



Guaranteeing Medicare and Access to Medicines – Rural, Regional and Remote Clinical Trial Enabling Infrastructure Program

The Australian Government is investing \$125 million to improve the health of Australians in rural, remote and regional areas through access to innovative clinical trials. The Rural, Regional and Remote Clinical Trial Enabling Infrastructure Program removes barriers to participating in clinical trials by:

- improving facilities, equipment and services in rural, regional and remote Australia
- providing patients quicker and easier access to medical treatments, drugs, therapies and devices, through participation in clinical trials
- increasing research capacity, including linkages and enhancements of existing local and national organisations, facilities and workforce, with flow-on effects to broader health services.

The Program will fund these three projects with:

- \$18.6 million to the Border Medical Oncology Research Unit for the *ReViTALISE Project* to bridge the metro-regional trials gap by 2025. This project will, among other things, add the Mildura Base Hospital and Latrobe Regional Hospital as new sites to Regional Trials Network Victoria and introduce seven unique projects across the network resulting in an increased number of trials and improved recruitment.
- \$75.2 million to the Department of Health, Queensland for the *Australian Teletrial Program*. This project will enrol more than 5000 new patients in rural, remote and regional areas in trials. Regional Clinical Trial Coordinating Centres (RCCC) will be established in Queensland, supporting 11 new trial locations, in Western Australia, supporting seven new trial locations, in Victoria, supporting five new trial locations, in Tasmania supporting three new trial locations, and in South Australia and the Northern Territory, supporting eleven new trial locations.

- \$30.6 million to the NSW Ministry of Health for the *Improving access to innovative healthcare in rural, regional and remote NSW and ACT Project*. This project will address clinical trials inequality for 1.8 million people in rural regional and remote NSW.

This grant program, funded under the Medical Research Future Fund, is giving patients access to clinical trials where they live.

Why is this important?

Australians in rural, regional and remote areas face barriers in taking part in clinical trials, including distance, cultural difference, geographical isolation and workforce capacity.

It is through the research done in clinical trials that people gain access to better treatments. This funding will help put our researchers and doctors at the forefront of global research and give more patients more treatment options regardless of where they live.

Who will benefit?

Almost a third of Australians live in rural, regional and remote areas, and these communities have significantly worse health outcomes and shorter life expectancies.

Under this program, people living in rural and remote areas will be able to access clinical trials.

Through this funding, three grants will be funded enabling more clinical trials to be conducted over the next five years.

How much will this cost?

This will cost \$125 million from 2020–21 to 2024–25.