Ignorance drives radiation fears

The possibility that low doses of radiation may prevent or delay the progression of cancer is being explored by a Flinders University research team led by Professor Pam Sykes in a move that runs counter to the widely held perception that exposure to any radiation is harmful.

Professor Sykes, recently appointed to the University's Strategic Professorship in Preventive Cancer Biology in the Flinders Centre for Cancer Prevention and Control says the public panic in response to nuclear accidents such as that at Fukushima in Japan is the result of a general ignorance about radiation.

"We have to ensure that radiation is respected and we have to understand what damage radiation can cause — but radiation is not the poison, the dose is," Professor Sykes said.

"We need radiation in our environment, just as we need vitamins and minerals. Too much is a problem, too little is a problem," she said.

"Chernobyl was obviously a disaster but there was no increase in leukaemia, solid tumours or birth defects among the 335,000 people who were evacuated and who received less than 100 milliSieverts of radiation — that's five times the dose I'm allowed as a radiation worker.

"There was an increase in thyroid tumours but we're not sure how much that related to the fact that everyone was screened for thyroid tumours, which wouldn't normally happen.

"It's now been accepted that they should not have evacuated so many people because the biggest detriment from Chernobyl was that they were dramatically disadvantaged, both economically and socially. Many suffered depression thinking they were going to die of cancer.

"And the frightening thing is that it's been..."
Civilian casualties have rights: law expert

A Flinders University international law expert has uncovered international law that could, for the first time, require those taking part in armed conflicts to account for and possibly compensate the families of civilian casualties.

The research, led by Professor Susan Breau, will fuel the international debate that has raged over civilian deaths in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Professor Breau’s report was discussed for the first time at an international meeting of security policy makers at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy in June. She found there is a binding international legal obligation upon all parties to an armed conflict to record every civilian casualty of armed conflict.

The obligation includes searching for the missing or dead, collecting bodies, treating the dead with respect, returning property to families, individual culturally-sensitive burial (not in mass graves) and informing families where they lie.

Professor Breau said the findings could also lead to compensation for families of loved ones missing or killed in armed conflict.

“The precedent has already been set in Iraq, where the US and British governments have paid families for what’s known as ‘collateral damage,’” Professor Breau said.

The three-year research project was commissioned by the London-based think tank, the Oxford Research Group and funded by a UK charity organisation, the Funding Network.

During the research, Professor Breau’s team, which included Ms Rachel Joyce, discovered that legal obligations relating to civilian casualties are already enshrined in international humanitarian law, international human rights law and domestic law, and are binding on all parties at all times in relation to any form of violent killing or injury by any party.

“There is so much armed conflict in the world and there is a desperate need for groups and governments to understand their obligations towards civilians caught up in war,” Professor Breau said.

“Now states, individually and collectively, need to plan how to work towards conforming with these substantial bodies of law. Our findings also mean that members of civil society, particularly those that look after the welfare of the victims of conflict, have a new opportunity to press states towards fulfilling their obligations under law.”

The report – Legal Obligations to Record Civilian Casualties in Armed Conflict – is the completion of the first phase of the project. In the second phase Professor Breau will be looking at applying the law to different situations including current armed conflicts, such as Afghanistan, Libya and Syria, as well as past conflicts.

In time it is hoped the results could lead to an international treaty covering civilian casualties of armed conflict along the lines of the treaty that currently covers obligations regarding military personnel in armed conflict, the Geneva Convention.

“It is possible that states will have to begin the process of negotiating an international treaty. It could result in a change in the way they approach warfare now they know they can no longer fail to account for and identify civilian casualties,” she said.

Peta Newbold

estimated that throughout Europe there were over 100,000 wanted pregnancies aborted, and these were people who didn’t live anywhere near Chernobyl.”

Professor Sykes’ research, which involves doses of radiation that are up to three orders of magnitude lower than those used by other investigators, has been funded by the US Department of Energy Low Dose Radiation Research Program for almost 10 years.

“Using a transgenic mouse that is very sensitive to stressors, we have identified regions in the dose range that cause different biological effects,” she said.

“Some of our colleagues in Germany and Oxford have shown that low doses of radiation to cells in culture trigger a mechanism which removes pre-tumour cells. We’re now working to see if we can identify this response in a mouse.

“If we can understand these mechanisms, we can manipulate them to prevent cancer,” adding it might be “several years” before the potential to humans could be confirmed.

