



Lesley Podestra

- Keynote Monday 11 May

Lesley joined the Alannah & Madeline Foundation in 2016 as Chief Executive Officer.

Lesley came into the not for profit sector after undertaking a number of senior roles in the Australian and Victorian governments – she worked in education, employment and the health portfolios as a senior executive. She was the head of the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health , Ageing and Aged Care Division and the head of Communicable Disease and Biosecurity. She helped to establish the National Incident Room and National Medicines Stockpile to enable Australia respond to serious events including the use of biological agents in terrorism, pandemics and serious natural disasters. She led the National Dementia Strategy, the National Immunisation program and the National HIV Strategy. She has a deep commitment to child and maternal health and introduced the Nurse Family Partnership to Australia with Prof David Olds to support first time parents and babies in remote Aboriginal communities.

Lesley worked with The Fred Hollows Foundation as their head of Global Partnerships and Advocacy where she oversaw a new WHO Action Plan to reduce Blindness, developed a global partnership with the International Diabetes Federation and won a Google challenge award with a low cost camera.

She has a long standing commitment to population health with a particular focus on health equity in marginalised and vulnerable populations.