



**MEDIA RELEASE, MAY 11, 2011**

**GILLARD GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES IMPORTANCE OF MEDICAL RESEARCH**

The Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI) welcomes the Gillard Government's Commonwealth Budget 2011-12 for continuing to fund health and medical research at current levels.

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), the primary agency for health and medical funding in Australia, has received an appropriation for the Medical Research Endowment Account of \$746 million for 2011-12.

This allocation would be expected to support medical research at levels comparable to the \$727 million in research grant commitments made in 2010 and an additional \$26.2 million over five years will be allocated to mental health research priorities.

In the lead up to the Commonwealth Budget 2011-12 there was unprecedented concern from Australia's medical research community and the public that health and medical research funding may face significant cuts.

AAMRI President Professor Julie Campbell said, "I am delighted to see that the Federal Government has maintained funding for the National Health and Medical Research Council."

She said, "This Federal Budget is a strong acknowledgment of Australia's health and medical research excellence and the valuable social and economic returns the investment in this sector brings to the country".

AAMRI has also welcomed the announcement from the Hon. Mark Butler, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, that Government will undertake a strategic review of Australia's health and medical research sector. This review will be an important mechanism through which a long-term strategy for the sector can be developed.

[ENDS]

**Further information**

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## **NOTES**

### **Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes**

The Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI) is the peak body representing Australia's 37 pre-eminent independent medical research institutes. AAMRI institutes are a key component of Australia's health and education system, with both hospital and university affiliations. Our members are not-for-profit organisations that are recognised leaders in health and medical research.

### **Professor Julie Campbell AO, FAA**

Professor Julie Campbell is Present, of the Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes and the inaugural Director of the Wesley Research Institute, Brisbane. Professor Campbell is recognised as a world leader in the field of smooth muscle biology. Her commitment to research in human health and science education has been recognised with her award of an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in the 2006 Queen's Birthday Honours List and her election as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science in 2000.