



Medical researchers rally to Canberra demanding urgent unlocking of MRFF funds

Dr Amanda Poprzecny, an obstetrician and maternal-fetal medicine specialist at Adelaide's Women's and Children's Hospital, saw firsthand the risks faced by pregnant women with sleep apnoea.

Her proposed clinical trial—designed to improve pregnancy outcomes for these women—was rejected for funding under the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF).

For Associate Professor Adam McKay, the consequences were just as real. At Monash University's Epworth Rehabilitation Research Centre, he worked with patients recovering from traumatic brain injuries. His project aimed to implement and evaluate best-practice management of post-traumatic amnesia – a critical step in early rehabilitation.

“This research would have helped people with traumatic brain injury get the best possible care at a critical time in their recovery,” he said. “Instead, we watched opportunities slip away,” said Professor McKay.

These stories are not isolated.

Independent Member for Kooyong Dr Monique Ryan will today host a large delegation of leading medical researchers from around Australia at Parliament House, intensifying pressure on the Albanese Government to unlock urgently needed funds from the MRFF.

This high-profile action follows a recent Parliamentary Budget Office analysis revealing the MRFF has capacity to double its investment in Australian medical research without jeopardising its capital base. The MRFF was designed to disburse \$1bn per year once its capital base reached \$20bn. The PBO analysis projects that the MRFF will grow to \$35.4 billion by 2035–36 if the government continues to disburse only \$650 million/year, as it has proposed.

This high-profile action follows a recent Parliamentary Budget Office analysis revealing the MRFF has capacity to double its investment in Australian medical research without jeopardising its capital base. The MRFF was designed to disburse \$1bn per year once its capital base reached \$20bn. The PBO analysis projects that the MRFF will grow to \$35.4 billion by 2035–36 if the government continues to disburse only \$650 million/year, as it has proposed.

“Locking away this critical funding threatens the future of life-saving innovation. Hundreds of high-quality research proposals have gone unfunded in recent years. Releasing MRFF funds not only secures the future of Australia’s research sector; it delivers better health outcomes for all Australians.” said Dr Ryan.

The survival of world-class research institutes in Australia is also under threat.

Earlier this year, the Australian Association of Medical Research Institutes reported that, without more support, many of its member organisations would cease to be financially viable in 5 years. Catalysing media research in Australia is especially important now that Donald Trump has slashed American medical research funding and eviscerated the US Centres for Disease Control.” said Dr Ryan

Representatives from the following organisations will be present in Canberra today:

- The Group of Eight, including researchers from: Monash University, University of Western Australia, University of Adelaide, and the University of Sydney
- Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI)
- Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences
- Australian Academy of Science
- Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
- Burnett Institute
- Lung Foundation Australia
- George Institute
- Australasian Leukemia and Lymphoma Group
- Hudson Institute of Medical Research
- Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand
- John Curtin School of Medical Research
- Research Australia