



APPRISE

AUSTRALIAN PARTNERSHIP FOR
PREPAREDNESS RESEARCH ON
INFECTIOUS DISEASE EMERGENCIES

Media release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE on Wednesday 14 February 2018

Research centre gets the green light to begin critical pandemic research

Multiple stakeholders have approved research priorities for a Centre of Research Excellence (CRE) to fill the gaps found in Australia's past responses to infectious diseases outbreaks.

In an Australian first, the Australian Partnership for Preparedness Planning on Infectious Diseases Emergencies (APPRISE), a CRE funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council, was required to have a broad national consultation period before research projects could begin.

This gave stakeholders input into the proposed research plan and ensured a broad understanding of Australia's research needs.

Professor Sharon Lewin, Director of the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity (Doherty Institute), a joint venture of the University of Melbourne and Royal Melbourne Hospital, and Chief Investigator of APPRISE, said stakeholders wanted the focus of research outcomes to be on practical improvements to Australia's preparation and response to infectious diseases emergencies.

"Our stakeholders are very keen that APPRISE research outcomes go beyond academic publications and create useful changes to health policy and practice for Australians during infectious disease emergencies," said Professor Lewin.

She said priorities approved by the stakeholders, including representatives of the Commonwealth Government, include research to protect health workers from infection and to improve testing for diseases, particularly in remote locations.

Other areas of focus are on improving the use of data in decision-making and sharing data among researchers, networks, government departments and those working at the interface of animal and human health.

"Pandemic ready" protocols for ethics, disease surveillance, sample collection and new treatment studies will also be created so researchers and health workers can rapidly respond at the beginning of outbreaks.

APPRISE will also develop communication and engagement strategies with communities at high risk of infectious diseases, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

APPRISE researcher Professor Ross Andrews, an epidemiologist at the Menzies School of Health Research in Darwin, said effective and respectful engagement *with* communities rather than *for* them is critical to effective preparation for future pandemics.



APPRISE

AUSTRALIAN PARTNERSHIP FOR
PREPAREDNESS RESEARCH ON
INFECTIOUS DISEASE EMERGENCIES

He said communication with at-risk communities had not really improved after the 2009 H1N1 influenza (swine flu) pandemic.

“Creating education opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and health workers will help communication and improve the capacity for communities to prepare and respond to infectious diseases,” he said.

The consultation process was run by Nous Group and the *Stakeholder Consultation Report* and the APPRISE response to the report was evaluated by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee and approved by the National Health and Medical Research Council, the funder of APPRISE.

– ENDS

About APPRISE

The Australian Partnership for Preparedness Research on Infectious disease Emergencies (APPRISE) Centre of Research Excellence is developing research to inform Australia’s emergency response to infectious diseases.

The APPRISE CRE is an Australia-wide network of experts involved in medical, scientific, public health and ethics research. APPRISE is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

APPRISE participating institutions are:

The Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, The University of Melbourne and The Royal Melbourne Hospital

Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases and Biosecurity, The University of Sydney

Westmead Institute for Medical Research

University of Western Australia

The Kirby Institute, University of New South Wales

Menzies School of Health Research, Charles Darwin University

Monash University

University of Sydney

Pathwest Laboratory Medicine WA

Geelong Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases, Deakin University

Charles Darwin University

Burnet Institute

Australian Red Cross Blood Service

University of Queensland

University of Sydney

University of Adelaide

Hunter New England Population Health



APPRISE

AUSTRALIAN PARTNERSHIP FOR
PREPAREDNESS RESEARCH ON
INFECTIOUS DISEASE EMERGENCIES

James Cook University

Web

apprise.org.au



@APPRISE.CRE



@APPRISE_CRE



APPRISE Centre of Research Excellence

Media enquiries

Julie Milland

Communications Officer, APPRISE CRE

P +61 (0) 3 8344 7778

julie.milland@unimelb.edu.au

David Barrett

Communications Manager, The Doherty Institute

P +61 (0) 3 9035 7721

M +61 (0) 468 427 290

david.barrett@unimelb.edu.au