

**EMBARGOED: 12:01AM, MONDAY, AUGUST 16, 2021**

## How hidden ageing could lead our heart to malfunction

*Small heart valves critical to blood flow through the heart an emerging public health issue*

*“If you’re over 65 years of age, ask your doctor to listen to your heart.”*

**Heart doctors will issue this public health plea next Monday, August 16 to help curb our nation’s rising rates of undiagnosed, but easily treated, heart valve disease – malfunctioning of one or more heart valves that disrupts blood flow through the heart.**

Their plea will coincide with the release of a Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute whitepaper next Monday, warning the disease can go unrecognised, undiagnosed and untreated, with devastating complications.

Over half a million Australians are living with heart valve disease, while more than a quarter of a million Australians have faulty heart valves, and don’t know it. The number of undiagnosed cases of heart valve disease is projected to spiral in the next three decades, to 435,000 in 2051, placing a heavy burden on our nation’s healthcare system, ageing population, and economy.

To learn more about the whitepaper findings, including why timely diagnosis and early intervention is crucial to avoid a person presenting to a doctor in crisis, tee up an interview with a spokesperson below.



### Experts

#### **Prof Tom Marwick**

Cardiologist, and Director and Chief Executive, Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute, MELBOURNE

#### **Prof David Celermajer, AO**

Cardiologist, Director of Adult Congenital Heart Services and Pulmonary Hypertension Services, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital; Clinical Director, The Heart Research Institute, SYDNEY

#### **Dr Liza Thomas**

Interventional and specialist cardiologist, Westmead Private and Liverpool Hospitals, SYDNEY

#### **Dr Peter French**

Cardiologist and interim Director of Cardiology, Canberra Hospital, CANBERRA

#### **Prof Greg Scalia**

Cardiologist, Heartcare Partners and GenesisCare, Director of Echocardiography, The Prince Charles Hospital, and Professor of Medicine, The University of Queensland, BRISBANE

#### **Dr Heath Adams**

Interventional and structural cardiologist, Hobart Heart Centre and Royal Hobart Hospital, HOBART

#### **Dr Ross Roberts-Thomson**

Structural Interventional Cardiologist, Royal Adelaide Hospital and St Andrew’s Hospital, ADELAIDE

#### **Prof David Playford**

Academic Clinical Cardiologist and Cardiovascular Imaging Specialist, GenesisCare, and Professor of Cardiology, University of Notre Dame, PERTH

## Australians living with heart valve disease

**Phil, 71**

Head of Insurance, father and grandfather living with heart valve disease, MELBOURNE

**Gerlinde, 77**

Professional weaver, mother and grandmother living with heart valve disease, MELBOURNE

**David, 82**

Retired police officer, dad, grandfather and great grandfather living with heart valve disease, SYDNEY

**Neville, 84**

Retired GP and keen bushwalker living with heart valve disease, HOBART

**Fred, 77**

Retired banker and travel enthusiast living with heart valve disease, GOLD COAST

**Les, 84**

Avid golfer, father and grandfather living with heart valve disease, SUNSHINE COAST

**Milton, 60**

Business owner and father living with heart valve disease, PERTH

## Digital media kit

Includes broadcast vision available for download, images and audio grabs.

[baker.edu.au/valvedisease](http://baker.edu.au/valvedisease)

## Media contact and interviews

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