The Australian Society for Medical Research

August 24, 2009

The Hon Jodi McKay MP
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Minister Assisting the Minister for health (Cancer)
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NSW OFFICE FOR SCIENCE & MEDICAL RESEARCH
GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTES REPORT

Thank you for the invitation to comment on the OSMR Governance Principles for Medical Research Institutes Report.

The Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR) is the peak body representing health and medical researchers in Australia. Through more than 1,300 direct members and affiliations with 72 specialist societies, medical colleges and patient groups, the ASMR network reaches an additional 140,000 Australians involved, or having an interest in, health and medical research.

The ASMR strongly supports governance principles for NSW-based medical research institutes (MRIs) that broadly endorse and enhance transparency and accountability. However, as highlighted in the report, these overarching principles should accommodate wherever possible the different models of governance that have evolved in many MRIs often as a result of their unique histories and patterns of evolution. They should also serve as a framework to enhance and not impinge in any way on the world-class excellence of our MRIs' research output.

ASMR supports the assertion that any model of governance for MRIs must be underpinned by a realistic and sustained level of State Government-funded infrastructure support. Careful consideration should also be given to the fair and equitable utilisation of the governance principles as a criterion for State Government infrastructure funding decisions.

We welcome this opportunity to comment on the Governance Principles report and would be delighted to provide clarification on the above or any additional information.

Dr Sarah Meachem (ASMR President)   Dr Alison Butt (ASMR President-Elect)