

AAMRI welcomes new funding for COVID-19 medical research

- **\$13 million in competitive funding: \$8 million for research into antiviral therapies and \$5 million for clinical trials to better treat and manage COVID-19 patients with severe acute respiratory distress.**
- **\$2.6 million for the Doherty Institute to fund four projects on testing, pathology and development of a framework and protocols.**
- **The funding is part of the Government's \$2.4 billion Coronavirus National Health Plan, funded from The Medical Research Future Fund.**

The Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI) applauds the Federal Government's new funding announcements. This new round of grants is a real step towards making resources available to help Australia's top scientists contribute to the coronavirus (COVID-19) effort.

"This is the kind of focussed effort we need to begin this immediate, critical work on new therapies, treatments and testing," said AAMRI President Professor Jonathan Carapetis AM.

The Peter Doherty Institute for Immunity and Infection has welcomed the new funding, which has been directed at four different strategies. These strategies are: the development of a new, simpler Australian coronavirus pathology test; the development of new testing protocols to enable more individuals to be tested simultaneously; development of a deployment framework for newly approved coronavirus serology tests; and, assessing how and when to use serology testing.

The \$8 million in competitive funding for antiviral research will first be given as \$3 million to test up to 10 antivirals, and then a further \$5 million to rapidly progress the most promising candidates to clinical practice.

"I'm pleased to see these funds getting fast-tracked to the scientists who have the potential to make a real difference in what is now a global health emergency," said Professor Carapetis.

The clinical trial funding for those who suffer acute respiratory distress is aimed at looking after the most vulnerable in our community, including the elderly and those who are immunocompromised.

These funds are all available from the Medical Research Future Fund, an ongoing research fund set up by the Australian Government in 2015 and set to grow to \$20 billion by 2021. The dividends from this fund are invested into Australia's medical research.

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About AAMRI

AAMRI is the peak body representing medical research institutes across Australia. Our 56 member organisations are international leaders in health and medical research, addressing practically every aspect of human health and disease. Collectively, AAMRI's members represent more than 19,000 staff and students.

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