



women & infants  
research foundation

# Media Release

## Feilman funding boosts outlook for mothers and babies across the country

Friday, 27 March 2020

Critical new funding provided by the Feilman Foundation is set to play a key role in the new national approach to preventing preterm birth.

The substantial funding provided over the next three years will enable the Women & Infants Research Foundation (WIRF) to build on the success of its pioneering Outreach Program as part of the Western Australian Preterm Birth Prevention Initiative.

“The Trustees of the Feilman Foundation were very pleased to be able to provide a grant to this important project, led by Professor John Newnham AM which will make a great difference to the women at risk of preterm birth” said Alan Good, Chairman of the Foundation.

“The Foundation was set up by three women, the late Ethel Feilman and her two daughters Margaret and Patricia Feilman who amongst a wide range of interests, were concerned for the welfare of women and children. We have no doubt they would be very glad that we made the decision to support this proposal.”

The Outreach Program traverses the state to provide in-service education to health care professionals in their own work environments about new health interventions to prevent preterm birth and the science underpinning them.

WIRF’s Chief Scientific Director and 2020 Senior Australian of the Year, Professor John Newnham AM said the new funding would allow a significant increase in the scope, activity and impact of this unique whole-of-state, whole-of-population program.

“We will now be able to increase our reach by visiting more regional and metropolitan areas in WA than ever before. In response to the ever-growing need, this funding will also enable us to implement a dedicated mental health component for practitioners,” Prof Newnham said.

Another element of the program’s critical expansion will be to work with key stakeholders to address the unacceptable rates of preterm birth experienced by Aboriginal mothers; currently twice the national average.

“Resources and materials developed in partnership with Aboriginal health professionals and communities will be included in the Outreach Program with the aim to address this major discrepancy in maternal and perinatal health,” he said.

“Through this significant level of support we will be able to magnify the scope of our most of high-impact program and we look forward to working with Feilman Foundation to ensure no pregnant woman is left behind.”

**ENDS**

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**Media opportunity:** Professor John Newnham AM is available for follow up media comment on request.



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## **Background:**

### **The Women and Infants Research Foundation**

The Women & Infants Research Foundation is one of Australia's leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving the health of women and infants. We focus our research and programs across three principal areas: the prevention of preterm birth, gynaecological cancers, and women's mental health. Our research and programs have directly contributed to a number of improved clinical practices and health outcomes.