

**Presenter: A/PROF PAUL JOHNSON**

**Title: POSSUMS, MOSQUITOES AND BAIRNSDALE ULCER (MYCOBACTERIUM ULCERANS INFECTION)**

Australia is the only developed country reporting significant local transmission of *Mycobacterium ulcerans* - the causative agent of Bairnsdale/Buruli ulcer (BU). Eighty percent of Australian cases occur in Victoria (30-40 per year) and about one third are children. Concern about BU led to it being made legally notifiable in Victoria from January 2004. Overseas there are thousands of new cases annually in rural West and sub-saharan Africa, the majority of whom are children aged < 15. The presentation will review the latest information on epidemiology, pathogenesis, transmission and treatment of BU.

Paul Johnson is an Infectious Diseases Physician at the Austin Hospital. Since 1998 he has served as a task force member with the WHO Global Buruli Ulcer Initiative and is currently Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for *Mycobacterium ulcerans*, Western Pacific Region, based at VIDRL. He is also the facilitator of a multi-disciplinary research team funded by DoH Victoria that has been investigating why there have been more than 100 cases of BU in residents of or visitors to St Leonards, Point Lonsdale, Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads since 1998.

Presented on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June.