

MEDIA RELEASE

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Health and Medical Research to drive further health gains

Government commitments to health and medical research will drive further gains in public health, provided potential industry barriers are addressed.

“Funding for the National Health and Medical Research Council for 2009-10 will grow to \$703 million, an increase of \$85 million.

“Funding of \$1.5 billion under the Health and Hospitals Fund, and \$430.3 million for research infrastructure and workforce training, will drive discovery and better health services across a wide range of hospitals, research institutes, and universities,” Rebecca James, CEO of Research Australia said today.

The changes to R&D tax have the potential to be a significant help to small companies who spend on eligible R&D but in the current economic environment there has been a dramatic decrease in eligible R&D expenditure as companies try to survive.

The lack of a competitive grants program will be a problem that the R&D concessions may not address.

Research spending by life science juniors fell dramatically in the first quarter of the year, with listed companies in the sector dropping their R&D spending by almost 25%. “We are keen to see this turn around” Ms James said.

“We welcome the government’s commitment to driving improvements in health and the development of Australian excellence in medical research, science and technology. In particular we acknowledge the support of Minister Roxon in promoting an expanded knowledge base to improve health outcomes.” Ms James said.

About Research Australia

Research Australia is a unique national alliance of over 180 member and donor organisations with a common mission to make health and medical research a higher national priority. For more information on Research Australia visit www.researchaustralia.org

For more information please contact: Rebecca James 03 9650 3131

Sydney

The Exchange Centre,
20 Bridge Street, Sydney NSW 2000
Telephone • 61 2 8298 8365 Facsimile • 61 2 9227 0636

Melbourne

Suite 2, Mezzanine
257 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000
Telephone • 61 3 9662 9366 Facsimile • 61 3 9639 4126