



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

THE GOVERNOR'S LECTURE SERIES
GLOBAL HEALTH ISSUES FOR CHILDREN
Wednesday 30 November 2022

The Hon Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, Former Governor-General of Australia
Patrick Houlihan, Chairman, Murdoch Children's Research Institute and Director, **Professor**
Kathryn North AC
MCRI Ambassadors
Panellists to whom you'll shortly be introduced
Distinguished guests

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we gather – the Wurundjeri and Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation – and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and to Elders of other communities who may be with us.

I warmly welcome you to Government House to this public lecture on Global Health Issues for Children.

It is a part of a series of Lectures that we have been pleased to host here in our magnificent historic Ballroom.

When the building of Government House Victoria was completed almost 150 years ago, I am not sure that the Governor of the day would have foreseen its use in this way.

At that time, grand balls for up to several thousand guests at a time were front of mind, held to celebrate all sorts of occasions, including the Queen's Birthday and the Melbourne Cup.

Across the decades its use has broadened, changing with the times. There is no better illustration than during WW1, when the grandeur of this room gave way to trestles stacked high with goods, to be packed and sent to the troops, by the newly formed Victorian Division of the Red Cross.

In addition to large award ceremonies and receptions to acknowledge organisations and individuals that make significant contributions to our State, and events to welcome visiting Heads of State and dignitaries, this Ballroom has been used for a range of performances.

It has been our pleasure across the last seven years to expand a public performance series to include circus, ballroom dance, a rock concert and an Indigenous children's choir, amongst many others.

And we have held this ongoing Lecture series, welcoming Victorians to hear some of our greatest experts discussing different important topics of interest.

That brings me to this evening.

We are blessed in Victoria with a combination of world class universities, hospitals, and research institutes. We have long been mindful of the fundamental importance of research, its relationship with clinical practice and the importance of ongoing collaboration between institutions and, indeed, between nations – no matter which way political winds might be blowing at any particular moment in time.

These past difficult years of the pandemic have brought that home to us more than ever. It has highlighted some of the most wicked worldwide problems when it comes to disadvantage and health equity.

And there could be no more obvious place to start a discussion about that – and to cement solutions – than with the health of our children.

It has prompted us to pose the question this evening: How do we make the healthiest generation ever, for every child?

When I said that we are blessed in Victoria by the calibre of research institutes that we have, I can say, hand on heart, that we have every reason to be proud of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

MCRI is the largest child health research institute in the country, and rated as one of the world's leaders in research quality and impact.

Its more than 1200 researchers work with partners within the Royal Children's Hospital, (where some are also clinicians), and experts from the University of Melbourne.

They address some of the most complex issues in paediatric medicine, with research translated into effective prevention, early intervention and treatment, to improve the lives of millions of kids each year.

If we are blessed to have great research institutes here, and blessed to count the MCRI amongst them, then I can probably describe us as triply blessed to have Professor Kathryn North AC as the Director.

Professor North is a paediatric physician, neurologist and clinical geneticist, and a national and international leader in genomic medicine.

Shortly, she will facilitate a wonderful panel of experts whom she will introduce to us.

Before that, I do want to introduce a very special guest to say a few words.

Our 25th Governor-General, the Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, is known to you all. Dame Quentin's wide-ranging contribution to public life in Australia is admired: indeed, loved. What is significant is that her contribution did not finish when she left her formal role.

The MCRI is one of the beneficiaries of Dame Quentin's continuing commitment and wisdom. I am delighted that she is our guest this evening, demonstrating the support that she so generously gives, and it is my absolute pleasure to welcome Dame Quentin to the lectern.