

Call for an Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Medical Research Future Fund Mission

THE MRFF MISSION VISION

An Australia where arthritis and musculoskeletal (AMSK) conditions no longer limit participation, productivity or quality of life.

The impact of AMSK conditions is significant...

AFFECTING OVER
7 MILLION
AUSTRALIANS

13%
OF DISEASE BURDEN

The leading cause of chronic pain and the second leading cause of disability and early retirement due to ill health.

BY 2030, NEARLY
60,000

FORCED OUT OF THE WORKFORCE DUE TO ARTHRITIS

COSTING THE HEALTH SYSTEM OVER
\$16 BILLION
ANNUALLY

We urge the Australian Government to commit to a MRFF Mission with a minimum investment of

\$100 MILLION Over 10 years

The Goal: To build a stronger, integrated, and cost-effective dedicated AMSK research and implementation engine that is consumer-centred, research-driven and service-oriented.

Despite being among the leading causes of disability and early retirement, and representing 13% of disease burden, AMSK conditions attracted only 5% MRFF funding and just 1.6% NHMRC funding in 2023-24.

The current fragmented, underfunded approach drives low value care, leaving unaddressed gaps in prevention, diagnosis and service delivery.

A feasibility and cost-benefit analysis conclusively demonstrated that an MRFF Mission is uniquely positioned to achieve the desired outcomes, offering unparalleled scalability, impact, and economic viability.

Consultations with Consumers, Researchers and Clinicians have identified Six Strategic Pillars vital for a successful Mission, providing a clear framework for a sustainable investment.



Foster collaboration & engagement across the ecosystem



Ensure funding & sustainability



Drive health innovation



Strengthen Australia's workforce and research capacity



Generate high quality research and evidence



Influence system & policy

Return on investment of an Arthritis and MSK Mission

64

RESEARCH AND
CLINICAL JOBS
SUPPORTED
per year



2.2X

POTENTIAL REDUCTION
IN HEALTH SYSTEM +
PRODUCTIVITY BURDEN

\$361M

POTENTIAL NET RETURN
TO AUSTRALIAN
ECONOMY



**EVERY \$1 =
\$4.61
ROI VALUE**

Based on an independent cost benefit analysis of a \$100 Million Mission over 10 years.

RESEARCH STREAMS

Foundational research infrastructure

To unify health data, track outcomes, and drive evidence-based improvements in care

Equitable access to evidence based healthcare

To accelerate discovery of innovative cost-effective interventions and care models that support delivery of faster, high-value care to all Australians with AMSK conditions.

Prevention and workforce planning

To develop and scale interventions that prevent AMSK conditions, reduce the impact of injuries, and boost workforce participation

Supporting recovery and return to work

To trial and implement new rehabilitation and support models that help Australians manage AMSK conditions and remain active in the workplace

OUTCOMES OF THE MRFF MISSION



FOR CONSUMERS & COMMUNITIES

Tackle health inequalities by embedding consumer partnerships, reducing pain and disability, and enabling economic & social participation.



FOR THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Drive evidence based care by containing the unsustainable growth of surgeries, supporting a sustainable workforce, and securing the research pipeline.



FOR AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE

As a global leader in AMSK research, we will reduce disease burden, drive evidence informed policy, and boost economic productivity.

This is a vital opportunity to transform the lives of millions of Australian children and adults, reduce the strain on our healthcare system, and build a more productive economy. Arthritis Australia urges the Australian Government to align its research investment with the burden of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal conditions by funding this critical MRFF Mission.