

for academic input, and provide them with various adjunct titles.

The range of diagnostic imaging modalities and interventional radiological procedures continues to expand, providing significant research opportunities. Medical science students should understand what is available, the benefits and limitations, inherent risks, and should appreciate the economic burden on the community from inappropriate use. Also, radiology provides an excellent means of teaching basic medical subjects, such as anatomy and pathology.

Considering the importance of radiology in the health system, and how its academic status is recognised by leading overseas universities, surely it is reasonable that each medical school in Australia should include a department of radiology, or, at least, a full Professor of Radiology, financed primarily from within the university.

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¹ Hare WSC. Radiology at the University of Melbourne: a history from Roentgen to the year 2000. Melbourne: BPA Digital, 2004: 22-23. □

University Chairs of Radiology

William S C Hare

TO THE EDITOR: The University of Sydney recently established a Chair of Radiology and appointed Professor Ming Wang as the first full Professor of Radiology in New South Wales. This long overdue appointment resulted from a bequest of Arthur Parker-Hughes, after whom the Chair is named. Likewise, it was largely through the generosity of Edgar John Rouse that the first university department of radiology in Australia was established at the University of Melbourne in 1965; I was appointed Foundation Professor. Considering the role of radiology in modern medicine, it is remarkable that to date in Australia, establishing Chairs of Radiology depends largely on private sponsorship.

Soon after Roentgen's discovery of x-rays in 1895, Scandinavian countries promoted the triad of medicine, surgery, and roentgenology, as it was then designated, as the basis of clinical management. Radiology departments were nurtured in their universities, and were leaders in research. European medical schools followed suit, and since about 1960, university radiology departments in the United States have been at the forefront of research. In Australia, university clinical departments developed relatively late, and, when they did, the Australian Universities Commission recognised the need to provide space and basic staffing for these new departments to achieve the desired academic standard.¹

In recent decades, development of new university radiology departments has languished. Established in 1975, the radiology department at Flinders University closed in 2002. The radiology department at the University of Queensland began in 1977. Currently, medical schools rely on busy radiologists employed by teaching hospitals