

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015

Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy 2021-2026 Determination 2021

Authority

Section 32D of the *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015* (MRFF Act) provides that the Australian Medical Research Advisory Board (Advisory Board) must determine the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy (Strategy).

The Strategy is a legislative instrument for the purposes of the *Legislation Act 2003*. However, section 42 of the *Legislation Act 2003* relating to disallowance does not apply (subsection 32D(6) of the MRFF Act refers).

Section 32D(1) of the MRFF Act requires the Strategy to be determined by the Advisory Board that is comprised of members with appropriate experience or knowledge in specified scientific and technical fields (section 32G(2) of the MRFF Act refers). Additionally, section 32EA of the MRFF Act requires that the Advisory Board provide a consultation process, where organisations with expertise in medical research or medical innovation and organisations representing consumers who benefit from medical research and innovation are consulted to inform the development of the Strategy. As such, disallowance does not apply to the instrument made under paragraph 32D(1) of the MRFF Act, due to the development of the instrument being based on technical and scientific expertise and public consultations.

Further, the Strategy ensures that a coherent and consistent approach is adopted in providing financial assistance under the MRFF for five years (section 32D(1) and 32D(4) of the Act refer). If the Strategy was to be subject to disallowance, this would impact of the forward planning of the health and medical research sector as the Strategy informs decisions to make grants of financial assistance available to the sector.

The Strategy commences the day after registration on the Federal Register of Legislation.

Purpose

The purpose of the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy 2021-2026* (the 2021-26 Strategy) is to ensure that a coherent and consistent approach is adopted in providing financial assistance under the MRFF. It sets out the vision, aims and objectives for the MRFF.

The 2021-26 Strategy proposes four strategic objectives that can be realised through priority-driven investment, and collaborative research, innovation and translation.

The 2021-26 Strategy will inform the development of new Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities during the period in which the 2021-26 Strategy is current.

Background

The MRFF was established to provide financial assistance to support health and medical research and innovation, with the objective of improving the health and wellbeing of Australians.

The current Advisory Board was appointed on 11 September 2021 and comprises of:

- Professor Ian Frazer AC (Chair)
- Professor Caroline Homer AO (Deputy Chair)
- Professor Tom Calma AO
- Professor Denise Doolan
- Mr Yasser El-Ansary
- Professor Douglas Hilton AO
- Professor Anne Kelso AO
- Ms Imelda Lynch

In developing the 2021-26 Strategy, the Advisory Board has taken into consideration other health and medical research strategies including the work of the National Health and Medical Research Council to ensure a coordinated narrative.

The MRFF Act determines that a Strategy is in force for five years. A subsequent Strategy must be determined and in force as soon as the 2021-26 Strategy ceases.

Consultation

The 2021-26 Strategy has been developed following a national consultation with consumers, healthcare providers, researchers and organisations. The consultation process included a call for written submissions, a virtual roundtable by invitation and a national webinar.

The consultation process commenced on 20 September 2021 with the release of a Consultation Guide and opening of an online written submission process. A public webinar and a virtual roundtable were also held to inform the consultation. The Advisory Board engaged with the health and medical research sector and public through this consultation process, including receiving over 200 submissions from a range of interested parties including peak bodies, universities, medical research institutions, clinicians and consumers. The consultation closed on 11 October 2021.

The submissions and feedback received through the consultation process were considered in the development of the 2021-26 Strategy.

The 2021-26 Strategy will be published on the Department of Health's MRFF website.