



Media Statement

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LEI Managing Director stepping down to focus on world-leading genetic eye research

Professor David Mackey is stepping down as Managing Director of the Lions Eye Institute (LEI) at the end of February 2019 to focus on five funded research projects into the genetics of eye disease.

Professor Mackey will continue his association with the LEI, leading the Genetics and Epidemiology group as well as mentoring students and early- and mid-career researchers.

LEI Board Chairman Peter Forbes said Professor Mackey had progressed the LEI's standing and reputation as a world-renowned medical research institute.

Professor Mackey was recently awarded a Practitioner Fellowship from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to discover new genes responsible for glaucoma and myopia. He is also leading research funded with a \$9.4 million NHMRC program grant – the largest ever awarded for eye research.

During his 10 years at the LEI, Professor Mackey's outstanding contribution to research received ongoing national and international recognition. He was appointed to a number of organisations, including the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences (Chair of the WA branch), Academy of Asia-Pacific Professors of Ophthalmology, NHMRC Human Genetics Advisory Committee, International Society for Genetic Eye Disease and Retinoblastoma (President), and Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia (Chair, Scientific Advisory Committee).

He also received the American Academy of Ophthalmology Achievement Award, Churchill Fellowship Award and Harvard Club of Australia Non-profit Fellowship Award.

Since arriving in WA in 2009, Professor Mackey has co-authored more than 200 peer-reviewed journal articles, many with his students as first author.

He presided over expansion and innovation at the LEI, including: relocation of research groups to a new state-of-the-art building; major renovation of the LEI clinic; growth of Clinical Trials to become the largest ophthalmological trials centre in Australia; a second satellite clinic in Midland; three new research groups; Lions Outback Vision; and a Volunteer Concierge Program for patients.

"I am delighted that my association with the Lions Eye Institute will continue through my research," Professor Mackey said. "It's been a privilege to guide the Institute through a period of growth and lead an organisation that makes a positive difference to people's lives."

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