

You are here: Home / News

NEWS

- > [Contacts](#)
- > [Find an expert](#)
- > [Subscribe](#)
- > [Unsubscribe](#)
- > [RSS feeds](#)

FOR STAFF

- > [Got a news story?](#)
- > [Public comment policy](#)
- > [Media clippings](#)

BROWSE NEWS

Research

NEWS ARCHIVES

2012

NEWS

World-renowned scientist to head multidisciplinary centre tackling 'lifestyle diseases'

24 February 2012

A world-renowned scientist whose research spans why locusts swarm to the dietary causes of ageing and human obesity has been appointed Academic Director of the University of Sydney's new multidisciplinary centre specialising in obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

[Professor Stephen Simpson](#) is an Australian Research Council Laureate Fellow in the [School of Biological Sciences](#) and a scientific adviser to Obesity Australia.

The news of his appointment coincides with the naming of the new centre - to be known as [the Charles Perkins Centre](#) - in recognition of a visionary and outstanding graduate of the University.

University of Sydney Vice-Chancellor [Dr Michael Spence](#) said the centre would make a major contribution to health globally by researching solutions to the alarming levels of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease in Australia and worldwide.

"Charles Perkins was the first Indigenous male graduate in Australia. We have named the centre in his honour as he so clearly embodied the values that underpin this vital and innovative research project," Dr Spence said.

"Charles Perkins changed the lives of a disadvantaged group of Australians - the centre seeks to change the lives of people around the world.

"Charles Perkins showed that new approaches could change the way Australians think and act. And he sought to lead new collaborations where a single person or agency alone could not deliver the desired result."

Professor Stephen Simpson said the Charles Perkins Centre would innovate and challenge existing approaches to obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

"The centre will integrate and enhance existing research across the University in an effort to address and solve the huge social and health costs arising from these metabolic diseases, which we believe can be prevented," he said.

"We are committed to improving health outcomes not just here in Australia, but around the world."

Professor Simpson's research spans locust behaviour to human health and integrates techniques and ideas from humanities, physical, medical and biological systems, including the most extensive study to date into whether calories or nutrient balance is responsible for ageing and longevity.

About the centre: To support the centre's academic program, the University is investing \$385 million to build a state-of-the-art research and education facility behind the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital site. It will serve as a central research and education hub supporting the broader University network.

The centre's core strategy is a commitment to cross-disciplinary partnerships and collaborations. It supports research and education across a diverse mix of disciplines including agriculture, architecture, law, psychology, sociology and business, physics, chemistry, biomedical sciences, imaging, clinical research and health policy.

Background: Obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease are among the leading causes of mortality and disability in Australia. They account for half the deaths in Australia and are a major contributor to the increasing financial burden on health systems worldwide.

There is an urgent need to act, as these alarming statistics show:

- In 2008, 500 million adults worldwide were obese.
In Australia, more than 60 percent of adults and 25 percent of children are overweight or obese.
- By 2025, 6.9 million Australians will be obese.
- More than 220 million people worldwide have diabetes, and diabetes-related deaths are projected to double between 2005 and 2025.
- Diabetes is predicted to become the major cause of morbidity and mortality in Australia by 2016.
- Cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death globally, and by 2030 almost 23.6 million people will die from stroke and heart disease.

- In Australia in 2008, cardiovascular disease was the cause of 34 percent of all deaths - more than any other illness.



[Follow University of Sydney Media on Twitter](#)

Media enquiries: Rachel Gleeson, +61 2 9351 3615, +61 478 409 131,
rachel.gleeson@sydney.edu.au

Sitemap

- ▶ [Future students](#)
- ▶ [Current students](#)
- ▶ [International](#)
- ▶ [Research & innovation](#)
- ▶ [Alumni & supporters](#)
- ▶ [About the University](#)
- ▶ [Visitors & community](#)
- ▶ [Staff & careers](#)

© 2002-2012 The University of Sydney.

ABN: 15 211 513 464. **CRICOS Number:** 00026A. **Phone:** +61 2 9351 2222.

Authorised by: Executive Director, External Relations.

[Contacts](#) | [Sitemap](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Library](#) | [Disclaimer](#) | [Privacy Statement](#)