

10 July 2015

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee Inquiry into the Medical Research Future Fund Bill 2015 and the Medical Research Future Fund (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2015.

Research Australia is an alliance of 160 members and supporters advocating for health and medical research in Australia. Research Australia's activities are funded by its members, donors and supporters from leading research organisations, academic institutions, philanthropy, community special interest groups, peak industry bodies, biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies, small businesses and corporate Australia. It reflects the views of its diverse membership and represents the interests of the broader community. Each year we undertake public opinion polling on a range of matters relating to health and medical research, and these findings inform our policy development and submissions.

Research Australia's mission is to make health and medical research a higher priority for the nation. We have four goals that support this mission:

- A society that is well informed and values the benefits of health and medical research.
- Greater investment in health and medical research from all sources.
- Ensure Australia captures the benefits of health and medical research.
- Promote Australia's global position in health and medical research.

Research Australia is pleased to make a brief submission to the Inquiry. As a principal member of the MRFF Action Group we fully support and endorse the Action Group's submission.

In relation to the submission made by the MRFF Action Group, we wish to emphasise two aspects of the submission in particular.

We believe it is important the MRFF remain flexible enough to provide financial support for the whole of the virtuous cycle from discovery through to the application of the knowledge to improve healthcare, and through the many manifestations of health and medical research in the future. Research Australia is supportive of the existing definition of medical research in the Medical Research Future Fund Bill. We are also conscious of the potential problems posed by the Bill's definition of 'medical innovation'. These problems are clearly outlined in the MRFF Action Group's submission and Research Australia is supportive of the alternative definition proposed by the MRFF Action Group.

Research Australia is also of the view that it is critical that the consumer voice be included at all levels, from the development of the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy and the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities to the selection of projects. We endorse the MRFF Action Group's call for consumer representation on the Advisory Board; Research Australia submits that this consumer representation is not only desirable but essential.

I would be pleased to provide any further information you may require in relation to this submission. I can be contacted on 02 9295 8547 or via email at elizabeth.foley@researchaustralia.org.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Foley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes.

Elizabeth Foley
CEO & Managing Director