



THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP
Minister for Health and Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

16 October 2008

NR08/

NHMRC DIRECTS \$33M TO SA MEDICAL RESEARCH

South Australian health and medical researchers have received more than \$33 million in funding from the latest round of National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) project grants.

I am pleased to announce these 63 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 the successful applicants are of an outstanding level, carrying out research that will benefit the health of Australians in both the long and short term.

Research carried out in South Australia reflects the preventative health focus of the Australian Government and the need to determine the effectiveness of current health interventions, as well as our goal to improve the health of individuals with disabling illnesses.

The South Australian projects include:

- **Restoring sight with better corneal transplants:** Prof Keryn Williams, Flinders University, receives \$494,250 to apply genetic techniques to corneal transplants, with the intention of reducing failed transplants and improving sight in recipients.
- **Beating the obesity epidemic:** Assoc Prof Christine Feinle-Bisset, University of Adelaide, receives \$ 714,000 for research into diets that help people to lose weight, only for their body weight to stabilise over time despite continued dieting. This research aims to understand the mechanisms that respond to acute and longer-term dietary restriction and will help to develop successful, long-term weight loss strategies.
- **Fluoride in water – does it result in better teeth?** Prof A. John Spencer, University of Adelaide Dental School, receives \$193,375 to understand the factors that determine the oral health of children and young adults, in particular access to fluoridated water.
- **Better policy and practice in health care:** Prof Janet Hillier, University of Adelaide, receives \$860,750 to develop methods to identify and withdraw ineffective health practices, improving care and freeing up resources for better use.

More than 23 per cent of applications from South Australian 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