Tuesday, 10 August 2010

A/Professor David Little, Head of Orthopaedic Research and Biotechnology in the Department of Orthopaedics has received two prestigious awards in recognition of his contribution to orthopaedics.

A/Prof Little has been awarded the John Mitchell Crouch Fellowship by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons for 2011, the College’s most prestigious scholarship, for outstanding contributions to fundamental scientific research in the field. He has also been awarded the Australian Orthopaedic Associate’s Award for Orthopaedic Research for his contribution to international orthopaedic research.

The Orthopaedic Research and Biotechnology Unit works to understand bone diseases and bone repair.

“Improving understanding of bone diseases, bone healing and pharmaceutical therapies has immediate benefits for children as we can take our research from the benchtop to the bedside,” said A/Prof Little.

His internationally recognised pioneering use of biphosphonates in paediatrics now benefits children in the Hospital. Following on from this, the Unit is exploring a drug combination of local anabolic treatment with biphosphonate therapy.

Children with the common genetic disease NF1 often have severe orthopaedic problems, and surgery has a poor prognosis. In a world first, the Unit has demonstrated that cells from the surrounding muscle are critical in serious skeletal injury. The cells make a key contribution to bone formation and repair and it is hoped that this research will result in new cell-based therapies for bone repair.