

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Tuesday 17 February, 2009**

### **BRAIN SIZE IN PREMATURE BABIES – A NEW WAY TO PREDICT THEIR FUTURE**

Researchers are always looking for ways to determine which children born prematurely will develop well, and which will develop more slowly. Such knowledge would allow those at greatest risk to be looked after more intensively in the hope of preventing problems.

But picking those children who will develop more slowly is not always easy. It is possible to use MRI scans and measure the size of a baby's brain, and that will give some guidance. But MRI scans aren't available everywhere, and a simpler method is needed.

Innovative research led by Peter Anderson at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute in Melbourne may be giving that simpler method.

In research to be presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Cerebral Palsy Conference held in Sydney this week (18-21 February 2009), Peter Anderson will talk about simply measuring a child's skull.

He has shown that measuring the size of a child's skull gives reasonable guidance as to a premature child's later development. In general, a premature baby with a larger skull has a lower risk of developing problems, while a premature baby with a smaller skull has a higher risk of developing problems.

If these findings are supported by further research, then it will be a useful tool for determining those premature babies most in need of help.

Mr Anderson will present on the topic at the Conference tomorrow, Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February, from 1.15pm.

**\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\***

### **MEDIA ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE**

**What:** 3<sup>rd</sup> International Cerebral Palsy Conference (the largest of its kind in the world)  
**When:** Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2009  
**Where:** Sydney Convention Centre, Darling Harbour, Sydney

**Presentation:** Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009  
1.15pm – 2.30pm session (presentation time 2.07pm)  
Bayside 204B room

### **FOR FURTHER DETAILS, MEDIA ACCREDITATION, ABSTRACTS OR TO OBTAIN A PROGRAM FOR THE CONFERENCE, PLEASE CONTACT:**

Liz Foy – General Manager, Service Development – 02 9479 7280 / 0419 405 181  
Janine Jones – Marketing and Communications Manager – 02 9479 7245 / 0407 066 813

### **Facts about the Cerebral Palsy Institute**

- Researching prevention and curative strategies for cerebral palsy
- Custodians of the Australian Cerebral Palsy Register to monitor trends
- Funding targeted cerebral palsy research through the Cerebral Palsy Institute Grants Program

The Cerebral Palsy Institute  
321 Mona Vale Road  
Terrey Hills 2084  
Tel: 02 9479 7200  
Fax: 02 9479 7292

