

PROFESSOR COLIN WILKS

Doctor of Veterinary Science, *honoris causa*

Colin Wilks is a widely respected and distinguished alumnus of the Melbourne Veterinary School. Colin completed his BVSc in 1968, and after a short stint in private practice, he returned to the University to complete a Masters in Veterinary Science in 1972. Colin moved to the USA where he completed his PhD at the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University. Colin's expertise in the field of veterinary virology led him to the UK to take up a Post-doctoral Research Fellow post at the Royal Veterinary College in London. Colin returned to Australia as a Senior Veterinary Research Officer (Immunology) at the Veterinary Research Institute in Parkville, (where the new microscopy facility is now located). Colin remained in Parkville for 11 years, including one year as a Visiting Scientist at the US high security animal disease centre on Plum Island, and 3 years as Acting Director of the Institute. Colin moved again in 1987, to New Zealand to begin work as a Senior Lecturer in Veterinary Virology at the Veterinary School at Massey University and was quickly promoted to Professor of Veterinary Public Health. In 1995 he became Head of the Department of Veterinary Pathology and Public Health. In 1998 Colin and his family returned to Australia where he worked for the Victorian Department of Primary Industry prior to returning to his alma mater to develop an integrated public health curriculum for the Melbourne Veterinary School. Colin's research has included involvement with international students and the supervision of the research component of their degree programs in Ethiopia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Peru and China. He has supervised 25 PhD students to successful completion and a similar number of master students in research and taught degree programs.

Professor Wilks has published extensively on many aspects of virology and public health and has provided expert contributions to government committees in New Zealand and Australia, particularly on zoonotic disease risks and risk assessment of protocols for importation of animals and animal products. From 2011 to 2017, he chaired the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Centre of Excellence for Biosecurity Risk Analysis at The University of Melbourne. During his academic career, he held the post of the Scientific Editor of the Australian Veterinary Journal for 5 years and has served on the editorial boards of several other veterinary and scientific publications.

Professor Wilks has helped advance veterinary science through his work as an academic and government veterinarian, but he has also helped improve public health in many low- and middle-income countries through his consultancy work for the World Health Organisation, the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, the Asian Development Bank and World Bank. His international "public practice" assisted authorities in many countries to control significant diseases of humans and animals. Professor Wilks is an excellent ambassador for One Health, where the health of humans, animals and the environment are all considered holistically. He has helped control H5N1 avian influenza in developing countries, as well as contributing to the development of animal health services, surveillance and laboratory networking, and the upgrading of veterinary education in many countries in Asia, Africa and South America.

Professor Colin Wilks is internationally recognized in the field of veterinary virology and public health. In 2009 he was awarded Fellowship of the Australian Veterinary Association in recognition of service to veterinary science in Australia and, in 2018, honorary Fellowship in the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists. He is the embodiment of professional integrity, a valued mentor to many staff in the Melbourne Veterinary School and a role model for all.

He would be a worthy recipient of the degree of Doctor of Veterinary Science *honoris causa*.