



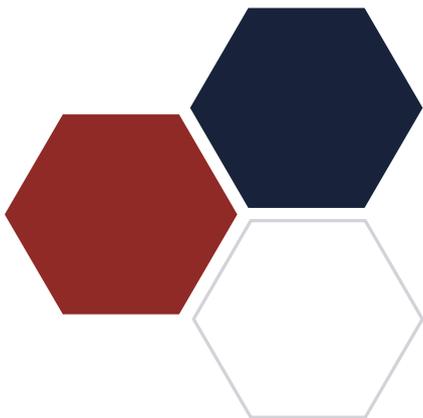
Australian Government

Department of Health  
and Aged Care

# Medical Research Future Fund

## Monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy

August 2024 update



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## Summary of changes

This 2024 update includes the following changes:

- minor changes to the wording of one impact measure and 3 measures of success (amendments shown in italics):
  - impact measure
    - Beneficial change to health *policy and practice*
  - measures of success
    - New health technologies are embedded in health *policy and practice*
    - New health interventions are embedded in health *policy and practice*
    - The community engages with and adopts new technologies, treatments *and interventions*
- incorporation of the performance indicators published in 2023
- better articulation of performance monitoring data sources
- minor editorial changes.



# Introduction

The Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) has developed this Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) *Monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy* (the Strategy) as an overarching framework for assessing the performance of the MRFF. The Strategy is an update to the *2021-2022 to 2023-24 document* published by the department in November 2020. The Strategy informs and guides MRFF evaluation and monitoring activities.

The MRFF is a \$22 billion long-term investment supporting Australian health and medical research. The MRFF aims to transform health and medical research and innovation to improve lives, build the economy and contribute to health system sustainability. The *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015 (MRFF Act)* sets out the operations of the MRFF, including:

- how the endowment fund will be managed
- the purposes for which MRFF funding can be used
- the organisations that will be able to receive MRFF funding.

In addition, the MRFF Act specifies that an Australian Medical Research Advisory Board (AMRAB) be established. The AMRAB's duties include determining the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy and Priorities*, both of which are required under the MRFF Act. These documents are developed following extensive community and sector consultation. The AMRAB sets the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities* every 2 years, and the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy* every 5 years. The Strategy is intended to align and evolve with these Priorities and Strategies as they are refreshed.

The *MRFF 10-year Investment Plan* (the Investment Plan) sets out the Australian Government's plans for MRFF funding and provides a mechanism for implementing the current Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy and the related Priorities. The MRFF has been a key contributor to the Australian Government's *National Health and Medical Industry Growth Plan*, and is complemented by a range of government investments in health and medical research. This includes funding from the *National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)* and the *Biomedical Translation Fund*.

In addition, 3 legislative and policy documents provide the framework for MRFF's operation:

- *Medical Research Future Fund Investment Mandate Direction 2015*
- *Medical Research Future Fund – Funding Principles*
- *Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines 2017*.



## MRFF program structure

The MRFF 10-year Investment Plan (the Investment Plan) is structured around 4 research themes (patients, researchers, translation and missions) as originally described in the Health Portfolio Budget Statements 2019–20 (pp 22-24). Under these themes are a set of MRFF initiatives (currently 22 initiatives under the 3rd Investment Plan, Appendix A). Grant opportunities are made available under the initiatives and are the mechanisms for offering grant agreements to fund health and medical research activities through the MRFF.

The MRFF's program structure aligns with these financial and grant arrangements (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1** MRFF program structure

The MRFF is complex, because it:

- spans multiple inter-related initiatives across the Investment Plan, and across a range of health and medical research areas
- funds activities across the research spectrum, from discovery research to commercialisation and translation of innovative ideas and products, and improved health services
- provides funding using funding agreements that range in
  - length (up to 5 years)
  - quantum (from hundreds of thousands to tens of millions of dollars).



# Monitoring and evaluation

## Principles for monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluating funded projects, programs and initiatives within the MRFF will be:

- independent from the policy areas responsible for administering the grant program and from grant recipients, or carried out with independent advice in the case of internal evaluations
- impartial in its treatment of information for all grant programs and recipients
- transparent in process and outcomes
- inclusive of consumers and stakeholders
- incorporate learnings that provide ongoing improvements to future evaluation and grant opportunities
- regular and systematic
- proportionate and fit for purpose for the program or activity being evaluated.

Monitoring and evaluating the MRFF must:

- consider the project, grant opportunity and/or initiative aims, objectives and priorities, as well as the MRFF's vision, aim, impact measures and measures of success
- account for the complexity within the MRFF program structure
- support continuous refinement and improvement of MRFF initiatives and evaluation processes
- ascertain whether unmet needs have been met
- consider whether other complementary investments are required to address identified areas of need
- assess
  - research outputs (including, where relevant, negative results of research and unintended outcomes)
  - research impact (over appropriate timelines)
- account for the challenges in assessing the impact of health and medical research effectively — notably, the difficulties with attributing outcomes to specific grants and the time taken for research to translate to health policy and practice
- in determining the appropriate methodology and timing for evaluation of the grant program, account for factors such as proportion of funding disbursed, duration of program, evolving funding or research landscape or unmet health needs.



