



FSM statement about the appointment of Professor Jon Wardle to SCU

Friends of Science in Medicine (FSM) President, [Assoc Professor Ken Harvey](#) MB BS (Melb), FRCPA, AM congratulates [Professor Jon Wardle](#), nurse and naturopath, with postgraduate qualifications in public health, law and health economics, on being appointed to Southern Cross University's (SCU) *Maurice Blackmore Chair of Naturopathic Medicine* in Lismore.



Director of the new National Centre for Naturopathic Medicine Professor Jon Wardle

Professor Wardle has also been appointed as Foundation Director of the [National Centre for Naturopathic Medicine](#) (NCNM) funded with \$10 Million from the [Blackmore Foundation](#) set up to sponsor research into 'complementary medicine'.

Vice Chancellor, [Professor Adam Shoemaker BA \(Hons\), PhD \(ANU\)](#), researcher in Indigenous literature and culture, said the benefits of basing the NCNM at Southern Cross were enormous, "Being in a region like the Northern Rivers of New South

Wales means we have brilliant local networks in this field. We are also supported by a local community who, like the University, are really receptive to trying new things in order to create a healthier future".

Professor Harvey comments, "Professor Wardle certainly has challenges ahead. The Northern Rivers region is the [anti-vax capital of Australia](#) and [some naturopaths advise against vaccination](#). Degree courses in naturopathy such as the [Torrens Bachelor of Health Science \(Naturopathy\) degree](#), include studies of homeopathy, iridology and flower essence therapy. None have scientific evidence of efficacy".

FSM has long argued that health care should be based on scientifically sound research, published in peer-reviewed journals of accepted standing. FSM is equally concerned about medical practitioners offering unproven and often exploitative treatments as it is about complementary medicine practitioners.

Professor Harvey said, "some naturopaths practicing in Lismore, associated with SCU, work at [clinics](#) that use unverified laboratory tests to make dubious diagnoses and recommend treatment programs that lack evidence of efficacy".

Professor Harvey (and FSM) conclude that there is an urgent need for evidence-based science to be applied to naturopathy. They trust that Professor Wardle will emulate [Professor Edzard Ernst, Foundation Professor of Complementary Medicine at Exeter University](#), by applying accepted scientific standards to the evaluation of naturopathic interventions.



The March 24 opening of the NCNM in Lismore will feature a panel discussion on the future of health care with guest speakers: Professor Kerryn Phelps AM, former President of the [Australasian Integrative Medicine Association](#), Marcus Blackmore AM, naturopath and [Executive Director of Blackmores Ltd](#), which markets vitamin and herbal products, and Professor Jon Wardle.

FSM hopes that the panel will discuss some of the issues raised above.