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>EMBARGOED UNTIL XXXX AEST, FRIDAY 25 MAY**>**

**PIONEER IN FASD RESEARCH, PATIENT CARE, AND
 ADVOCACY RECOGNISED BY AMA**

AMA Excellence in Healthcare Award 2018
2018 AMA NATIONAL CONFERENCE - #amanatcon
QT Canberra, 25-27 May 2018

A pioneer in research, clinical care, and advocacy for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) was today named the winner of the AMA Excellence in Healthcare Award 2018.

Professor Elizabeth Elliott AM FAHMS was presented with her award by AMA President, Dr Michael Gannon, at the AMA National Conference in Canberra.

The AMA Excellence in Healthcare Award is for an individual, not necessarily a doctor or AMA member, who has made a significant contribution to improving health or health care in Australia. The person may be involved in health awareness, health policy, or health delivery.

“Professor Elliott is a Distinguished Professor in Paediatrics and Health at The University of Sydney School of Medicine and a NHMRC Practitioner Fellow. She has been a passionate advocate for raising awareness of FASD for more than 20 years,” Dr Gannon said.

“FASD, which is caused by prenatal alcohol exposure, is recognised as the leading preventable cause of prenatal brain injury, birth defects and developmental and learning disability worldwide.

“There are lifelong consequences for children born from alcohol-exposed pregnancies.

“FASD prevalence has been estimated at five per cent in mainstream communities, 20 per cent in some remote communities, and 36 per cent in young offenders in Western Australia.

“Until recently, there have been no diagnostic guidelines, limited clinician skills, and no specialised clinics.

“Professor Elliott played a significant leadership role in developing the Australian Guide to the Diagnosis of FASD and online training modules, new clinical services, a national FASD website and a national FASD register.

“She chaired the Australian government’s National FASD Technical Network and is Co-Chair of the NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in FASD, and Head of the NSW FASD Assessment service.

“She was lead clinician in the Lililwan study on FASD prevalence in the Fitzroy Valley and has published extensively on FASD.

“She contributed to WHO, NHMRC and RACP alcohol guidelines and has been a keynote, invited, or scientific presenter at more than 300 conferences nationally and internationally.

“She was nominated for this award by the National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (NOFASD), the first and largest and organisation dedicated to FASD in Australia.

“Over the past 20 years, FASD has evolved from being a little-known, poorly recognised, and misunderstood condition to becoming a major strategic focus for Commonwealth and State Health Departments.

“Professor Elliott is a true pioneer in the FASD field and has contributed to the development of Australia’s response to FASD, through addressing aspects of health policy, health care delivery, education, and health awareness in the work she has undertaken.

“However, FASD is only one component of Professor Elliott’s work, which includes disadvantaged children in Immigration detention, with rare disorders and living in remote Australia.

“In 2008, she was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for services to paediatrics and child health and, in 2017, she received the Howard Williams Medal from the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) – its highest award – for her contribution to paediatrics in Australia and New Zealand.

“Much of her work has been undertaken voluntarily, and has strengthened Australia’s health systems and their capacity to respond to FASD.

“Her efforts have improved health care services in FASD and changed health outcomes for children and families living with, and affected by, FASD.

“She is a worthy recipient of the AMA Excellence in Healthcare Award.”

**** Professor Elliott is available for interview****

25 May 2018

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