The monitoring and evaluation process also offers an opportunity to:

- determine what impact (direct or indirect) has been made on the health status of priority populations<sup>1</sup>, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and vulnerable people, including older Australians
- implement innovative grant management, performance management and evaluation processes based on results, and action learning and action-based research (plan, act, observe, reflect)
- learn from and align with
  - the [Department of Health and Aged Care Evaluation Strategy](#)
  - other Australian medical research and innovation funding activities
  - existing reviews, evaluations and assessments, such as the [McKeon Review 2013](#)
  - international best practice, where relevant and available
  - earlier work, including a MRFF evaluation framework developed by Research Australia.<sup>2</sup>

## Learning from monitoring and evaluation activities

The Strategy aims to establish a learning system, whereby the:

- MRFF's ongoing design and implementation accounts for the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation activities
- selection, design and implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities focus on providing information to support continued improvements within the MRFF.

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<sup>1</sup> From the *Australian medical research and innovation strategy 2021–2026*: “Priority populations’ is intended to be read broadly as including, without being limited to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, rural and remote Australians, Australians with a disability, the elderly, those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage, and LGBTQIA+ communities.”

<sup>2</sup> Research Australia (2019). *An evaluation framework for the Medical Research Future Fund*, commissioned by the Department of Health, Research Australia, Sydney.



## Conceptual framework for monitoring and evaluating the MRFF

The MRFF Act (section 3) specifies that its objective is to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians by establishing the MRFF to provide grants of financial assistance to support medical research and medical innovation.

Through the *National Health and Medical Industry Growth Plan*, the Australian Government also committed to improving health outcomes, and increasing jobs and economic growth.

In setting out the first *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy (2016-21)*, the AMRAB articulated the MRFF's vision, aim, objectives, and measures of impact.

The measures of impact have since been refined into the following 5 impact measures:

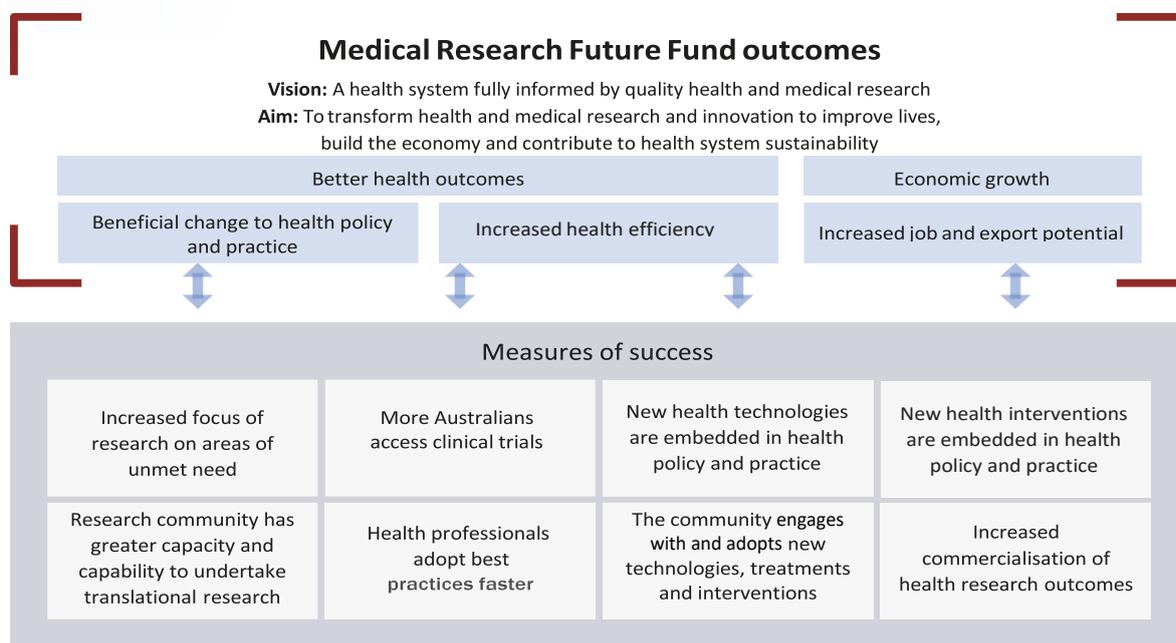
- Better health outcomes
- Beneficial change to health policy and practice
- Increased health efficiency
- Economic growth
- Increased job and export potential.

Figure 2 presents the MRFF monitoring, evaluation and learning conceptual framework, which integrates the aims, visions, objectives and impact measures. It also sets out the MRFF's measures of success that support achievement of MRFF outcomes.

This 2024 update further refines the MRFF impact measures and measures of success to be more inclusive of translation of research findings into health policy (encompassing e.g. public and preventive health programs and measures), in addition to healthcare practice.

Table 1 defines the measures of success and outlines their relative contribution towards the 5 MRFF impact measures. Appendix B articulates how each MRFF initiative will contribute to the measures of success and how investment and efforts will be prioritised (i.e., in the short or long term) in contributing towards the measures of success.





