

## SRHMRA Submission 72 — Parkinson's Australia

Parkinson's Australia welcomes the McKeon Review, given the rapidly ageing population in Australia and increases in Chronic diseases such as Parkinson's. Up to 80,000 Australians live with Parkinson's, with an annual growth of 4%. Their care involves families, partners, carers and communities. The annual financial cost of Parkinson's is over \$775 million, including \$500 million for the health system. In addition, the burden of disease arising from pain, disability and premature death has an economic cost of more than \$7.6 billion.

The allocation of medical research funding for Parkinson's in Australia is modest, isolated, often independent and uncoordinated. Parkinson's Australia believes that the time is right for a national approach to research into Parkinson's, including a register of researchers and their projects to facilitate a team concept on common questions relevant to Australia.

Parkinson's Australia makes the following recommendations for consideration:

- Future medical research funding needs to increasingly target chronic diseases of the elderly;
- In setting research policy and allocating funding, the relevant committees need to include people living with chronic conditions such as Parkinson's to ensure consumer guidance in decision making;
- An urgent need for a well controlled and designed epidemiological study to determine the number of Australians with Parkinson's;
- Greater emphasis on making research outcomes available to people living with Parkinson's as well as health professionals and policy makers;
- Increased funding for research into the efficacy of inter-professional teams systems for multi-disciplinary care for people living with Parkinson's;
- Nursing and allied health disciplines such as physiotherapy, social work and speech pathology warrant greater weighting in research funding;
- Clinical research, in general, needs more attention, especially into diseases of ageing; and
- Training of new researchers in areas related to chronic diseases and ageing, such as Parkinson's, to improve evidence-based clinical practice.