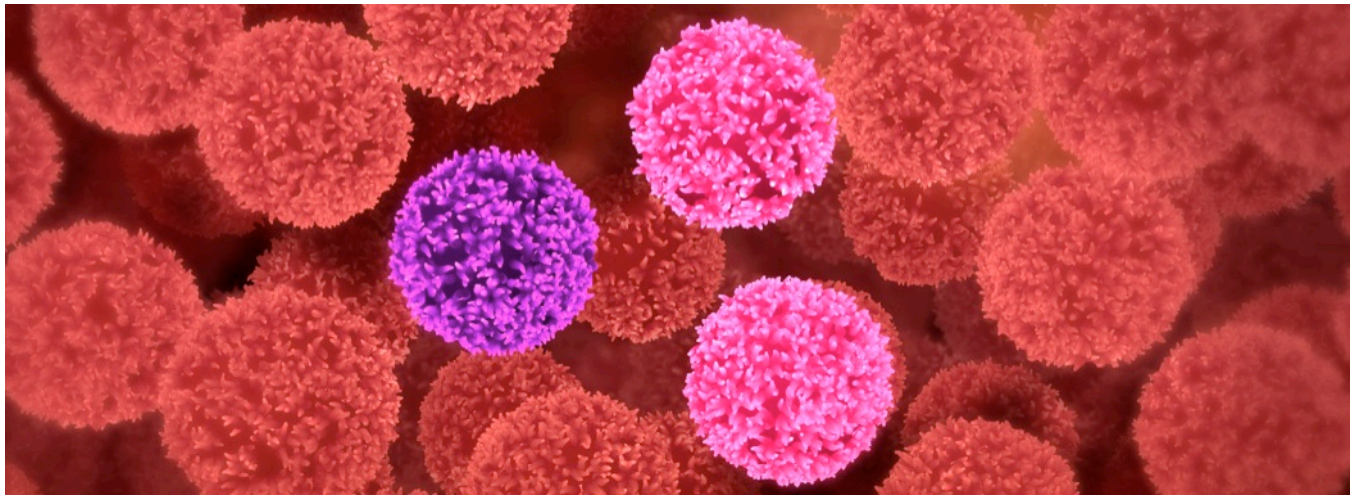
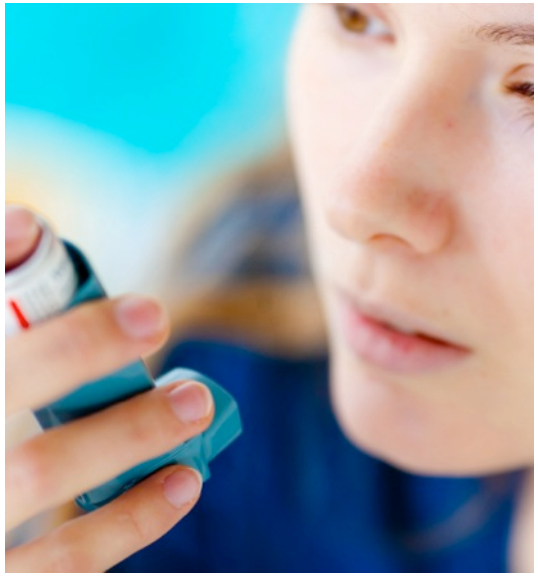
Why Give to Health & Medical Research?

Research Australia





Worldwide, the scope for research outstrips the available funds

At its most basic, health and medical research provides the information and techniques we need to reduce disease and improve health

Research funding

Worldwide, health and medical research is funded by governments (public), corporations seeking to develop new products (private) and through donations and bequests (philanthropy).

