However—as a new year begins—it is a good opportunity to reflect on the positives. So many members of the Discipline of Paediatrics and Child Health have had recent major successes. This newsletter highlights many of the new initiatives and achievements over the past year.

The Clinical School at the Children’s Hospital at Westmead (CHW) represents a focus for teaching, research and mentorship within the hospital. Our medical students continue to regard their Paediatrics and Child Health term as one of the highlights of the medical course. Every term we are approached by students asking how to pursue a career in paediatrics—mainly because they have so enjoyed their time at CHW. This year we had over 40 students applying for a Preinternship term (PrInt) in paediatrics—and many of these students will become our junior medical staff in years to come. Our medical students all comment on the enthusiasm, dedication and excellence of our teachers. This feedback is a credit to all members of the Discipline and augurs well for the future in terms of attracting the best young doctors to paediatric subspecialty training. Thank you to all of our teachers who make the program so successful!

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Sydney, and especially the Dean, Bruce Robinson, have been very supportive of education and research at CHW over the past year. The Faculty has provided seed funding to establish a Paediatric Clinical Trials centre, and from 2009 will contribute to the salary of a fellow in International Education to work with the Diploma of Child Health (DCH) and the Clinical School to further medical education in paediatrics for doctors in remote rural areas and overseas. The DCH is now complemented by a successful masters Program in Paediatrics which has been established under the leadership of Dianne Campbell and Anne Morris in the Clinical School. The enrollment has grown from 4 to 30 students in the space of two years—with increasing interest from potential students overseas. In addition, the University of Sydney Medical Foundation has actively raised funds over the past three years to establish a Chair in Adolescent Academic Medicine based at CHW. We have had many outstanding local and international applicants for this position—and an appointment should be made in early 2009.

Many of you will have participated in student exams in our new Clinical Skills Centre (officially known as The Kim Oates Australian Paediatric Simulation Centre or KOAPSC). This is a joint initiative of the Hospital and the Clinical School and we welcomed Ella Scott in the second half of 2008 as the new centre manager. KOAPSC will be a wonderful focus for ongoing education in clinical skills for staff and students alike. Welcome also to Dr Wendy Hu who has been appointed by the Hospital as the new Associate Director of Medical Education. Wendy has an outstanding track record in Education and Curriculum development and the staff of the Clinical School will work closely with her to enhance and streamline education at all levels across the Hospital.
Welcome to 2009 continued...

The Clinical School oversees a very active postgraduate student program with over 60 students currently undertaking PhDs at CHW, many of them winning local and international prizes for their research. The annual Postgraduate student conference continues to highlight the variety and quality of the clinical and laboratory research being conducted at CHW. In August 2008, Cheryl Jones stepped down as SubDean of Postgraduate Education and Russell Dale has taken over this very important position. During her five years as Postgraduate Coordinator, Cheryl introduced major innovations to the induction, professional development and review of our postgraduate students—many of these innovations are now being adopted by the Board of Postgraduate Studies at the University. Cheryl received many tributes from past and present PhD students as well as hospital staff for her dedication, wisdom, nurturing and support. I want to thank Cheryl for her fantastic contribution to mentoring and research within the hospital.

In this newsletter, we also highlight Honours and Awards to many members of the our Discipline. We are particularly proud of Elizabeth Elliott for being awarded a Member of the Order of Australia and Peter van Asperen for being awarded the John Sands Medal by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

CHW researchers had an amazing success rate in NHMRC and ARC grants in 2008, and many researchers also attracted prestigious funding from other national and international granting bodies. This is a great result in a very competitive and challenging financial environment—and reflects the excellence of our research staff and the dedication of our research leaders. Congratulations to all grant recipients!

Wishing all of you a happy, enjoyable and successful New year.

