Baker IDI Researcher Receives Top Commonwealth Health Award

A researcher from Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute who is advancing our understanding of kidney disease in diabetes has taken out a prestigious Commonwealth research award presented in Melbourne last night.

Baker IDI's Head of Advanced Glycation, Associate Professor Josephine Forbes, received the Commonwealth Health Minister's Award for Excellence in Health and Medical Research for 2010, cementing her spot as one of the country’s most promising medical researchers.

The Award, which recognises an outstanding junior researcher, was presented at the Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR) dinner at the Hilton on the Park.

This honour follows a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Excellence Award presented to Josephine earlier this year.

Josephine’s research group has made another major discovery in the past 12 months, identifying that the cause of diabetic complications may also promote the development of diabetes in the first instance. This recent discovery has been patented and represents a major advance in this area.

Baker IDI Head of Research, Professor Mark Cooper paid tribute to Josephine, saying her commitment and contribution to developing a greater understanding of diabetic complications was something that would benefit millions of people.

A researcher at Baker IDI for nine years, Josephine completed her PhD in kidney disease at the Royal Children’s Hospital. She later worked with the University Of Melbourne’s Department of Medicine, before joining Baker IDI.

Josephine’s primary research is focussed on the biochemical process of advanced glycation and its contribution to diabetes and vascular complications, in particular kidney disease.

Advanced glycation is a biochemical process brought on by an excess of sugar, with glycation having the capacity to cause major damage to the organs of a diabetic person over several decades. As well as occurring within the body, this process can be precipitated by certain types of cooking as well as eating foods that have been heavily processed.

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