

The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) has today announced it will award the 2023 Sidney Sax medal for outstanding contributions to the development and improvement of Australia's healthcare system to Professor Michelle Haber AM FAA FAHMS, Executive Director of Children's Cancer Institute and conjoint Professor in the Faculty of Medicine and Health, UNSW Australia.

A Sidney Sax medal will also be awarded posthumously to Emeritus Professor Mary-louise McLaws AO FRSN (1953-2023), esteemed epidemiologist and trusted voice to the nation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Professor Michelle Haber has dedicated her entire professional life to improving clinical outcomes for children with cancer. She is one of Australia's leading translational researchers and has become the face of Australian childhood cancer research internationally.

She is world-renowned for her research into the childhood cancers neuroblastoma and leukaemia, which has led not only to key advances in our understanding of these diseases, but also to new clinical approaches that have improved survival rates.

She is also actively involved in developing a number of new research areas arising from the world-leading ZERO program, Australia's first national child cancer personalised medicine program.

'Professor Haber's research has had a very direct and immediate benefit for children with cancer, and she is to be commended on this award' says AHHA Board Chair, the Hon Jillian Skinner.

As a well-respected leader and expert driving the childhood cancer research agenda, Professor Haber, has been the executive director of the Children's Cancer Institute for the past 20 years.

Before her death, Emeritus Professor Mary-Louise McLaws played an influential role in spearheading widespread improvements in infection control within hospital settings, helping save countless lives over the past three decades. But it wasn't until the COVID-19 pandemic that she became a household name, providing public information and advice on the disease.

'Professor McLaw's contribution to public health in Australia and globally was nothing short of outstanding' says AHHA Board Chair, the Hon Jillian Skinner.

Emeritus Professor McLaws worked at University of New South Wales Health and Medicine for 36 years, publishing over 180 scientific papers, and where she was a well-respected teacher and mentor, proudly supporting PhD candidates throughout her career.

Emeritus Professor McLaws was appointed to the World Health Organization (WHO) expert advisory panel on COVID-19 and the NSW clinical taskforce for COVID-19; and in 2022 she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia.

The online version of this [media release](#) can be found on the AHHA website.

The AHHA is the independent peak membership body and advocate for the Australian healthcare system and a national voice for universally accessible, high-quality healthcare in Australia.

Media enquiries: Chief Executive Kylie Woolcock 0410 625 830

Luminaries of health awarded 2023 Sidney Sax medals

25 October 2023

The 2023 Sidney Sax awards will be presented by AHHA Board Chair, the Hon Jillian Skinner, at a ceremony in Brisbane on Thursday 26 October, as part of the [2023 Value Based Health Care Congress](#).

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