

Announcing:

The Aileen Plant Memorial Prize in Infectious Diseases Epidemiology



Professor Aileen Plant, 1948-2007

Professor Aileen Plant was a renowned Australian Infectious Diseases Epidemiologist, whose sudden passing on 27 March 2007 at the age of 58, while working in Jakarta, was an enormous loss to Global and Australian public health.

She was a medical epidemiologist, as well as Professor of International Health at Curtin University of Technology and by any measure, one of the World Health Organisation's leading experts in outbreak investigation. Professor Plant also held the position of Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Biosecurity CRC for Emerging Infectious Diseases.

She had extensive experience in outbreak investigation, but her main research interests were in the applied and policy aspects of infectious disease control. She was passionate about her work and travelled extensively, often at great risk to herself, to help people and countries in need of her expertise.

It was her vast experience in the field which prompted WHO to invite her to join an expert investigation team being assembled in Vietnam to investigate the outbreak of a deadly virus, later to become known as SARS. Professor Plant and the medical investigation team in Hanoi worked tirelessly to identify the virus and to develop a method for its control, again at great risk to their own personal safety.

In recognition of her leadership during the SARS epidemic, Professor Plant was awarded the National Medal of Honour by the Vietnamese Government for her leadership of the SARS outbreak control program.

Now, to honour her legacy to infectious diseases epidemiology, The University of New South Wales and the Department of Health and Ageing have together created an annual National competition for the Aileen Plant Memorial Prize in Infectious Diseases.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS February 9th 2009:

Applications for the 2008 award close March 25th 2009; The winner will be announced and the prize will be presented at the annual scientific meeting of the Public Health Association of Australia. The inaugural prize will be awarded at the PHAA conference on 28-30 September 2009, Hotel Realm, Barton, Canberra.

Guidelines for applicants

Eligibility: The Aileen Prize Memorial Prize will be awarded annually for a first author paper by an Australian researcher, published in the previous calendar year in a peer-reviewed medical journal in the area of infectious diseases epidemiology. The prize consists of AU \$2000 and a certificate.

The applicant must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident

The applicant must be first author on the submitted paper.

The paper must have been published in the previous calendar year. The inaugural 2009 prize will be for a piece of work published between January 1st 2008 and December 31st 2008. In press or submitted works are not eligible.

If co-authors are listed on the paper, the applicant must submit a statement outlining their own contribution to the paper, specifically that any epidemiologic design and analysis was carried out solely by the applicant. All co-authors must sign the statement.

Applications must comprise:

1. a copy of the published paper,
2. a cover letter of a maximum of 2 pages, double spaced, using 12 point Times New Roman font, addressing the judging criteria, and
3. any supporting documentation.

Applications must be submitted in triplicate, hard copy and electronic, to: Professor Raina MacIntyre, School of Public Health and Community Medicine, Samuels 325, Faculty of Medicine, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 2052 by March 25th 2009. Electronic copies to: r.macintyre@unsw.edu.au with "Application for Aileen Plant Memorial prize" in the subject line

The applicant must respond to each of the judging criteria, providing evidence to support each one:

1. Journal impact factor
2. Citations
3. Epidemiologic rigour of the study – applicants should discuss alternative study designs and why the chosen design was ideal for the study. They should also discuss analytic methods and why the chosen analysis was most suitable. Limitations of the study must also be discussed.
4. Public health impact – applicants should outline whether the study resulted in any changes to policy or practice, or other public health impact, giving evidence of this.

The applications will be judged by a panel of experts including representatives from UNSW and the Department of Health and Ageing.