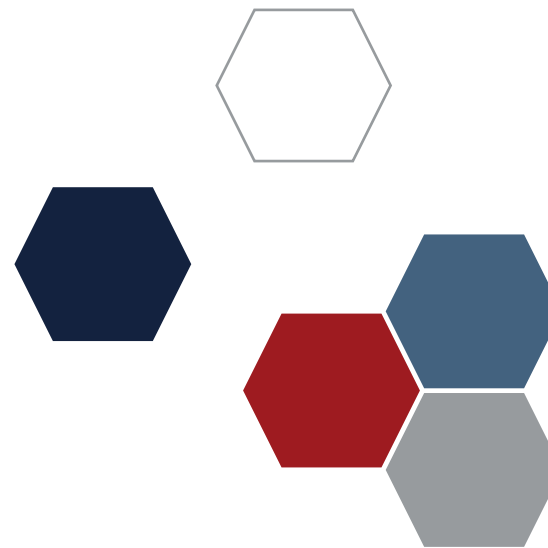




Australian Government

Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing

Medical Research
Future Fund



Medical Research

Future Fund

Reducing Health Inequities Mission
National Consultation on the Roadmap and
Implementation Plan

Webinar

Introduction

- Welcome
- No microphones will be active, only hosts are able to speak
- All questions can be sent via the interactive Q&A input
- One hour has been allocated at the end of the presentation to answer questions
- A copy of this presentation will be made available on the consultation website

Support Services

Beyond Blue

provides information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health, whatever their age and wherever they live.

1300 224 636 beyondblue.org.au

Lifeline

provides 24-hour crisis counselling, support groups and suicide prevention services

13 11 14 lifeline.org.au

13 YARN

provides 24/7 free and confidential crisis support

13 92 76 www.13yarn.org.au

1800RESPECT

provides 24/7 support for people impacted by domestic or family violence.

1800 737 732 1800respect.org.au

The National Relay Service

Provides 24/7 free and confidential help when calling a mental health helpline.

0423 677 767 rschat.nrscall.gov.au

QLife

provides nationwide telephone and web-based services for peer support and referral for people wanting to talk about a range of issues including sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings or relationships.

1800 184 527 qlife.org.au

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Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Background

- Established in 2015, the \$25.4 billion MRFF is a long-term sustainable source of research funding
- The MRFF aims to transform health and medical research and innovation to improve lives, build the economy and contribute to health system sustainability.
- Complementary Government funding of health and medical research in Australia:
 - **MRFF** – awards funding for national priority areas that address gaps in research and creates opportunities for research translation and commercialisation to improve health and wellbeing of Australians
 - **NHMRC** – awards funding through a range of investigator-linked initiated schemes to build capacity and advance health and medical knowledge

MRFF 10-year Investment Plan

- The \$6.5 billion MRFF 10-year Investment Plan (2024-25 to 2033-34) provides funding for 22 initiatives to support lifesaving research, create jobs, strengthen the local industry base for commercialising research and innovation, and further grow Australia’s reputation as a world leader in medical research
- The plan is underpinned by four key themes – patients, research missions, researchers and research translation

 Patients	This theme aims to bring benefits to patients, including supporting life-changing clinical trials, funding innovative treatments and advanced health care and medical technologies
 Research Missions	MRFF Research Missions (Missions) are large programs of work that bring together key researchers, health professionals, stakeholders, industry partners and patients to tackle big health challenges
 Researchers	This theme aims to support Australian researchers, including to help build their skills and capacity, support their research in priority areas and assist them to develop and bring new research discoveries to the market
 Research Translation	This theme aims to translate research outcomes into practice by building the evidence base to support the adoption of best practice care in to health care delivery

MRFF Missions

- focus on an area of unmet need or a technology with transformational potential (priority led)
- are planned and coordinated 10-year programs of work (strategic, Roadmap, Implementation Plan)
- bring together key researchers, health professionals, stakeholders, industry partners and patients (outcome focused)
- harness resources across the system (investment, leadership and collaboration)
- use innovative research approaches (new grant models)



Purpose of consultation

- **Focus:** Reducing Health Inequities Mission design (Roadmap and Implementation Plan)
- **Questions:**
 - Are the priority areas for investment identified in the Implementation Plan the most effective way for delivering on the Reducing Health Inequities Mission's goal and aims?
 - Are there existing research activities which could be utilised to contribute to the Reducing Health Inequities Mission Roadmap and Implementation Plan aims and priority areas for investment? How can these be leveraged?
 - Are the 'Evaluation approach and measures' appropriate for assessing and monitoring progress towards the Reducing Health Inequities Mission's goal and aims?

