



North Shore
Heart Research
Foundation

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Editors note: interviews and photos of researchers arranged on request.

HEART DISEASE RESEARCHERS GIVEN A BOOSTER SHOT

January 21: North Shore Heart Research Foundation has started 2008 by awarding grants of almost \$500,000 to heart disease specialists to undertake promising research.

Four leading Royal North Shore Hospital cardiologists, a young doctor starting to specialise in cardiology and a senior nurse completing his PhD were selected late last year from a host of applicants seeking funds for research projects.

The grant money they receive will fund several research projects investigating new techniques into treating and preventing coronary artery disease and heart failure – Australia's top two killers.

"Australia has some of the most brilliant and forward thinking cardiologists in the world, and we are indeed fortunate to have leading researchers based here at RNS. The tremendous public support of our Foundation's fundraising efforts allows us to invest more into key research projects; projects we believe show great promise in achieving significant breakthroughs in the fight against heart disease," the Foundation's Chief Executive Officer, Derek Minett, said.

"This latest round of research grants encourages and funds the most innovative and meritorious research projects from investigators keen to build on the successful work of their peers. Most recent successes in new models of treatment of heart disease are a great incentive to expand the boundaries of current practice."

Cardiologists and researchers Professor Helge Rasmussen and Dr Gemma Figtree are the recipients of the largest new research grant in 2008. Titled: *Reversible oxidative modification of the sodium pump – role in hormonal regulation of vascular tone.*

Cardiologist and epidemiologist, Professor Geoffrey Tofler, received a grant for his research work in cardiac disease prevention. The title of his research is *Triggered Acute Risk Prevention: a study of feasibility in subjects with cardiovascular risk factors.*

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Cardiology Interventionist, Dr Michael Ward, and colleagues at RNS and Prince of Wales Hospital will be undertaking innovative gene research. His work is titled: Estrogen receptor alpha: a candidate gene for altered vascular reactivity and Takotsubo phenomenon.

Cardiology Registrar, Dr Levi Bassin, who now works in the Royal North Shore Hospital's Department of Cardiology is undertaking a project titled: *Effect of Myocardial Ischaemia, Hypothermia and Subarachoid Haemorrhage on the Wavefront of Electrical Activation and Recovery*. This work will support the completion of his PhD studies.

In another project, Thomas Buckley RN, currently specialised in cardiology, will complete his work supporting a study - *Evaluation of Cardiovascular Health in Bereavement*. This work supports the final year of his PhD studies.

"Research projects are extremely time consuming and resource hungry, requiring great determination and dedication from those who see better ways to improve the heart health of our community" Mr Minett said.

"Bequests, fundraising events and appeals have provided much needed funds in 2007 to support our research programs and we express our deep gratitude to those who support us, knowing that we are working together to *give HEART to future generations.*"

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