**Figure 2** MRFF monitoring, evaluation and learning conceptual framework, updated 2024

Note that Table 1 uses the following definitions:

- Unmet medical need arises where individuals are living with a serious health condition, where there are limited satisfactory options for prevention, diagnosis or treatment to support improved health outcomes ([2023 Clinical Trials Activity Grant Opportunity](#)).
- Health technology is a broad term meaning something that is intended to do any of the following: prevent, diagnose or treat medical conditions; promote health; provide rehabilitation; or organise delivery of health care. Health technologies include: tests, medical devices, medicines, vaccines, blood products, procedures, programs or systems involved in health care.
- Health practice is a clinician’s use of skills and knowledge in any way that affects the safe, effective delivery of health services.
- Precision medicine is an approach to patient care that uses an understanding of a patient’s disease to tailor interventions or treatments, and includes technologies such as genomics, computing, connectivity and artificial intelligence.
- A health intervention is an act performed for, with or on behalf of a person or population whose purpose is to assess, improve, maintain, promote or modify health, functioning or health conditions ([Compendium of WHO and other UN guidance on health and environment](#)).



- The research community is individual researchers and academics, universities, medical research institutes, hospitals, and other medical research organisations and businesses undertaking and supporting medical research in Australia, including the medical technology and pharmaceutical sector.
- Translational research is the process of applying ideas, insights and discoveries generated through scientific inquiry to the treatment or prevention of human disease. Transfer of knowledge can include changes to practice, policy or further research.
- Health professionals are people who operate within any branch of health care, including the medicine, surgery, dentistry, midwifery, pharmacy, psychology, nursing or allied health profession.
- Community refers to the general public, including patients, consumers and carers.
- Commercialisation is the process of bringing new products or services to market. For MRFF, this is anticipated to include the development of diagnostics, therapeutics, devices, digital health technologies and other products or services that may ultimately benefit patients.

## Research impact and performance indicators

Impact is an important component of research evaluation. Research impact can be defined as the effect of the research after it has been adopted, adapted for use, or used to inform further research<sup>3</sup>. Impact is an important component of research evaluation. However, measuring impact is difficult<sup>4</sup> and comes with multiple challenges, including in gathering evidence that links research with impact<sup>5</sup>, attributing impact<sup>6</sup> and the time taken for research to translate to policy and practice.<sup>7</sup>

The department has published a set of [MRFF performance indicators \(Appendix C\)](#), to assist in understanding the MRFF's impact. The performance indicators are a set of quantifiable metrics that primarily capture the outputs and outcomes from MRFF-funded projects, to provide evidence on how well research funded by the MRFF is tracking in relation to its outcomes (the measures of success) and subsequently its five impact measures ([Appendix D](#)). This is distinct and complementary to evaluating how effective the MRFF performs as a grant program ([Appendix E](#)).

The performance indicators will facilitate continuous improvement of the MRFF and agility in capturing outputs, outcomes, and evidence of research impact.

<sup>3</sup> NHMRC, Research Impact Position Statement, <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/research-policy/research-translation-and-impact/research-impact>

<sup>4</sup> Ozanne, J.I., et al. 2016. *Assessing the Societal Impact of Research: The Relational Engagement Approach*. Journal of Public Policy and Marketing 36(1), p1-14. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/74404568.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Penfield, T., Baker, M.J., Scoble, R., Wykes, M.C., 2013. *Assessment, evaluations, and definitions of research impact: A review*, Research Evaluation 23(1), p1-12.

<sup>6</sup> Penfield, T., Baker, M.J., Scoble, R., Wykes, M.C., 2013. *Assessment, evaluations, and definitions of research impact: A review*, Research Evaluation 23(1), p1-12.

<sup>7</sup> Morris, Z.S., Woodling, S., Grant, J. 2011 *The answer is 17 years, what is the question: understanding time lags in translational research* J. R. Soc. Med., 104, p510-520



**Table 1:** Defining measures of success and their contribution to the 5 impact measures

Note: Major contributors to impact measures are indicated by dark cells, minor contributors by light cells

Measure of success	This measure considers the extent to which outcomes of MRFF funded research:	IMPACT MEASURE				
		Better health outcomes	Beneficial change to health policy and practice	Increased health efficiency	Economic growth	Increased job and export potential
Increased focus of research on areas of unmet need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifies areas of unmet need and facilitates more research into these areas</li> <li>leads to new health treatments, drugs, interventions, devices and diagnostics</li> <li>embeds such approaches into clinical practice</li> </ul>					
More Australians access clinical trials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creates better opportunities for Australians to access clinical trials by funding activities that support research to progress to the clinical trial stage, and directly supporting additional clinical trial activity</li> <li>builds Australia’s clinical trial capability and leadership at the national and international level</li> </ul>					
New health technologies are embedded in health policy and practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifies or validates new health technologies, including precision medicine</li> <li>measures the awareness of new health technologies among clinicians and patients</li> <li>embeds new health technologies into health policy and clinical practice</li> </ul>					
New health interventions are embedded in health policy and practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifies or validates new health interventions</li> <li>measures the awareness of new health interventions among clinicians and patients</li> <li>embeds new health interventions into health policy and clinical practice</li> </ul>					
Research community has greater capacity and capability to undertake translational research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increases researcher capacity</li> <li>improves awareness of translational research within the research community</li> <li>supports capability development to undertake translational research</li> </ul>					
Health professionals adopt best practices faster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifies or establishes best practices</li> <li>assesses the speed at which best practices are communicated to clinicians and health service administrators</li> <li>identifies how best practices are understood and adopted</li> </ul>					
The community engages with and adopts new technologies, treatments and interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>involves the community in prioritising, designing and conducting research</li> <li>promotes community awareness of new technologies, treatments and interventions, and their benefits</li> <li>promotes community support for new technologies, treatments and interventions</li> </ul>					
Increased commercialisation of health research outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifies research or products that are viable for commercialisation and lead to creating new Australian companies or expanding existing companies</li> <li>leads to new commercially available treatments or products for the benefit of Australian patients</li> </ul>					