Health Inequities in Australia

- Some population groups in Australia are experiencing greater health challenges than the population average.
- Australia has a diverse population, and everyone should be able to attain their full potential for health and wellbeing.

Reducing Health Inequities Mission

- Forms part of the MRFF 10-year Investment Plan
- \$150 million from 2027-28 to 33-34 and beyond
- The Mission will open its first grant opportunity in 2027
 - Advice for grant opportunities will be provided by the Mission’s Expert Advisory Panel following the development of the Mission’s first Roadmap and Implementation Plan

Reducing Health Inequities Mission funding:

2027-28 (\$m)	2028-29 (\$m)	2029-30 (\$m)	2030-31 (\$m)	2031-32 (\$m)	2032-33 (\$m)	2033-34 (\$m)	2034-35 (\$m)	2035-36 (\$m)	2036-37 (\$m)	Total (\$m)
14.4	11.9	11.9	11.9	11.9	17.6	17.6	To be advised			150.0

Expert Advisory Panel

- provides the Minister for Health and Ageing with advice on the strategic priorities for research investment through the mission by defining:
 - evidence and knowledge gaps requiring research funding to assist in transforming health care and outcomes for individuals and communities
 - key research questions that, if answered, will deliver meaningful change to patients through the translation of research
- appointed in February 2026 (the Mission's first Expert Advisory Panel)
- ensures the priority-setting approach aligns with the approach used by the other MRFF missions.

Expert Advisory Panel membership

Professor James Smith (Chair)

Matthew Flinders Professor (Health and Social Equity) with more than 20 years' experience as an applied social health researcher, focusing on rural and remote health and improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and education outcomes.

Ms Nicky Bath

Chief Executive Officer, LGBTIQ+ Health Australia. Formerly: Associate Director, LGBTI Health Programming and Development at ACON, Manager of the Harm Reduction and Viral Hepatitis Branch at the NSW Ministry of Health, Several senior positions in state and national drug user organisations including CEO of the NSW Users and AIDS Association.

Mr Adam Heterick

A Wiradjuri man and Australia's first Indigenous bioinformatician. Focusing on helping First Nations communities develop ethical, culturally informed ways to govern and use genomic data.

Professor Stuart Kinner

Professor of Health Equity, School of Population Health, Curtin University and has produced over 250 publications on the health of marginalised and justice-involved people

Professor Leigh Kinsman

Chair of Rural Health Research, La Trobe University and a nurse academic specialising in reducing the gap in health outcomes between rural and metropolitan Australians.

Ms Mary Sayers

Chief Executive Officer, National Disability Research Partnership and has personal and family experience of disability.

Dr Jenny Welsh

Mid-Career Researcher who specialises in community-based population health research to address health inequities and a Fellow and epidemiologist, National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University.

Professor Suzanne Crengle

A senior Māori health researcher with a focus on health inequities, health services research and quality of care, and youth health. Professor and Director of Ngāi Tahu Māori Health Unit, University of Otago.

