



# Mental Health Research Institute

## INTRODUCTION

### **In the Beginning .....**

The Mental Health Research Institute was founded in 1956 as part of the Victorian Health Department. The Institute then specialised in common mental disorders in the community, with a focus on risk factors, prevention and appropriate treatment. The building was located close to the original Royal Park Hospital in Parkville, one of Victoria's busiest hospitals.

*The Institute has been attracting competitive research funds and is rapidly becoming internationally respected for its work*

### **Change**

In 1983 a working party was established and recommended that a major expansion and re-organisation should take place. This resulted in more emphasis on neuroscience and the creation of an independent organisation. The Institute was incorporated in 1987 and since then has grown rapidly from an initial staff of three.

## **THE INSTITUTE TODAY**

### **Where are we now?**

Today, the Institute is Australia's only independent psychiatric research organisation. It has three research divisions and four groups, over 100 staff, and is located in a purpose built research centre on the Royal Park campus, now part of Royal Melbourne Hospital.

Psychiatric research has great potential to result in health cost savings and improved quality of life for all those families affected by mental illness.

Approximately 16% of hospital beds are occupied by people with a mental illness, and psychiatric illness creates an estimated cost to the community of at least \$5.5 billion a year.

### **Costs & Funding**

A modern neuroscientific research centre was completed in 1994 at a cost of \$5.5 million. This significant achievement was made possible through the generous support of Federal and State Governments, corporate and business sponsorships, charitable trusts & foundations, and the general public.

The Institute is fully accredited as a medical research institute by the National Health and Medical Research Council. It has been attracting competitive research funds and is rapidly becoming internationally respected for its work.

The Institute now plays an increasingly strategic part in both national and international developments in mental health.

The University of Melbourne, Monash University and the Royal Melbourne Hospital are closely affiliated with the Institute.

*Visitors are welcome and tours of the Institute are held regularly.*

## THE FUTURE

### Where Are We Heading??

The Institute will continue to investigate the nature, origins and causes of psychiatric diseases. Such knowledge will aid the diagnosis, treatment and ultimately lead to the possible prevention of mental illnesses such as Alzheimer's disease, schizophrenia and depressive illnesses.

*Research at the Institute aims to improve diagnosis, treatment and ultimately lead to the prevention of mental illnesses such as Alzheimer's Disease, Schizophrenia and depressive illnesses.*

The Institute's research is highly relevant to community needs and with ongoing support, the Mental Health Research Institute can help make a brighter future for all Australians.

The commitment and enthusiasm of Institute staff is uncompromising, but there is still a long way to go in the field of mental health research. The research process requires expertise, dedication, time and money. Today, research is costly and progress is gradual.

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## SOME DEFINITIONS:

### Psychiatry:

The study of mental disorders and their diagnosis, management and prevention.

### Neuroscience:

Scientific research into brain related functions.

## FIND OUT MORE!

Visitors to the Institute are welcome and tours of the building are held regularly.

More detailed information can be obtained from the Mental Health Research Institute.

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