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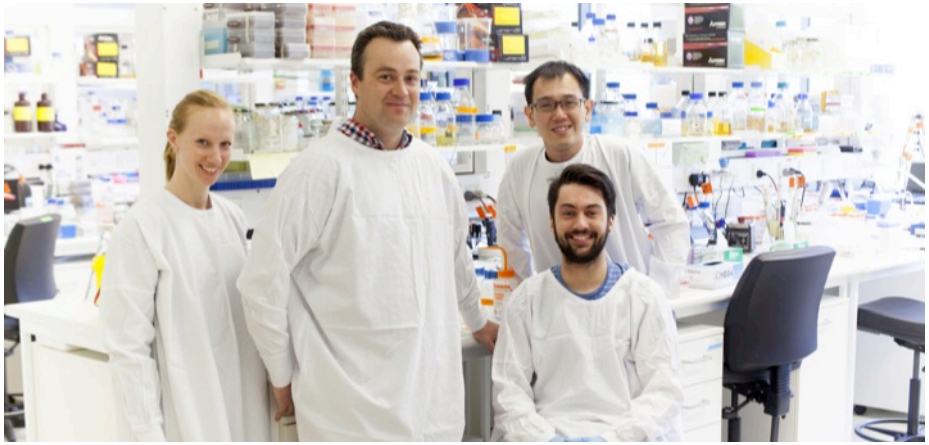
For further information regarding the different types of research see the “What is Health and Medical Research” document.

Why give to health and medical research if governments fund it?

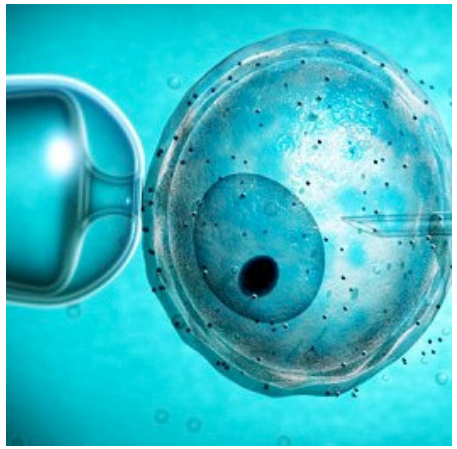
Australian governments invest approximately $4billion per year in health and medical research, with the bulk of that funding coming from the Commonwealth Government.

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is the Commonwealth Government’s primary agency for funding health and medical research. Every year it calls for applications for funding for individuals and projects. The applications are very detailed and are subject to a rigorous assessment process. The success rate is very low, with on average fewer than 20% of all applications approved.









It is estimated that there are more than twice as many good research proposals and researchers as there is money available to fund them.

With the demand for funding far exceeding supply there is a tendency for the funding programs to favour established scientists and ‘safe’ ideas. This means that many novel but higher risk ideas that could lead to major breakthroughs and many bright young researchers with only a limited track record do not receive government funding.

Governments around the world, in North America, Europe, and Asia, have similar programs and similar objectives.

The reality is that there is more research and more researchers than governments can fund. It is a case of competing priorities for tax dollars. While Research Australia may not agree with governments’ priorities and think that they should provide more funding, we understand the problem they face. Donations can help to fund this additional research.



Why give to medical research if corporations fund it?

In Australia, a range of different corporations and businesses invest more than $1 billion ever year in health and medical research. This includes research by multinational pharmaceutical companies, large Australian companies like Cochlear and ResMed, and small Australian companies developing a single device or diagnostic test. What these companies all have in common is that they are investing to develop a product or service that they can sell.

SIDS, and to the promotion of safer sleeping practices for infants, including putting them down to sleep on their back rather than their stomach or side, and not covering their faces.

These discoveries led to major health promotion campaigns in Australia, supported by another charity, SIDS and Kids, and around the world which have changed parenting practices and dramatically reduced the incidence of SIDS in the last few decades.

Research into the cause of SIDS continues.



There is a range of types of health & medical research which do not attract government or commercial funding, and rely instead on donations and bequests

Other discoveries are made that can lead to treatments for diseases that mainly affect poor people in the third world, or only affect a very small number of people globally. Spending hundreds of millions of dollars to develop these new treatments is not commercially viable.

And corporations will often only invest in research that is proven; where it is reasonably certain that the research findings can be translated into a new product. Most health and medical research occurs at an earlier stage.

Malaria

Many Australian researchers are engaged in research into malaria, which affects 250 million people around the world, primarily in sub Saharan Africa, the Indian subcontinent, South America and parts of Asia.



For information about how to give to health and medical research, see these other resources:

- Donations and Bequests to Health & Medical Research
- Making Grants to Health & Medical Research

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