Studies in Canada and Japan have also shown that low doses of radiation given to mice delay the onset of cancer, and reduce the symptoms of diabetes and atherosclerosis, improving the span and quality of life of the affected animals.

Professor Sykes and her team are currently examining low dose radiation therapy in reducing or preventing prostate cancer, with a grant from the Prostate Council Foundation of Australia.

Vincent Ciccarello
Testing time for drug users as research advances

A project that aims to improve roadside and workplace drug testing has won Australian Research Council (ARC) funding for a team led by Flinders University’s Professor Nico Voelcker. The $245,538 ARC Linkage Grant will be used to develop advanced analysis technologies using porous silicon microchips to increase the safety of Australian drivers and workers.

Associate Head of the Faculty of Science and Engineering, Professor Nico Voelcker said that while roadside drug testing recently had been incorporated into legislation throughout Australia, technology leading to faster, more sensitive and higher throughput screening methods that will contribute to law enforcement efforts are needed.

“The television campaign which asks whether you would trust a surgeon or pilot who has been on drugs raises a very important question: how would you know?” Professor Voelcker said.

On the road and in jobs that require people to be clear-minded, drugs can have potentially fatal consequences,” he said. Current methods of drug testing at the roadside and in the workplace do work but our technology would significantly increase the speed and throughput of tests.”

Professor Voelcker and his team have already established a proof of principle whereby highly porous silicon was able to absorb illicit drugs from saliva, which could then be detected by their molecular characteristics.

“We have teamed up with the leaders in forensic science to develop what we believe will be a highly efficient method of detecting illicit drugs,” Professor Voelcker said.

The grant includes an ARC Postdoctoral Fellowship Industry (APDI) grant – the only one awarded in South Australia in this funding round – to enable Dr Maurizio Ronci, a mass spectrometry expert from the European Centre for Brain Research in Rome, Italy, to join the team.

“The APDI grant demonstrates Flinders University’s capacity to attract high-calibre international researchers such as Dr Ronci to South Australia,” Professor Voelcker said.

Vincent Ciccarello

Culture of concealment survives Dr Death

The narcissistic personality of Dr Jayant Patel may have been the major factor in Bundaberg’s ‘Doctor Death’ scandal, but a second major contributor was a State health system that was “a disaster waiting to happen”, according to Professor James Dunbar, who also says little has changed since.

Professor Dunbar, who heads the Greater Green Triangle Department of Rural Health, run jointly by Flinders and Deakin universities, is co-author with Professor Prasuna Reddy and Mr Stephen May of a new book entitled Deadly Healthcare.

Professor Dunbar said that the events of the Patel case had unfolded while he was teaching the Safety and Quality topic to students of the Masters in Health Care Management. The events, he says, offered a perfect case history of so-called Swiss cheese theory, in which risk factors, either individual or systemic, are metaphorically represented by slices of cheese and their holes.

“Generally speaking the holes don’t line up – something traps the errors and people take actions that stop accidents happening,” Professor Dunbar said.

“In this case, there were far more slices than usual, and all the holes lined up in a way that no-one’s ever seen before in the world.

“It’s also a depressing story – despite $10 billion and a huge effort to change the culture in Queensland health, it only worked in the short term, and in the long term things are really back to where they were.”

Professor Dunbar said one of the most important ways to address the medical risk factors is to create an anonymous computer-based incident reporting system, so that “near-misses” can be categorised and dealt with at a level appropriate to their seriousness.

“Now you can set that up, but the thing is it’s pretty pointless if you don’t do anything with the information,” he said.

Professor Dunbar said even after the Patel case, a nurse in Bundaberg who made numerous reports about shortcomings in the emergency department was ignored until she too turned whistleblower.

“You have to have an open culture in which people are not frightened to come forward – in Queensland Health we’re seeing a culture in which says ‘Don’t rock the boat, because if you do you’ll be managed out of the place’, Professor Dunbar said.

He said punitive attitudes from politicians are being reinforced by managers due to the budgetary pressures in the system.

“This creates a culture of concealment instead of an effort to find out where the system’s weaknesses are.”

Deadly Healthcare is published by Australian Academic Press.

Charles Gent

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Flinders teaching excellence recognised

The excellence of Flinders University’s teaching has earned the nation’s highest accolade with nine individuals and teams being awarded Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC).

