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Professor Emily Banks awarded AMA Gold Medal for outstanding service to medicine

This year's recipient of the prestigious AMA Gold Medal is Professor Emily Banks AM for her outstanding service to medicine, including internationally recognised, ground-breaking research establishing evidence of significant harms of e-cigarettes.

AMA President Dr Omar Khorshid presented the award, the AMA's highest honour, to Professor Banks at the AMA's National Conference Gala dinner in Sydney this evening.

Dr Khorshid said Professor Banks had made exceptional contributions to medicine and public health over her career. Her recent research had been extremely important and timely, as the tobacco lobby sought to hook younger generations through vaping.

He said her research had been conducted in the face of tobacco company opposition and political pressure.

"Congratulations to Professor Banks, a very worthy recipient of the AMA Gold Medal," Dr Khorshid said.

"Time and again, Professor Banks has provided evidence to support action to safeguard health, and vaping is no exception.

"As the industry has unscrupulously marketed to children, teenagers and young people, Professor Banks and her research team at the ANU have provided high-quality data the community, doctors and policymakers need to make truly informed decisions.

"Professor Banks leads a project team of more than twenty researchers who have published multiple studies and papers assessing emerging global evidence on the risks of e-cigarettes, establishing significant harms and highlighting the limitations of e-cigarettes as a smoking cessation strategy.

"Professor Banks' work has contributed to Australia's world-unique prescription-only model for e-cigarettes and clearly demonstrates the need to keep these highly addictive products out of our schools," Dr Khorshid said.

Dr Khorshid thanked Professor Banks for her contribution to the AMA in its work to support doctors and bring to the public's attention the harm of e-cigarettes and vapes, particularly for young people.

Professor Emily Banks biography

Professor Emily Banks AM is a public health physician and epidemiologist working in cardiovascular disease, cancer, tobacco control and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. The main emphasis of her work has been in using large-scale evidence to identify actions to improve health and health care, at an individual and population level.

Professor Banks is Head of the Centre for Public Health Data and Policy at the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University. She is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences, an NHMRC Principal Research Fellow, Chair of

the NHMRC Health Research Impact Committee, Member of NHMRC Council, Deputy Chair of the Heart Foundation Research Committee and a Visiting Professor at Oxford University.

Professor Banks chaired the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Medicines for Australia from 2010-2016.

She was based in the UK from 1995-2003, where she was Deputy Director of the Cancer Research UK Epidemiology Unit at the University of Oxford and joint Principal Investigator of the Million Women Study.

Professor Banks' awards include: the UK Woman of Achievement in Science and Technology (2000); the ANU Vice-Chancellor's Awards for career achievement (2010), media engagement (2011 and 2016) and research translation (2011); the National Breast Cancer Foundation Patron's Award for services to breast cancer research (2014), the Medical Journal of Australia/MDA National Prize for Excellence in Medical Research (2015), AFR/Westpac 100 Women of Influence (2016); the ACT Heart Foundation's Women with Heart (2017); Australian Citation for University Teaching (2017); President's award, Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (2020); and Member of the Order of Australia (2021).

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