Professor Barry J. Marshall is a true medical pioneer. His work transcends all boundaries. Across the world in every country, people regardless of rank or fortune have benefited from Marshall’s work.

Barry Marshall met Robin Warren, a pathologist interested in gastritis, during internal medicine fellowship training at Royal Perth Hospital in 1981. Together, the pair studied the presence of spiral bacteria in association with gastritis. The following year (1982), they performed the initial culture of *Helicobacter pylori* and developed their hypothesis related to the bacterial cause of peptic ulcer and gastric cancer.

Marshall and Warren discovered that a bacterium, *Helicobacter pylori*, causes one of the most common and important diseases of mankind, peptic ulcer disease.

This discovery was made by two poorly funded Perth based doctors who worked in the face of intense skepticism from the global medical community and without the benefit of extensive or expensive technological infrastructure.

In 1984, while at Fremantle Hospital, Professor Marshall fulfilled Koch’s postulates for *H.pylori* and gastritis in a well-publicised self-administration experiment, in which he drank a culture of *H.pylori*. Persevering despite the widespread skepticism, Marshall also came up with combinations of drugs that killed the *H.pylori* bacteria and eliminated ulcers permanently.

Another hypothesis by Marshall, that *H pylori* is a causative factor in the etiology of stomach cancer has also been accepted.

Attempts by other researchers to prove him wrong

Professor Barry J. Marshall

To quote the citation from the Nobel Prize Presentation Ceremony:

“Barry Marshall and Robin Warren: Against prevailing dogmas, you discovered that one of the most common and an important disease of mankind, peptic ulcer disease, is caused by a bacterial infection of the stomach. Your discovery has meant that this frequently chronic and disabling condition can now be permanently cured by antibiotics to the benefit of millions of patients. Your pioneering work has also stimulated research all around the world to better understand the link between chronic infections and diseases such as cancer.”

Barry Marshall completed his undergraduate medical degree at The University of Western Australia in 1974 and he is currently Senior Principal Research Fellow, School of Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences at UWA where he continues research related to *H.pylori* and runs a molecular biology laboratory.
instead confirmed his ideas, and in early 1994 the US Food and Drug Administration officially approved a treatment to cure ulcers. *H. pylori* is a causative factor in stomach cancer, has also gained acceptance. *H. pylori* is now widely recognized as the most common chronic infection in the world.

This work has now been acknowledged as the most significant discovery in the history of gastroenterology and is compared to the development of the polio vaccine and the eradication of smallpox.

Among many prizes Professor Marshall received:

Warren Alpert Prize with Dr Robin Warren in 1995;
The John Scott Award, City Of Philadelphia. 1995;
The Gairdner Award, Toronto Canada. 1996
The Albert Lasker Award in 1995;
The Paul Ehrlich Prize with Dr Warren in 1997;
The Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Medicine in 1998;
The Florey Medal, Australia in 1998;
Member of the Royal Society, UK in 1999;
Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, in 1999;
Benjamin Franklin Medal for Life Science in 1999;
The Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Public Health Thailand, in 2001;
The Keio Medical Science Prize in 2002
And the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine which he shared with Dr J. Robin Warren in 2005.