



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

MEDIA RELEASE

A holistic approach to rehabilitation care is crucial

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International speaker, Professor Derick Wade today addressed the Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine/ New Zealand Rehabilitation Association Combined Rehabilitation Meeting in Wellington about the importance of a holistic approach to rehabilitation care.

A specialist in Neurological Rehabilitation at the Oxford Centre for Enablement in the United Kingdom, Professor Wade today delivered the prestigious 'George Burniston Oration' at the annual meeting where he discussed the need for an overall move away from a biomedical view of illness, towards a holistic and biopsychosocial approach.

"It's vital to understand the process of rehabilitation from the patient's perspective so that relevant motivating goals are set.

"If our goals and the goals of the patient don't match, the individual won't be engaged in their recovery.

"This leads to failure for both rehabilitation as a specialty and for individual patients.

Professor Wade also addressed the importance of a structural and social change to how hospitals treat people with disabilities.

"We must alter hospital environments so that they do not further disable people.

"Hospitals currently often restrict patients from doing anything for themselves and so they lose confidence in their abilities.

"Rehabilitation services must run in parallel with healthcare from the outset.

"Research has shown that the immediate inclusion of rehabilitation as soon as an individual becomes unwell significantly improves rehabilitation outcomes.

"We need to reduce the focus on disease and technology towards the disability and the patient in order to achieve successful outcomes for the patient" said Professor Wade.

The George Burniston Oration is given every year to honour the late George Burniston OBE, CMG. Dr Burniston was one of the great pioneers in rehabilitation medicine in Australia.

Professor Wade is also considered a pioneer in the field of rehabilitation. He has been researching stroke and rehabilitation for the last 35 years and has published over 200 peer-reviewed articles.

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