

SRHMRA Submission 113 — Miranda Smith

Australia has a wonderful tradition of strong and innovative health and medical research. One of the key factors in continuing this tradition is providing financial support to the individuals engaged in research, and facilitating flexible and varied career opportunities to young researchers. The current NHMRC training fellowships are a fantastic part of this support system, and should continue to expand in the future. The overseas biomedical training fellowships (of which I am a recipient) are one of the best programs in the world for providing support and a degree of security to young researchers. Additionally, programs that target early career researchers and particularly women who may have a less linear career progression due to maternity leave and child rearing responsibilities are necessary to retain the highly trained workforce on which progress in research depends. Medical research is an international endeavour, and the pressure to obtain funding, to publish and to collaborate internationally all create a highly competitive environment in which continued support for researchers pursuing a traditional academic career should be provided alongside programs and systems that provide flexible options for people who have a research background but don't want to pursue a purely research-based career.