## Reporting and monitoring

### Financial and administrative data

Existing MRFF financial and administrative reporting includes:

- department Portfolio Budget Statements (annual)
- department annual reports
- GrantConnect
- Financial Assistance to Support the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities (biennial report to Parliament)
- grant agreements
  - annual reports with financial administrative information
  - end-of-project reports with financial and administrative information
- department's administered reporting information by program, which provides visibility of the administered funds and brings together financial information from a number of other systems, including the
  - Australian Government Department of Social Services Community Grants Hub
  - Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources Business Grants Hub
  - Government Estimates Update System
  - NHMRC Research Grants Management System.

### Performance monitoring data

Existing MRFF performance monitoring and reporting data sources include:

- grantee progress and final reports
- performance indicators survey data (e.g., research outcomes, translation and impact, consumer involvement, collaboration)
- applications data (e.g., CI gender, career stage, application numbers, success rates)
- stakeholder consultations (undertaken as part of evaluation activities, including engagement with grantees)
- feedback from Grant Assessment Committees (GACs).

This data informs performance reporting as outlined in Tables 2 and 3.



## Approach for monitoring and evaluating the MRFF

A multicomponent, mixed-methods approach is employed for monitoring and evaluating the MRFF, based on the program structure. Table 2 outlines the evaluation activities involved.

As part of assessing the MRFF initiatives, the department considers the contribution of key drivers, or enablers, that support achieving the measures of success outlined in Table 1, including:

- collaboration
- communications
- data and infrastructure
- program or project governance
- partnerships and engagement
- public and private co-funding.

Assessment of the contribution of the above enablers to success are embedded within monitoring, evaluation and learning activities.



**Table 2** MRFF monitoring, evaluation and learning activities

Program level	Activity	Goal	Output	Frequency
Grant agreement <sup>a</sup>	Monitor progress against deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>annually</li> <li>at the end of project</li> <li>beyond the end of project<sup>b</sup></li> </ul>	Support MRFF monitoring, evaluation and learning activities and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assure that projects meet their intended objectives and milestones</li> <li>oversee issues and risks as they arise, including opportunities for early intervention</li> <li>provide information to support improvements in grant design (eg understanding key features of successful projects)</li> </ul>	Grant assessment	Annually
Grant opportunity <sup>c</sup>	Monitor/review grant opportunities	Support MRFF monitoring, evaluation and learning activities and provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clear guidance on the intended objectives of the grant being offered and how grant recipients will demonstrate progress against those objectives</li> <li>assurance that grant opportunities meet their intended objectives and outcomes as specified in the guidelines</li> <li>a way to enable continuous improvement to support the design of future opportunities</li> </ul>	Grant opportunity review, evaluation report if required	Monitored/reviewed annually. Evaluation undertaken when required to support ongoing program delivery.
Initiative	Mission review	Assess progress towards the mission’s 10-year vision and priorities, and re-align approaches as required	Report	Review/evaluate at mid-point; evaluate towards end of mission.
	Non-mission initiative evaluation	Assess progress, outputs and outcomes against long-term objectives, international best practice and/or emerging trends or priorities	Report	Monitored/reviewed annually. Evaluation undertaken when required to support ongoing program delivery.
Theme	Thematic reports	Assess the MRFF’s impact on patients, researchers, missions and translation	Report	Monitored/reviewed annually. Evaluation undertaken when required to support ongoing program delivery.
MRFF	Internally review MRFF administrative and grants management processes	Process review of financial management and grant administration to ensure efficiency and effectiveness	Report	Annually
	Impact evaluation against the 8 measures of success	Assess broader program performance against the MRFF’s measures of success	Report	Every 5 years from 2025
	Report on financial assistance towards MRFF Priorities	Report on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MRFF policies, performance and assurance activities</li> </ul>	Report	Every two years, linked to duration of Priorities.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how MRFF financial assistance was consistent with the Priorities</li> <li>• the processes for determining grants of financial assistance</li> <li>• other Australian Government financial support for medical research, innovation and development</li> <li>• funded rates of MRFF grant opportunities.</li> </ul>		
Report on special priority and emerging topics	Provide funding statistics and impact data on priority and emerging topics	Report	As required
Regular reporting	Provide funding statistics and data on applications and funded grants across MRFF	Publicly available data	Ongoing

- a A grant agreement sets out the relationship (eg financial, milestones) between the department and a funded organisation, and specifies the details of the grant.
- b The department will engage with grant recipients to undertake these retrospective evaluations.
- c A grant opportunity is the specific round or process through which grant agreements are offered. Single or multiple agreements can arise from 1 grant opportunity.



