



**Western Australian Institute
for Medical Research**

March 27, 2007

Media Statement

WAIMR'S BIO 2007 COUP

Professor Lyle Palmer, the head of the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research's Laboratory for Genetic Epidemiology, will become the first West Australian to Chair a panel at the world's premier annual biotechnology event when he heads to Bio 2007.

The event, to be held in Boston in May 2007, will see Professor Palmer Chair a session called 'Biobanks: Building Capacity, Building Understanding, Building Business'.

Professor Palmer said the panel would discuss the enormous potential of so-called 'biobanks' which are health resources built from large-scale, long-running health studies.

"This is a major coup for WA and gives us an opportunity to highlight WA's strengths in this very important area of biomedical research which holds hope of generating breakthroughs in complex diseases like asthma, heart disease and cancer," he said.

"The session will bring together representatives of biobanking initiatives from WA, the US, the UK, Canada and Estonia, and will introduce the international research and development, business and health care industries to opportunities stemming from these projects."

Professor Palmer said the opportunity would further highlight to the world WA's successful Busselton Health Study, which has been running since 1966, as well as the planned Joondalup Family Health Study, which aims to collect health information from up to 80,000 residents in the City of Joondalup.

Industry and Enterprise Minister Francis Logan congratulated Professor Palmer on his appointment to chair a panel at the biotechnology event in Boston later this year.

Mr Logan said Professor Palmer was one of a growing number of people working within the Western Australian biotechnology industry who were making their mark on the world.

"There is no doubt that Western Australia punches well above its weight on the international biotechnology stage," he said.

"One of the key reasons for this is the calibre of people, like Professor Palmer, who work within the industry in this State.

"The WA Government has identified biotechnology as an industry with real and sustainable growth potential and we are keen to support its development as much as possible."

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