

Improved quality of life for patients drives research

Helping patients return to their previous quality of life or better is a driving force for Fiona Stanley Fremantle Hospitals Group (FSFHG) researcher and orthopaedic surgeon Professor Piers Yates.

Professor Yates is a full time surgeon with clinical interests in arthroplasty, infection, implant design, trauma and joint preservation of the hip and knee. He has also developed an international reputation for his research and development into these areas, amounting to more than 100 journal publications and conference presentations.

His orthopaedic research has been a high priority in his career, completed on top of his clinical work, in a quest to always ensure the patient is receiving the best possible treatment.

"I forever look to improve things, challenge the status quo and ask the difficult questions. This allows me to continually learn but more importantly helps to improve patient outcomes," Professor Yates said.

A large component of orthopaedic research at FSFHG is safety studies for hip and knee implants with the prime aim of finding the best solution for patients.

"Australian orthopaedic research is highly respected globally due to our regulation requirements. We lead the way in research into implants with the majority of this work undertaken at Fremantle Hospital as the prime site for elective orthopaedic surgery for South Metropolitan Health Service," Professor Yates said.



Professor Piers Yates

Professor Yates has taken his research to the next level through the design and development of more than three implants.

"These hip and knee implants are now in use globally, with another two in production. As a surgeon, I see the different needs of our patients, so it was a natural progression for me to tailor a solution."

Infected joint replacements is one of the biggest costs associated with joint replacement surgery, which has encouraged Professor Yates and his infectious disease colleagues to develop an international study based at Fiona Stanley Hospital (FSH).

"This is the biggest study we have done in our research group, with FSH being the highest recruiting site amongst the 900 cases and 22 centres involved," Professor Yates said.

"Finding a better treatment pathway for infected joints, which is the major complication of implant failure is estimated to save upwards of \$80,000 per patient!"