



THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP
Minister for Health and Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

16 October 2008

NR08/

NHMRC DIRECTS \$50M TO QUEENSLAND MEDICAL RESEARCH

Queensland health and medical researchers have received more than \$50 million in funding from the latest round of National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) project grants.

I am pleased to announce these 20 grants which are part of \$357 million funded nationally.

I commend the researchers who have been awarded grants. The high calibre of medical research in this country means that successful applicants are of an outstanding level, carrying out research that will benefit the health of Australians in both the long and short term.

The Queensland projects include research that has the potential to improve human health from before birth and the effectiveness of vaccinations, as well as inform public health programs to prevent melanomas.

The Queensland projects include:

- **Epigenetics – the next genetic frontier:** Prof Emma Whitelaw, Queensland Institute of Medical Research, receives \$1.2 million to explore epigenetics, the process by which cells differentiate and develop to create human embryos.
- **Brain function and development:** Assoc Prof Linda Richards, University of Queensland, receives \$506,000 to investigate the development of the cerebral cortex in embryos, which will impact on the prognosis and treatment of developmental brain disorders.
- **Nanopatch vaccinations to fight flu:** Prof Mark Kendall, University of Queensland, receives \$491,000 to develop a “nanopatch” that will deposit flu vaccinations under the skin’s surface and make standard vaccines 100 times more potent than conventional syringe injections.
- **Moliness and the genetic basis for melanoma risk:** Prof Nicholas Martin, Queensland Institute of Medical Research, receives \$1.3 million to research how the genes that determine hair, eye and skin colour act to modify moliness and melanoma risk.
- **Advancing paternal age:** Prof John McGrath, University of Queensland, receives \$481,000 to explore whether children of older fathers are at greater risk of developing disorders such as autism and schizophrenia.

More than 26 per cent of applications from Queensland researchers were funded, in line with the national average.

Media contacts: Sean Kelly, Minister's office, 0417 108 362
Carolyn Norrie, NHMRC, 0422 008 512