It is the equal highest number of citations awarded to a single institution in the 2011 round of Citations and includes one of a total of 22 special awards to ‘Early Career Achievers’, offered for the first time.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Andrew Parkin congratulated the award recipients and said their achievements reflected the University’s commitment to high quality teaching and scholarship.

“Quality in teaching is a long-standing, distinguishing characteristic of Flinders,” Professor Parkin said.

“It is a characteristic of which the University is proud but one it does not take for granted. Its achievement calls for a campus-wide focus on the dissemination and embedding of good teaching practices and the ability and willingness to respond to student feedback,” he said.

“Our teachers have again demonstrated the capacity and desire to motivate and inspire their students and to create new tools and techniques to enhance the student learning experience.

“On behalf of the University, I extend my congratulations to each of the recipients of the ATLC Citations – one of the nation’s highest teaching honours, as determined by their peers and the tertiary education sector.”

The winners of the Citations, worth $10,000 each, are:

- Ms Patricia Barkway (School of Nursing and Midwifery)
- The Clinical Communication Project team: Mrs Didy Button, Mrs Moira Kelton, Mr Gregory Mathews and Dr Karen Wotton (School of Nursing and Midwifery)
- Associate Professor Diana Glenn (School of Humanities)
- Mrs Lyn Gum (Flinders University Rural Clinical School)
- Mrs Tania Leiman (Flinders Law School)
- Simulation Teaching Team: Professor Harry Owen, Ms Maria Cmielewski, Ms Karina Morrison, Ms Christine Nobes, Ms Meredith Reeve, Ms Leanne Rogers, Dr Cyle Sprick and Ms Debbie Stone (School of Medicine)

Second student receives G-G’s scholarship

A Flinders student teacher has won a prestigious Governor-General’s Indigenous Student Teacher Scholarship, the second time a Flinders undergraduate has received the award in the two years since it was established.

Ms Stacey Fyfe-Savage, who is studying for a double degree in Early Childhood and Special Education, told the selection panel that she had overcome considerable odds to study at Flinders and is now a mother of three, juggling work as a Community Education Officer at a primary school in Victor Harbour and full-time study.

Ms Fyfe-Savage also talked about her passion for reviving the almost forgotten language of her people, the Ngarrindjeri from the lower Murray River, western Fleurieu Peninsula and the Coorong, and about her dream of becoming a teacher in a system where there needs to be more examples of Indigenous achievers.

“Receiving the award is a great privilege and it shows that dreams can come true,” Ms Fyfe-Savage said.

The Governor-General’s Indigenous Student Teacher Scholarships are awarded each year to help one Indigenous student in every State and Territory to undertake Education studies at university. It is part of a raft of Government initiatives aimed at closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage.

For the winners it is worth $25,000 a year for the life of the teaching degree, an award Ms Fyfe-Savage says gives her enormous relief and will help out with the difficulties she has fitting in studies with her other commitments.

Flinder’s Yunggorendi First Nations Centre supports Indigenous students in higher education and Associate Professor Tracey Bunda said the Centre was very proud that for the second consecutive year an Aboriginal student of Flinders University had won the Governor-General’s Indigenous Student Teacher Scholarship.

“Following in the footsteps of Angelina Parfitt in 2010, Stacey Fyfe-Savage is a most worthy recipient for 2011. A Ngarrindjeri woman, mother and mature-aged student, Stacey has taken an important step for herself, her family and her community in working towards her Degrees in Education,” Associate Professor Bunda said.

“She has a wonderful bubbly personality that is attractive to children and adults alike and this will stand her in good stead for her chosen career,” she added.
Humanities research poised for renaissance

Australian humanities could be heading a renaissance following the birth of a Flinders-led national network that will help researchers to speak with one voice.

The Australian Consortium of Humanities Research Centres (ACHRC) is hosted at Flinders University and its Director is Associate Professor in English, Robert Phiddian. It will be launched at its inaugural Annual Meeting at the RIAus in Adelaide on 25-26 July.

Keynote speakers will include the head of the international Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI) Professor Srinivas Aravamudan of Duke University, and representatives from major institutions, including the National Library of Australia and the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR).

“Kim Carr is the first Minister in a long time who really acts on the belief that university research extends beyond the disciplines of science or medicine,” Associate Professor Phiddian said.