**Table 3** Completed MRFF monitoring, evaluation and learning activities, including published reports

Program level	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Initiative	<a href="#">Evaluation of the Rapid Applied Research Translation Initiative</a>  <a href="#">Medical Research Commercialisation landscape review</a>	<a href="#">Evaluation of the Clinical Trials Activity Initiative</a>	<a href="#">Review of the Million Minds Mental Health Research Mission</a>	<a href="#">Review of the Australian Brain Cancer Mission</a>	<a href="#">Review of the Genomics Health Futures Mission</a>  <a href="#">Review of the Cardiovascular Health Mission</a>	TBD
Theme	-	-	-	-	-	TBD
MRFF	<a href="#">Financial Assistance to Support the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2016–2018</a>	<a href="#">Financial Assistance to Support the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2018–2020</a>	<a href="#">Gender data report 2022</a>	<a href="#">Financial assistance to support the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2020–2022</a>  <a href="#">Report on the Coronavirus Research Response</a>  <a href="#">Report on funding for rural, regional and remote health research</a>  <a href="#">Gender data report 2023</a>	<a href="#">Data about the 2021 Early to Mid-Career Researchers Grant Opportunity Outcomes</a>  <a href="#">Gender data report 2024</a>	<a href="#">Financial assistance to support the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2022–2024</a>  <a href="#">Gender data report 2025</a>

– = not applicable; TBD = to be determined

Reports can be found on the MRFF website: <https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/medical-research-future-fund/mrff-resources/mrff-reports>



## Appendix A Initiatives and their goals

Theme	Initiative	Goal
Patients	Emerging Priorities and Consumer-Driven Research	To support research that improves patient care and translation of new discoveries, and encourage collaboration between consumers and researchers
	Clinical Trials Activity	To increase clinical trial activity in Australia, help patients' access clinical trials, and enable researchers to bring international trials to Australian patients
	Global Health	To develop knowledge and tools to fight threats to Australia's national health security from the regional and global challenges of antimicrobial resistance and drug-resistant tuberculosis
Researchers	Frontier Health and Medical Research	To create opportunities for researchers to explore bold and innovative ideas, and make discoveries of great potential and to support the translation and commercialisation of these discoveries to achieve global impact
	Clinician Researchers	To help the next generation of talented Australian health professionals drive research questions, make new discoveries and ensure implementation of best practice care for their patients
	Early to Mid-Career Researchers	To build and grow research capacity and capability in Australia by supporting EMCRs to continue their health and medical research careers.
Research missions	Australian Brain Cancer Mission	To double the survival rates and improve the quality of life of patients with brain cancer over the 10 years to 2027, with the longer term aim of defeating brain cancer
	Million Minds Mental Health Research Mission	To help an extra one million people be part of new approaches to mental health prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment and recovery
	Genomics Health Futures Mission	To save or transform the lives of more than 200,000 Australians through genomic research to deliver better testing, diagnosis and treatment
	Dementia, Ageing, and Aged Care Mission	To improve quality of life for Australians as they age



## Appendix A continued

Theme	Initiative	Goal
Research missions (continued)	Indigenous Health Research Fund	To improve the health of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous-led research practice and governance</li> <li>• knowledge translation</li> <li>• evidence-based structural change in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health practice</li> <li>• building on the unique knowledge, strengths and endurance of our communities, with particular reference to Country, culture and spirituality</li> </ul>
	Stem Cell Therapies Mission	To support world-leading translational stem cell research that develops and delivers innovative, safe and effective stem cell medicines to improve health outcomes, in partnership with patients and carers
	Cardiovascular Health Mission	To make transformative improvements in cardiovascular health and stroke management for all Australians
	Traumatic Brain Injury Mission	To better predict recovery outcomes after a traumatic brain injury, identify the most effective care and treatments, and reduce barriers to support people to live their best possible life after traumatic brain injury
Research translation	Preventative and Public Health Research	To support targeted research on new ways to address risk factors for chronic and complex diseases in Australia
	Primary Health Care Research	To increase Australia's evidence base in primary health care through research to improve service delivery and patient outcomes, and translate this knowledge into action
	Rapid Applied Research Translation	To support transformative translational research, so patients can benefit from better quality of care.
	Medical Research Commercialisation	To support early-stage health and medical research and innovation in Australia through to proof-of-concept and beyond, providing opportunities for commercialisation
	National Critical Research Infrastructure	To establish and extend infrastructure of critical importance that will be used to conduct world-class health and medical research
	Research Data Infrastructure	To establish and extend research data infrastructure to support world-class health and medical research



## Appendix B How initiatives contribute to the measures of success

Theme	Initiative	Measure of success							
		Increased focus of research on areas of unmet need	More Australians access clinical trials	New health technologies are embedded in health policy and practice	New health interventions are embedded in health policy and practice	Research community has greater capacity and capability to undertake translational research	Health professionals adopt best practices faster	Community engages with and adopts new technologies, treatments and interventions	Increased commercialisation of health research outcomes
Patients	Emerging Priorities and Consumer-Driven Research	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term
	Clinical Trials Activity	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term	Long term	Long term	Long term
	Global Health	Short term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term	Long term
Researchers	Frontier Health and Medical Research	Short term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term	Short term	Short term
	Clinical Researchers	Long term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term	Long term	Long term
	Early to Mid-Career Researchers	Long term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term	Long term	Long term

