

Speech: Barbara Dicker Oration

Vice-Chancellor Professor Linda Kristjanson

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Let me begin by offering a warm welcome to the Honourable Mary Wooldridge, Minister for Mental Health, Women's Affairs and Community Services, Ian Dicker and his family, Professor Patrick McGorry, alumni, colleagues, and friends of Swinburne.

It's wonderful to have you all here tonight.

It's a great privilege to welcome the Dicker family and to be able to introduce our guest speaker Professor Patrick McGorry for the inaugural Barbara Dicker Oration.

Professor McGorry is a leading international researcher, clinician and mental health advocate and leader - especially through his work with young people in our community.

He is the Executive Director of Orygen Youth Health Research Centre and Director of Clinical Services at Orygen Youth Health.

It is through his work on improving the youth mental health sector, and in the process transforming the lives of tens of thousands of young people around the world, that many of us will be familiar with.

It is indeed a great privilege to have Professor McGorry deliver the inaugural Barbara Dicker Oration.

The Barbara Dicker Brain Sciences Foundation has been established by Ian Dicker and his family to honour the memory of his late wife, Barbara Dicker.

It is through the generous support of the Dicker family that Swinburne has been able to establish Australia's first multidisciplinary mental health institute.

Many of us here tonight have been touched in some way by depression, dementia, sleep disorders or anxiety. Whether it has been through personal experience or through a family member, friend, neighbour or even a work colleague.

The collaboration between Swinburne and the Dicker family enables further research into these vital health areas.

The Barbara Dicker Brain Sciences Foundation supports applied research in brain and psychological sciences, with a view to helping diagnose, treat and prevent sleep disorders, anxiety and depression, and dementia. The ultimate goal is to find a cure, treatment or prevention for these.

Mental health research is an important priority worthy of support and we believe we are making a significant contribution to the community in the mental health sector.

Swinburne has invested \$40million to establish Australia's newest and most complete human brain imaging research centre in the Advanced Technologies Centre - the very building you are in tonight.

Incorporating state-of-the-art equipment including a Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine and Victoria's first magnetoencephalograph machine, Swinburne can now offer researchers the full spectrum of multi-modality imaging.

This infrastructure and equipment is complemented with clinical interview rooms, computing facilities for image analysis, clinical trials and e-therapy facilities, cellular neurosciences and genetic laboratories, and a Baby Laboratory.

Our research covers cellular and genetic science all the way through to brain and behavioural sciences.

We focus on the translation of research findings and psychological knowledge into practical applications to improve the wellbeing of individuals, groups and the community.

A wonderful example of this is our e-Therapy group, which leads the world in the development and dissemination of on-line treatments for mental health disorders such as anxiety. Swinburne also has significant expertise in schizophrenia and hoarding disorders.

We are very proud of our world class Brain and Psychological Sciences Research Centre here at Swinburne, and are immensely honoured to have the Barbara Dicker Brain Sciences Foundation part of our broader research efforts.

The Barbara Dicker Oration tonight honours the memory of Barbara Dicker and the philanthropy of the Dicker family, whose generosity will help many others through mental health research.

Most importantly, this work will help improve the lives of many affected every day by mental health disorders.

I am now delighted to hand over to Professor McGorry, whom I warmly welcome to Swinburne for the inaugural Barbara Dicker Oration.

Thank You.