Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 2/3 June 2014

Ref No: SQ14-000900

OUTCOME: 1 – Population Health

Topic: Translational Research

Type of Question: Hansard Page 69, 3 June 2014

Senator: McLucas, Jan

Question:

How has the NHMRC extended its reach into any area that is relevant to improving people's health?

Answer:

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funds research relevant to any area of health. The NHMRC's strategy for health and medical research is to invest in the highest quality research, as determined through peer review, across the four broad research areas of health and medical research: clinical; public health; health services; and biomedical research. In 2014 the NHMRC will expend $804 million on 'applied research' (clinical, public health and health services research). Total expenditure in the National Health Priority Areas (NHPA) is:

NHPA	Expenditure
Arthritis	$24,379,589
Asthma	$23,824,907
Cancer	$181,772,349
Cardiovascular Disease	$124,553,448
Dementia	$31,930,978
Diabetes	$68,773,161
Injury	$48,238,475
Mental Health	$78,569,775
Obesity	$38,253,417

Over the last ten years (2005-2014) the proportion of NHMRC research funding used to support each of the broad research areas has changed, reflective of a broader reach into a wider range of health areas: The number of grants in:

- health services research has increased from 127 to 241;
- public health research has increased from 389 to 658; and
- clinical research has increased from 868 to 1466.

Examples of how NHMRC funded research has benefitted human health include:

- Professor Seong-Seng Tan's research to minimise brain injury arising from trauma and stroke (University of Melbourne);
- Associate Professor Ingrid Winkler's research into making chemotherapy safer (Mater Medical Research Institute in Brisbane);
- Professor Elizabeth Elliott's research into the impact and clinical management of influenza in children (University of Sydney); and
- Professor Graeme Jones's research into new options to delay joint replacement (University of Tasmania).

Further detail can be found in the NHMRC publication *Ten of the Best Research Projects 2013* available from: www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/r53