

# WMRF leader has for years been a champion of local medical and health related research

WELL INTO A MAJOR FUNDRAISING DRIVE TO BOOST ITS RESEARCH FUND TO \$5 MILLION THE WAIKATO MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION IS FORTUNATE INDEED TO HAVE HAD DR NOEL KARALUS BSC, MBCHB FRACP AS ITS LEADER SINCE 2006.

By **MIKE BLAKE**

leading local respiratory physician at the Waikato DHB and in private practice in Hamilton Dr Karalus has been the driving force behind the Foundation over recent years.

Proud of his Taranaki origins, Dr Karalus is a leading local researcher and champion of medical research in the Waikato region. He has produced an impressive list of medical papers over the years and continues to be a champion of local medical and health related research.

Noel has also held a significant number of postings over the years and some of these include:

- (Honorary) Management Committee Asissi Home and Hospital
- Chairman Health Waikato Infection Control Committee
- (Honorary) Medical Advisory Panel to Asthma Foundation of NZ
- (Honorary) President Waikato Asthma Society
- Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee (to

- Ministry of Health)
- Clinical Lecturer Auckland Medical School
- Honorary Clinical Lecturer Auckland Medical School
- Senior Clinical Lecturer Auckland Medical School
- Chairman Senior Medical Staff, Health Waikato
- TB Working Group for The Ministry of Health

As an independently operated Registered Charitable Trust, the Foundation's primary purpose is to help improve the health of people of all ages and from all walks of life throughout the Waikato region and beyond.

Since its inception in 1986, the Foundation has quietly beavered away at providing local researchers with grants for medical and health related research.

Based at the Waikato Clinical School at the Waikato Hospital, the Foundation provides the DHB with a significant asset in terms of staff recruitment and retention. Medical staff at all levels are attracted to the DHB by virtue of the availability of the research grants the Foundation provides for qualifying medical and health related research throughout



DR NOEL KARALUS

the Waikato region.

Over the past 28 years, the Foundation has provided funding for research which has helped prevent deaths from meningococcal disease, discovered that broccoli can help kill bladder cancer and helped fund ground breaking internationally published research that found a simple cure for low blood sugar in new born babies.

During his stewardship, Dr Karalus has steered the Foundation through some tough economic times and with prudent and conservative fiscal management the Foundation has continued to increase the income it generates from its research fund.

The demand for research

grant funding has grown significantly and over the years and even with a significant annual subsidy from Trust Waikato the Foundation's fund of \$1.3 million simply has not been able to satisfy the demand for research funding.

In 2012, following extensive market research, Dr Karalus and his team of Trustees made the decision to take positive action to commission a major fundraising appeal aimed at helping meet the demand for increased funding for medical and health related research in the region.

Since that time teams of local volunteers comprising medical professionals and key business leaders have led

the drive to lift the funding available to \$5 million. As a result the fund stands at over \$2.5 million and is constantly increasing as the team members encourage and invite members of the local community to get behind their local Research Foundation and by doing so, help to play a part in enhancing the health and wellbeing the people of Waikato.

Currently the Foundation is also broadening the scope of its fundraising drive by bringing together a team of influential volunteers from within the rural sector that will be charged with the responsibility of taking the appeal to the wider district farming community. This community is

often overlooked in ventures of this nature however in this instance Dr Karalus firmly believes that the benefits of the research the foundation commissions is particularly relevant and potentially hugely beneficial to the rural and farming community throughout the region.

Dr Karalus also hugely grateful to the appeal patrons Sir William and Lady Judi Gallagher who have generously donated significant time and resource to the appeal and continue to promote the Foundation at every opportunity.

Dr Karalus and his team of Trustees would welcome any support the general public may feel appropriate. Donations to the appeal can be made online at [www.wmrf.org.nz](http://www.wmrf.org.nz) or by contacting Dr Karalus on 021 993 446 or WMRF fundraising manager Russell Mayhew 021 741 034.

The Foundation needs your support and would welcome any donation or bequest you may feel appropriate. Donations can be made online at [www.wmrf.org.nz](http://www.wmrf.org.nz) or by mail to Waikato Medical Research Foundation Private Bag 3200 Waikato Mail Centre Hamilton 3240. *If you would like to talk to the Foundation about your gift or if you would like a visit from a Foundation member, please contact either Dr Noel Karalus 021 993 446 or fundraising manager Russell Mayhew 0274 741 034.*