

Professor Ed Byrne Continues as a Mito Foundation Patron

Professor Ed Byrne is a renowned neuroscientist who has made significant contributions to the study of neuromuscular disorders through his work in the fields of clinical work, research and education. He is currently the vice-chancellor at Monash University.

He began his career in Adelaide after graduating with first class honours from the University of Tasmania in 1974. He was made Neurology Registrar at Royal Adelaide Hospital in 1978. In 1983, he was appointed Director of Neurology at St Vincent's Hospital and Professor Clinical Neurology University Melbourne in 1992.

Professor Byrne was a founding director of the Melbourne Neuromuscular Research Unit and the Centre for Neuroscience in 1993. He was also made Professor of Experimental Neurology at the University of Melbourne in 2001.

In 2003, he took up responsibility as Executive Dean of Medicine, Nursing and Health Science at Monash University. During this period, research income doubled, Professor Byrne strengthened the School of Biomedical Sciences and supported the establishment of a new Medical School in Malaysia as a branch of Monash.

Since 2002, Professor Byrne has been a non-executive director of Cochlear Pty Ltd. He was previously a Director of BUPA, the UK's leading provider of private health care insurance and health care services (operating in Australia as HBA and MBF). He has been an executive board member of the Committee for Melbourne since 2009. He is also an Executive Committee Member of the Australia Japan Business Co-operation Committee.

In 2012 he was elected a fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE), and in 2013 became Chairman of the Board of the Global Foundation, an organisation that promotes high-level thinking within Australia and cooperation between Australia and the world. In 2012 he was appointed by the Governor of Jiangsu Province as a third-term economic consultant of Jiangsu Provincial People's Government.

The University of Melbourne awarded him a Doctor of Science, a higher degree conferred in recognition of a demonstrated record of research excellence. He completed a Masters of Business Administration in 2005.

Professor Byrne was admitted as an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2006. He has also served on a number of charitable trusts and provided advice to several community-based organisations in the neurology area.

"Mitochondrial diseases are becoming increasingly recognised as an important cause of human illness. From their recognition barely half a century ago, they have been recognised as a cause of human diseases affecting many organ systems at different ages. Our knowledge of this area increased enormously firstly through the application of biochemical techniques to delineating respiratory chain deficiencies and in recent decades in the genomic age through the identification of mutations firstly in the mitochondrial then in the nuclear genome. With this increased understanding of causation, work is going on around the World looking at developing effective treatments. In addition to their role in relatively uncommon but important genetic illnesses, mitochondrial dysfunction probably has a role in many of the commoner neuro-degenerative diseases and may well contribute to human aging. Research in Australia and around the World continues on these important questions."

- Professor Ed Byrne