



The Hon Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT COMMITS TO MEDICAL RESEARCH

Quality medical research leads to greater knowledge and understanding about specific diseases, new treatments and medicines, new skills, better practice and best outcomes, the Minister for Health and Medical Research, Jillian Skinner said today.

“The NSW Government is committed to quality medical research and I am proud that we have established an Office of Health and Medical Research and earlier this month announced adoption of recommendations of a taskforce chaired by Peter Wills, which developed a 10 year NSW Health and Medical Research Strategic Plan.

“I am delighted that the Review received such strong interest and support – with over 500 individuals and organisations contributing to it,” Mrs Skinner said.

“Medical research is an absolutely essential and fundamental building block upon which so much else rests and individual researchers and research teams need to have access to proper facilities and physical infrastructure in which that research can take place.

“The NSW Government currently allocates more than \$200 million to medical research and as an immediate response to the review we are committing an investment of an additional \$70 million over a four year period to implement the Review recommendations,” Mrs Skinner said.

This \$70 million commitment includes:

- Annualising an additional \$10 million to the base funding of the Medical Research Support Program to bring the total to \$37.3 million per annum;
- An investment of \$5 million annually to a Medical Devices Seeding Fund which will encourage and promote investment in the design and development of medical devices;
- Establishing a Research Capacity Building Program designed specifically to attract and support elite researchers to NSW with an emphasis on another of our strengths - bioinformatics;
- Providing \$800,000 annually to support eight research hubs;
- Providing \$800,000 annually for support of research networks and establishing a clinical trial support team within the Office of Medical Research.

In addition to implementing the Wills Review, the NSW Government is committing:

- \$55 million in partnership with the Commonwealth for the Westmead Millennium Institute;
- \$28 million for the NSW Cancer Institute to be invested in cancer research.

The NSW Government's commitment to medical research has been welcomed by leaders in the field, including:

CMRI Director, Professor Roger Reddel:

"CMRI commends the NSW Government and the Minister for Medical Research, The Hon. Jillian Skinner, for their commitment to medical research and their recognition of the vital role it has to play in the future health of our community."

HMRI Director, Michael Nilsson:

"We have had single-year funding for the past three years so we welcome this as providing a roadmap for the future while we develop our own strategic plan."

"MRSP funding from the NSW Government allows us to build research capabilities and purchase critical equipment, which in turn ensures our researchers remain competitive in attracting national and international funding."

Professor Nicholas Talley, Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of Newcastle Faculty of Health:

"In a challenging budgetary climate, I am particularly happy to see a commitment of an additional \$70 million over the next four years to fund key research and development initiatives, including the proposed Office for Health and Medical Research."

MTAA CEO Anne Trimmer:

"We are particularly encouraged by the Government's commitment to invest \$5 million in a Medical Devices Seeding Fund designed to support further development of medical devices in NSW."