

## SRHMRA Submission 6 — Amanda Spurdle

I am writing with great concern to request an increase in federal funding for Australian medical research and all related facets, to avoid detrimental impact on Australian health in the short and longer term.

The novel research undertaken in this country is considered internationally competitive, and research funding is needed to

- At minimum increase funding to keep abreast of increased costs for personnel and consumable to at least maintain this level of research— without this we cannot lead or be involved in international efforts and cannot contribute to and cannot learn from the efforts of our international collaborators
- Preferably increase funding so that all grants currently scored as fundable get funded the first time around, instead of wasting up to 30% of valuable research time on writing, rewriting grants, and addressing comments from overloaded reviewers who have to read 5x as many grants as they should since everyone has to write 5x as many grants to get one funded (20% success rate only - pitiful, when ~50% of grants are considered fundable by reviewers )
- Keep good researchers in the country so they can contribute to the training of medical personnel and clinical application of research findings – all major advances and training take place in research hospitals
- Provide the research results that will in the longer term lead to innovative treatments to reduce healthcare costs, including development of drugs that can be used internationally.
- Maintain the role of medical research in the Australian economy - every \$1 invested in Australian medical research is estimated to return > \$5 in economic development.

Australians are extremely competent researchers who manage to compete and even excel at the international level, DESPITE working on shoestring budgets compared to their international counterparts. Given that NHMRC currently has insufficient funds to support all of the submitted grant applications that are considered fundable by our scientific peers (including international reviewers), it is clear to me that the government should be provided MORE funding to contribute to the Australian economy and health. Moreover, the state governments have contributed large amounts of money to new buildings to house scientific researchers – it would be a great waste to have these empty.

Failure to increase the research budget would have irreversible consequences to Australian medical research. Australia needs an increase in investment in order to capitalise on the investment already made. This would be in line with decisions recently made by both UK and US governments.