

# Medical Research Future Fund



## Boosting Preventive Health Research

### INVESTMENT

The Australian Government will invest **\$10 million** to support the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre (TAPPC) in generating low-cost, translatable and scalable solutions that promote the adoption of good health practices, prevent disease and keep people out of hospital.

### KEY ELEMENTS

- Tackling childhood obesity, nutrition and physical activity.
- Applying behavioural economics approaches to positively influence smarter lifestyle choices.
- Identifying effective behavioural interventions for at-risk populations (including those living with mental illness and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) and those living with complex and chronic disease.

### RATIONALE

- Chronic disease is one of Australia's biggest health challenges and it is largely preventable.
- Poor diet, obesity, physical inactivity, tobacco use and harmful alcohol consumption are amenable to behaviour modification.
- Research assists with managing the costs associated with the growing rate of complex and chronic disease.
- The Government is committed to action on chronic conditions through the *National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions*, which this research investment will complement.
- TAPPC is peer recognised and strategically placed to immediately identify and scale-up research solutions for translation and impact.

### DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Creation of new knowledge with practical application to community and clinical settings and practice.
- Collaboration across academic disciplines and health services to better understand the social, cognitive and emotional aspects of individual choices.
- Production of effective guidance, tools and interventions to support Australians to live active and healthy lives.

### MEDICAL RESEARCH FUTURE FUND

The Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) demonstrates the Government's strong commitment to research and innovation. The MRFF provides a long term sustainable source of funding for endeavours that aim to improve health outcomes, quality of life and health system sustainability.

The MRFF will double direct Australian Government funding for health and medical research.

**The MRFF is a dedicated vehicle for priority investment in health and medical research.**

The MRFF, established under the *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015*, provides grants of financial assistance to support health and medical research and innovation in improving the health and wellbeing of Australians. It operates as an endowment fund with the capital preserved in perpetuity. At maturity, the MRFF will reach \$20 billion.

The first disbursements from the MRFF focus on translating research into real health benefits, breakthrough investments in new technologies and challenges, and enhancing Australia's reputation for research excellence and leadership.

Over \$65 million will be injected into a range of programs that cut across the research pipeline – fuelling new discoveries and the translation and commercialisation of great Australian ideas.





## KEY FACTS

- Over 60 per cent of Australian adults and 25 per cent of Australian children are overweight or obese. Overweight and obesity is the second highest contributor to burden of disease.
- Obesity conservatively cost the Australian society \$8.6 billion a year (2011-12 estimate) in terms of healthcare and lost productivity due to disability.
- Action in preventive health can assist in tackling health inequity, particularly for at-risk populations who suffer a disproportionate level of disease burden.
- Over 50 per cent of Australians aged 18 years and older do not eat recommended serves of fruit and 90 per cent eat insufficient vegetables.
- Only a third of Australian children, one in ten teens and more than 40 per cent of adults undertake the recommended level of physical activity every day.
- Lack of physical activity accounts for five per cent of the total burden of disease and is a major contributor to some cancers, cardiovascular disease and diabetes.
- Nutrition and physical activity risks can be mitigated through health interventions that support and sustain behaviour and lifestyle changes.
- Psychological bias and subtle environment features influence decision making – behavioural economics taps into this reality to influence smart choices.
- TAPPC is a National Health and Medical Research Council partnership centre established in 2013 with existing expertise and extensive research networks in preventive health.

## IMPLEMENTATION

- This research program will be administered by TAPPC, and immediately double their research effort.
- TAPPC has some ready-to-scale projects in the pipeline and will look to identify and select new work consistent with the elements of the program.
- Opportunities for international research collaboration will also be explored.

## ADVISORY BOARD

The Australian Medical Research Advisory Board, established in accordance with the *MRFF Act*, is responsible for consulting on and developing a five-yearly Strategy that sets out the vision, aims and objectives for the MRFF and an accompanying two-yearly list of Priorities. Government must consider the Strategy and Priorities in making MRFF investment decisions.

## STRATEGY 2016-2021

**VISION:** A health system fully informed by quality health and medical research.

Identifies key strategic investment platforms that set to position Australia to meet future healthcare challenges:

- Strategic and international horizons
- Data and infrastructure
- Health services and systems research
- Capacity and collaboration
- Trials and translation
- Commercialisation

## PRIORITIES 2016-2018

The first MRFF disbursements address identified Priorities under each strategic platform, are a mix of strategic investments, and use a range of administrative mechanisms to maximise impact. More disbursements will occur in 2017-18.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

 [www.health.gov.au/MRFF](http://www.health.gov.au/MRFF)  [MRFF@health.gov.au](mailto:MRFF@health.gov.au)

