

MEDIA RELEASE



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

Monday 9 July 2018

The Ripple effect: Improving health outcomes for Indigenous Australians

Internationally-recognised leader in Indigenous cancer research, Professor Gail Garvey, will share her insights on the role Indigenous medical education can play in improving the health outcomes of Indigenous Australians, in a keynote lecture at the University of Newcastle tonight.

A Kamilaroi woman from NSW, and a graduate of the University of Newcastle, Professor Garvey will deliver the lecture as part of an Equity in Medicine public lecture series to celebrate the 40th anniversary of medicine at UON, and the 10th anniversary of the Joint Medical Program (JMP).

Professor Garvey is the Senior Principal Research Fellow at the Menzies School of Health Research. She leads a number of national research programs aimed at improving cancer control for Indigenous Australians.

Professor Garvey said her research programs advocate for a collaborative approach, bringing key stakeholders, such as Indigenous consumers, researchers, and clinicians together to achieve common goals.

“Medical Schools can use similar collaborative approaches to achieve better health for the community as a whole but particularly for those most vulnerable such as Indigenous communities.

“The University of Newcastle has and continues to be a trailblazer in graduating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors and this contribution has made a significant impact on the Indigenous health agenda over the last 30 years.

“My experience working in medical education at the University of Newcastle triggered my desire to focus my career in research and Indigenous health. My research has included developing and translating evidenced-based tools into clinical care to accommodate the language, culture and specific supportive care needs of Aboriginal cancer patients.”

University of Newcastle Head of the School of Medicine and Public Health, and Dean of the Joint Medical Program, Professor Brian Kelly, said Professor Garvey’s contributions to national research programs, which aim to improve cancer outcomes for Indigenous Australians, were making a real impact.

“Professor Garvey advocates involving Indigenous stakeholders and clinicians throughout the research process to achieve maximum practical benefits from research, and supporting Indigenous people to lead such research. Our University can play an important role in supporting the education of Indigenous people as future research leaders.”

Professor Kelly said it was fitting that Professor Garvey’s lecture would mark the start of 2018 NAIDOC Week.

This year’s theme for NAIDOC Week is ‘Because of her we can’, celebrating the invaluable contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have made – and continue to make - to communities, to families, and to the nation.

“We are honoured to host Professor Garvey, a graduate of the University of Newcastle, to help us celebrate 40 years of medicine at UON and 10 years of our Joint Medical Program. We look forward to her sharing her insights on the role medical education can play in improving the health outcomes for Indigenous communities.”

The Ripple Effect: Improving health outcomes for Indigenous Australians and the role of Indigenous medical education, will be delivered from 5.30pm Monday 9 July at the University of Newcastle’s Wollotuka Common Space, Birabahn Building.

For further information or interviews, contact Communications and Media, on 02 4921 5577 or media@newcastle.edu.au.

About Professor Gail Garvey:

Professor Garvey has led the national Centre of Research Excellence in Discovering Indigenous Strategies to Improve Cancer Outcomes via Engagement, Research Translation and Training and a Cancer Council NSW funded Strategic Research Partnership, both aimed at improving cancer control for Indigenous Australians.

Her PhD and research interest and expertise are in psychosocial aspects of cancer care of Indigenous cancer patients and health services research, which has led to more than \$24m in competitive funding.

Professor Garvey’s vision and leadership has also led to the following achievements:

- Conducting the first roundtable to identify research priorities in cancer for Indigenous Australians (2010)
- Establishing the National Indigenous Cancer Network (2013) in collaboration with Cancer Council Australia, the Lowitja Institute, the Indigenous Health InfoNet and Menzies School of Health Research
- Instigating and convening the inaugural World Indigenous Cancer Conference in partnership with the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) (2016)
- Establishing an international collaborative research program of work with IARC on cancer and Indigenous people globally.

40 Years of Medicine

In 2018, the University of Newcastle celebrates the 40th anniversary of medicine and the 10th year of the Joint Medical Program (JMP).

Since 1978, our globally-recognised, regionally-based, medical program has graduated doctors with a dedication to excellence in all aspects of patient care with the skills and capacity to adapt and respond effectively to new and emerging future health needs.

From our Foundation Dean, Professor David Maddison revolutionising medical school admission to the establishment of Australia’s only jointly delivered medical program, we aren’t afraid to do things differently if it means the best possible outcome for our alumni and ultimately the communities they serve.

Our unique partnership with the University of New England, Central Coast and Hunter New England Local Health Districts enables over 1000 practising doctors with a variety of backgrounds to support our students with hands-on, practical learning. Our program now boasts six clinical schools including large metropolitan hospitals in Newcastle and the Central Coast, regional and rural centres in the lower Hunter, Tamworth, Armidale, Taree, Moree and primary care settings across the Upper Hunter, New England and Central Coast.

Our distinct teaching and clinical framework has attracted a diverse student cohort who are willing, and capable, of driving excellence in health care intervention due to the extensive skills, perspectives and networks that their diversity brings. We are particularly proud that we have graduated approximately one third of all practising Indigenous doctors, our alumni are more likely to choose a rural area as their first preference for future practice, and our international linkages foster global citizens prepared to deliver evidence-based care and strengthen the capacity of health care systems.