CASE STUDY

PROFESSOR ALASTAIR MACLENNAN APPOINTED OFFICER OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA.

Professor Alastair MacLennan was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for his 40 years' work in women's and children's health, in particular unravelling the causes of cerebral palsy. Professor MacLennan has conducted feto-maternal research since 1970 and is the author of 340 refereed publications, books and scientific chapters.

The 2009 South Australian Scientist of the Year for Public Good has an international reputation for leading the world's largest research group into the causes of cerebral palsy, which affects more than 30,000 people in Australia.

Professor MacLennan and his team of researchers have recruited thousands of Australian families to provide cheek swabs and blood samples to help unravel the mystery of how genetic mutations are linked to cerebral palsy. The study is the largest of its kind in the world and seeks to find genetic answers to a disability that affects the neuro-motor region of the brain at birth, resulting in poor muscle coordination and even quadriplegia.

Apart from his reputation as one of the world's foremost cerebral palsy researchers, Professor MacLennan is also an international expert on menopause and women's health. He has received millions of dollars in Federal Government health funding for his research into both cerebral palsy and the role of hormone replacement therapy in treating menopausal symptoms.

Professor Mike Brooks, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President Research at the University of Adelaide, says the Australia Day honour conferred on Professor MacLennan is "highly deserved recognition for a lifetime body of work".

"Professor MacLennan has spent more than 40 years improving the standards of obstetrics and gynaecology around the world. **In that time he has made significant breakthroughs in helping to pinpoint the causes of cerebral palsy**, as well as making an outstanding contribution to women's health."

Professor Alastair MacLennan