



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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MINISTER MARKS MOMENTOUS DAY FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

The Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research, Jillian Skinner, today officially opened the new Hunter Medical Research Institute building at Newcastle, marking a significant investment in the future of medical research in NSW.

The NSW Government has invested more than \$20 million in the construction of the building and has made significant contributions through the Medical Research Support Program to help HMRI in undertaking its important research.

“This day has been decades in the making and it is with great pleasure that I can officially open this state-of-the-art facility for the benefit of patients today and tomorrow,” Mrs Skinner said.

“As Health Minister, I am committed to ensuring the work of talented researchers is fostered because medical research is a vital thread in the fabric of our state’s health system.

“The Hunter Medical Research Institute has a key role to play in the development and understanding of new treatments which will benefit patients from near and far.”

Mrs Skinner was joined by the Federal Minister for Industry and Innovation, Greg Combet, at the unveiling. The Australian Government has contributed \$45 million toward the project, predominantly from the \$5 billion Health and Hospitals Fund.

As the hub for more than 350 of the Hunter Medical Research Institute’s 1100 aligned researchers, the five-storey, 16,000 square metre facility houses open-plan laboratory and office space along with a Clinical Trials Centre.

“I have no doubt that the collaborative HMRI partnership, which links Hunter New England Health, the University of Newcastle and the community, will lead to greater working relationships, ground-breaking innovations and importantly, improved patient outcomes,” Mrs Skinner said.

The Member for Newcastle, Tim Owen, said the opening of HMRI marked an historic day for local patients, researchers and the wider community.

“The opening of this facility will benefit both the health of locals and the health of our local economy. It will attract the best researchers and clinicians to work in the Hunter and has created more than 650 jobs in our region,” Mr Owen said.

The Member for Charlestown, Andrew Cornwell, welcomed the opening of the facility.

“This investment in the Hunter Medical Research Institute will assist our local researchers to continue to deliver research of national and international significance,” Mr Cornwell said.

The Member for Swansea, Garry Edwards, said the NSW Government valued the contribution of HMRI’s team of researchers to the medical field.

“The HMRI Building will house more than 350 medical researchers from the University of Newcastle and Hunter New England Health, in close proximity to John Hunter Hospital,” Mr Edwards said.

The Director of HMRI, Professor Michael Nilsson, said the Building brought together four of the Institute’s key research programs and was designed to facilitate collaboration and translation of research.

“This is the realisation of a long-held vision to build a world-class research centre in this region, but it really signals the start of a bright new era,” Professor Nilsson said.

HMRI Chairman Bob Kennedy said the new Building was a triumph of teamwork and a can-do attitude that exists in the Hunter.

“We have enjoyed wonderful cooperation throughout this project from the Federal and State governments, as well as our many supporters, and it shows what can be achieved,” Mr Kennedy said.