

**Australian clinical trials networks shaping modern medicine:
Local doctors recognised among the world's most influential researchers of our time.**

Australia has shown once again that it is punching above its weight as a global leader in clinical trials research, and that Australian patients are the beneficiaries.

The World's Most Influential Scientific Minds: 2014 has just been published by Thomson Reuters. By analysing the most frequently cited publications in the scientific literature between 2002-2012, the report identified a list of standout researchers of the last decade who are having the greatest influence on the world's future directions across all major areas of science.

When the list of *Highly Cited Researchers* was last reviewed in 2004 there were no Australian-based researchers recognised in the field of Clinical Medicine. Ten years on and there are seven Australian researchers reported to be among the most influential scientific minds of our time in this highly competitive field.

Three of the Australian's to make the list are current or past leaders of a clinical trials network – a formal collaboration of doctors, nurses and other researcher professionals who design and undertake clinical trials across multiple hospitals and health care settings.

Professor Rinaldo Bellomo was the founding Chair of the Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society Clinical Trials Group (ANZICS CTG) and is Co-Director of the Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Research Centre (ANZIC-RC) at Monash University, Melbourne and Director of Intensive Care Research at Austin Health.

Reflecting on the extraordinary personal achievement, Professor Bellomo acknowledged the dedication of intensive care researchers involved in the ANZICS CTG and ANZIC-RC.

"It represents an acknowledgement of team effort and of the dedication of multiple outstanding clinician researchers who have made, and continue to make, the journey to improve the care of critically ill patients - the most vulnerable patients of all. These patients deserve and must receive our continued commitment to the relentless pursuit of the best level of evidence to illuminate clinical practice".

"This ranking reflects the high standard of practice and scientific clinical research of the intensive care community in Australia. I am simply a representative of a group of people who over two decades of intensive effort have shaped the world's thinking and practice in this field and have made the lives of critically ill patients safer and their recovery better."

Professor Bellomo is a keen advocate for the role of networks in improving the quality of health care.

"Our commitment to this process is unwavering and filled with passion. The Australian community must know that if they need to come to intensive care they will receive *best in the world care*, and that the multiple trials we conduct represent the only way to make such care more effective and safer", Professor Bellomo said.

The 2014 list of the world's best and brightest scientific minds includes leading Australian cancer researchers Professor John Forbes AM, Director of Research at the Australia and New Zealand Breast Cancer Trials Group (ANZBCTG), and Professor Timothy Hughes, member of the Australasian Leukaemia and Lymphoma Group (ALLG). Both the ANZBCTG and the ALLG have published numerous landmark clinical trials over the last decade.

In a media release issued by the ANZBCTG earlier this week, Professor Forbes had similar words of acknowledgement for what can be achieved through collaborative clinical trials.

“[inclusion on the list]... is an endorsement of the quality of the research undertaken by the ANZBCTG, in what is an internationally peer reviewed process. As a result of clinical trials research, we have made significant improvements to the treatment options available to women diagnosed with or at risk of breast cancer and to survival rates, helping more women to survive their breast cancer long term”, Professor Forbes said.

There are around 40 clinical trials networks in Australia. These groups, led by senior clinician researchers working in the health system, are dedicated to undertaking well-designed clinical trials in order to provide the high-quality evidence that helps save or improve the lives. As this latest report highlights, their work is providing cutting-edge care for Australians and shaping new frontiers in clinical medicine on a global scale.

The full list of researchers named in *The World's Most Influential Scientific Minds: 2014* is available at <http://thomsonreuters.com/press-releases/062014/Scientific-Minds-2014>.

About the Australian Clinical Trials Alliance (ACTA)

ACTA was established in 2013 to support the some 50 clinical trials networks, trial coordinating centers and clinical quality registries that conduct important public-good research within hospitals and primary care settings across Australia.

These networks are collaborative groups that involve up to several hundred senior doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and researchers. They are uniquely capable of identifying where there is poor evidence to guide treatment decisions and conducting well-designed clinical trials that provide evidence to help patients, health professionals and governments make the best possible decisions about health care.

A full list of the organisations that are part of the ACTA community is available at <http://www.clinicaltrialsalliance.org.au/about-acta/the-acta-community/>

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