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Menzies welcomes \$10million funding boost for multiple sclerosis

The Menzies Institute for Medical Research has welcomed the announcement of \$10 million in Federal Government funding for its flagship program of research into multiple sclerosis (MS).

The Menzies Institute Director, Professor Alison Venn, said the funding would make an enormous difference to its collaborative program which is working with the wider MS community, nationally and internationally, towards better prevention, treatment and ultimately a cure for the disease.

“What we are trying to achieve with our collaborators is translational research that will improve the outcomes and quality of life of those who live with MS,” she said.

“We are looking at the disease in a multidisciplinary way, from mechanisms in the laboratory, through to clinical treatment and prevalence of the disease at the population level. This will accelerate research in all those areas.”

Menzies, an institute of the University of Tasmania, has been researching MS for more than 20 years and now has more than 30 research staff and graduate research students working on the disease.

In collaboration with other researchers at the University and around the world, the Institute has been responsible for many breakthroughs in the disease, including understanding the link between UV exposure, vitamin D and MS risk.

“I would like to acknowledge that we have reached this point today through positive collaboration with MS organisations, MS researchers nationally and internationally, study participants and philanthropic donors,” Professor Venn said.

Tasmania has the highest prevalence of MS anywhere in Australia.

In a report for MS Research Australia released in 2018 Menzies researchers calculated that the number of people living with MS in Australia increased by just over 20 per cent from 2010 to 2017, from 21,283 to 25,607. The report found an economic cost of MS to the Australian community of \$1.75 billion.

Information released by:

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