“We’re hoping this could mean something of a renaissance for the humanities, but we have to get our act together, too. The ACHRC aims to be a forum where we build consensus in our sector about what we can deliver, and what we need in order to do it.”

The ACHRC consolidates a network that has existed only patchily in Australia and will be based on, and affiliated with, a proven international model, the CHCI based in the US. It is supported by universities across Australia and will provide a physical and virtual hub to connect humanities researchers to international networks and funding, and coordinate research activity across the sector.

Professor Phiddian said the ACHRC has been formed at a critical time for the humanities because technology now provides so much information so easily that the value of the humanities is questioned.

“Having all that information doesn’t mean you can understand it. Helping individuals and societies understand where we come from, who we are, and what’s humanly possible: that’s what we do,” he said.

David Agnew bids adieu with runs on the board

While his track record suggests he may be as predisposed to farewells as Dame Nellie Melba, Mr David Agnew promises 30 June was his last official day at Flinders University.

After more than 40 years, one resignation, one failed attempt at retirement and a Distinguished Service Award, employee payroll number 00006 has said “it’s time to go”.

In 1967, encouraged by his future father-in-law, then Director of Student Services, Alan Mitchell, he applied for the position of finance secretary in the Student Union.

“When I started in the Union, Flinders was a very small place where everybody knew each other,” Mr Agnew said.

“I was pleased to be able to work and study for a Bachelor of Arts part-time,” he said.

The timing of his move in 1975 into research administration, overseeing the allocation of grants and research appointments, avoided what would have been a crisis of conscience.

“I was still at the Union during the 1974 ‘Occupation’ of the Registry by a group of radical students,” Mr Agnew said.

“Fortunately, I was on leave when the staff stormed the Registry and took it back. I would have joined the staff as I didn’t like the notion of the occupation,” he said.

He went on to become secretary of the research committee and the head of research administration until 1993. He moved into various personnel roles until his resignation from Flinders in 1996 to join Charles Sturt University as Director of Research and Graduate Studies.

After three years, retirement beckoned.

“I was not doing much and after five months I said to my wife: ‘I cannot stand this; I’ve got to do something’.”

Serendipitously, that very evening, Professor Malcolm Battersby phoned, asking him to consider working part-time in the Department of Psychiatry.

An avid cricket fan, Mr Agnew has plans to write a biography of Steve Waugh, to travel and to order his collection of more 100,000 stamps.
Collaboration points to world first ageing

South Australia could become the world’s first ‘age-friendly’ state. That’s the intended outcome of the collaboration between the current Adelaide Thinker in Residence and the Adelaide Thinker in Residence (ATIR) Partner Group that includes Professor Mary Luszcz, Director of the Flinders Centre for Ageing Studies.

Thinker Dr Alexandre Kalache is a former Director of the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) Aging and Life Course Program, and has an international reputation as an advocate for older people. He recently spent four weeks in Adelaide working with researchers and partner organisations to understand how well South Australians are ageing.

Professor Luszcz and the South Australian Active Ageing Research Cluster (SAAARC), which is also hosted at Flinders, produced the initial policy brief which provided the springboard for the discussion and she said the resulting collaboration is likely to be a catalyst for progressing ageing policy within the state and ongoing research.

“Dr Kalache takes an holistic view of ageing policy, that has strong synergies with the work we do,” Professor Luszcz said.

“His philosophy is that age-friendly policy is friendly for everyone, and innovation that makes sense for seniors makes sense for people of all ages.”

Professor Luszcz hopes the collaboration with the Thinker might lead to greater investment in ageing research and allow us to work towards becoming an ‘Age-Friendly’ state. More than 30 cities have this WHO designated status, but it will be a world first for an entire state to aim to achieve it.

“It would mean that the ‘age-friendly’ policy would extend to regional, rural and remote areas. To date an exclusive focus on cities overlooks these areas, which particularly in an Australian context are vital to an inclusive approach to ageing well.”

Professor Luszcz is also running the Australian Longitudinal Study on Ageing (ALSA) that has provided a wealth of information since 1992 and an innovative adjunct project, the ALSA Daily Life Time-Sampling Study (ADuLTS). ADuLTS will give a rare insight into how the oldest survivors (85 years and older) from the original cohort continue to spend their days, how they contribute to society and how that impacts on their wellbeing.

Is chocolate cake your downfall?

