

media release



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\$35 million realises plans for HMRI building

The Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI) says tonight's Australian Government announcement of \$35 million is good news for the Hunter region as it has secured a world class research facility.

"This Australian Government grant of \$35 million allows us to move ahead with the construction of the building on the Rankin Park Campus of Hunter New England Health, which we anticipate will be completed in the first half of 2012," said HMRI Director Professor Maree Gleeson.

Professor Gleeson says the \$90 million HMRI Building will bring together University of Newcastle and Hunter New England Health researchers to improve the health of Hunter people, boost the local economy and create more jobs.

"This building will attract leading researchers and the best doctors and health specialists to the Hunter, ensuring that our community receives the best health care," said Professor Gleeson.

"World class facilities, supported by outstanding researchers, will provide long term career opportunities for researchers in the Hunter.

"It will also enable Hunter researchers to expand their research and generate further discoveries that contribute to the health of people in the Hunter and throughout the world.

"Construction of the building will inject an additional \$178 million to the Hunter region's economy and will create 670 jobs."

HMRI has experienced sustained growth since it was established in 1998, with researchers currently spread across seven campuses. The new HMRI Building will bring together four of HMRI's research programs in a world class facility, allowing medical and clinical researchers to work together to take research discoveries from the laboratory to the bedside, and providing room for growth.

HMRI Chairperson Bob Kennedy said: "I would like to thank the Australian Government and our local Federal Members of Parliament for this contribution to the HMRI Building which is an important milestone not only for HMRI, but for the Hunter.

"We are also grateful for the support of the Hunter business sector, our community, and our partners the University of Newcastle and Hunter New England Health."

Mr Kennedy also recognised previous contributions to the project by state and federal governments including the state government's provision of land for the building on the Rankin Park campus.

Professor Maree Gleeson is available for interview.

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