



THE HON MARK BUTLER MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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2010 NHMRC AUSTRALIA FELLOWSHIPS ANNOUNCED

The Rudd Government recognised the extraordinary work of nine of Australia's best health and medical researchers today with the announcement of the National Health and Medical Research Council Australia Fellowships.

The Australia Fellowships are Australia's most prestigious award for excellence in the fields of health and medical research and recognise those researchers with the vision and application to tackle some of the biggest health issues facing society today.

The Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Mark Butler, made the announcement at Monash University saying that the awards were proof of Australia's wealth in research talent.

"It is important as a nation that we recognise and support the excellence of our health and medical researchers whose dedication, drive and innovation help unravel the mysteries behind disease and relieve human suffering," Mr Butler said.

"The Rudd Government applauds these nine outstanding people and is proud to support their research and the contribution it can make to improving health in Australia and across the world."

Recipients of the Australia Fellowship each receive a specially minted commemorative medal and \$4 million in funding towards their nominated research project.

The Australia Fellowship recipients for 2010 are:

- **Professor Francis Carbone from the University of Melbourne** who specialises in the study of immunity at the body surfaces which are the common points of entry for a variety of infectious agents. His Australia Fellowship will be used to propose how best to include this type of peripheral immune protection and how we can exploit these mechanisms for the purpose of infection control.
- **Professor Michael Good who will take up a position at Griffith University** using his Australia Fellowship to pursue the development of vaccines for two major pathogens – malaria and group A streptococcus (GAS). Both research programs are entering exciting phases as they move into Phase I clinical trials. At the same time, the fellowship will enable him to explore the development of the next generation vaccine candidates for these diseases.
- **Professor Christopher Goodnow from the Australian National University (ANU)** who is one of Australia's leading immunologists. The Australia Fellowship will allow

his team at the ANU, together with a national network of collaborators, to start a new initiative aimed at identifying the root cause of auto-immune disease - as well as allergy, inadequate immunity to infection, and lymphoid malignancy – by applying new technologies of massively parallel DNA, sequencing and flow cytometry.

- **Professor Martyn Goulding from the University of Queensland** who will use his Australia Fellowship to recruit and establish an internationally recognised team of researchers to work with him on studying how nerve cells in the spinal cord function and contribute to the sensorimotor networks that control movement, posture, balance and protective reflexes. These studies will provide new knowledge that can then be used for spinal cord repair following injury and to devise new therapeutic approaches for the management of chronic pain.
- **Professor Shaun Jackson from Monash University** who aims to identify an entirely new approach to the treatment of heart attacks and stroke; namely the development of innovative blood clotting therapies that prevent the disease-causing effects of disturbed blood flow. This research program brings together a number of world class researchers at Monash University, the Walter & Eliza Hall Institute and RMIT University in Melbourne, with scientists at The Scripps Research Institute in San Diego to tackle this important medical problem.
- **Associate Professor Paul Keall from the University of Sydney** will develop imaging methods, algorithms and technology to substantially improve the accuracy and effectiveness of radiation therapy for cancer. The first part of the work will facilitate targeting radiation to moving tumours in real time to reduce normal tissue damage. The second part will enable doctors to focus additional radiation on the most resistant and aggressive parts of the cancer to improve tumour control and reduce its spread.
- **Professor Charles Mackay from Monash University** who is keenly interested in an intriguing link between diet, gut bacteria and immune responses. His Australia Fellowship will be used to gain new knowledge on immune responses, by exploring new ideas on inflammation and the role of diet and gastro-intestinal microflora.
- **Professor John Mattick from the University of Queensland** who will lead a team of researchers to explore the scientific and applied dimensions of his thesis that the majority of the human genome encodes a hidden regulatory system that uses RNA to direct human development. If correct, the results of the project will transform our understanding of human biology, development, and brain function, and create an enlightened framework for future research into human health and disease.
- **Professor Mark Smyth from the University of Melbourne** who sees immunology emerging as a fundamental discipline of oncology. Professor Smyth's major goal with his Australia Fellowship is to understand why some tumours may be controlled by the immune response while others are apparently not.

**Media contacts: Lisa Sedgwick, Parliamentary Secretary's Office, 08 8242 0827
Simon Tidy, NHMRC, 0422 008 512 or 02 6217 9190**