



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health
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MEDIA RELEASE

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Record \$24 million for cardiovascular disease research

The Turnbull Government will invest a record \$24 million to support landmark research into cardiovascular disease by The George Institute for Global Health.

With 4.2 million Australian adults having a disease of the circulatory system, including 1.2 million with cardiovascular conditions such as stroke and heart disease, research investment is critical.

This is National Health and Medical Research Council's third largest grant ever provided for medical research in Australia and the largest investment in research on cardiovascular disease - a disease which many Australians do not know they have.

Cardiovascular disease is a collective term for diseases of the heart and blood vessels. The term commonly includes diseases such as coronary heart disease, heart failure, cardiomyopathy, congenital heart disease, peripheral vascular disease and stroke.

The \$24 million investment will support research into a number of areas, including:

- Finding better methods of managing stroke, including large scale clinical trials investigating the effects of blood pressure lowering in the prevention of stroke, and for improving outcomes in acute stroke patients, as well as new approaches to stroke rehabilitation.
- Trials of new combination pills for blood pressure management, aiming to make treatment simpler and more effective for patients.
- Whether specific blood sugar lowering medicines can prevent kidney damage and kidney failure in people with diabetes.
- Investigating if modifying dialysis treatment, such as timing and dialysis fluid composition, can improve outcomes for people with kidney failure.
- A new digital and interactive tool for GPs and their patients (HealthTracker) that is about to be trialled in 70 clinics across Australia.
- A specific focus on improving the prevention and management of cardiovascular disease in women.

The Turnbull Government is committed to supporting Australia's talented researchers and innovators to find solutions to health challenges such as cardiovascular disease.

Professor Bruce Neal, Deputy Director of The George Institute for Global Health, will lead this program of both domestic and global relevance. It will generate and translate evidence from high-quality research into clinical use.

The program is designed to inform health care providers and policy makers on the best strategies for the prevention and treatment of conditions like heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, and diabetes.

Professor Stephen MacMahon, Principal Director and Co-Founder of The George Institute for Global Health, said this funding recognises the global impact of the research conducted by this group of accomplished researchers.

“The new funding will enable them to expand their high-impact work on the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular diseases, kidney disease and diabetes, which remain the leading causes of early death in this country and many others,” Professor MacMahon said.

Professor Neal said cardiovascular disease affect millions in Australia and hundreds of millions worldwide.

“This announcement is particularly important because it allows us to search for solutions throughout a patient's life and across every point of their healthcare journey. Prevention is a big part of our work. We want to make sure people are treated better in our hospitals but also to figure out how to keep them out of there in the first place,” Professor Neal said.

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