

Media Release

Thursday 14 November 2019

Recognition for fighting asbestos use in the Asia Pacific and for leading research into asbestos-related disease in Australia

NSW Governor to visit ADRI today

The Asbestos Diseases Research Institute (ADRI) will welcome Her Excellency, Margaret Beazley AO QC, Governor of New South Wales today. Governor Beazley will be updated on ADRI's research into asbestos-related diseases to improve methods of prevention, diagnosis, and treatments. The Governor will also receive an update on ADRI's international work on the prevention of disease in neighbouring countries.

The visit is timely following revelations last week on the [shocking and dangerous extent of asbestos use in Indonesia](#). ADRI is joining international efforts to raise public awareness about asbestos and provide expertise in developing skills in Indonesia to diagnose asbestos-related diseases. ADRI experts will visit Indonesia this month to lead workshops on the pathological diagnosis of mesothelioma.

The ADRI team will update the Governor on their sharing of expertise with Australia's neighbours, including [work this year in the Philippines holding a United Nations-sponsored workshop](#) to help combat the rising incidence in mesothelioma cases in the country. ADRI provides training to assist countries in our region develop the capacity to detect, diagnose and treat cases of asbestos-related disease.

Governor Beazley will tour ADRI's labs and receive an update on the vitally important research work undertaken in ADRI's Biobank. Blood and tissue specimens (including blood samples from mesothelioma patients and tumour tissue) are stored in the ADRI Biobank. The Biobank is an important and unique resource that is leading to a better understanding of disease. Biobank research is converted into clinical practice to improve outcomes for patients diagnosed with asbestos-related disease.

Peter Tighe, Chair of ADRI says, "The team at ADRI are honored that New South Wales Governor Margaret Beazley has shown such interest in our work fighting Australia's deadly asbestos legacy. The work of ADRI is vital and potentially life-saving. At ADRI we are investing our concerted efforts in the development of a life-saving cure for malignant mesothelioma. Many will be shocked to know that the deadly legacy of asbestos continues in Australia and the epidemic is only just reaching its peak. We have one of the highest incidences of asbestos-related diseases in the world per capita with around 700 new cases of malignant mesothelioma recorded in Australia every year. There is no cure and current treatments to preserve and extend life are limited. This work matters more than ever."

Professor Ken Takahashi, Director of ADRI says, "We are thrilled that the NSW Governor has requested an update on the work of ADRI. Asbestos-related disease remains a national health crisis in Australia. ADRI's goal is to save lives through investing our sustained, concerted efforts into three priority areas;

laboratory research, clinical sciences, prevention and public health – both in Australia and in developing countries.

“Public health efforts must continue to focus on preventing the devastating effects of avoidable asbestos-related diseases. ADRI contributes to the assessment of the global burden of asbestos-related diseases and advocates for an international ban on asbestos with a primary focus on the prevention of disease in developing countries.”

About the visit:

Members of the media are welcome to attend ADRI during the visit of Her Excellency, Margaret Beazley AO QC, Governor of New South Wales, and receive an update on ADRI’s work. The visit will take place from 3:30pm on Thursday 14 November at ADRI, Gate 3, Hospital Road, Concord Hospital.

Interviews:

Peter Tighe, Chair of ADRI and Ken Takahashi, Director of ADRI are available for interview.

Photos:

Photos will be available of the NSW Governor’s visit upon request.

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About the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute (ADRI):

As a response to the incidence of malignant mesothelioma in Australia, the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute (ADRI) located in the Bernie Banton Centre, was opened in January 2009 by the then Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd. ADRI was established by the Asbestos Diseases Research Foundation (ADRF), a charitable, not-for-profit foundation dedicated to assist and support the research efforts of ADRI into asbestos-related diseases.

Before his death in 2007, Bernie Banton campaigned vigorously for the rights of those who suffered, like himself, from asbestos-related diseases. The state-of-the-art research facility on the Concord Hospital Campus was named in his honour and consists of six wet laboratories and two dry laboratories.

See <http://adri.org.au/>.