The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0951

Beal, Susan

(1935 -)

Born	19350101
Occupation	Medical practitioner

Summary

Dr Susan Beal has been investigating the circumstances surrounding Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) for more than 20 years. Beal who grew up in Sydney, New South Wales, studied medicine at Sydney University and specialised in paediatrics. She married in 1959 and had five children between 1960 and 1970. The family moved to South Australia in the early 60s. Dr Beal began working at the Adelaide Children's Hospital as research registrar in neurosurgery and then running the Cerebral Palsy Clinic. In 1970 she was asked to investigate the incidence of SIDS in South Australia. Since then Dr Beal has been involved in research and public awareness campaigns that have led to a dramatic decrease in deaths. Between 1973 and 1990 she visited more than 500 families who had lost babies to cot death, and in 1986 was able to show that the rate of death was highest among babies who slept face-down. She is credited with being the first person anywhere to argue publicly against babies sleeping on their stomachs, and in the countries that have heeded her advice, including Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, the incidence of SIDS has almost halved. Dr Susan Beal was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the Queen's Birthday honours list, 1997, for service to medicine, particularly in the fields of paediatrics and SIDS research.

Published resources

Book
Sudden infant death syndrome : problems, progress and possibilities, Krous, Henry F and Byard, Roger W, 2001

The little boat with the big blue eyes, Beal, Susan and Williams, Bruce (illustrated by), 1996

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

State Library of South Australia
Interview with Susan Beal [sound recording] Interviewer: Helen Chryssides

Launch of the second stage of The Honoured Women Oral History Project [sound recording]

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Dr Susan Beal, researcher into sudden infant death syndrome, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

[Biographical cuttings on Susan Beal, Dr., epidemiologist, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

Author Details
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