
\$10 MILLION - A LIFE SAVING INVESTMENT

Murdoch Childrens Research Institute will receive a \$10 million injection for vital child health research, from the National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC), as announced by the Prime Minister John Howard today.

The NHMRC grants will support seventeen research projects at Murdoch Childrens into conditions affecting an increasing number of Australian children including arthritis, genetic disorders, muscular dystrophy, food allergy, metabolic disease and the long term effects of drug use.

“This funding will help our researchers make important discoveries to improve the quality of life for many children,” said Director of the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute, Professor Terry Dwyer. “We acknowledge and appreciate the Commonwealth’s support of medical research as an important investment in the future health of Australians.”

The grants awarded include \$1 million to help researchers develop and test a new vaccine against rotavirus which hospitalises 10,000 Australian children and kills half a million children worldwide each year. The new vaccine, to be produced in collaboration with the Indonesian Government, will cost only a few cents per dose making it affordable to people in developing countries who need it most.

Research into the long-term impact of premature birth will also receive \$1 million. Previous studies have indicated a large proportion of premature babies experience developmental delay at age two. Researchers will use magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to study the evolution of brain abnormalities in premature children as they grow.

An investigation into the prevalence and environmental predictors of food allergies in children will receive more than \$500,000. The rates of hospital admissions for anaphylaxis, the most severe form of allergic reaction have trebled in the past five years making this study important for developing treatment and eventual prevention.

The \$10 million investment is guaranteed to improve the quality of life for many Australian children.

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