

## **ENABLING GRANTS FUNDING 2009**

### **VICTORIA**

**Title of Project** – Australian Twin Registry

**Chief Investigator** – Professor John Hopper

**Institute** – University of Melbourne

**Funding** - \$2,500,000 over 5 years

**Description of Project** – The Australian Twin Registry (ATR) is a volunteer registry of over 30,000 twin pairs willing to consider participation in health research. This national resource was established in the 1980s with NHMRC support because twin studies play a unique, powerful role in research on the impact of genetic and environmental factors on health. Over 400 studies have benefited.

**Title of Project** – National Network of Brain Banks

**Chief Investigator** – Professor Catriona McLean

**Institute** – Mental Health Research Institute

**Funding** - \$2,500,000 over 5 years

**Description of Project** – Brain disorders are a major public health and economic problem. Study of brain tissues from deceased patients using current technologies has great potential to unlock our understanding of how these diseases occur and may lead to improvements in diagnosis, treatment or the development of preventative strategies. The furthering of this knowledge as new technologies come on-line justifies the need to develop and support a National Network devoted to storage and provision of carefully characterised brain tissue to neuroscientists.

**Title of Project** – Australasian Biospecimen Network-Oncology

**Chief Investigator** – Ms Lisa Devereux

**Institute** – Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

**Funding** - \$1,750,000 over 5 years

**Description of Project** – Availability of ethically consented, clinically annotated human cancer tissue is a key determinant of the international competitiveness of Australian biomedical researchers. This project provides a structured national network to collect, process and disseminate tumour tissue; strategically target specific tumour types such as mesothelioma and rare paediatric tumours that can only be collected in substantial numbers through such a network and provide infrastructure that can be contracted by clinical and translational researchers. The project builds on a wealth of experience in tissue banking, large-scale molecular genetic and genomic studies in breast, ovarian, colorectal cancers and mesothelioma, and on an established consortium – the Australasian Biospecimen Network.

**Title of Project** – National Centre for Intensive Care Research

**Chief Investigator** – Professor Rinaldo Bellomo

**Institute** – Australia and New Zealand Intensive Care Society

**Funding** - \$2,500,000 over 5 years

**Description of Project** – The National Centre for Intensive Care Research, also known as The Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society Clinical Trials Group (ANZICS CTG), provides the only coordinated clinical trials research strategy for intensive care medicine in Australia and one of the few in the world. Its core business is the design and conduct of world-class multicentre randomised controlled trials. To date the group has operated with extremely modest infrastructure support supplied by the parent society (ANZICS) and its success has been due to the voluntary hard work and commitment of full-

time clinicians. These efforts have already significantly enhanced the medical research effort in Australia by documenting the epidemiology of important areas of critical illness and, more importantly, by the conduct of world-class clinical trials.

## **NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Title of Project** – Breast Cancer Biospecimen Resource

**Chief Investigator** – Associate Professor Christine Clarke

**Institute** – The University of Sydney

**Funding** - \$1,600,000 over 5 years

**Description of Project** – The Breast Cancer Biospecimen Resource consists of stored samples of the majority of newly diagnosed breast cancers in NSW and through the Australian and New Zealand Breast Cancer Trials Group together with accurate, prospectively tracked clinical data on each specimen. This facility serves as a model for extension of similar procedures to other common Australian cancers including cancers of the lung, bowel, prostate and melanoma. Research that is facilitated by this Resource holds real promise for improving patient selection for treatment. This will return a significant humanitarian and cost saving benefit. In addition this advance would also maximise the benefit of population mammographic screening.

**Title of Project** – Trans Tasman Radiation Oncology Group

**Chief Investigator** – Assoc Prof David Ball

**Institute** – University of Newcastle

**Funding** - \$375,000 over 18 months

**Description of Project** –The Trans Tasman Radiation Oncology Group is an experienced research group conducting cancer clinical trials involving radiotherapy (RT) in order to improve cure rates, quality of life and to reduce side-effects of treatment. Fifty per cent of all cancer patients need RT as part of their treatment. The aim of the Trans Tasman Radiation Oncology Group is to strengthen the quality and safety of RT trials by (a) enabling rapid review and checking of treatment by electronic means and (b) improve trial design.