*continued*



Appendix B continued

Theme	Initiative	Measure of success							
		Increased focus of research on areas of unmet need	More Australians access clinical trials	New health technologies are embedded in health policy and practice	New health interventions are embedded in health policy and practice	Research community has greater capacity and capability to undertake translational research	Health professionals adopt best practices faster	Community engages with and adopts new technologies, treatments and interventions	Increased commercialisation of health research outcomes
Research Missions	Australian Brain Cancer Mission	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Long term
	Million Minds Mental Health Research Mission	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term
	Genomics Health Futures Mission	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term
	Dementia, Ageing, and Aged Care Mission	Short term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term
	Indigenous Health Research Fund	Short term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term
	Stem Cell Therapies Mission	Long term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term
	Cardiovascular Health Mission	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term
	Traumatic Brain Injury Mission	Short term	Short term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term

continued



Appendix B continued

Theme	Initiative	Measure of success							
		Increased focus of research on areas of unmet need	More Australians access clinical trials	New health technologies are embedded in health policy and practice	New health interventions are embedded in health policy and practice	Research community has greater capacity and capability to undertake translational research	Health professionals adopt best practices faster	Community engages with and adopts new technologies, treatments and interventions	Increased commercialisation of health research outcomes
Research translation	Preventive and Public Health Research	Long term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term
	Primary Health Care Research	Long term	Long term	Long term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term
	Rapid Applied Research Translation	Long term	Long term	Long term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term
	Medical Research Commercialisation	Long term	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term	Long term	Short term
	National Critical Research Infrastructure	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term
	Research Data Infrastructure	Long term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Short term	Long term	Long term	Long term

Note: This table shows the how short- and long-term investment and efforts will be prioritised towards the Medical Research Future Fund’s key measures of success for each initiative. Individual grants may not be able to deliver on every measure of success.



## Appendix C MRFF performance indicators and their measurable outputs

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	RATIONALE	MEASURABLE OUTPUTS
<b>Projects targeting priority populations</b>	To capture how much of MRFF-funded research is prioritising populations where current interventions or technologies may not be suitable or accessible, or where those populations may be under-represented for other reasons	<p>Number, value and proportion of projects on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health</li> <li>• older people experiencing diseases of ageing</li> <li>• people with rare or currently untreatable diseases/conditions</li> <li>• people in remote/rural communities</li> <li>• people with a disability (including people with intellectual disability)</li> <li>• individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse communities</li> <li>• LGBTIQ+ people</li> <li>• youth</li> </ul>
<b>Projects targeting emerging issues</b>	To capture how much of MRFF-funded research is addressing unmet need <sup>8</sup> , in terms of new and emerging issues	<p>Number, value and proportion of projects on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID19 or other emerging health challenges</li> <li>• priorities arising from Senate Inquiries, emergencies, and other consumer-led mechanisms</li> </ul>
<b>Projects involving clinical trials</b>	To capture multiple facets relating to clinical trials supported by MRFF funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number, value and proportion of projects by conditions, location</li> <li>• patients recruited (projected vs actual)</li> <li>• number of trials completed</li> <li>• number of trials with published outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Research workforce indicators</b>	To describe the research workforce supported by MRFF funding, in terms of capacity (e.g. is the MRFF supporting more early-to-mid career, diverse, rural/regional/remote researchers), and capability (e.g. increased training, mentorship, collaboration and access to further funding)	<p>Number and type of research staff employed/supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clinicians, allied health professionals, early-to-mid career, students, women, First Nations, rural/remote</li> </ul> <p>Number of projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• involve staff in research translation/knowledge mobilisation training</li> <li>• involve staff in industry exchange programs</li> <li>• involve international collaborators</li> <li>• involve interdisciplinary collaborators</li> <li>• result in new research collaborations/partnerships</li> <li>• have generated new funding (source and amount)</li> </ul>

