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Stroke prevention gains \$5 million boost

Driving down the high number of Australians affected by stroke each year is closer to becoming a reality, thanks to more than \$5 million in funding received by the University of Tasmania's Menzies Institute for Medical Research.

In one of Menzies' most successful funding rounds, a \$5 million National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Synergy Grant was awarded to cardiovascular epidemiologist Associate Professor Seana Gall and her team.

The project was one of a pool of Menzies projects to receive just over \$8 million in total in the NHMRC's latest funding round.

The Synergy Grant research aims to improve the prediction of those at risk of stroke, identify new interventions to prevent stroke and establish a ground-breaking nationwide surveillance system for stroke.

"By 2050 the number of strokes per year will double to 130,000 in Australia," project lead Associate Professor Gall said.

"The research will bring together a diverse and interdisciplinary team of stroke experts from across Australia to comprehensively focus on the challenges of stopping stroke in its tracks."

(Other project participants include: Auckland University of Technology, Monash University, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute Limited and University of Western Australia).

Other successful Menzies projects:

-Prediction and detection of apnoea in pre-term infants: Professor Peter Dargaville (NHMRC Ideas Grant) and Kathleen Lim (NHMRC Postgraduate Scholarship);

-Identifying the genetic causes and modifiers of paediatric cataract: Professor Kathryn Burdon (NHMRC Ideas Grant);

-Non-invasive controlled interventions into neovascular blindness: Dr Guei-Sheung Liu (NHMRC Ideas Grant);

-Research on how the packaging of our genetic material affects brain cancer: Dr Owen Marshall (NHMRC Ideas Grant).

Menzies Director Distinguished Professor Alison Venn congratulated the recipients in what was a very competitive grant round.

“The award of this highly competitive research funding is a fantastic boost to our research efforts at Menzies and recognises our strength across the spectrum of laboratory, clinical and population health sciences,” she said.

“This research has the potential to impact major health issues globally and improve the lives of many Australians.”

Menzies is part of the University’s College of Health and Medicine.

Further research funding was also received by the College of Health and Medicine with NHMRC Ideas Grants awarded to Professor Anna King (Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre) and Dr John Lin (School of Medicine).

The announcement was part of more than \$9.2 million in funding received by the University of Tasmania in this latest NHMRC funding round.

For interviews with researchers please contact: Liz Stacey, 0419 587 457

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