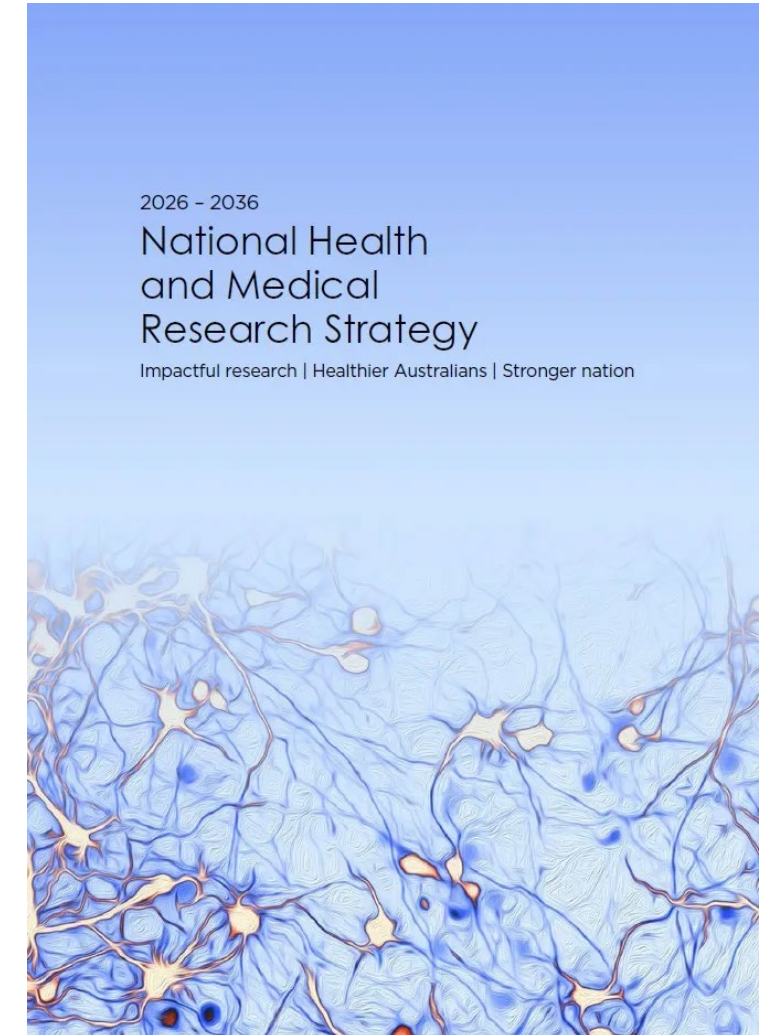
Professor Louise Maple-Brown (AMRAB representative)

A Senior Endocrinologist at Royal Darwin Hospital, Honorary Fellow at Menzies School of Health Research and 20 years' leadership experience in Aboriginal health on Larrakia country, Darwin, Northern Territory.

Alignment with the National Health and Medical Research Strategy

Expert Advisory Panel ensured the Roadmap and Implementation Plan aligns with, and refers to, the principles in the National Health and Medical Research Strategy:

- ensure all Australians benefit from health and medical research by producing better health outcomes for the community
- optimise existing money in health and medical research, encourage greater coordination and partnerships across the sector and improve efficiency and effectiveness of research efforts
- foster a strong research workforce and create the attractive investment environment necessary for a sustainable research pipeline from discovery and innovation to translation and commercialisation
- help build a sustainable research pipeline from discovery and innovation to translation and commercialisation
- cover the entire sector and include all levels of government, industry, philanthropy, academia and consumers.



Roadmap – Goal and Purpose

Goal

The Goal of the RHIM is to reduce health inequities in Australia by generating and translating evidence that improves population health, strengthens communities, enhances productivity and participation, and co-creates scalable, sustainable, effective and inclusive health and social structures and systems.

Purpose

The purpose of the RHIM is to drive transformative health and medical research that strengthens systems, informs policy and practice, and enables everyone in Australia regardless of circumstances, to achieve equitable health and wellbeing outcomes.



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Roadmap
Reducing Health Inequities Mission

The Reducing Health Inequities Mission is investing \$150 million over ten years from 2027-28 into research to address inequities in health outcomes by improving access to quality health services by priority populations.

Rationale:

Health inequities are increasing globally and are shaped by social and structural determinants of health including access to resources (including quality healthcare), and broader social, environmental and economic conditions. These factors contribute to preventable illness and premature death, reduced quality of life, and lower levels of trust in health systems. In this context, the ways in which healthcare is organised, accessed and delivered contribute to differences in health outcomes between individuals and communities. At a population level, health inequities are linked to higher health and social costs, and impact adversely on productivity and overall economic performance. While health inequity exists along a continuum, some 'priority populations'¹ – notably Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples - experience additional contributing factors related to colonisation and racism that amplify poorer outcomes. Stigma, social, political and policy environments also influence how some populations are recognised, supported and resourced.

In Australia, reducing health inequities aligns with commitments to human rights, addressing systemic and individually mediated discrimination, and supporting national prosperity and productivity. Progress in this area can be complex, as many of the contributing factors are interconnected and multifaceted, often described as 'wicked problems' that benefit from coordinated, cross-sector and whole-of-government approaches.