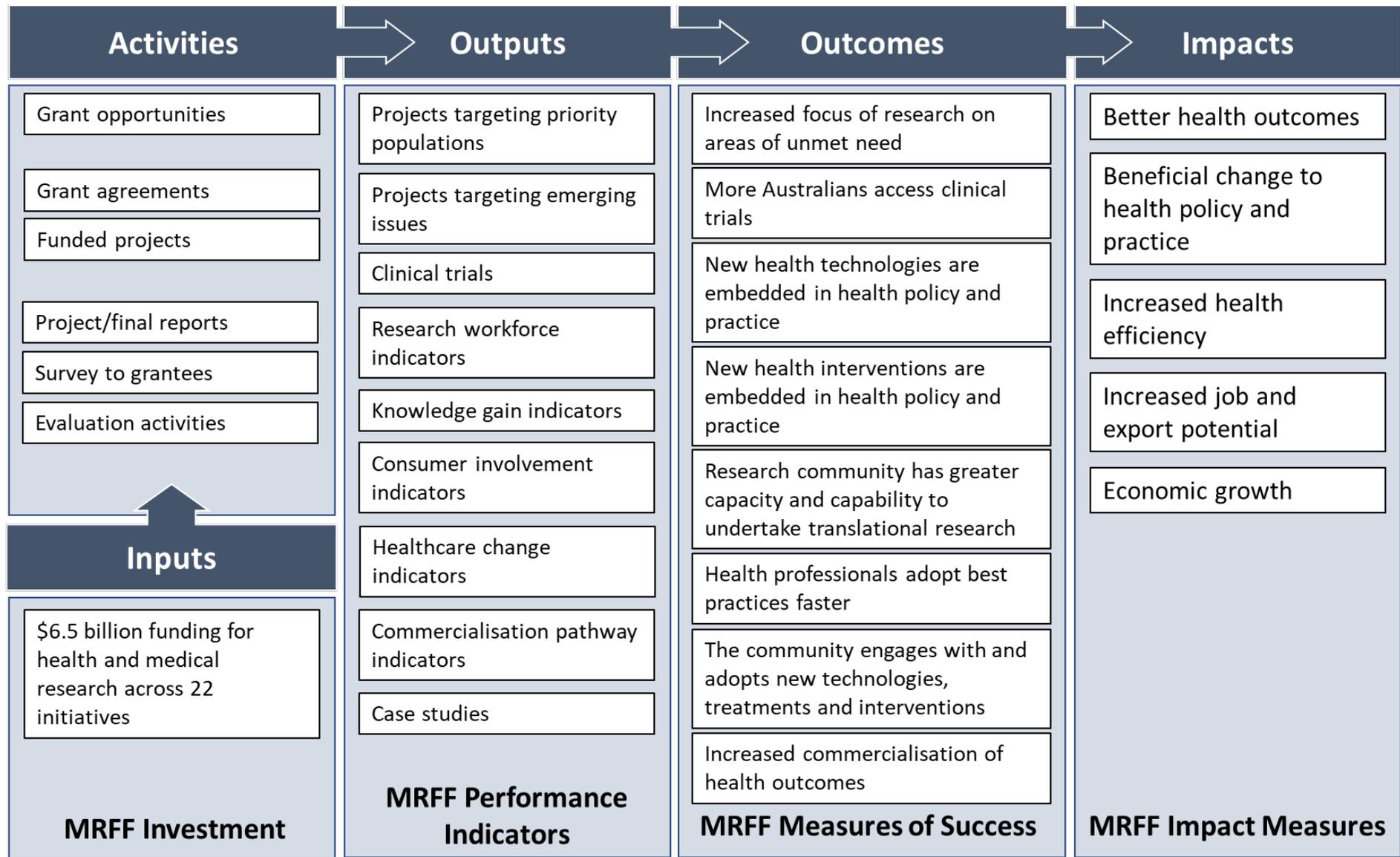
<sup>8</sup> From the 2022 MRFF 2022 National Critical Research Infrastructure Grant Opportunity: “Unmet medical need arises where individuals are living with a serious health condition where there are limited satisfactory options for prevention, diagnosis or treatment to support improved health outcomes.”



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	RATIONALE	MEASURABLE OUTPUTS
<b>Knowledge gain indicators</b>	To capture increased knowledge as a result of MRFF-funded research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number of publications arising out of MRFF supported research</li> <li>• citation impact metrics</li> </ul>
<b>Consumer involvement indicators</b>	To capture the level of involvement of relevant consumers throughout the research pipeline, from priority setting, co-design through to dissemination and translation	<p>Number, value and proportion of projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include consumer organisations as project partners or advisory groups</li> <li>• involve consumers in priority and co-design of study</li> <li>• involve active consumer input in data gathering/analysis</li> <li>• involve active dissemination of results to consumers</li> <li>• deploy strategies to include traditionally underrepresented groups</li> <li>• involve consumers in project governance</li> </ul>
<b>Healthcare change indicators</b>	To capture the outcomes of research, the methods for dissemination, translation and the impacts of research on clinical practice and healthcare systems	<p>Number, value and proportion of projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engage with partners who can change practice (medical colleges, health system managers)</li> <li>• result in TGA/FDA/EMA or PBAC/MSAC application/ approval</li> <li>• are cited in or change protocol/clinical guidelines</li> <li>• result in new treatments</li> <li>• result in withdrawal of ineffective treatments</li> <li>• result in repurposing of current treatments/technologies</li> <li>• result in better access to health interventions or technologies among priority populations</li> </ul>
<b>Commercialisation pathway indicators</b>	To capture the level of progress towards the creation of healthcare products, treatments or interventions	<p>Number, value and proportion of projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include co-funding (financial or in-kind) from industry partners (source and amount)</li> <li>• result in a patent application/approval</li> <li>• result in a product entering Phase 3/4 clinical trials</li> <li>• have led to creation of new start-ups/ companies</li> <li>• result in a product entering the market in Australia or overseas</li> </ul>
<b>Case studies</b>	To capture the richness and complexity in which funded research contribute to impact, that cannot be captured via quantitative means	Stories demonstrating key impacts or highlights how individual projects or groups of projects contribute to one or more measures of success or Impact Measures

