

Investing in medical research for a healthy, thriving Australia

The Government – through a strategic, efficient and long-term investment – can capitalise on Australia’s international strength in medical research to grow high value jobs and knowledge-intensive exports, curtail ballooning health costs, boost the nation’s productivity and quality of life, and bring hope to the community that we will find solutions to our biggest health problems.

AN EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT HEALTH SYSTEM – *strategic investment in health research*

Unlike research supported by the Government’s National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), research funded through the healthcare budget is not aligned to health needs, tracked or evaluated.

Track, manage and re-focus state and territory government Local Hospital Network medical research investment, using the National Health Reform Agreement, including setting research key performance indicators.

Develop up to 10 health research priority areas through the COAG Standing Council on Health, and invest 10-15 per cent of Government medical research funding towards these areas.

Build capacity in public health research, health systems and policy research, and the implementation of research outcomes into healthcare delivery for a more efficient and cost-effective healthcare system.

A STRONG, SUSTAINABLE RESEARCH SECTOR – *effective, efficient, long-term funding*

A lack of funding certainty is chipping away at the confidence and capacity of Australia’s medical research sector and the medicines industry it supports. This, together with inefficient funding schemes, means the Government is not reaping the best returns from its investment in medical research.

Maintain the Government’s long-term investment in medical research to bolster Australia’s research sector and medicines industry, and attract philanthropic and industry co-investment.

Rationalise and increase funding for the indirect costs of research to 40 cents per \$1 of competitive research grants by 2014-15 and 60 cents per \$1 by 2018-19 (an additional \$272 million in annual investment), to keep the lights on at Australia’s medical research organisations and maintain the nation’s position as an international leader in medical innovation.

Streamline Government funding schemes, including longer (5-year) research grants, to vastly improve research productivity, boost job security, and attract the best and brightest minds to Australia.

GROWING INNOVATIVE INDUSTRIES – *translating discoveries into high-tech exports*

While Australia is a world leader in medical research, we are well below the OECD average at translating research into commercially viable technologies and treatments. There is an opportunity to make Australia’s medicines industry – worth \$4 billion in annual exports – Australia’s defining knowledge-intensive industry.

Invest \$20 million annually into proof-of-concept funds for medical research to drive patient and commercial outcomes from Australian medical research, and grow Australia’s medicines industry.

Distribute these funds to 10-20 health-research precincts – hubs consisting of a teaching hospital, university, medical research institutes and industry partners, successfully integrated to foster innovation, attract foreign investment, aggregate commercialisation expertise, and drive translation of medical research.

The Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes is the peak body for Australia's independent medical research institutes (MRIs). Our 41 member organisations are internationally recognised leaders in health and medical research, working on a broad spectrum of human health conditions, from mental health to diabetes and heart disease. AAMRI's members are not-for-profit organisations co-located with hospitals, providing a direct interface between laboratory-based research and healthcare delivery. Together, AAMRI's members employ over 10,000 staff and students and have a combined annual research income of over \$700 million.

