

Announcing the 2009 NSW Public Health Impact Award winner: Professor Louise Baur

Sarah Thackway and Catriona Bonfiglioli

In July 2009, the NSW Branch of PHAA held its Annual General Meeting. About fifty people attended to acknowledge a year of achievements for the Branch. Professor Boyd Swinburn provided the annual address, discussing the challenges of obesity prevention.

At the same meeting the 12th anniversary of the NSW Public Health Impact Award was celebrated. The Award was initiated by the Branch in recognition of the outstanding contributions made by NSW practitioners to public health.



Photo courtesy of C. Bonfiglioli

This year we received more nominations than in the past four years. All nominations were of extremely high calibre – demonstrating the growing list of dedicated and expert public health professionals in NSW committed to improving the health of the population and reducing health inequalities.

Nominations are assessed by a panel against the following criteria:

- Significant impact;
- Development of innovative solutions;
- A high degree of excellence;
- Overcoming substantial barriers
- Documenting their efforts;
- Generating public and professional support for an initiative; and,
- Promoting public health.

This year's winner is Professor Louise Baur, an academic paediatrician, who has campaigned for two decades to raise awareness of the impact of child and adolescent obesity.

Louise is a Professor in the Discipline of Paediatrics & Child Health, Director of the NSW Centre for Overweight and Obesity in the Prevention Research Centres at the University of Sydney and a consultant paediatrician (Director of Weight Management Services) at The Children's Hospital at Westmead. She is the Director of the Australasian Child & Adolescent Obesity Research Network and Chair of the International Obesity Task Force's (IOTF's) Working Group on Childhood Obesity.

Professor Baur is the Founding Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Pediatric Obesity*, co-Chair of NSW Health's Aboriginal and Population Health Priority Taskforce and a Director of World Vision Australia.

Her current research interests include the prevention of childhood obesity, the antecedents of obesity, the metabolic syndrome in childhood, the complications of paediatric overweight and obesity and the effective management of obesity and related disorders in a variety of settings.

Since 2004, she has been a Chief Investigator on studies which have received over \$7.0 million in external peer-reviewed funding. She has published extensively in such journals as the *Lancet*, the *BMJ*, and other high impact publications.

Professor Baur's ability to communicate effectively with stakeholders at all levels and across the researcher-policy maker divide has encouraged debate and helped keep obesity on the public health agenda in NSW, across Australia and also internationally.