

Citation for the Award of Doctor of Dental Science (*honoris causa*)

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR NEIL DAVID HEWSON

Since graduating with a BSc from the University of Melbourne in 1977, Associate Professor Neil David Hewson has worked to improve the dental health of the community, advance the dental profession and develop the quality of dental education through a lifetime's volunteer service and leadership of state, national and international professional organisations, foundations, government committees and education and industry bodies.

In his work for the Australian Dental Association (ADA), Neil Hewson has held a range of practical and leadership roles, both in Victoria and nationally, contributing to a wide range of professional committees and to governance of the organisation, introducing significant improvements through strategic planning and operational reform.

His leadership of the Victorian Centre for Oral Health Science (VCOHS) and the Oral Health Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) has been accomplished in a range of roles since 2003. Associate Professor Hewson made an outstanding contribution to the governance and strategy of these bodies which still produce the majority of research output for the Melbourne Dental School. Neil Hewson's strong advocacy and leadership in the dental profession influenced the profession's acceptance of Oral Health CRC technology and products, underpinning the ongoing success of the research centre. His current Chairmanship of the Oral Health CRC represents over twelve years of outstanding service in support of the advancement of dental health research.

Associate Professor Hewson's work in support of water fluoridation amongst other public health measures exemplifies his commitment to lowering the burden of oral disease in Australia. His determination to improve the oral health of the community is evidenced by his major role in the instigation of the national Dental Health Week in 2005. This ongoing annual national public education program run by the ADA raises public awareness of dental health issues and the dental profession.

Associate Professor Hewson's strong advocacy, diplomacy and leadership of the profession have proved invaluable to the Melbourne Dental School. His influence and standing were critical to the organised dental profession's acceptance of the introduction of training of oral health therapists as part of the University of Melbourne's Bachelor of Oral Health. Similarly, his advocacy for the introduction of the graduate-entry Doctor of Dental Surgery has worked in the best interests of the future profession even though there were elements of strong opposition. He has also made invaluable contributions to governance and strategy for the Melbourne Dental School as a major advisor to the previous Head of School, over the past 16 years. Other contributions to the University of Melbourne include being a clinical demonstrator and serving as a member of the Committee of Convocation.

National and international recognition of Neil Hewson's contributions to the dental profession include his election to fellowship of three international dental associations and honorary life membership of both the Victorian and National Dental Associations, their highest awards.

Associate Professor Neil Hewson is proposed for the degree of Doctor of Dental Science (*honoris causa*) in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the education and leadership of the dental professions, to the advancement of dental research, and to the oral health of the Australian community.