Medical Education

The Discipline of Paediatrics and Child Health offers an online postgraduate program, designed to further enhance the professional capacity of qualified medical practitioners in paediatric key areas. The postgraduate coursework program is delivered entirely on-line, allowing students to participate from anywhere in the world. Students can work their way towards a Master of Medicine (Paediatric Medicine), or exit part way through the program to attain a Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma.

The program is responsive to global developments and to the changing needs and expectations of professionals and practitioners. The program is flexible in terms of its content and delivery methods to meet the needs of a wide range of students in many different situations and locations. The course attracts local and overseas students from areas such as the Middle East, China, India, Pakistan and South East Asia. The program is delivered via a mixture of quality teaching strategies, taking full advantage of information technology to address the needs of busy practitioners and professionals.

Units of study include: Asthma and Allergy, Gastroenterology, Infectious Diseases, Nutrition and Obesity, Neonatal Medicine, Emergency Medicine and Neurology.

A number of short courses will also be offered in 2009.

For further information please contact: Dr Anne Morris—9845 3139; annem3@chw.edu.au
Grant Success

**Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grants**

**Prof R Booy**

Social, Economic, and Health Benefits of Vaccinating Children in Day Care Centres against Influenza: $594,265

**Heart Foundation**

**Prof LA Baur**

The Loozit weight management trials in adolescents: $35,000

**Dr S Garnett**

Diet intervention for adolescents with prediabetes: $128,209

**Other**

**Prof LA Baur**

Financial Markets Foundation for Children. Loozit: a community-based healthy, active living program for overweight and obese young people aged 13-16 years: $61,250

**Prof J Christodoulou**

March of Dimes. The Utility of forced Myogenesis of cells in culture: Unmasking mitochondrial Respiratory Chain (RC) Disorders: $262,708

**Prof K North**

March of Dimes. The Role of Contactin-1 in serve Childhood Myopathy: $282,585

**Dr S Garnett**

MBF Foundation. The role of dietary protein and exercise in pre-diabetic adolescents: $397,975

**Prof K North, Dr B Barton, Dr J Payne**

US Army Medical Research Programs (2208-2011) A Randomized Placebo-Controlled Study of Lovastatin in Children with Neurofibromatosis Type 1: US$2,000,000 with CHW as coordinating centre

**Dr K Ramjan**

APEG Meeting Grant. Insulin resistance/vibration study: $10,000

**Dr YH Cho**

Pfizer Paediatric Endocrine Care Research grant: $50,000

**Dr F O’Leary**

WCHN grant. WCHN Resuscitation Training: $100,000

**Dr G O’Neill**

NSW Cancer Council Project Grant. The signalling switch function of the pro-metastatic, adhesion adaptor protein HEF1: $350,000

**Dr R Dale and Dr F Brilot-Turville**

Pfizer Neuroscience Research Grant $35,000
Australia Day Honour for Professor Elizabeth Elliott

In June 2008 Professor Elizabeth Elliott was made a Member of the Order of Australia “service to paediatrics and child health as an academic, researcher and educator and through the establishment of the Australian Paediatric Surveillance Unit” (featured in a magazine article—below) and was invited to participate in the Australia 2020 Summit. Congratulations Liz!

Liz is a senior academic member of the Discipline of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Sydney (based at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead) and Consultant Paediatrician at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead. She is actively involved in medical education at the University of Sydney and also heads a clinical education program in Maternal and Child Health for health professionals in Dien Bien Province, Vietnam. She has co-authored 5 books on topics including scientific writing and evidence-based paediatrics and has published widely.

Liz is Founder and Director of the Australian Paediatric Surveillance Unit, a national research group with a focus on rare diseases of childhood. She is also Director of the Centre for Evidence Based Paediatrics, Gastroenterology and Nutrition in Sydney and currently holds an NH&MRC Practitioner Fellowship.

In the 1980s Liz spent 8 years working in the UK, where she conducted a range of laboratory and clinical studies on Oral Rehydration Therapy that culminated in the award of a Doctorate of Medicine. She is President of the Paediatric Research Society Australia and New Zealand and her current research involves a number of uncommon but high impact conditions in children including fetal alcohol syndrome and the haemolytic uraemic syndrome.