Everyone experiences food cravings. Cravings are distinct from hunger and described as an intense desire to eat something specific, such as chocolate. And it may have been the lure of chocolate cake that helped draw a packed house to a recent Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences public lecture that outlined the latest Flinders research on the issue.

Food cravings are an issue for a number of reasons. The best known are that in general people crave foods that are high in calories and cravings can also lead to bingeing and other disordered eating. However, work undertaken by Flinders’ psychologists has uncovered other consequences too.

Associate Professor Eva Kemps and Professor Marika Tiggemann have undertaken research to understand what influences our cravings and what we can do to control them. They suggest that mental imagery may hold the key.

“People report they can see the food they crave, taste it and smell it,” Professor Tiggemann said.

“And this takes up cognitive resources that can then interfere with cognitive performance. This is a concern because it can affect the way we cope with everyday tasks such as driving through dense traffic or tasks where mistakes can have serious consequences, such as monitoring a radar screen.”

The researchers found interventions involving thought suppression and exposure to food cues did not work well. However, if subjects were given cognitive visual and olfactory imagery tasks their food cravings were reduced, but the tasks were too hard to maintain.

The most successful method was a relatively simple task borrowed from the treatment of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Known as ‘dynamic visual noise’, it involved focusing on a black and white dot pattern that pulsed.

The use of a random unfamiliar smell also reduced food cravings, and the results now point to further research.

“The preliminary findings were promising. Food cravings were reduced, and were less likely to lead to eating,” said Professor Tiggemann.

“Now we need to find out whether that translated to actually eating less overall. We also have to take the work out of the lab and apply it to those people for whom food cravings are a problem. There is a lot to do before we can take these techniques to the market,” she said.
Logos is the most important institution of its kind in Australia and the first of many to come in Europe and North America.

"We are thrilled to receive the generous support of the South Australian Government and the Greek Government."

An important element of the Centre will be the enhanced delivery of Modern Greek through the development of new online content and the conversion of existing teaching materials into a format better suited to the online environment.

"For five years, Flinders has successfully delivered Modern Greek externally to students at Charles Darwin University in the Northern Territory," Professor Tsiianikas said.

"Logos will be the focal point of a state-of-the-art approach to language studies that we expect to influence the way other languages are taught in Australia."

The Greek Government will provide an additional staff position within Modern Greek at Flinders for a minimum of five years and a two-week training program for 30 teachers in the years 2012-2013 through the European-funded program Intercultural Greek-language Teaching in Diaspora run by the University of Crete.

Flinders Vice-Chancellor Professor Michael Barber congratulated Professor Tsiianikas on the launch of Logos, the continuing success of the International Greek Conference on Research Conference, and the achievements of Modern Greek at Flinders.

Vincent Ciccarello

Flinders to host national Greek cultural centre

The promotion and preservation of Greek language and culture will be the focus of a new national centre at Flinders University, announced by Premier Mike Rann.

The Logos Australian Centre for Hellenic Language and Culture will receive funding of $600,000 over four years from the South Australian Government, as well as the support of the Greek Government as the first of similar centres it has planned around the world.

Centre Director, Professor Michael Tsiianikas said the name, Logos, reflected the spirit and all-embracing nature of the Centre.

"The Greek word, logos, has a broad range of meanings — but, essentially, it refers to any idea that has the power to move people," Professor Tsiianikas said.

"Our aspirations for the Logos Centre are to not only move young people to pursue studies in Modern Greek but to strengthen Australia’s economic and social ties with Greece through the promotion of Greek traditions, music and culture,” he said.

"Logos is the most important institution of its type in Australia and the first of many to come in Europe and North America.

Breakthrough on bullying in Greece

The violent protests on the streets of Athens have made headlines recently but in schools throughout Greece bullying has long been rife. However, a Flinders University research team led by Professor Phillip Slee and Professor Rosalind Murray-Harvey is poised to make a difference in a country that has some of the highest bullying rates in the world.

Researcher Grace Skrzypiec in Flinders School of Education has recently returned from Greece where an anti-bullying program developed by Flinders — including a DVD and information and training resources — is now the centrepiece of a pilot anti-bullying program, the first of its kind in that country.

On that visit, the result of an encounter with Greek academics as part of a Flinders University-run conference on cyberbullying in Melbourne last year, Ms Skrzypiec was surprised to find that Greece had none of the policies or tools that are widely available elsewhere to address bullying — even though the country rates fourth and sixth in the world for bullying amongst boys and girls respectively.