**Title of Project** – Cell Bank Australia

**Chief Investigator** – Dr Roger Reddel

**Institute** – Children’s Medical Research Institute

**Funding** - \$300,000 over 1 year

**Description of Project** – Cell Bank Australia is a high-standard cell culture facility that has enabled the establishment of a national repository of quality-controlled vertebrate cell lines derived from various tissues and species. This will facilitate high quality studies in a wide range of areas of basic health and medical research and in biotechnology

**Title of Project** – Australasian Sleep Trials Network

**Chief Investigator** – Assoc Professor Ronald Grunstein

**Institute** – Woolcock Institute of Medical Research, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital

**Funding** - \$625,000 over 2.5 years

**Description of Project** –There is increased recognition that sleep health problems are a major cause of illness in the community. These include disorders such as obstructive sleep apnoea, insomnia, restless legs syndrome and health problems related to shift work. The Australasian Sleep Trials Network has formed a consolidated network of sleep investigation groups to undertake larger scale clinical trials aimed at deciding what are the best treatments for different sleep disorders.

**Title of Project** – National Clinical Trials Registry

**Chief Investigator** –Professor John Simes

**Institute** – University of Sydney

**Funding** - \$700,000 over 2 years

**Description of Project** - The Australian and New Zealand Clinical Trials Registry (the ANZCTR) is an on-line registry of all types of clinical trials being undertaken in Australia and New Zealand. The ANZCTR includes trials from the full spectrum of therapeutic areas of pharmaceuticals, surgical procedures, preventive measures, lifestyle, devices, treatment and rehabilitation strategies and complementary therapies. It has coverage of all clinical trials involving Australian or New Zealand researchers or participants.

## QUEENSLAND

**Title of Project** – Australian Prostate Cancer Collaboration (APCC) Bio-Resource

**Chief Investigator** –Professor Judith Clements

**Institute** – Queensland University of Technology

**Funding** - \$2,000,000 over 5 years

**Description of Project** – The Australian Prostate Cancer Collaboration (APCC), supported by the Commonwealth Bank, Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and Andrology Australia, has been developing an Australia-wide network of prostate tissue banks and associated clinical databases for the past 3 years. This innovative project has established “nodes” or branches of the tissue bank in each State where tissues are collected and coordinated the use of this material from a central committee or “head office”.

A website has been established ([www.apccbioresource.org.au](http://www.apccbioresource.org.au)) that is the national face of this ‘virtual’ national tissue bank and 7 State-based tissue bank consortiums are participating in this venture. The goal of this ‘virtual bank’ or network is to further enhance the national research effort by facilitating greater collaboration nationally and providing better access to, and optimal utilisation of, the clinical material available to facilitate improvements in prostate cancer management. Operational support for the nodes is critical for the success of a national Bio-Resource.

**Title of Project** – Australasian Kidney Trials Network

**Chief Investigator** – Assoc Professor Carmel Hawley

**Institute** – University of Queensland

**Funding** - \$2,000,000 over 5 years

**Description of Project** –The Australasian Kidney Trials Network facilitates well-conducted clinical research and fosters collaboration between leading researchers in kidney disease. The Network’s focus is to answer important questions about prevention and treatment of kidney disease to improve health and quality of life outcomes. The Network is at the forefront of knowledge creation and addresses complex economic, technological and social needs relating to the patient care and the translation of research into clinical practice.

## **South Australia**

**Title of Project** – Interdisciplinary Maternal Perinatal Action on Clinical Trials Collaboration.

**Chief Investigator** – Professor Caroline Crowther

**Institute** – University of Adelaide

**Funding** - \$100,000 over 6 months

**Description of Project** - The Interdisciplinary Maternal Perinatal Action on Clinical Trials (IMPACT) Collaboration aims to promote and support high quality clinical trials addressing important research questions to improve the health and well being of women and their children. This is achieved through implementing the three objectives of the Collaboration:

- identifying national research areas and encouraging appropriate clinical and methodological trials
- providing high level support to researchers undertaking multicentre trials at national and regional levels
- providing education and training

## **ACT**

**Title of Project** – Australian Phenome Bank

**Chief Investigator** – Professor Christopher Goodnow

**Institute** – Australian National University

**Funding** - \$700,000 over 2 years

**Description of Project** – The NHMRC Australian Phenome Bank (APB) is a service that provides nation-wide protection of, as well as access to, mouse models of human disease. The APB's national contribution stems from the protection, efficiency and opportunity it provides to many of the NHMRC's leading researchers and research groups. The Australian Phenome Bank has established a frozen sperm bank, database, and training program to enable access by the research community to new strains of genetically modified mice. Efficient access to diverse strains, provided by the Phenome Bank, are critical for translating the human genome sequence into an understanding of specific mechanisms regulating all the body organ systems in health and disease, and for developing new disease prevention and treatment approaches.