Liz is also a member of the Inter-governmental Committee on Drugs Working Party on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders; the National Health and Medical Research Committee to Review Australian Alcohol Guidelines; the National Polio Expert Committee; the National Certification Committee for Polio and the Scientific Advisory Group for Influenza.

Child advocate recognised

Andrew Priestley
Professor Elizabeth Elliott said she hoped she has advanced the cause of women and children through her work in paediatrics and health education.

The Hunters Hill resident has just been appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for her contribution to medicine, which has involved establishing the Australian Paediatric Surveillance Unit to facilitate national child health research.

While working as a paediatrician for 17 years, Prof Elliott has also been involved in training medical students and health professionals through the University of Sydney and heading a teaching program for doctors and nurses in Northwest Vietnam to reduce maternal and child mortality rates in the region.

Health education, particularly for women, and child health continue to be priorities for Prof Elliott.

“I hope I will continue to contribute to improving child health, advocating for children and promoting education and opportunities for women,” she said.

“My hope my legacy will be that I’ve been a role model for women in medicine and an advocate for children.”

Prof Elliott was humble and thankful for the appointment. “I’m obviously very honoured, but I acknowledge that there are many of my colleagues who are equally deserving,” she said. “I’m very grateful for the support that I’ve had from my family and colleagues and mentors.”
Honours and awards

* Professors Louise Baur and Robert Booy were presented with a General Excellence Award at the 2008 Medical Media Awards.

* Dr Yvonne Zurynski was awarded a Fellowship from the Creswick Foundation for her project on Rare childhood diseases in Australia: using knowledge and experience from overseas to underpin development of a national website providing information, education and opportunities for linking families affected by rare diseases. Yvonne was awarded $15,000 and this will enable her to spend 6 weeks visiting relevant organisations overseas next year.

* Dr Charles Helms, a Professor in the Carver College of Medicine at the University of Iowa and Medical Director of Clinical Quality, Safety and Performance Improvement at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, won a Fulbright Senior Scholarship to Australia—his research project while visiting The University of Sydney is to assess the impact of the policy of mandatory HCW vaccination that was implemented in New South Wales. Dr Helms will arrive in January to work with the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance of Vaccine Preventable Diseases.

* A/Prof Andrew Holland was presented with the ConvaTec Prize for Wound Research at the Australasian Wound and Tissue Repair Society Conference. The aim of the prize is to recognise a person who is conducting wound related research of an excellent standard in Australia. Andrew’s research into the presence of Fibrocytes in Pediatric Burn Wounds was deemed to be the most likely to make a significant impact on wound research or practice.

* Professors Elizabeth Elliott and Louise Baur were invited to participate in the Australia 2020 Summit.

* Professor Peter Van Asperen was awarded the prestigious John Sands Medal by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians at the scientific meeting in Adelaide. Peter was awarded the Medal for his contribution to the college and to Paediatrics and Child Health.

* Dr Nicholas Wood was awarded the Rue Wright Memorial Prize at the scientific meeting of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians in Adelaide. Nick’s presentation was titled Predictors of Hepatitis B immunity in Aboriginal children: the Australian Aboriginal birth cohort study.

* Prof Louise Baur was awarded the Nutrition Society of Australia Medal for “outstanding contribution to nutrition and high esteem in which your colleagues hold you.”

* Prof Bridget Wilcken was honoured with a Festchrift for her four decades of service to the inborn errors field in Australasia.

* Prof Kim Oates received the Howard Williams Medal at the RACP ASM 2007 and delivered the oration on the topic “Can we believe what children tell us?” to a packed house.

