

Submission to the Draft National Health and Medical Research Strategy

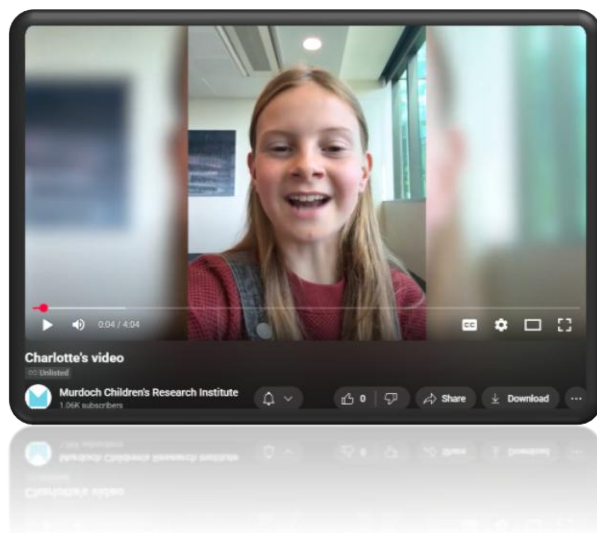
Prepared for:

The Hon Mark Butler MP

Minister for Health and Ageing, Minister for Disability and the NDIS

Ms Rosemary Huxtable AO PSM

Chair, National Health and Medical Research Strategy



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gup82-jecztc>

MCRI Submission to the National Health & Medical Research Strategy

Introduction

Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) commends the Government for recognising the importance of a nationally coordinated and strategic approach to supporting and strengthening Australia's health and medical research ecosystem. We applaud the emphasis on a truly national approach, rather than limiting the focus to areas within the Commonwealth's remit.

We also acknowledge the global context in which this strategy has been developed in 2025 and appreciate the effort to address the challenges and opportunities facing the sector.

Alignment with AAMRI Submission

We strongly endorse the analysis and recommendations outlined in the AAMRI submission, particularly the focus on:

- **Research excellence:** the foundation of high-quality, impactful health and medical research
- **Research capability and workforce:** ensuring a skilled, sustainable pipeline of talent
- **Sustainable funding:** providing stability and confidence for long-term research impact

We support the call to strengthen these areas and ensure they are backed by actionable initiatives.

Additional Priorities from MCRI

Drawing on nearly 40 years of experience, MCRI wishes to highlight two additional priorities:

1. Research Infrastructure

The strategy rightly identifies the national interest in leveraging existing world-class research infrastructure. High-quality facilities and robust data systems are essential for a thriving research ecosystem. Shared resources such as biobanks and population-level data assets (e.g., [GenV](#)) enable collaboration, reduce duplication, and maximise public investment.

We recommend better alignment with the NRI Roadmap, NCRIS, and a future National Health and Medical Research Infrastructure Framework/Roadmap. *This case is explored further in a joint submission from Professors Sharon Goldfeld (MCRI) and Desiree Silva (Kids Research Institute Australia).*

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2. Clinician Researchers

Greater emphasis should be placed on clinician researchers—the individuals who bridge clinical practice and research to deliver real-world impact. *This is detailed further in a supplemental submission from Professor Vicki Anderson, Chair of the Melbourne Children's Campus Clinician Science Fellowship Governance Committee.*

A Critical Omission: Children and Adolescents

As Australia's largest independent medical research institute dedicated to child and adolescent health, we are concerned that **the draft strategy does not explicitly mention children or adolescents.**

Given the intergenerational benefits of improving health outcomes for our youngest Australians and addressing inequities early in life, children must be included—whether under Priority Populations or another relevant section. Our decades of research demonstrate why this is essential.

The current health system is predominantly designed so that we wait for disease to occur and then try to treat it - which is inherently expensive and often ineffective. We strongly support a **greater focus on prevention and early intervention.** Children and their parents (young adults) represent two age groups in whom early detection and prevention are most effective, resulting in the greatest cost savings to the health system and improving the health trajectories of all Australians.

To hear directly from children, parents, and experts, we invite you to watch this short 4-minute video: <https://youtu.be/Gup82-jeczC>

Conclusion

We are available to discuss any of the points raised and look forward to the finalisation of this critically important strategy—one that will help current and future generations live healthy, fulfilled lives.

Professor Kathryn North AC

Director, Murdoch Children's Research Institute