

MEDIA STATEMENT

Wednesday, 3 April 2024

Ian Constable Research Fellow Appointed

The Lions Eye Institute and The University of Western Australia are delighted to announce the appointment of Associate Professor Holly Chinnery as the inaugural Ian Constable Research Fellow.

An internationally renowned expert in the field of corneal inflammation, Associate Professor Chinnery completed her PhD at The University of Western Australia and subsequently conducted postdoctoral research at the Lions Eye Institute and Monash University.

The Lions Eye Institute's Managing Director, Professor Bill Morgan said the appointment would bolster research capacity and further strengthen the Institute's position at the forefront of sight saving research. "Associate Professor Chinnery will build on and expand her research activities at the Lions Eye Institute to build a corneal ocular surface platform and team. Her research will bridge the gap between basic immunology science at the Institute and enhance clinical translation."

Associate Professor Chinnery said her work aims to understand how the corneal nervous and immunological systems interact in the context of homeostasis, inflammation, injury, and neurodegenerative diseases.

"Corneal immunology is a fascinating field that explores the intricate interactions between the immune system and the cornea - the transparent front surface of the eye," she said.

"My research program uses preclinical models to investigate fundamental ocular immunology and explore novel therapies for corneal neuropathy and inflammation. Ultimately, the aim is to model conditions that affect the human ocular surface to improve and develop new treatments for patients whose sight has been lost to corneal disease, surface diseases, dry eyes and allied conjunctival pain syndromes."

Associate Professor Chinnery will assume her position in April this year at the Lions Eye Institute, and will also hold an appointment dedicated to research and teaching at the UWA Optometry School.

"The ambitious goal to further augment the Lions Eye Institute's understanding of a varied range of eye disorders through cutting edge research informed the decision to create two prestigious Ian Constable Research Fellow positions. Active recruitment is ongoing to fill the second of these posts," said Professor Morgan.

In 2011, Associate Professor Chinnery established her own research group in Corneal Immunology at Deakin University. In 2013, she joined the Department of Optometry and Vision Sciences at The University of Melbourne, based at the Melbourne Brain Centre, co-founding the

FrontTear Research Centre. This research uses in vivo and ex vivo confocal imaging techniques to visualise and monitor dynamic immunological signatures in the human eye. She also supervises seven PhD students.

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About the Lions Eye Institute

At the [Lions Eye Institute](#), we make a difference to people's lives through excellent patient care and by pushing the frontiers of science to discover new treatments and cures for eye disease. As a not-for-profit organisation, the Lions Eye Institute spans the dual complementary pathways of research and clinical care. We bring together a globally recognised team of researchers and clinicians who continually build on each other's discoveries, knowledge and expertise to deliver sight-saving treatment and care around the world. The quest for knowledge and its life-changing applications for patients drives our work. For more Lions Eye Institute media stories, visit [our news page](#).

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