* Dr David Lester Smith (pictured left) was a finalist for the PRSANZ prize and Dr Liz Peadon was also a finalist for the PRSANZ prize with her medical education paper at the Royal Australasian College of Physicians at the scientific meeting in Adelaide.
NHRMC Scholarships and Fellowships

Awards for 2009

Oncology Research Unit:
- Cuc Bach—NHMRC biomedical Scholarship
- Maha Mahmassani—NHMRC Biomedical Scholarship

Endocrinology:
- Kim Ramajn—NHMRC Clinical Scholarship

SIDS Research:
- Carla Evans—NHMRC Biomedical Scholarship

NCIRS:
- Nick Wood—NHMRC Health Professional Research Fellowship

Neuromuscular Research:
- Daniel MacArthur—Overseas Biomedical Fellowship

Honours and Awards (cont.)

Prof Louise Baur received the John Sands Medal of the College for “exceptional and sustained contribution to the RACP and the profession of paediatrics”. Louise also gave an invited lecture to the Adult Medicine Division called ‘Affluenza – the epidemic of ‘Diabetes’. Factors in childhood and adolescence.’

Prof Elizabeth Elliott won the Rue Wright Award at the RACP ASM 2007 for her presentation on ‘Fetal alcohol syndrome in Australia’. She also gave invited talks at the Trainees Forum on ‘Planning your career: insight and advice from clinical leaders: Research’; and in the main meeting on ‘Public health impacts of APSU studies’; ‘Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in Australia: Research, Policy and Practice’; and ‘Perinatal exposure to HIV—what have we learned from 12 years of surveillance’ (with MS A McDonald). Liz also judged the Trainees Research Award and Chaired the PRSANZ Prize session.
The Hoc Mai Maternal and Child Health Project, initiated by the NSW Governor, Professor Marie Bashir and the Vietnam Women’s Union in 2004, now in its 6th year, has been highly successful. We aim to improve health outcomes for mothers and babies in Vietnam through delivery of collaborative education and train-the-trainer programs for health professionals in Dien Bien Phu, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, and exchange programs bringing Vietnamese doctors to Sydney.

Project highlights in 2008 include the following:

- Dr Kirsty Foster presented a paper on the project, International collaboration to improve maternal and child health in Vietnam, at the 13th Ottawa International Conference on Clinical Competence in March 2008.
- Heather Jeffery was appointed Professor of International Child Public Health, University of Sydney.
- Dr Jane Hirst was awarded the Shan S Ratnam Young Gynaecologist Award” for Australia by the Asia Oceania Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology for her presentation on the Maternal and Child Health Project.
- A team under the direction of Prof Jonathan Morris conducted an education workshop for clinicians in maternal-neonatal care in Tu Du Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City in November 2008.
- Dr Hirst received the ‘Taylor-Hammond Research Scholarship’ from the RANZCOG Research Foundation to carry out a project ‘Classification of stillbirth in Vietnam and identification of antecedent factors’ at Tu Du hospital in Dec.2008-Jan 2009 for her Masters in Public Health (Honours) project.
- Caroline Sein (Masters International Public Health student, University Sydney) conducted a research project on Abortion Practices in Vietnam in Dec 2008 under the supervision of Prof Jeffery.
**HOC MAI MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH PROJECT (CONT.)**

Project highlights (cont.):
- Maternal and Child Health Team members mentored medical elective students from the University of Sydney during their time in Vietnam and supervised 13 Vietnamese doctors on AusAid Scholarships in maternal and child health during their 3 month visit to the Children’s Hospital Westmead and Royal North Shore Hospital.

The project relies on a multi-disciplinary group of volunteer health professionals from Sydney and clinician tutors and interpreters from Hanoi, to whom we are very grateful. It is endorsed by the Ministry of Health of Vietnam and the Hanoi Medical University and supported by the Dien Bien Provincial Health Department, Dien Bien Phu Provincial Hospital, National Institute of Pediatrics Hanoi, National OBGYN Hospital Hanoi, and the Consulate General of Vietnam in Australia.

