



# HUMANS OF THE ROYAL

## Dr David Cartwright



Dr David Cartwright retired on 4 June 2017 after 35 years in neonatology and the comments on the Metro North Hospital and Health Service Facebook page said it all – outpourings of thanks from parents whose babies were saved and respect and admiration from colleagues.

However, true to form, he remained a 'casual consultant' continuing to visit weekly for teaching and keeping data systems running.

David graduated from UQ in 1973 with First Class Honours and a University Medal and became a Resident Medical Officer at the Royal Brisbane Hospital in 1974.

As a bonded Scholarship holder, he was sent to Mount Isa in 1975 as a Senior Resident but returned to Herston campus in 1976 as a registrar in Paediatrics. In 1979 he became the Senior Registrar in Neonatology and then travelled overseas to work in New Zealand and San Francisco for the next few years.

He returned to the Royal Women's Hospital in 1982 and became the Director of Neonatology in 1988.

David has received a myriad of awards in his career, including;

- Ramsey Prize in Pathology 1971
- Charles M. Lilley Memorial Prize in Surgery 1973
- RBH Specialist Staff Association Award for Best Publication by Resident / Registrar 1981
- Australia Day Medallion, 2003
- RBWH Award for Excellence in Health Care, 2008

David described neonatology as a marathon for all concerned. Many of the premature babies spend their first three or four months of life in hospital, some of them remaining more than six months. He said that, thankfully, most people out in the community haven't the vaguest idea of what goes on in neonatology and when a parent comes in with a very premature baby, it's a completely different world that they didn't know existed.

David's career has spanned some huge advances in caring for extremely premature babies, medical breakthroughs that have meant couples now take-home children who would have previously died. When he first started in neonatology, doctors had only just begun giving steroids to women in the lead up to a premature birth. The practice matures the baby's lungs, a leap he describes as one of the biggest in his speciality.

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