

CHANCELLOR,

I have the honour to present to you John Wakerman, who Council has determined should be awarded the degree of Doctor of Science *Honoris Causa*.

John completed a Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery at the University of Sydney in 1981 and subsequently worked as a medical practitioner. In 1990 he completed a Master of Tropical Health at the University of Queensland, involving a substantial fieldwork component spent in Malaysia. Although he was invited to undertake further study with the University of Queensland, John elected to move to Alice Springs to assume a role with the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services.

He progressed through the Department to become the General Manager of Alice Springs Remote Health Services, where he was responsible for the management and delivery of health and community services to the dispersed remote communities of Central Australia; an area of some 900,000 square kilometres – all the while maintaining his own clinical medical work in remote communities.

John returned to academia in 1996, becoming a Senior Research Fellow at the Menzies School of Health Research. At Menzies his experience in the delivery of health programs and his passionate advocacy for rural and remote health issues was invaluable in the development of Remote Health research methods. He was also responsible for undertaking research to produce an evidence base appropriate for the organisation and governance of remote area health services.

John was appointed as the inaugural director of the Centre for Remote Health in 1999. The Centre is a joint centre of Flinders University and Charles Darwin University, established through an initiative of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. It is one of a national network of University Departments of Rural Health, which exist to improve the health status of populations in rural and remote areas by appropriate preparation of the health workforce, thereby improving recruitment and retention levels.

As Director, John was immediately responsible for the development of the Centre's physical infrastructure, staffing and administrative systems. He was also tasked with ensuring that the Centre would make a real difference to the remote communities in the Northern Territory. The Centre's primary location is in Alice Springs with satellite campuses in Katherine and Darwin. However its catchment area is Territory-wide and includes cross-border areas in South Australia and Western Australia.

Under John's leadership, the Centre for Remote Health has developed a range of educational activities from student placements to short courses to undergraduate and postgraduate awards. This has involved writing new curriculum within the discipline of Remote Health, as well as facilitating access to awards at both Flinders and Charles Darwin Universities. The Centre now offers Australia's leading remote health postgraduate programs and is home to the country's leading Remote Services research group, which seeks to be responsive to both community and health needs through collaborative effort and capacity building. John has created an environment where the Centre's staff seek to build partnerships with communities and organisations, so that research activities are guided by community knowledge. These partnerships have meant that communities not only benefit from the results of the Centre's research through improvements in health in remote regions, but also from involvement in the research process itself.

John became a Professor at Flinders University in 2006 and is the current chair of the Central Australian Rural Practitioners Association. He is a member of both the Health Care Committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Health and Hospital Advisory Board. He was awarded the Centenary Medal for services to remote health and education in 2003 and received a Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning in 2007.

#### CHANCELLOR

In recognition of his distinguished academic leadership and outstanding contribution to development of remote health services and education in Central Australia, John Wakerman has been awarded by the Council of Charles Darwin University, the degree of Doctor of Science, Honoris Causa -Dr John Wakerman