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Dear Minister

**RECOMMENDATION REGARDING APPLICATION OF FUTURE HEALTH RESEARCH
AND INNOVATION ACCOUNT MONEYS IN 2020/21**

I, John Van Der Wielen, on behalf of the Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Advisory Council, of which I am the Chairperson, recommend that Future Health Research and Innovation Account moneys be applied in 2020/21 to the Research Programs and Initiatives listed in this document. This recommendation is made in response to your direction, dated 30 November 2020, and pursuant to section 4D of the *Western Australian Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Act 2012*.

Recommendations regarding Innovation Programs and Initiatives are not being made at this time.

Yours sincerely

John Van Der Wielen
CHAIRPERSON

FUTURE HEALTH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUND ADVISORY COUNCIL

December 2020

Recommended New RESEARCH Programs and Initiatives

RESEARCH Priority alignment	Programs and Initiatives
<p>1. Provide cash commitments for submission to major competitive co-funding programs, making WA-led applications more competitive and, therefore, increasing the State's share of national and international competitive funding.</p>	<p><u>1.1 Contribution to National Imaging Facility funding bid</u> It is proposed to support a commitment of \$2.3 million towards the WA Node of the National Imaging Facility (WA NIF) bid that will result in securing funding for the following infrastructure:</p> <p><u>1.2 Major External Grants Support Program</u> This proposed program will establish a funding pool to provide cash commitments to major funding programs that require matching funding (e.g. National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Partnership Projects, Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) bids, some Medical Research Future Fund submissions, other international funding programs, etc).</p>
<p>2. Support research translation to foster a vibrant research translation culture in the public health system, facilitate quantifiable buy-in from health system leadership and improve patient care and outcomes.</p>	<p><u>2.1 Implementation Science Fellowship</u> The proposed Implementation Science Fellowship will support high-quality implementation science professional to undertake a project related to implementation of research findings within the WA public health system. The Implementation Science Fellow will also provide implementation-related advice and training to WA researchers, innovators and WA public health system executives.</p> <p><u>2.2 FHRI Translation Fellows: Aboriginal health; and Country and regional WA health</u> The proposed FHRI Translation Fellows Program will provide three-year fellowship funding and a research allowance to support high-quality early- to mid-career researchers in both of the following two areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal health issues • Country and regional WA health issues.
<p>3. Build capacity in the collection, analysis and communication of health data to facilitate translational research projects aimed at producing health benefits for individuals and their families and improving the health system.</p>	<p><u>3.1 Consumer and Community Involvement in Research Data Scheme</u> This Program consists of design, implementation and evaluation of a training suite that can be delivered using varied methods collaboratively with consumers and researchers to support co-design data driven research.</p>

RESEARCH Priority alignment	Programs and Initiatives
4. Provide opportunities for all clinicians to undertake research, helping them to build a long-term research career and provide opportunities to rapidly translate findings into better healthcare.	To be determined.
5. Determine a biobank model that meets WA research and innovation needs and that represents international best practice.	<u>5.1 Enhancing biobank capacity and sustainability in WA</u> This proposed Program has two components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridging operational funding for established WA biobanks to ensure they can transition to the new WA biobank model once it is determined. • Determine a biobank model that meets WA research and innovation needs and that represents international best practice.
6. Enhance clinical trial capacity and expertise to improve the quality of clinical trials in WA and make the state more attractive to funders of clinical trials (grant funding and commercial sponsors).	To be determined.

Recommended Existing RESEARCH Programs and Initiatives

Recommended EXISTING RESEARCH Programs

Research Translation Projects

The program seeks to support high-quality research projects that have the potential to demonstrate improved cost effectiveness and/or efficiencies within the Western Australian (WA) public health system, and that can potentially be translated to improved healthcare policy and practice. This program primarily aims to enhance the quality and sustainability of healthcare delivery by the WA public health system.

Clinical Trials and Data Management Centre (CTDMC)

The CTDMC was established in 2017 with a \$1.3 million, three-year grant from the WA Department of Health. The CTDMC forms one of the key platforms for the WA Health Translation Network, which is an accredited National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Advanced Health Research and Translation Centre.

Clinician Research Fellowship (CRF) program

The Clinician Research Fellowship (CRF) program was implemented in 2011 and aims to encourage clinicians employed by Health Service Providers (medical, nurse/midwifery and allied health) to develop their research capability while maintaining a clinical role, seeking to broaden their impact on WA health outcomes and support rapid research translation to clinical practice.

The CRF program specifically supports early- and mid-career researchers who have minimal paid research time. The research must be undertaken in WA and be of direct relevance to the WA health system.

Medical and Health Research Infrastructure Fund (MHRIF) and Research Infrastructure Support (RIS)

The MHRIF is a scheme implemented by the Department of Health in 1997 to reward WA's best medical and health researchers with funding for the indirect (infrastructure) costs of research (i.e. research equipment, general support staff, computers and common office services). In independent medical research institutes (MRIs), the funding meets additional needs such as electricity, maintenance, rates and minor capital works. The RIS scheme was implemented by the Department of Health in 2014-15 to provide additional research infrastructure support on a competitive and equitable basis to independent MRIs. Distribution of RIS funding is based on each MRI's success in obtaining competitive national and international peer-reviewed research grant income in line with the MHRIF scheme.

WA Emerging Research Leaders Awards and Near-miss Awards

Each year the NHMRC runs health and medical research grant funding programs. The WA Emerging Research Leaders Awards and the Near-miss Awards Program are based on the selection outcomes of the NHMRC Ideas Grants and the Investigator Grants, whereby these NHMRC 'near-miss' applications are potentially eligible for FHRI Fund support. Near-miss applications were assessed through the NHMRC's peer-review process and were found to be suitable for funding but did not receive a grant due to being below the ranking cut-off, which is based on the available funding pool.