

Woolcock Institute Appoints New Chairman

Australia's premier respiratory disease and sleep disorder research centre, the Woolcock Institute of Medical Research, has appointed Mark Compton as the new Chairman of the Board.

Mr Compton has been on the Board since February 2003 and will replace Mr Warren Scott who retired recently after a distinguished period as Chairman.

Prof. Norbert Berend AM, Director and CEO of the Woolcock Institute of Medical Research said, "Mr Compton is ideally suited to the position due to his background in health, business and not for profit organisations".

"Mark is an experienced Chairman, CEO, Director and Manager. His experience in managing public companies, especially those in the healthcare and life sciences field have been and will continue to be invaluable to the Woolcock," Prof Berend said.

Mr Compton has a pharmacology degree from the University of NSW and a Masters in Business Administration from the Australian Graduate School of Management (UNSW). He is also a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Mr Compton's career has included working in research roles in the area of respiratory disease, as an advisory consultant to the Poisons Information Centre at The Children's Hospital; National CEO of the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia; CEO and MD of SciGen Ltd an international biotechnology company with its principal business in biopharmaceuticals; and MD of Alpha Healthcare Ltd a publicly listed Australian company which owned and operated a network of private hospitals.

Mr Compton has significant experience in the not-for-profit sector as a volunteer, non-executive director and chairman. In addition to other not for profit roles he was Chairman of the NSW board of St John Ambulance Australia for six years and was appointed to a senior role on the national board of St John in 2004. He has served St John Ambulance as a volunteer in various roles for over 30 years.

Mr Compton paid tribute to the retiring Chairman Mr Warren Scott saying, "Warren steered the organisation through a critical time of development and was Chairman when the Woolcock was publicly recognised by the Editor of the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine, Professor Jeffrey Drazen, as one of the world's top five respiratory research centres. Warren along with the Board successfully raised money through fundraising and state and federal government funding to create a purpose designed new home for all of the Woolcock's activities and its rapidly growing research program, in a refurbished building owned by the University of Sydney. We are tremendously grateful for the wonderful contribution and leadership given by Warren during his tenure" Mr Compton said.

Mr Compton went on to say that 2008 was going to be an exciting year for the Woolcock staff because it would be the first time they had been housed in one building.

"The consolidation of the Woolcock's activities and people into one facility will significantly improve conditions and opportunities for Woolcock researchers to progress leading edge research projects. The Board will continue to work with the Director and his research leaders to ensure the best possible support is provided to the Woolcock to allow it to grow and continue to do its invaluable work in researching respiratory and sleep disorders. The Woolcock has a distinguished record as a major contributor to the body of knowledge that has led to saving lives and improving the management of disease and quality of life for so many patients affected by the many debilitating diseases affecting breathing and sleep" Mr Compton said.

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