

RCH Alumni

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You're invited to a Face-to-Face Aluminar

Friday, 26th June 2026 12 midday

RCH Foundation, 2nd Floor, 48 Flemington Road

“How do we learn to prevent? From clinics to Generation Victoria”

With Professor Melissa Wake

Over the past 30 years, paediatric care has transformed survival for many serious childhood diseases. Yet the greatest burdens facing children and adults today – such as obesity, diabetes, mental ill-health, developmental and learning difficulties, cancer and chronic disease - are largely shaped outside hospitals. They emerge gradually across families, communities and systems, often beginning early in life and unfolding over decades.

This talk traces one paediatrician's journey from busy outpatient clinics and developmental paediatrics at the Royal Children's Hospital to leading one of the world's largest next-generation population studies: Generation Victoria (GenV). Along the way sits a central question: how do we actually learn to prevent?

Drawing on experiences spanning clinical care, longitudinal cohorts, field trials and public health, Melissa will explore why traditional research systems struggle to generate timely, scalable prevention, and why a different model may now be possible. GenV is building a whole-of-state “learning system” embedded throughout all Victorian health, education and community services, following around 125,000 children and parents from “cell to society”. Combining biosamples, linked data, portable phenomics, trials and future simulation modelling, its goal is not only to study disease, but to test, predict and accelerate prevention in the real world.

This presentation will reflect on what the RCH Alumni helped build and what the next era of child and population health research might become.

Professor Melissa Wake is Scientific Director of Generation Victoria (GenV) at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences, NHMRC Leadership Fellow, paediatrician and public health researcher. She came to the Centre for Community Child Health from New Zealand in 1992 and never left.



-----You You are warmly invited to join us for lunch (\$25/person) following the talk – RSVP by 19th June if joining us for lunch. Parking beneath the building is reached via Entry no 4 in Flemington Rd or kerb side parking may be available along Flemington Rd or Chapman St.

To register, please go to:

<https://www.trybooking.com/DMLBK>

Any queries to the Honorary Secretary, Peter Bunworth - peter_bunworth@yahoo.com.au