



MEDIA RELEASE April 26, 2007

ASMR RESPONSE TO ALP INNOVATION PAPER

The Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR) welcomes the ALP's paper on 'New Directions for Innovation, Competitiveness and Productivity' released this week.

"This paper recognises the importance of innovation and R&D in developing Australia's international competitiveness in preparing and meeting challenges ahead with an ageing population and climatic variations", says ASMR President, Associate Professor Maria Kavallaris.

Health and medical research continues to make significant contributions to the health and well-being of Australians. Innovations in HMR have led to an emerging biotechnology industry with knowledge, job and wealth creation in this country. Programs to facilitate partnerships and leverage between researchers, industry and government will help drive innovation and R&D. The paper acknowledges this need but does not offer detailed strategies to effectively link key stakeholders. "How the establishment of the ten *Enterprise Connect* Innovation centres will operate is sketchy, and ASMR looks forward to more comprehensive policy releases in the near future regarding the innovation centres and other initiative proposed in the ALP paper."

"Public sector infrastructure programs to universities and research institutes is crucial if Australia is to improve its competitive standing internationally, this need is recognised in the policy paper."

Despite increased investment in research and development, Australia still hovers below the OECD average and policy that will considerably improve Australia's standing is encouraged. The ASMR encourages bipartisan support of sustainable government investment in health and medical research innovation in Australia.

The ALP policy paper shines the spotlight on the importance of innovation and R&D to Australia's future and we hope will help concentrate debate and policy in the right direction to meet Australia's emerging health, environmental, social and economic needs.

Media inquiries:

A/Prof Maria Kavallaris,
President, ASMR Mobile: 0408 480 855

Dr Mark Hulett,
President-elect, ASMR Contact: 02 6125 4480 or Mobile: 0400 365 607