



PRIME MINISTER

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ASSISTANCE FOR NEW FIELDS OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. William
McMahon, C.H., M.P.

The Government has approved substantially increased grants for medical research. This includes special provision for research into diseases and conditions responsible for the death and chronic illness of many Australians.

The total grants approved of \$13.5 million over the next three years represent a \$6.5 million increase over the amount granted to the National Health and Medical Research Council for medical research in the last triennium.

The major innovation in this substantial expansion of the Commonwealth's support for medical research is in the first of the three major categories of research provided for.

Within this category of special needs which are not currently supported, a total of \$2.67 million is to be made available to initiate research under the following headings:-

- . Psychiatric illness, which has become a major medical problem in our community.
- . Cardio-vascular disease, the largest single health problem confronting Australians.
 - . Viral and renal diseases
 - . Infectious hepatitis
 - . Arthritis, which is a major cause of chronic illness
 - . Asthma, bronchitis and hay fever, the most prevalent respiratory conditions
- . Accidents, including traffic, domestic, occupational and recreational accidents.
- . Addiction to drugs and alcohol.

The second category relates to support for certain medical research institutes in Australia which have developed specialised, in-depth programmes of notable achievement.

The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research and the Howard Florey Institute of Experimental Physiology and Medicine have established outstanding world-wide reputations, and contributed significantly to improve our knowledge in their fields and we want to ensure that support for them is continued.

Finally, we have agreed to continue support for traditional areas of medical research through scholarships, overseas fellowships, and equipment grants as well as the maintenance of current research activities in universities, hospitals, institutes, government departments, and by individual doctors and dentists.

In these last two categories, the increase in assistance is more than fifty per cent compared with the previous triennium. The Government is confident that these grants will provide a real stimulus for medical research.

It is another in a series of significant Government initiatives over a wide range of public health problems.

The Commonwealth has already taken warning action related to the hazards to health of smoking in new requirements for television advertising. We have also recently announced substantially increased grants for heart and cancer research.

CANBERRA,

5 June, 1972.