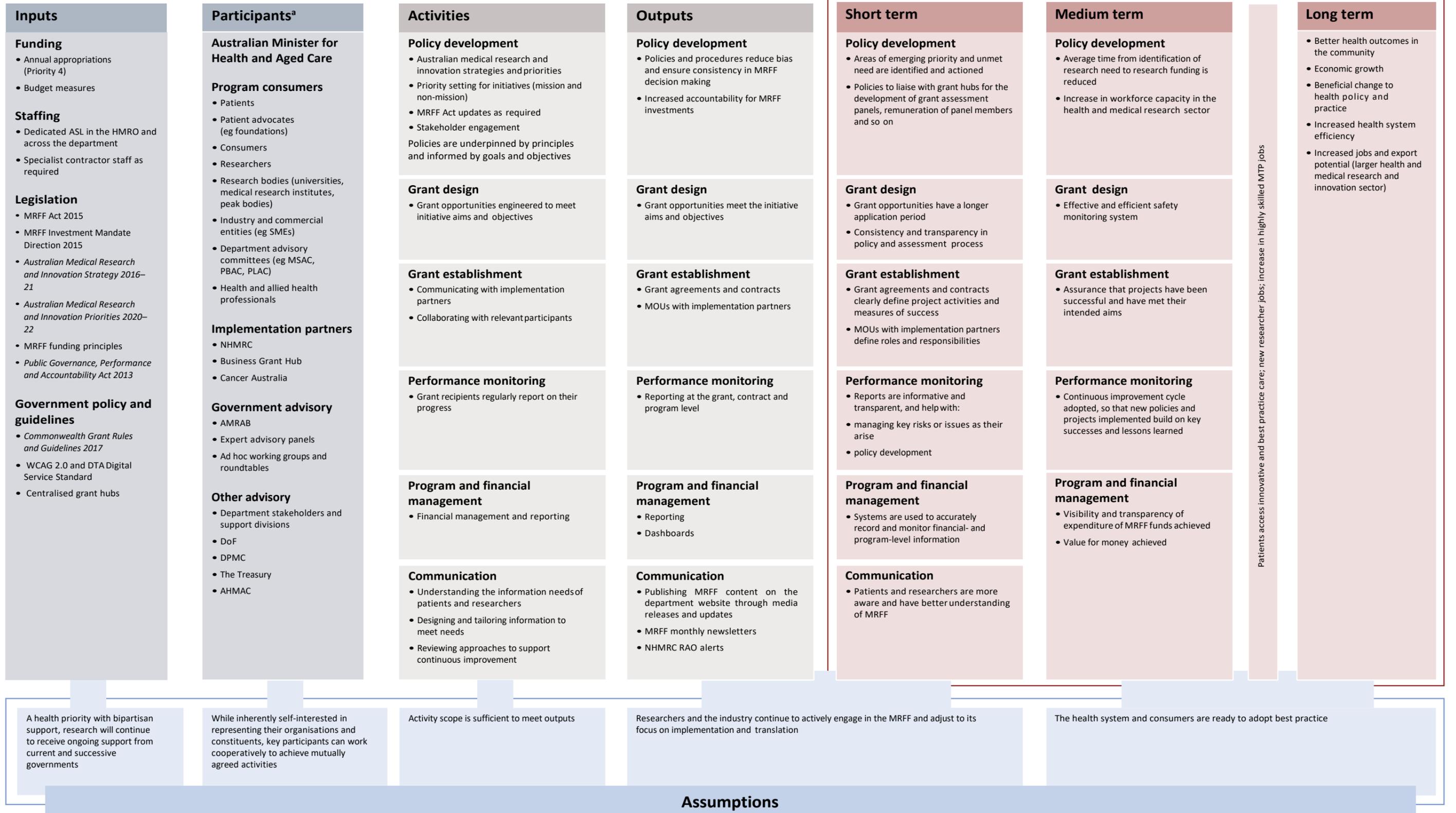


# Appendix D Evaluation of impact of MRFF-funded research



# Appendix E Evaluation of MRFF program performance

**Situation** | Health and medical research and innovation improves health outcomes, creates jobs and drives economic growth. The Australian Government has made available \$6.5 billion over 10 years through the MRFF, which complements funding made available through the NHMRC, Australian Research Council, university block grants, and industry support such as the Research and Development Tax Incentive.



Patients access innovative and best practice care; new researcher jobs; increase in highly skilled MTP jobs

AHMAC = Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council; AMRAB = Australian Medical Research Advisory Board; ASL = average staffing level; DOF = Australian Government Department of Finance; The department = Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care; DTA = Digital Transformation Agency; DPMC = Australian Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; HMRO = Health and Medical Research Office; ITD = Information Technology Division; LAD = Legal and Assurance Division; MOU = memorandum of understanding; MRFF = Medical Research Future Fund; MSAC = Medical Services Advisory Committee; MTP = medical technologies and pharmaceuticals; NHMRC = National Health and Medical Research Council; PAS = Procurement Advisory Service; PBAC = Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee; PCPD = People, Communication and Parliamentary Division; PLAC = Prostheses List Advisory Committee; RAO = research administration officer; SME = small to medium enterprise  
<sup>a</sup> Groupings of key participants are not mutually exclusive