The project is financed by the International Development Program of the University of Sydney, the UNFPA and Hoc Mai. We are grateful for in-kind support from the Faculty of Medicine’s Disciplines of Paediatrics and Child Health, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Perinatology (University of Sydney), and The Children’s Hospital at Westmead, Royal North Shore Hospital and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, and for equipment donated by Welsch Allen and Laerdal.

Elizabeth Elliott (Team Leader)
The Children’s Hospital at Westmead and the Discipline of Paediatrics and Child Health hosted overseas visitors from the University of Padua Children’s Hospital (Italy) and the Children’s National Medical Centre in Washington (USA) as key speakers at the Hospital Paediatric Update—Dr Roger Packer, Dr Robert Keating, Prof William Gilliard (USA), Dr Giorgio Perilongo, Dr Alessandra Murgia and Dr Carlo Giaquinto (Italy).

The Children’s Hospital at Westmead, the University of Padua Children’s Hospital and the Children’s National Medical Centre in Washington have established a Sister Program, through a Memorandum of Understanding, to foster education, clinical and research collaborations.

One of the aims within the program is to support training opportunities through exchange programs for trainee clinicians. Drs Perilongo, Murgia and Giaquinto met with a number of Junior Medical Officers at their weekly Journal Club to outline potential opportunities for overseas training. The feedback from those who attended has been very positive, and our visitors had a wonderful time.

“What a marvellous country! What marvellous people! How marvellous Australia is!” Dr Giorgio Perilongo (pictured below right)

“Thank you, once again, for all your hospitality in Sydney, Australia. Dr. Gilliard, Dr. Keating and I were honored to be at your institution…” Dr Roger Packer

For further information about the program and possible opportunities contact: Prof Kathryn North (Kathryn@chw.edu.au)
The Discipline of Paediatrics & Child Health’s annual Postgraduate Research Student Conference held on 15 August 2008 was a great success, with over 90 people attending, including students and their supervisors. The guest speaker was Iain McGregor, Professor of Psychopharmacology and Director of the Psychopharmacology Laboratory in the School of Psychology at The University of Sydney.

Thank you to the session Chairs: John Christodoulou, Peter Gunning, Elizabeth Elliott, Geraldine O’Neill, Kathryn North, Patrina Caldwell, Jennifer Bryne and Rachel Skinner, plus the many postgraduate supervisors and post-doctoral researchers who helped with marking student presentations on the day.

This year the Conference was supported by Beckman Coulter Australia, Miltenyi Biotec, Weinmann, Fisher and Paykel Healthcare, and the Medical Staff Council at CHW.

The Discipline of Paediatrics and Child Health also financially supported much of the meeting.

Thank you to the sponsors for their support of the student prizes for excellence.

Prize winners pictured from left to right: Luke St Heaps, Julia Brotherton, Samantha Tang, Iain McGregor (guest speaker), Claire Martin, Nikki

Postgraduate Degrees Awarded

- Min Hu PhD
  Analysis of pathogenic and tolerising T cells in allograft transplantation

- Janine Smith (nee Turner) MMed
  Characterisation of Muscular Dystrophies associated with abnormal glycosylation of dystroglycan

- Loretta Lau PhD
  Functional Analysis of Cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2) Inhibition and Chemosensitivity in Neuroblastoma

- Lauren Bradshaw (nee Cowell) PhD
  Survival signalling in cancer cells

- Belinda Kramer PhD
  MGMT GeneTherapy: in vivo selection of transduced stem cell populations using MGMT

- Nicole Chia MScM
  Chromosome Banding Idiograms at the 300 and 700 band level of resolution

- Mona Shehata PhD
  In vitro models for the role of D52 protein in tumourigenesis
## New Titles, Appointments & Promotions

