

# MEDIA RELEASE

## For immediate release

From: Kasey McCulloch, Media Officer, Mercy Health

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## Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology named Catholic Health Australia's Emerging Leader 2016

Professor Stephen Tong has been honoured at the Catholic Health Australia (CHA) Awards in Sydney and named CHA Emerging Leader 2016.

Prof Tong is a specialist obstetrician-scientist based at Mercy Hospital for Women in Heidelberg. Prof Tong is part of a team that helps care for 6,000 pregnant women each year; he also leads an internationally recognised research program committed to improving outcomes in high-risk pregnancies.

Linda Mellors, Chief Executive – Health Services, Mercy Health said Prof Tong is immensely deserving of the highly competitive CHA Award.

“Prof Tong is a leader of vision, wisdom and integrity who contributes widely and generously to the hospital, as well as the international scientific community,” said Dr Mellors.

“We are extremely fortunate to have Prof Tong as a member of our team, and I have no doubt the mothers and babies of tomorrow are in the best of hands.”

Prof Tong's Translational Obstetrics Group (affiliated with the University of Melbourne), has conceived three key concepts which have progressed from laboratory studies to international clinical trials. These concepts include a blood test to identify babies at risk of stillbirth, and treatments for ectopic pregnancies and severe preeclampsia.

Prof Tong joined Mercy Hospital for Women as a specialist obstetrician in 2011 and was appointed Associate Professor, University of Melbourne. Two years later he was promoted to full Academic Professor at the age of 39. Prof Tong has published more than 100 papers, the majority in leading international journals.

“I am thrilled and humbled to be awarded CHA Emerging Leader 2016. It is very touching that senior members of the Mercy family nominated me for this award, without my knowledge,” said Prof Tong.

“I do my best to lead well, especially with my research team members whom I mentor and actively work with to create individual two-year career plans.

“I recognise the importance of allowing members of my team to assume more responsibilities as their careers progress and know the value of being able to delegate. As my team gets bigger, I know my limited time is more effectively spent writing major grants and mentoring, rather than performing experiments. This can sometimes be hard to do but it's about figuring out who to trust with tasks and what is best for the team.

“I am immensely proud of my research team - The Translational Obstetrics Group. We are very hopeful, that together, we will make discoveries that will lead to safer care for pregnancies challenged with major complications such as fetal growth restriction, preeclampsia and ectopic pregnancy.”

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