NHMRC RAO SEMINAR 2014
Boosting Dementia Research – with the G7 and the World!

Professor John McCallum
G7 - World Dementia Council - Key challenges

- Improvements in health and care
- Raising awareness and supporting dementia friendly communities
- Better research

Cure or modifying therapy by 2025 - target
World Dementia Council Statement of Purpose (May, 2014)

- Current research and development is not making sufficiently rapid progress
- Conventional drug development approaches have made limited headway
- Our understanding of dementia & diagnostic tools are still in their infancy
- There have been multiple clinical trial failures at large cost to investors and the pharmaceutical industry
- The lead times are long and the chances of failure are very high.

We need to change that equation in Australia
Dr Dennis Gillings

World Dementia Envoy
Australian visit
1 December 2014
“The Global Dementia Challenge: Cost, Care and Cure”
Australian Government measure: Boosting Dementia Research

1. $200 million over five years to accelerate dementia research and translate research into policy and practice.

2. Key components:
   - NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research ($50 million)
   - $95 million for large scale research projects in priority areas for dementia
   - $46 million to dramatically expand research capacity and build future research workforce (includes $26 million ARC funding)
   - $9 million to support Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research
Why Dementia?

• More than 332,000 Australians living with dementia - increases to 400,000 in less than ten years - without a medical breakthrough, almost 900,000 by 2050

• Total direct health and aged care system expenditure on people with dementia $4.9 billion in 2009-10 and by 2060, to outstrip all other health conditions

• Most feared diseases with 71% of Australians 50 to 59 years worrying about contracting dementia, and 75% among those aged 60 and over

• 1.2 million Australians involved in care of persons with dementia

• Australia faces a shortage of 150,000 paid and unpaid carers by 2029

• Dementia - single greatest cause of disability in older Australians (aged 65 years or older) and third leading cause of disability burden overall

• Globally dementia care would be the 18th largest economy (in between Turkey and Indonesia) and the largest world company with US$600bn turnover, larger than Walmart (US$414bn) and Exxon-Mobil ($311bn)
Dementia Diagnosis and post diagnostic support
”Sliding doors” - Mr Smith aged 79

What can happen.......  
Becomes distressed and agitated one Saturday night  
Seen by on call GP and admitted to hospital  
Diagnosed with delirium secondary to UTI  
History of two years memory loss, wife not managing well  
Sedated on admission, discharged to nursing home

What could happen.......  
Diagnosed as having dementia two years ago  
Supported by good Dementia Advice Service  
Wife notices he is “not himself” one Tuesday  
GP who knows him visits and prescribes antibiotic for a UTI  
Recovers – no need for hospital admission
NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research ($50M + Research $150M)

• a new Institute model for NHMRC, different from international examples like CIHR, hosted independently but reporting to and grants processed through NHMRC:
  – Identify priorities for dementia research in Australia
  – Bring together Australia’s dementia research
  – Synthesise Australia’s dementia research
  – Rapidly and flexibly translate dementia research
  – Develop partnerships
  – International collaboration
Research priorities ($95M)

• Large scale funding to boost priority areas of research

• NHMRC Dementia Research Team Grants Scheme opened on 8 August 2014 and closed 8 October 2014, providing up to $32.5 million over five years for large scale projects (up to five teams will each receive $6.5 million).

• New opportunities will be based on priorities identified through the NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research when established.
Building the workforce ($46M, including $26M from ARC)

• NHMRC/ARC working in collaboration

• Expand capacity by supporting best new researchers in dementia and conjoint disciplines

• Research takes into account social, economic and cultural impacts and complex consequences of dementia
Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research ($9M)

- Queensland Brain Institute
- Undertake research into the prevention and treatment of dementia, in accordance with the Government’s election commitment
- Different laboratories within the Centre will collaboratively develop therapies, tests and tools to prevent dementia
Setting priorities

- NHMRC stakeholder consultation project to identify national dementia research and translation priorities
- Nine focus groups and sixteen interviews with senior researchers, early career researchers and clinical practitioners
- Three focus groups and thirty interviews with people with dementia, their family members and carers, and professional care providers
- Survey seeking stakeholder views on dementia research and implementation priorities (with 388 completed responses)
In 2013, an estimated 44.4 million people were living with dementia globally.

By 2050, that will reach 135 million people.

Cost of dementia care globally is $698 billion per year, that's 1% of global GDP.