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Melanie Alcausin</td>
<td>Clinical Associate Lecturer</td>
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<td>Dr Belinda Barton</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
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<td>Dr Joceline Branson</td>
<td>Clinical Associate Lecturer</td>
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<td>Dr Fabienne Brilot-Turville</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
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<td>A/Prof Gary Browne</td>
<td>Clinical Professor</td>
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<td>Dr Simon Clarke</td>
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<td>Dr Murthy Chennapragada</td>
<td>Clinical Senior Lecturer</td>
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<td>Dr David Ken Vin Chung</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Maria Craig</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Kathryn Currow</td>
<td>Adjunct Associate Professor</td>
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<td>Dr Aniruddh Deshpande</td>
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<td>Dr Marion Fernandez</td>
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<td>Ms Sue Hawes</td>
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<td>Dr Anthony Herbert</td>
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<td>Dr Sandra Johnson</td>
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<td>Dr Michael Kohn</td>
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<td>Dr David Lester-Smith</td>
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<td>Dr Jonathan de Lima</td>
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<td>Dr Michelle Lipke</td>
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<td>Dr Albert Mansour</td>
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<td>Dr Damian Marucci</td>
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<td>Dr Elsie Mobbs</td>
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<td>Dr Emily Oates</td>
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<td>Dr Fenton O’Leary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Brian Owler</td>
<td>Associate Professor (Neurosurgery)</td>
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<td>Dr Pirooz Poursoltan</td>
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<td>Dr Liqa Rousan</td>
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<td>A/Prof Peter Shaw</td>
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<td>Dr Catherine Wiltshire</td>
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<td>Dr Nan Yang</td>
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The Lorimers—Awards for Excellence in Teaching and Students Supervision

This year, Dr Wal Grigor accepted an invitation from the Clinical School to attend the final Grand Rounds of the year and present the Awards for Excellence in Teaching and Supervision. These awards are entitled ‘The Lorimers’ in honour of Sir Lorimer Dods. Dr Grigor trained under Sir Lorimer and went on to become a leading Australian Paediatrician and Head of the Division of Medicine at RAHC. Dr Grigor has been associated with our hospital for over 52 years.

Dr Grigor introduced the teaching awards and recalled a few highlights from the career of Sir Lorimer—who was the first Professor of Paediatrics in Australia and a remarkable teacher, mentor and leader. Dr Grigor concluded that it was a great honour to be nominated for excellence in Education and to receive an award named after such an inspiring man.

Medical Clinical Teaching Dr Philip Britton (‘wikipedia of paediatrics’)
Surgical Clinical Teaching A/Prof Robert Charles (‘always looking for opportunities to teach’)
Clinical Reasoning Session Tutor Dr David Lester-Smith (‘no pomp and ceremony...nuts and bolts’)
Lectures and Structured Teaching A/Prof Richard Widmer (‘engaging lecturer’)
Rural Teaching (Bathurst) Dr Rebecca Torrens (‘had confidence in our abilities’)
Non-CHW Urban Teaching Dr Justin Needs (‘always willing to take an hour or two’)
Nursing/Allied Health Ms Jennifer Murphy (‘always very helpful’)
PrINt Dr Monique Bertinetti (‘a great teacher...very supportive’)
Postgraduate Students Prof Robert Ouvrier (‘a wonderful mentor’)
Postgraduate Students Dr Nan Yang (‘thoughtful, caring and patient’)

A special award was presented to A/Prof Cheryl Jones to acknowledge her role as Postgraduate Coordinator and Sub-Dean Postgraduate Studies from 2003-2008.

“...Cheryl knew every student so well, and could somehow keep track of the movements and activities of 60 postgraduate students at a time. She also had a real instinct for students in any kind of difficulty, and so frequently initiated early intervention strategies, while issues were minor....”

Thank you to the staff and students from The University of Sydney and The Children’s Hospital at Westmead who generously provide their time, effort, experience and expertise - your ongoing involvement and support is invaluable in creating and sustaining a place of excellence in medical research and education.