Associate Professor Chris Cowell appointed as Director of Kids Research Institute

"My vision for the Kids Research Institute is for it to become a global leading translational centre for children," said Associate Professor Chris Cowell on his appointment as Director of Kids Research Institute. "I look forward to the future growth and development of the Kids Research Institute and building a sustainable future."

“We plan to increase our capacity for clinical translational research and clinical trials with investment in both increased staff and new facilities. Children’s health problems that are witnessed every day at CHW directly influences the research that is undertaken at KRI – we will endeavour to strategically develop our research themes and provide increasing opportunities for graduates from a variety of professional backgrounds including science, health sciences and bioinformatics to pursue key research questions."

“I am delighted to be given the opportunity to lead KRI, an organisation of >230 research staff dedicated to achieving even better outcomes for sick children in Australia and internationally. KRI has grown substantially in the last few years as witnessed by its research staff attracting $13.4M in project grant support and publishing >400 per reviewed articles in the last year. Our challenge is to demonstrate the translation of this impressive output into clinical practice.”

A/Prof has been acting in the role since 2007, as well as continuing in his position as Head of the Institute of Endocrinology and Diabetes, which he has now relinquished. He is also Clinical Associate Professor of the University of Sydney. In addition, he has been Director of Clinical Research at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead since 2005, a part-time position created to help advocate and develop clinical research and its infrastructure.

As Acting Director, A/Prof Cowell has been guiding the research arm of The Children’s Hospital at Westmead through a time of change and development. Now re-branded as Kids Research Institute, and developing its own identity, KRI is well-placed to increase its research capacity and help improve the health outcomes of the children who are cared for at the hospital.

He brings to this position a strong clinical research background with international standing in growth hormone, obesity related metabolic syndrome and bone and mineral research as well as a strong record in clinical trial research locally, nationally and internationally. His major research interests are the prevention of metabolic complications of obesity in teenagers, and the effects of disease states on bone mass and bone geometry. Recently he was received NHMRC project funding to
investigate bisphosphonate treatment for children with Perthe’s Disease, a severe disorder of the hip joint.

As Head of the Institute of Endocrinology and Diabetes at the Children's Hospital at Westmead, he led its development into the largest paediatric endocrinology centre in Australasia with a strong research focus on prevention of chronic childhood endocrine disorders (diabetes, osteopenia and osteoporosis), and building a significant national and international profile. A/Prof Cowell trained as a paediatric endocrinologist in Toronto and Sydney and has extensive clinical experience in diabetes, growth, and disorders of bone metabolism.

Out of work, he enjoys time with his family, walking, bike riding and during winter months is often seen in red and white pursuing his passion for the Swans.