



3 May 2019

Professor Vlado Perkovic
President
Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes
president@aamri.org.au

Dear Professor Perkovic

Thank you for your letter regarding the 2019 election priorities for the Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes.

I welcome this opportunity to reiterate Labor's enduring support for health and medical research. As you note, Labor has strongly supported your members and the broader sector in both Opposition and Government.

We know that every investment we make in health and medical research is ultimately an investment in the health of all Australians. We also know that we need to give our world-class researchers the resources they deserve if we want to fight disease and improve our health care system.

These resources are also crucial to attracting and retaining the best researchers in Australia.

That's why Labor has supported the National Health and Medical Research Council since its establishment more than 80 years ago. A Shorten Labor Government will continue this support for the NHMRC and consider the issues you raise in relation to its funding.

It's also why Labor voted for the Medical Research Future Fund in the Parliament, supports the MRFF in Opposition, and will strengthen the MRFF in Government.

Labor is determined to see the MRFF reach \$20 billion, and a Shorten Labor Government will achieve this target on the current timeline, i.e. in 2020-21.

Labor is also determined to work with you, the Australian Medical Research Advisory Board and others to improve the governance on the MRFF – a concern that we know your members share.

Every investment in health and medical research is worthwhile. But the MRFF should be disbursed through contestable, peer-reviewed and transparent processes – not on the basis of pet projects or political pork-barrelling.

Labor also agrees that the MRFF is an opportunity to invest in mid-career researchers and women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, and looks forward to working with you on these priorities.

Finally, you will be aware that Labor has already announced a number of pre-election commitments to health and medical research, including our \$125 million commitment to cancer research – which stands over and above existing funding sources including the MRFF and NHMRC.

Once again, thank you for your letter. We look forward to working with you in Government to improve the health of all Australians.

Yours sincerely

Australian Labor Campaign Headquarters

www.alp.org.au