**Life on the Edge: the highs and the lows of opening of a new medical research facility**

**SETTING UP PC2 LABS IN A NEW RESEARCH FACILITY**

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Amidst extensive media, political interest and publicity, the Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute at the University of Wollongong was officially opened on 20 July 2010. This presentation outlines the various processes that were necessary in setting up operational PC2 laboratories, the challenges that unfolded once the researchers moved in and a look at how everything is working out 6 months down the track. It explores the highs and lows, giggles, and grumbles from the perspective of four technical officers: Head TO Linda Deitch and her dedicated staff: Katie Hall, Clare Atkinson and Mandy Reid through their roller-coaster ride behind the scenes at IHMRI and its development; from their arrival in the magnificent empty building shell, to the purchase and installation of specialist biomedical and various assorted laboratory equipment, through to the move of established research groups from within the University and elsewhere to this state-of-the art research facility. The insights gleaned from this experience will hopefully be of interest to Technical Staff potentially facing a similar mammoth task and to those in established facilities who (perhaps foolishly) dream of a starting from scratch.