

PROFESSOR RICHARD GRAEME LARKINS

Professor Richard Larkins studied at the University of Melbourne where he graduated in 1966 with Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery as the top student with 13 prizes. His clinical training was at the Royal Melbourne Hospital before taking his first specialist position at Royal Melbourne Hospital as Assistant Endocrinologist (1970 – 1972). During this period Professor Larkins carried out research in obesity with his fourth paper published in Nature in 1972 the year he was awarded his Doctor of Medicine. An overseas Churchill Fellowship and MRC Fellowship followed at Hammersmith Hospital, London (1972-1974) where he was awarded a PhD by the University of London. Professor Larkins returned to Melbourne in 1974 as Physician to Outpatients and Senior Associate in the Department of Medicine, Royal Melbourne Hospital (1974 – 1977) before being appointed as First Assistant in the University of Melbourne, Department of Medicine, Repatriation General Hospital, Heidelberg. In 1983, Professor Larkins was appointed to Reader before his appointment (at age 41) to the James Stewart Chair of Medicine and Head, Department of Medicine, Royal Melbourne Hospital/Western Hospital in 1984. He was Deputy Dean to Professor Gordon Clunie in 1996 before taking on the Deanship in 1998. Professor Larkins took up appointment as Vice-Chancellor at Monash University in September 2003.

Professor Larkins has demonstrated outstanding talents as researcher, clinical teacher, physician and inspiring leader. He has published 190 refereed papers and authored or edited five books, held substantial National Health and Medical Research Council Programs Grants and supervised 20 PhD scholars in the field of diabetes and endocrinology. He was awarded the Eric Susman Prize for Medical Research in 1982.

From 1982 - 1984 he was President of the Endocrine Society of Australia and Chair of the Accreditation Committee of the Australian Medical Council (1991 – 1995). During his time as Dean (1998 – 2003) Professor Larkins was President of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (2000 – 2002), member of the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council (1997 – 2000) and member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Council. In addition, Professor Larkins Chaired the National Health and Medical Research Council (1997 – 2000) at a time of profound change and growth, and his leadership resulted in greatly improved funding for health and medical research in this country. He has been a leader of the medical deans group in Universitas 21 and a leading figure in shaping Bio 21, which is now assuming its definitive role and direction largely because of his persistence and judgment.

In addition, to his enormous contribution to medical and social policy development in Australia, Professor Larkins has made a profound impact through advising on medical training and health policy development throughout the World. For this work he has been awarded Honorary Fellowships of the Academy of Medicine of Singapore, the Academy of Medicine of Malaysia, the Royal College of Physicians of Thailand, the American College of Physicians and the Ceylon College of Physicians. He

was also appointed a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland by invitation. He has chaired the Asia-Pacific Committee, Royal Australasian College of Physicians, given named memorial Lectures in Hong Kong, Thailand and Sri Lanka. He has given official postgraduate lecture courses in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Shandong Medical University, China, University of Papua New Guinea and been International Examiner in Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong.

His career has been one of continuous growth and selfless service. Among his many achievements, his personal example as a caring clinician, and a teacher and mentor of students are exemplary. Throughout his career he has also shown tremendous support for colleagues and for the growth and development of other medical research institutions such as the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute and the Howard Florey Institute. As Dean, he continued the development of the Faculty and through the education of the next generation of doctors, the upholding of the highest standards of practice by the profession. He has led the implementation of the new curriculum in Medicine, Dentistry and Physiotherapy with particular emphasis on Problem Based Learning and the unique opportunity offered by the Advanced Medical Science Year. He is a universally admired Dean, his qualities of high intelligence and mature judgment combining with a friendly manner and extraordinary dedication to the task, to create a form of leadership admired around the nation. His trademark imperturbability in the face of a complex life and heavy responsibilities is, by now, legendary.

In 2002 Professor Larkins was awarded the Order of Australia for service to medicine and health; as an advocate of increased investment in research, as a contributor to health policy reform, and as an initiator of innovative medical programs and the provision of training opportunities for medical officers in the Oceania region. Last year he was also awarded the University of Melbourne Sir William Upjohn Medal for distinguished services to medicine in Australia. He is among the most distinguished graduates of the University of Melbourne.