

Professor Helen O'Connell AO

MD, FRACS (Urol), MMed, MBBS & FAICD

**President, Urological Society of Australia & New Zealand (USANZ);
Urological Surgeon, Epworth Health; Research Professor,
Monash University; Urology Head, Australasian Pelvic Floor
Procedures Registry Steering Committee; & Professor,
Department of Surgery, University of Melbourne, *MELBOURNE***

Professor Helen O'Connell AO is Australia's first female urologist. She is also President of the Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand (USANZ); Urological Surgeon at Epworth Health; Research Professor at Monash University; Urology Head of the Australasian Pelvic Floor Procedures Registry Steering Committee; and Professor of the Department of Surgery, University of Melbourne. Furthermore, she is Chair of the International Continence Society (ICS), and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD).

Prof O'Connell specialises in urology research and the surgical treatment of male and female urological conditions, including lower urinary tract (particularly incontinence and outlet obstruction), bladder, and prostate conditions.

She graduated from The University of Melbourne in 1985 with a Bachelor of Medicine, and Bachelor of Surgery. Between 1994-1995 she undertook her Fellowship training with world-renowned NeuroUrology and Urology expert, Dr Edward J McGuire MD, in Houston, Texas, in the surgical management of disorders affecting urinary function.

In 1997 Prof O'Connell completed her Master's in Medicine, focusing on female urge incontinence. In 2004 she completed her Doctorate of Medicine in female pelvic anatomy at The University of Melbourne, Royal Melbourne Hospital, and Melbourne Private Hospital, respectively.

"An enlarged prostate is a reversible cause of bladder symptoms in ageing men,"^{1,2} Prof O'Connell said.

"The longer the male has had the problem, and the more severe it is, the less likely it is to be fully reversible."^{3,4}

"More than four in five (83 per cent) of men are open to seeking treatment, yet fewer than 40 per cent are really doing so."⁵

"Among those who do choose to seek treatment, one in five (20 per cent) elect to endure symptoms for six months before doing so,"⁵ Prof O'Connell said.

"A man's enlarged prostate also affects the quality of life of their partner, adversely affecting relationships."⁶

ends#

To coordinate an interview with Prof Helen O'Connell please contact:

Kirsten Bruce and Sam Jacobs VIVA! Communications



M 0401 717 566 | 0422 654 404
T 02 9968 3741
E kirstenbruce@vivacommunications.com.au | sam@vivacommunications.com.au

References

1. Benign prostate hypertrophy: healthdirect; [Available from: <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/benign-prostate-hypertrophy>].
2. Enlarged Prostate (Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia): National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease [Available from: <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/urologic-diseases/prostate-problems/prostate-enlargement-benign-prostatic-hyperplasia>].
3. Benign prostate enlargement [Available from: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/prostate-enlargement/>].
4. Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH): John Hopkins Medicine; [Available from: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/benign-prostatic-hyperplasia-bph>].
5. Australian market research on benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). YouGov: YouGov; 2024.
6. Shvartzman P, Borkan JM, Stoliar L, Peleg A, Nakar S, Nir G, et al. Second-hand prostatism: effects of prostatic symptoms on spouses' quality of life, daily routines and family relationships. *Fam Pract.* 2001;18(6):610-3.