¹ RHIM adopts AMRAB's definition of 'priority populations'. Evidence-based rationales for additional priority populations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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Roadmap – Scope

Scope

The RHIM will invest in translational health and medical research and related activities that:

- identify key modifiable mechanisms that reduce health inequities in access to, and quality of, health services for people and communities experiencing inequity across Australia
- support translation of research into actionable and scalable interventions and policy reforms to reduce these health inequities
- accelerate implementation of successful health and medical research interventions and approaches that improve health and wellbeing, and access to quality health care for priority populations
- address cross-cutting factors that contribute to health inequities and identify where targeted approaches may be effective
- close the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, and improve health outcomes for people experiencing structural disadvantage and/or marginalisation, to improve health equity across Australia
- promote co-designed, community-driven and multidisciplinary approaches to translational research addressing health inequity that include the perspectives of those most impacted by health inequities
- generate diverse forms of evidence that can inform changes to policy, practice and systems by including a focus on implementation, process and impact evaluation, sustainability, and scalability.

Implementation Plan - Enablers

Enablers

- Improving data capture within Australian research funding systems to better inform targeted calls for health inequities research
- Funders of health equity research should consider how their policies may advantage or disadvantage priority groups, including justice-involved people



Roadmap and Implementation Plan – Priority areas for investment

1. Reduce health inequities in Australia by:

- Developing strategies to strengthen and/or reorientate health systems and structures to reduce health inequities
- Leveraging cross-sectoral partnerships to advance the development and implementation of approaches consistent with Health-in-All-Policies (HiAP)
- Comprehensively documenting and monitoring the drivers, and protective factors that promote health equity in Australia
- Understanding and addressing the cumulative and intersectional impacts of health inequities
- Empowering people with relevant lived-experience to co-design and co-produce health promotion, prevention, and health system research that reflects the diverse experiences of priority populations and address the social, cultural, economic, structural, political, and commercial determinants of health

2. Develop and strengthen the health research workforce with skills, knowledge and experiences to lead research focused on reducing health inequities by:

- Creating an inclusive national health equity research network that brings together health and medical researchers across all career stages, peak bodies, collaborating organisations, peer and lived-experience sector from within and beyond the health sector, both nationally and globally, to build and strengthen health equity research and impact in Australia
- Strengthening research translation to ensure emerging health inequities research is accessible, understood and applied by end-users
- Building a diverse workforce of health equity researchers who bring relevant lived-experience to their work, and a research culture that centrally positions people with relevant lived-experience

Roadmap and Implementation Plan – Priority Populations

- The RHIM adopts AMRAB’s definition of ‘priority populations’
- Evidence-based rationales for additional priority populations will be considered on a case-by-case basis

Priority Populations include:

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- people in remote/rural communities
- people with a disability (including people with intellectual disability)
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities (including people who are immigrants or refugees)
- LGBTIQ+ people
- children and youth
- older people experiencing diseases of ageing (e.g. cognitive decline and dementia)
- people with rare or currently untreatable diseases/conditions



Roadmap and Implementation Plan Consultation

- The Roadmap and Implementation Plan will undergo a public consultation and international review
 - The purpose of this public consultation is to seek feedback from the community on the draft Roadmap and Implementation Plan
 - The public consultation will be open for five weeks
 - The international review panel will comprise of experts who provided advice in the context of relevant activities occurring internationally, which can inform the strategic direction of the Roadmap and Implementation Plan
- The Minister for Health and Ageing is interested in your comments on the Roadmap and Implementation Plan, which will guide future investments

Consultation – open discussion

- One hour allocated
- Please type questions in the Q&A box provided on the screen
- Questions and feedback will be collated for the presenters to note or discuss
- All submissions can be made through the Consultation Hub on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website (consultations.health.gov.au)
- **Reminder - online submissions close 25 September 2026**

Consultation questions

- Are the priority areas for investment identified in the Implementation Plan the most effective way for delivering on the Mission's goal and aims?
- Are there existing research activities which could be utilised to contribute to the Mission's Roadmap and/or Implementation Plan aims and priority areas for investment? How can these be leveraged?
- Are the 'Evaluation approach and measures' appropriate for assessing and monitoring progress towards the Mission's goal and aims?

Thank you

More information:

<https://consultations.health.gov.au/health-economics-and-research-division/medical-research-future-fund-rhim>



Interested in accessing MRFF grants:

Register with **GRANTCONNECT** (www.grants.gov.au)