



Joint Media Release

**Minister for Indigenous Affairs
Senator the Hon. Nigel Scullion
Minister for Indigenous Health
Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP**

Friday, 10 November 2017

\$12 MILLION NT INVESTMENT AIMS TO SAVE LIVES AND CLOSE THE GAP IN INDIGENOUS HEALTH

The Turnbull Government will fund nine landmark Northern Territory medical research projects worth over \$12 million, aiming to save children's lives and help close the gap in Indigenous health.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion and Indigenous Health Minister Ken Wyatt AM today announced the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funding for researchers at Darwin's Menzies School of Medical Research, covering Indigenous-specific and broader health projects.

"This research's focus on child health and chronic disease will help address significant challenges in Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities," Minister Scullion said.

"This demonstrates how the Coalition Government works closely with important Territory institutions like Menzies School of Medical Research to deliver better outcomes for Territorians.

"The funding includes major support for Menzies to undertake a trial of maternal immunisation to prevent pneumonia in infants and to continue a 30-year ground-breaking cohort study of 689 Aboriginal children born to mothers at the Royal Darwin Hospital."

Minister Wyatt said medical research was critical to closing the gap on Indigenous life expectancy.

"These nine important projects aim to improve and save lives and will provide more opportunities for health breakthroughs," said Minister Wyatt.

"From diet improvement to vitamin supplements and antibiotics, this broad range of critical work will continue to increase our clinical knowledge.

"I congratulate the Menzies School of Research for its work over more than 30 years, with health services and community partners, on people-focused projects to make a real difference on the ground."

The grants continue the Turnbull Government's commitment to world-leading medical research, with the NHMRC tasked with expending at least 5 per cent of its funding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health research.

“Through NHMRC, the government is also developing Road Map 3 *A Strategic Framework for Improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health through Research*,” Minister Wyatt said.

“This guide will communicate our objectives and investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research for the next decade.”

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Menzies School of Health Research funding:

CIA NAME	TITLE	BUDGET
Prof Anne Chang	Preventing early-onset pneumonia in Indigenous infants through maternal immunisation: a multi-centre randomised controlled trial	\$3,210,617.60
Dr Michael Binks	Vitamin D supplementation to prevent respiratory infections among Indigenous children in the Northern Territory: a randomised controlled trial.	\$3,164,378.55
A/Pr Gurmeet Singh	Early life and contemporary influences on body composition, mental health, and chronic disease risk markers in the Aboriginal Birth Cohort	\$3,117,044.30
Prof Anne Chang	Prophylactic antibiotics to prevent recurrent lower respiratory tract infections in children with neurological impairment (PARROT) study	\$1,193,515.70
A/Pr Julie Brimblecombe	Healthy Stores 2020: Reducing retail merchandising of discretionary food and beverages in remote Indigenous community stores	\$903,135.10
Dr Anna Wood	Diabetes and cardiovascular risk among Indigenous women after pregnancy complicated by hyperglycaemia.	\$126,437.00
Dr Simon Smith	A prospective study of the aetiology, associations, clinical features and outcomes of community-acquired pneumonia in children and adults in tropical Australia	\$126,437.00
Ms Jemima Beissbarth	Vaccine and antibiotic selective pressures on the microbiology of otitis media in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in northern Australia	\$87,302.00
Ms Christina Spargo	2017 Equipment Grant	\$84,491.50