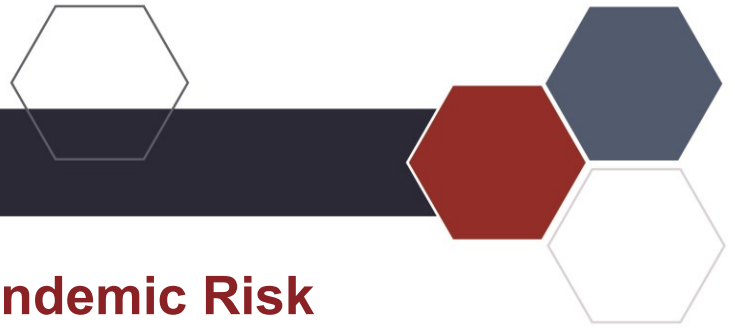


# Medical Research Future Fund



## National Security Against Pandemic Risk

### INVESTMENT

The Australian Government will provide **\$2 million** to support the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), a new international initiative addressing critical research and development gaps for pandemic preparedness and global health security.

### KEY ELEMENTS

CEPI aims to stimulate, finance and coordinate vaccine development to prevent and contain infectious disease epidemics, especially in cases where market incentives alone do not achieve this outcome.

An Australian contribution to CEPI will aid the development of vaccines against existing and emerging infectious diseases with epidemic potential.

### RATIONALE

- Pandemic outbreaks have increased dramatically in recent years due to factors such as higher population density, ecological changes and increased mobility.
- The West African Ebola outbreak demonstrated that vaccines can be developed quickly, but current models for financing vaccine development need improvement.
- Vaccines for infectious diseases that afflict low and middle-income countries are not research priorities for pharmaceutical companies.
- Epidemics know no boundaries and Australia needs to engage internationally to ensure that it can be part of any global response.
- Contributing to this vital initiative will ensure Australia and the globe is prepared for future epidemics, rather than reacting to them.

### DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Galvanised innovative partnerships between public, private, philanthropic and civic organisations.
- Vital vaccines moved from pre-clinical to proof-of-concept development stages in humans before an epidemic begins.
- As a financial supporter, Australia will work to highlight priority risks and vulnerabilities important to the Asia-Pacific region.

### 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

- Epidemic refers to an increase, often sudden, in the number of cases of a disease above what is normally expected in a given population and location.
- Pandemic refers to an epidemic that has spread over several countries or continents, usually affecting and threatening larger populations of people.
- CEPI is an innovative new public-private partnership that brings together industry, philanthropists and governments to develop safe and effective vaccines to fight infectious diseases of pandemic potential.
- CEPI has already identified three initial viruses to be targeted: Lassa virus, MERS Co-V and Nipah virus. All three have breached animal-human transmission and could trigger an epidemic or pandemic. CEPI aims to develop two promising vaccines for each of these viruses to avert potential crises.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) supports the work of CEPI, and the WHO's *Research and Development Blueprint for Action to Prevent Epidemics* is informing CEPI's priorities.
- CEPI has already received significant backing from Norway, Japan, Germany, India, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, World Economic Forum, and the Wellcome Trust.
- Asia is widely recognised as a global 'hot spot' for epidemic infectious diseases with pandemic potential.
- Australia aims to ensure that future epidemic infectious diseases in the region can be detected and contained as early as possible to reduce the threat to domestic health security.
- CEPI is expected to provide Australian consortia with new opportunities to participate in international research projects focusing on major global health threats.
- This investment complements Australia's commitment to global health and will build global innovative partnerships and create opportunities for global research collaboration.

## IMPLEMENTATION

- Australia's contribution to CEPI through the MRFF is a one payment of \$2 million funded over two years.

### 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)

