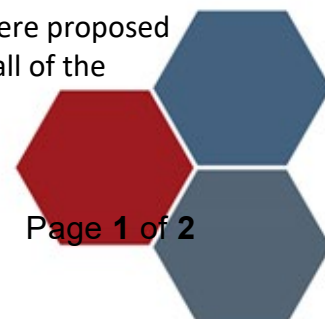
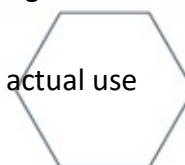


AMRAB MRFF Mission meeting communique

On 12 March 2020, the Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP attended a joint meeting in Melbourne between members of the Australian Medical Research Advisory Board (AMRAB) and the Chairs from each expert panels providing advice to MRFF Missions. Officers from the Health and Medical Research Office (HMRO) in the Department of Health also participated.

At the meeting:

- 1) AMRAB received progress updates from the Chairs of the eight MRFF Missions. They noted the positive progress achieved to date, including Roadmap development, the setting of priority areas for research investment, and the resultant opening of grant rounds in late 2019 – early 2020 across almost all Missions.
- 2) Through a facilitated workshop, AMRAB and the Mission Chairs considered options to optimise the effectiveness of the Missions in meeting their objectives, including:
 - a. Opportunities to collaborate across Missions to drive innovation and ensure research is translatable, including for vulnerable populations
 - b. Mechanisms to leverage enablers across the Missions, including infrastructure and partnerships with philanthropic organisations
 - c. Exploring fit for purpose grant models to accelerate the development of new ideas and ensure research funding is appropriately targeted to address Mission goals and objectives.
- 3) When in attendance, the Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, was provided with an update on plans for implementing each Mission and the expected impact of the Mission in terms of improved patient outcomes. The Minister congratulated the Chairs of the Missions on their progress thus far, particularly the:
 - a. Leadership being provided by the expert advisory panels, through their advice on priorities and implementation approaches
 - b. Importance of maintaining key areas of focus to concentrate investments and ensure real and measurable outcomes
 - c. Ongoing objective of achieving transformative, transparent and strategic change through leadership, innovation and collaboration.
 - d. Importance of a peer reviewed process for evaluating proposed and actual use of funding towards the defined Mission objectives.
- 4) AMRAB noted the ongoing need to appropriately manage conflicts of interest in all groups providing advice to support implementation of the Medical Research Future Fund, to ensure the integrity of the process. There was agreement that where proposed Mission programs of research would likely involve participation of most or all of the



Mission expert advisory panel, peer review of the program from external (international) reviewers with expertise in the Mission area would be expected.

- 5) AMRAB noted next steps includes finalising roadmaps and implementation plans for all Missions, which it considered would facilitate greater certainty for researchers and allow for longer lead times for grant rounds through:
- a. Clarifying the strategic objective of each Mission in terms of the expected benefit to Australian patients and guiding the investment priorities to achieve the objective, through defining research questions and outcomes for short, medium and long term investment.
 - b. Identifying opportunities for leveraging additional investment through philanthropy and other sectors, to support achievement of the Mission's outcomes.
 - c. Specifying the activities required to support the Mission's outcomes, and facilitate their longer term implementation, including community and industry engagement.
 - d. Acknowledging that while the purpose of funding for a Mission is not solely to create relevant databases and patient registers, these might nevertheless be a key activity for some of the Missions.
 - e. Consideration of a more goal orientated approach to Mission and Mission funded project evaluation, including external milestone reviews.