

## SRHMRA Submission 35 — Melinda Hardy

Medical research is internationally very competitive and many researchers will leave Australia in order to remain competitive in their field of research. In order to keep Australian researchers in Australia, it is very important to have a viable medical research sector. Australian's may not truly understand the importance of medical research. However, their lives are affected by medical research on a regular basis, whether it be for a medication they are taking or life-saving vaccinations. It is important that Australia remains competitive, in order for the researchers to keep working on important discoveries to better the health and quality of life of all Australians. This would have the flow-on affect of reduced costs incurred by an ageing population and increased prevalence of chronic disease.

I am a medical researcher working on translational research projects involving patients suffering from autoimmunity. I feel that funding of such projects will be of major importance in order to truly result in benefits to individuals. Perhaps there could be separate funds allocated to researchers working solely on human models, as opposed to animal models. I feel this is important, as human research projects are slower moving because of the need to recruit large enough cohorts of participants and the variations seen in the human population. For this reason, such researchers suffer from a slower rate of publication and therefore poorer track records to be competitive.

I also feel that the collaborations with clinicians and scientists needs to be boosted in order to make the most of each groups knowledge, which will result in better designed projects and outcomes.

Many Australian's will be interested in the work that medical researchers perform, particularly translational projects. Therefore, better communication of research discoveries to Australian's will further promote the great research being performed around the country.