

Health & Medical Research

Forging a more prosperous future for all Australians

Health and
Medical
Research
in Australia

Health & medical research: an exceptional investment and opportunity

- Every \$1 invested into the National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) returns more than \$3 in health and economic benefits¹
- NHMRC investment between 2000-2015 is projected to yield **net returns of over \$1.5 billion per year**²
- Lifting NHMRC investment to 3% of total health system expenditure would **increase net returns by an extra \$4.1 billion per year**²
- Over the last decade, the largest increase in real exports has been in medical instruments and medicinal and pharmaceutical products - a direct outcome of investment into health & medical research³

Recent workforce attrition impacts the future health and prosperity of all Australians

- The highly-skilled, highly-trained Australian health & medical research workforce is being dramatically eroded
- 16% of the workforce supported by NHMRC Project Grants has been lost over the past 3 years, equivalent to 670 full-time positions²
- In November 2016, 1 in 4 PhD-qualified researchers were uncertain of employment in 2017⁴
- Losses are sector-wide - breakthrough research in areas as diverse as childhood cancer, heart disease and mental health will not be converted into preventions and treatments unless researchers are supported

The Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) is not a magic bullet

- Clinical translation and commercialisation must be built upon a solid foundation of discovery-driven basic research. **You cannot harvest crops without first planting seeds!**
- Further investment into the NHMRC Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA) is required if the aspirations of the MRFF are to be realised - all stages of the research pipeline must be supported

Maximise health, social & economic returns for a more prosperous Australia

- **Immediate action:** Increase investment into the NHMRC MREA to stem the loss of our valuable intellectual capital and retain our best and brightest
- **Over the next 10 years:** Increase NHMRC investment to 3% of total health spending by 2027 to take advantage of a **\$58 billion bonanza of benefits**²



Established 1961

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2. Deloitte Access Economics. *Australia's health and medical research workforce: expert people providing exceptional returns*, 2016, www.asmr.org.au/Publications.html

3. Prime Minister's Manufacturing Taskforce, *Report of the Non-Government Members*, 2012, www.innovation.gov.au/industry/manufacturing/Taskforce/Documents/SmarterManufacturing.pdf

4. ASMR snap survey of the Australian health and medical research workforce, November 2016, unpublished