



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP

Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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Support for research to develop kidneys from stem cells

The Liberal National Government is providing nearly \$1 million in funding to a medical research project that will use human stem cells to develop kidneys as an alternative for renal replacement.

It is estimated that one in ten Australians will show evidence of chronic kidney disease by 2020, but only one in four patients will receive a transplant.

Chronic kidney disease is rising in incidence by six per cent per annum and there is an acute need to develop new therapies.

With funding allocated from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Professor Melissa Little from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute will receive \$936,221 for her research project.

Her research is part of a regenerative medicine project in which human stem cells are used to develop kidneys with functioning tissue as an alternative for renal replacement.

The research will focus on the molecular basis of kidney development, renal disease and repair.

We can now make kidney tissue from human stem cells and having this develop into mature kidney tissue after transplantation is a very promising step towards new treatments.

Professor Little aims to develop human kidney tissue that is able to expand and function after transplantation. A breakthrough in this area will open the door to kidney disease modelling, drug screening and the bioengineering of replacement kidney tissue.

This critical research project will help us better understand the condition and is among National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grants worth more than \$526 million.

Health and medical research is a key pillar supporting Australia's world-class health system and is critical to improving healthcare and improving the health of our nation.

The 2018–19 Budget we provided a record total of \$6 billion to Australia's health and medical research sector, including \$1.3 billion for a health and medical industry growth plan to drive a new era of better health care and fuel jobs and growth.

(ENDS)

Authorised by Greg Hunt MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Somerville, Victoria.