

Leading cancer experts recognised for their lifetime contribution

The Cancer Council Medal for Distinguished service has been awarded to two of Australia's leading cancer experts.

Two of Australia's leading cancer experts, Dr Heather Mitchell and Emeritus Professor Mike Daube AO, have been recognised for their efforts in improving cancer outcomes in Australia and the world, receiving the Cancer Council Medal for Distinguished Service.

The medal is awarded to recipients who have made an extraordinary contribution to reducing the impact of cancer on Australians through research, clinical practice or support.

Dr Mitchell, a Public Health Physician, has been recognised for her work as a pivotal driver of the implementation of cervical screening both nationally and in Victoria.

For three years Dr Mitchell chaired the steering committee established to oversee the review of cervical screening in Australia. It was this review that saw Dr Mitchell establish Australia's first pap test register and become Medical Director of the Victorian Cervical Screening Register.

It was the review and the subsequent establishment of the cervical screening program that was instrumental in halving the incidence and mortality of cervical cancer.

Professor Sanchia Aranda, CEO, Cancer Council Australia said, "Australia's position as a world leader in cervical cancer prevention, early detection and survival has been largely underpinned through Dr Mitchell's efforts, dedication, intelligence and passion.

"Dr Mitchell demonstrated the utmost integrity and commitment to the quality and performance of the National Cervical Screening Program and Cancer Council is pleased to acknowledge her work through awarding of this medal."

Equal recipient, Emeritus Professor Daube has been a leading public health researcher and policy maker for over 40 years.

He was a key advocate in driving the Australian Government to be the first country in the world to introduce plain packaging, a policy that is now globally accepted by governments and health authorities as a highly effective measure in reducing smoking-related deaths.

Professor Aranda said, "Emeritus Professor Daube's contributions to Australian and global tobacco control are immense and his work in tobacco control including the introduction of plain packaging has undoubtedly helped save millions of lives."

Throughout his career Emeritus Professor Daube worked with organisations in more than 40 countries, including working with the World Health Organization (WHO) and both Government and non-government organisations.

Emeritus Professor Daube also co-chaired the International Union Against Cancer's global tobacco control program and alongside Dr Nigel Gray, wrote the world's first blueprint for comprehensive action in tobacco control, a document that ultimately supported the development of the WHO's global Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, now endorsed by 173 nations.

"As former CEO of Cancer Council WA and previous Western Australian of the Year, Professor Daube's contributions to tobacco control have been recognised by many national and international awards, including the WHO Tobacco Medal (twice) and the World Federation of Public Health Associations' highest honour, the Leavell Award for Outstanding Global Health Leadership.

“Most recently he was awarded the American Cancer Society’s Luther Terry medal for lifetime achievement in tobacco control, the top international award in this field.

“Professor Daube is unequivocally one of Australia’s leaders in tobacco control,” Professor Aranda continued.

Emeritus Professor Daube will be presented his award at the Oceania Tobacco Control Conference tomorrow and Dr Mitchell will be presented her award at a later date.

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For more information please contact the media team at Cancer Council Australia on (02) 8063 4109 or media@cancer.org.au