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Dr Minoti Apte, a 56-year-old pancreatic researcher, has been named the New South Wales 'Woman of the Year' 2015 for her contributions to medical research, tertiary education and the Indian community in Australia.

Dr Apte received the award from NSW Premier Mr Mike Baird and Minister for Women Mr Pru Goward during a reception at NSW Parliament House recently. Dr Apte was also the recipient of Order of Australia Medal (OAM) last year for her services to medical research.

On winning the award, said Dr Apte, "I would like to acknowledge the wonderful support of members of the Pancreatic Research Group, my current PhD students Mr Zhihong Xu and Ms Sri Pothula and my mentors Professor Jeremy Wilson and Professor Ron Pirola."

Dr Apte further stated that gender inequality and certain disadvantages for women returning to work remains a big problem in Australia and more work needs to be done in this area. Dr Apte is currently the director of the Pancreatic Research Group and is an acknowledged world-leader in alcohol-induced pancreatic injury and pancreatic cancer.

Dr Apte was the first in the world to develop a method to isolate pancreatic stellate cells, a technique which provided much needed research tool for studying how pancreatic fibrosis progresses in patients. She is currently leading pre-clinical studies for new drugs that can treat pancreatic cancer.