

OBITUARY

PROFESSOR BRYANT STOKES AO NEUROSURGEON 1937-2026

Bryant Allan Rigbye Stokes was born in January 1937 and graduated in Medicine from the University of Western Australia in 1959. He was admitted to Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in 1965.

Bryant – affectionately known to his colleagues as Bars – was recognised as one of the nation’s leading neurosurgeons and contributed to the development of neurosurgery both in WA and Australia.

However, much of his extensive leadership career was centred on government and clinical governance roles. These included:

- Acting Director General of Health (WA): 2013–2015;
- Acting Commissioner of Health (WA): 2001;
- Chief Medical Officer (WA): 1995–2001;
- Chair of North Metropolitan Health Service Board: Appointed in 2016; and
- Chair of the WA Council on Safety and Quality in Health Care: 2002–2009.

In 1982 he was elected President of AMA (WA) and admitted to the AMA’s Roll of Fellows in 1984. The Association also recognised Bryant as one of the three founding fathers of Clinical Training and Evaluation Centre (CTEC).

In 2000 he received an AMA award for services to medicine.

He was a consultant neurosurgeon at Royal Perth Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital and Fremantle Hospital and served on numerous medical advisory panels and committees throughout his long and dedicated career.

He was Clinical Associate Professor of Neurosurgery at the University of UWA and Adjunct Professor in Surgical Anatomy University of WA and Professor of Anatomy, Notre Dame University.

Bryant was also a Director of the Medical Research Foundation, RPH, a past President of the Neurosurgical Society of Australasia and a former Chief Examiner in neurosurgery for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

In 2001 Bryant was made a Member of the General Division of the Order of Australia for his services to medicine and in 2008 he was invested to the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem “Knights Hospitaller”.

More recently, his outstanding contribution to Australian healthcare was recognised by his appointment as an Officer in the General Division (AO) of the Order of Australia in the 2020 Queen’s Birthday Honours List.

Prof Stokes was held in the highest regard by his colleagues, his patients, his friends and his family. He was a man of principle and compassion, a man who treated all patients as if they were his own family – and a man who made things happen.