

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016, 10 February 2016**

**Ref No:** SQ16-000015

**OUTCOME:** 0 - Whole of Portfolio

**Topic:** Medical Research Future Fund

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Gallagher, Katy

**Question:**

- a) When is it expected the first disbursement from the MRFF will be made?
- b) How will the disbursements from the MRFF be impacted by the decision to create the Biomedical Translation Fund?
- c) Will the MRFF Act require amendment to allow the establishment of the Biomedical Translation Fund?
- d) Will the MRFF now be a \$750 million fund?
- e) Will legislation be required to establish the Biomedical Translation Fund?
- f) Will disbursements be made from the MRFF and Biomedical Translation Fund this year? If so when?
- g) Who will advise on disbursements from the Biomedical Translation Fund?
- h) How will researchers and other eligible organisations be invited to apply for funding from the MRFF and Biomedical Translation Fund?

**Answer:**

- a) The Australian Medical Research Advisory Board (Advisory Board) will develop the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy (Strategy) and Priorities that will help guide the focus for program level funding. Decisions on disbursements will be made by the Government using the Strategy and Priorities as guidance. Timing of the disbursements is a decision for Government.
- b) This will have a negligible impact on the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) revenue and expected disbursements over the forward estimates. The MRFF remains on track to reach a \$20 billion capital base.
- c) No, the *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015* will not require any amendment to establish the Biomedical Translation Fund (BTF).
- d) No, distributions from the MRFF will continue to grow until it reaches maturity with a \$20 billion capital base, at which point it will disburse around \$1 billion per annum.

- e) Specific arrangements regarding the establishment of the BTF are currently under consideration. Subject to decisions made by Government, new or amending existing legislation may or may not be necessary.
- f) The timing of the disbursements from the funds is a decision for Government.
- g) Governance arrangements are currently under consideration. It is intended that the BTF governing body selects private sector fund managers through a competitive process. These fund managers will in turn identify matched private capital and commercially viable biomedical discoveries for investment.
- h) The MRFF Act allows for a range of bodies/entities to be utilised for distribution of MRFF disbursements. A funding body or bodies with the most suitable administrative mechanisms or expertise for the particular type of research endeavour will be engaged to allocate MRFF funds as required.

The precise entity selected for disbursements in any given year is a matter for Government consideration.

Specific arrangements regarding the establishment of the BTF are currently under consideration. It is intended that disbursements will occur as outlined above, refer to part g).