

NSW Health and Medical Research Strategic Review - Phase 3 Consultation Submissions close 5pm Wednesday 16th November 2011

Introduction

The New South Wales (NSW) Government is undertaking a review on the current performance of health and medical research in NSW and recommending a strategic plan covering the next ten years.

The Review is being led by Mr Peter Wills, AC, with the support of a Review Committee which has been appointed by Minister Skinner (Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research). The Review will assess the current performance of health and medical research in NSW, make recommendations on how the sector can be improved, better coordinated and leveraged; and propose ways in which the NSW health needs, clinical trials and commercialisation capacity can be better supported or expanded. For more information about the Strategic Review go to <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/omr/review/>

The Strategic Review is undertaking widespread consultation with health and medical research community and members of the public.

The first consultation phase was undertaken from 21 July to 15 August 2011. More than 350 people participated through an online survey open to the public; and/or a series of roundtable discussions and individual interviews with a broad range of stakeholders. The themes emerging from the on-line survey, group and individual interviews have informed the development of the NSW Health and Medical Research Strategic Review Issues Paper.

Eighty seven submissions were provided to the Review in the second phase of consultation (5 September to 26 September 2011), which elicited feedback on the Issues Paper.

This third phase of consultation (28 October to 16 November 2011) will elicit feedback on the Discussion Paper. This is the final opportunity for public comment on the NSW Health and Medical Research Strategic Review with a final report expected to be released in February 2012.

The purpose of the Discussion Paper is to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to comment on the emerging principles and actions and to inform recommendations for an Interim Report. It presents:

- a vision and refined strategy framework for health and medical research in NSW;
- a brief overview of current issues for health and medical research in NSW; and
- principles and possible actions for the 10-year NSW health and medical research plan.

Although the issues described in the Discussion Paper are based on evidence collected for the

Review, references, exhibits and quotes have not been included nor have timeframes for implementation, performance indicators or budgets. This level of detail will be included in the Interim Report. The Review will continue to gather evidence and feedback to validate the principles and actions presented here.

We invite all interested parties to contribute to the open submission process on the Discussion Paper by completing this online questionnaire. The questionnaire comprises 2 sections:

1. Details of Respondent (required)
2. Comments on Discussion Paper

Submissions close at 5:00 pm on Wednesday 16 November 2011.

The Discussion Paper and a copy of the questionnaire are available at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/omr/review/>

If you have any documents that you feel would be useful to the Review, please send to omr@doh.health.nsw.gov.au

Respondents are unable to print a copy of this questionnaire upon completion. Copies are available on request from the Office for Medical Research on omr@doh.health.nsw.gov.au

Section One: Details of Respondent

Name *

Dr Louise Dunn

Organisation *

Australian Society for Medical Research

Email *

dunnl@hri.org.au

I consent that excerpts or quotes from this submission can be used in the review reports and attributed to the author *

NOTE: All submission authors will be listed in an appendix of the final report.

Yes

No

Role of Respondent (your main role) *

Please choose only one response

- Research Administration
 - Student
 - Researcher 6+ Years post doc
 - Researcher 0-6 Years post doc
 - Research Assistant/ Technician
 - Research Manager
 - Health Services Manager
 - Clinician-Researcher
 - Clinician / Health Practitioner
 - Policy Maker
 - Other
-

If other, please specify

Director (ASMR) and NHMRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Employer / Place of Work or Study (your main employer) *

Please choose only one response

- University
 - Hospital / Health Service
 - Research Institute
 - Government
 - Finance
 - Industry
 - Non-Government / Not for Profit Organisation
 - Other
-

If other, please specify

Australian Society for Medical Research

Focus of Research Involvement (your main focus) *

Please choose only one response

- Basic/Biomedical
- Population Health
- Health Services
- Health Policy
- Clinical Research
- Other

If other, please specify

All of the above.

Section Two: Comments on Discussion Paper

Please provide any comments you have on the Discussion Paper

The four broad areas identified by the Discussion Paper are highly relevant to the goal of making NSW globally recognised as a centre for health and medical research. However, in the detail there remains some cause for concern, particularly in the area of basic science and biomedical research, and the lack of defined roles for non-clinician or non-public health researchers that populate this field. The work force must be appropriate and encompass researchers from the bench to the bedside. The idea that clinicians need to be better trained in research is without question as this ultimately drive translational outcomes. However, this will not be achievable without a strong culture of basic science and biomedical research, which by definition may not always be "translationally relevant". While it is financially necessary to support and invest in translational research, this should not be to the exclusion of the critical research components that may not seem translational now but nevertheless provide the scaffolding for translation at a later date.

While it is appreciated that we need to attract and retain early career researchers the mechanisms for this are not elaborated in enough detail to provide confidence. Of all biomedical researchers who pursue postgraduate careers the attrition is so high that only 3% will ever attain full Professorial appointments. Comparatively low professional salaries, time-intensive scientific processes, lack of any tenure track system and perceived ease at which clinician-researchers attract funding in comparison to basic scientists remains to be addressed.

Thank You!

Thank you for making a submission to the New South Wales Health and Medical Research Strategic Review.

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