Ms Skrzypiec also found that within the education system school principals were reluctant to address the problem because it would mean taking responsibility for the bullying occurring in their schools.

Ms Skrzypiec collaborated with researchers from the University of Thessaly in Volos, located about 300 kilometres north of Athens, to raise awareness of the personal and social damage of bullying and possible responses with a series of presentations to teachers, students, counsellors and parents.

"Everywhere I went people wanted to talk about bullying and there was a great response to Flinders’ DVD — they had an incredible thirst for information and we were providing the drink," Ms Skrzypiec told Flinders Journal.

"At the end of one session with a group of students, my original collaborator Christina Roussi said a student had approached a teacher and said: ‘Wow, I’m glad that happened because it has saved my life!’" she said.

Greek researchers — from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the University of Athens — have now also joined the Greek project team which will adapt the DVD, a questionnaire identifying strategies and other school resources to reflect local culture and conditions.

The DVD was directed and produced by Flinders Screen Studies lecturer, Alison Wotherspoon, with students from Unley High School depicting four bullying scenarios —

Peter Gill

International

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Mitsubishi Motors was more like a family than a workplace and South Australia is poorer for its passing, according to a new documentary by Flinders University film-makers.

Voices of the Mitsubishi Family records the reminiscences of former workers at Tonsley Park and the emotional journey that many took as the company rode the highs and lows of a very competitive vehicle-building industry before finally closing in March 2008.

A number of the workers interviewed by Flinders film-makers, Cole Larsen and Tom Young, likened working at Mitsubishi to a “family” with many people staying with the company for much of their working lives.

While the demise of Mitsubishi was prematurely predicted on many occasions, when the doors finally closed the company delivered extensive re-training opportunities and redundancy packages described as “very good”.

As one former employee put it, with the end of manufacturing at Mitsubishi Adelaide “lost some of its character, some of its culture and some of its heart”.

But as another said: “There will be a legacy of Mitsubishi — there is a diaspora of Mitsubishi people who have gone out into other industries and they are people who are doing a very good job”.

The film records that of nearly 1000 workers directly employed at Mitsubishi or working for supplier companies that were also affected by the closure, more than 80 percent have found new jobs.

Director Cole Larsen said that he had been surprised at the unanimity of the high regard with which Mitsubishi had been held amongst its workers.

“Overwhelmingly, the workers at all levels of the company thought that Mitsubishi had been a wonderful place to work with good conditions, great pay and training, and a strong and enjoyable social side to their working life,” Mr Larsen said.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Barber, said the Voices of the Mitsubishi Family project underscored Flinders engagement with the local community in which Mitsubishi had played such a significant role.

“Flinders’ relationship with the Mitsubishi site is set to continue with the University currently examining the role it will play with the establishment by the State Government of the Sustainable Industries Education Centre on the site,” Professor Barber said.

Professor Barber and the Minister for the Southern Suburbs, Mr John Hill, launched Voices of the Mitsubishi Family at Flinders University in June.

Peter Gill

Prime Minister opens high-tech facilities in Darwin

Medical education in Australia has been revolutionised with the opening by Prime Minister Julia Gillard of the Flinders University Northern Territory Medical Program (NTMP) Complex in Darwin.

The first stage of a $27.8 million Federal Government-funded program, the building features the Meti Learning Space, a state-of-the-art information communications technology which records medical students’ interactions with “patients” and simulators.

In addition to building a portfolio that can span the student’s academic course, the Meti Learning Space offers a common repository for assessment and allows staff trained at existing facilities to continue to use that training.

Flinders Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Barber said the hi-tech system reflects the progressive nature of the NTMP itself.

“In its inaugural year, the NTMP — delivered by Flinders University in collaboration with Charles Darwin University — has a full quota of 24 students undertaking medical studies in the Northern Territory for the first time,” Professor Barber said.

“All of those students will have the opportunity to practice medicine across the Northern Territory when they graduate. Within that cohort are 10 Indigenous students, with another four in Adelaide making it the single largest intake of Indigenous students into a medical program anywhere in Australia,” he said.

“The NTMP and its graduates will serve as an inspiration to other Territorians and Indigenous students.

“I expect this remarkable building and its facilities will similarly serve as a beacon of inspiration.”

Vincent Ciccarello

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