

Emeritus Professor John Chalmers AC

The degree of Doctor of Medicine (honoris causa) was conferred upon Emeritus Professor John Chalmers AC at the Faculty of Medicine's 150th birthday celebrations held on 13 June 2006.



Chancellor the Hon Justice Kim Santow conferring the degree of Doctor of Medicine (honoris causa) upon Emeritus Professor John Chalmers on 13 June 2006 in the Great Hall, *photo, courtesy Faculty of Medicine.*

Citation

Chancellor I have the honour to present Emeritus Professor John Chalmers, Companion of the Order of Australia and Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, for admission to the degree of Doctor of Medicine, honoris causa.

John Chalmers is one of the Faculty of Medicine's most illustrious alumni, a man with seemingly boundless energy who has outstanding achievements in medical research in high blood pressure, in research development as chair of the National Health and Medical Research Council and its committees, in clinical practice and administration, in medical education, and in the support of the College of Physicians as its president and council member and as a fellow of the Australian Academy of Science. He has served in senior positions in teaching hospitals and universities around Australia and has been recognised repeatedly nationally and internationally for his outstanding efforts, including the award of Companion in the Order of Australia.

John Chalmers graduated from this university Bachelor of Science (Medical) with 1st Class Honours in 1960 and MB BS with 1st Class Honours and the University Medal in 1967. Subsequently he graduated from the University of New South Wales with a PhD for his work on the control of blood pressure by the nervous system, research that he then pursued at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston and the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, London. At both places he was involved in ground breaking research.

Upon his return to Australia at the end of 1971, he was appointed Senior Lecturer in Medicine and then Associate Professor in 1973. In 1975 he took up the Foundation Chair of Medicine at Flinders Medical Centre in Adelaide and was a major and driving force in the development of the new medical school at

Flinders. His managerial energy, directness and creativity during that tenure were legendary and he mentored many young academics to success. He served as Dean of the School of Medicine for 3 years and as Clinical Dean for 12 years, and played a key role in guiding the school to change to a graduate medical program

In 1996, he returned to Sydney taking up the position of Chairman of Research at the Royal North Shore Hospital and Sub-Dean of Research at the Northern Clinical School of The University of Sydney. There he catalysed the development of the Institute for International Health with Stephen MacMahon and Robyn Norton. In 2000, he was appointed to the position of Chair of Research Development in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Sydney whereupon he set about to develop a research strategy for the Faculty including the purchase and equipping of the Medical Foundation Building in Camperdown.

Today he holds appointments as Emeritus Professor of Medicine at The University of Sydney, Honorary Physician at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and Senior Director at The George Institute for International Health, the latter being a role in which he has contributed to the expansion and success of the Institute

John Chalmers has held numerous other influential positions in Australia and elsewhere including President of the Australian Society for Medical Research, President of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, Chairman of the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia, and President of the International Society of Hypertension. He was Chairman of the World Health Organization-International Society of Hypertension Liaison Committee, and coordinated the development of the WHO-ISH 1999 guidelines of the treatment of hypertension.

John Chalmers' principal research interest has been high blood pressure or hypertension. Recently this research has concentrated on the effects of blood pressure reduction on stroke, showing that lowering blood pressure reduced the risks of recurrent stroke among patients who had suffered one or more strokes. He is currently examining the effects of blood pressure and blood glucose control on the complications of diabetes, and the benefits of lowering blood pressure in the acute phase of cerebral haemorrhage.

John Chalmers' research achievements have had profound consequences for our understanding both of the causes of high blood pressure and of the clinical effects of blood pressure reduction. The results of this research have direct consequences for the care of millions of patients worldwide.

Chancellor, I present John Philip Chalmers for admission to the degree of Doctor of medicine, honoris causa, and I invite you to confer the degree upon him.