



## **Medical Research Matters: Medical research community unites to call on Albanese government to unlock lifesaving medical research funds**

Australians are being denied the full benefits of homegrown medical research because of the government's refusal to unlock funding for that purpose from the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF).

The MRFF was established in 2015 as a \$20bn endowment intended to generate \$1bn annually for health and medical research.

However, the Albanese government is spending just \$650 million annually from the fund, which now holds more than \$24.5bn. This despite an analysis from the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO), commissioned by Dr Monique Ryan, Independent Member for Kooyong, showing that annual funding from the MRFF could be doubled while still enhancing its capital base.

As a result of this shortfall, many of Australia's medical research institutes are operating at a loss and forecast to close within five years. In December, the sector was squeezed even further after nine out of ten Ideas grant applications were rejected by the National Health and Medical Research Council, including half of those deemed "outstanding."

Dr Ryan today launched a campaign asking the public to email Treasurer Jim Chalmers, Finance Minister Katy Gallagher, and Health Minister Mark Butler, to demand the government release additional funds available from the MRFF.

To support the campaign, Dr Ryan has released a video of appeals from the Australian medical research community, as well as patients whose lives have been improved through MRFF-funded clinical trials.

### **Quotes from Dr Monique Ryan, Independent federal MP for Kooyong:**

"Releasing additional funding from the MRFF could transform our health and medical research sector, help our economy, and support Australians' efforts to save lives here and internationally.

It's utterly wasteful that so many of our brightest young people are spending three months a year writing grant applications with a less than 10% chance of success. When they look elsewhere for a career, it costs us all. And it's hugely frustrating that the money is sitting in the bank, ready to be spent, while the government looks the other way.

"If you value something, you pay for it. We can't call ourselves a "clever country" if we fail to value and support medicine and science properly.

"I urge all Australians to email Dr Chalmers, Senator Gallagher, and Minister Butler, to demand the Government unlock additional funding from the MRFF. It'll help our economy, and it will help our health."