

AAMRI welcomes \$50 million investment in mRNA research and manufacturing capacity

The Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI) welcomes today's announcement that new investment will be made in developing an onshore mRNA research and manufacturing capacity.

Highly effective COVID-19 vaccines such as those produced by Pfizer and Moderna utilise mRNA technology, and there is great optimism that this technology can help develop new lifesaving vaccines and treatments for other diseases as well.

Today's announcement has seen the Victorian Government commit \$50 million to help establish an mRNA vaccine and therapeutic manufacturing site, which will help boost sovereign manufacturing capability in Australia.

Earlier this week the Commonwealth Government identified onshore production of mRNA vaccines as a national priority, and it is anticipated there will be close cooperation between governments to help establish the facility.

"This support will boost Australia's research and manufacturing sectors and allow them to work together to develop mRNA vaccines and new therapies," said AAMRI President Professor Jonathan Carapetis AM.

This work will be conducted through partnerships between world-leading experts from the Monash University, the University of Melbourne, The Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity and other leading research institutes in partnership with Australian and international manufacturing companies.

"These partnerships will result in the development the first mRNA manufacturing capability in the Southern Hemisphere," said Professor Carapetis.

The success of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna has established mRNA vaccines as an alternative to traditional vaccines. These vaccines have shown high efficacy, increased capacity for rapid development, low-cost manufacture, and safe administration.

"Currently these vaccines are manufactured in Europe and the United States but thanks to this new focus and investment, Australia will be able to produce and distribute them locally," said Professor Carapetis.

Not only does this prevent delays due to global supply chain issues but also creates a more robust defence against future pandemics.

"I'm very pleased that the development of Australia's first mRNA manufacturing capability will fast-track our production of the mRNA vaccine, increasing future vaccine security and increasing our preparedness for future health threats," said Professor Carapetis.

RNA technology can also be used in the treatment of cancer, rare diseases, cellular engineering and protein-replacement therapy. This investment will help accelerate RNA-based projects and develop new lifesaving treatments.

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About AAMRI

AAMRI is the peak body representing medical research institutes across Australia. Our 57 member organisations are international leaders in health and medical research, addressing practically every aspect of human health and disease. Collectively, AAMRI's members represent more than 19,000 staff and students.

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