

MEDIA RELEASE – 28 May 2024

Lowitja Institute welcomes Paul Stewart as new chief executive officer

Today Lowitja Institute announced the appointment of Mr Paul Stewart as its new chief executive officer to lead Australia's only national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled health research institute.

A proud Taungurung man with connections to Central Victoria, Mr Stewart replaces Adjunct Professor Janine Mohamed who led the organisation for six years.

Mr Stewart has longstanding ties to the Institute from his early career in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research, and more recently held the positions of deputy CEO and interim CEO.

His career spans over 20 years with experience in leadership roles across a range of sectors including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, sport, government and education, both locally and internationally.

Chair Mr Selwyn Button said the Lowitja Institute Board was proud to appoint Mr Stewart to lead the organisation through its next strategic phase.

'Mr Stewart has played a key role in championing Aboriginal-led research for our peoples. He brings a wealth of experience in strategic leadership, as well as an understanding and commitment to supporting our community controlled organisations across the country, and we look forward to working with him to further strengthen the Institute's role to support community-led research, and influence health research policy reform for our mobs.'

Pat Anderson AO, co-patron of Lowitja Institute alongside our founder, the late Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG, also expressed her support.

'I am very happy about this appointment. Paul has been with Lowitja Institute for a number of years as deputy CEO, and has shown dedication and commitment to social justice in health.

'I first met Paul when he was starting out on his early career working for ONEMDA at The University of Melbourne for Professor Ian Anderson. I look forward to continuing the important work of the Institute with Paul in his new role as chief executive officer,' Ms Anderson said.

Throughout his career, Mr Stewart has held significant leadership roles at organisations such as the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, Cricket Australia, and The University of Melbourne, where he contributed to key initiatives and projects.

'After the passing of a remarkable leader, our namesake Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, I am committed to honouring her legacy to support health research that is led by our people, for our people,' Mr Stewart said.

'I also want to thank Adjunct Professor Janine Mohamed for her leadership and mentorship over the years – and I look forward to continuing our work to drive positive change to improve outcomes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.'

Mr Stewart's appointment as CEO is effective from Monday 27 May 2024.

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For more information or to arrange an interview with Mr Selwyn Button or Mr Paul Stewart, please contact Jo Cackett 0474 727506, or the Communications team at communications@lowitja.org.au

ABOUT LOWITJA INSTITUTE

Lowitja Institute is Australia's only national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled health research institute, named in honour of its patron, Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG. It is working for the health and wellbeing of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by facilitating high-impact quality research, tools, resources and knowledge exchange, and supporting a new generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health researchers.

Established in January 2010, the Lowitja Institute operates on key principles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, a broader understanding of health that incorporates wellbeing, and the need for the work to have a clear and positive impact.

The history of the Lowitja Institute dates back to 1997 when the first Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal and Tropical Health was established. Since then, the Institute and the CRC organisations have led a substantial reform agenda in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research by working with communities, researchers and policymakers, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people setting the agenda and driving the outcomes.