

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015*

#### *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2022-2024 Determination 2022*

#### **Authority**

Subsection 32E(1) 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 Priorities (Priorities).

The *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2020 – 2022 Determination 2020* sets out the Priorities for 2020-2022. The Priorities for 2022-2024 (2022-24 Priorities) are contained in the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2022-2024 Determination 2022* (Determination).

The Determination is not a disallowable instrument, as subsection 32E(6) of the MRFF Act provides that section 42 of the *Legislation Act 2003*, relating to disallowance, does not apply to the Determination.

As noted above, subsection 32E(1) of the MRFF Act requires the Priorities to be determined by the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board must be comprised of members with appropriate experience or knowledge in specified fields, including scientific and technical fields (subsection 32G(2) of the MRFF Act). Additionally, section 32EA of the MRFF Act requires that the Advisory Board must provide a consultation process, where organisations with expertise in medical research or medical innovation and organisations representing consumers who benefit from medical research and medical innovation are consulted to inform the development of the Priorities. As such, the development of the Priorities being based on expertise and public consultations helps ensure that the Priorities are appropriate for their purpose.

Further, the Priorities for providing financial assistance under the MRFF Act must be consistent with the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy (subsection 32E(2) of the MRFF Act) and are in force for two years (subsection 32E(5) of the MRFF Act). If the current Priorities were to be subject to disallowance, this would impact financial certainty for the health and medical research sector as the Priorities inform decisions to make grants of financial assistance available to the sector. Disallowance could also lead to there being no Priorities in force, when subsection 32E(4) of the MRFF Act requires that new Priorities must be determined and in force as soon as the current Priorities cease to be in force.

#### **Purpose**

The Determination sets out the 2022-24 Priorities, which guide the provision of financial assistance from the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF). Program-level

funding decisions, informed by the Priorities, are proposed by the Minister for Health and Aged Care (the Minister) through the Budget process.

In accordance with paragraph 15A(2)(a) of the MRFF Act, the Minister must take into account the Priorities that are in force at the time in making decisions to request the drawing down of funds from the MRFF in order to make grants of financial assistance for medical research and medical innovation.

## **Background**

The MRFF was established under the MRFF Act to provide financial assistance to support medical research and medical 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 2022-24 Priorities, the Advisory Board has taken into consideration:

- a) the burden of disease on the Australian community;
- b) how to deliver practical benefits from medical research and medical innovation to as many Australians as possible;
- c) how to ensure that financial assistance provided under the MRFF Act provides the greatest value for all Australians;
- d) how to ensure that financial assistance provided under the MRFF Act complements and enhances other financial assistance provided for medical research and medical innovation; and
- e) other relevant matters.

The Advisory Board has developed the 2022-24 Priorities in conjunction with the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy 2021-2026 (2021-26 Strategy), to ensure alignment with the strategic objectives set out in the 2021-26 Strategy. The 2021-26 Strategy is contained in the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy 2021-2026 Determination 2021*, available on the Federal Register of Legislation.

## **Consultation**

The 2022-24 Priorities have been developed following national consultation with consumers, healthcare providers, researchers, organisations and individuals.

The consultation process commenced on 20 September 2021, and included an online written submission process, a public webinar and an expert virtual roundtable. The Advisory Board engaged with the health and medical research sector and the public

through this consultation process, receiving more than 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 2022-24 Priorities.

### **Commencement**

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

The Determination commences on 6 November 2022, immediately after the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2020 – 2022 Determination 2020* ceases.

The Priorities that are in force are also published on the Department of Health and Aged Care's website.

Details of the Determination are set out in **Attachment A**.

### **Section 1 – Name**

This section provides that the name of the instrument is the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2022-2024 Determination 2022* (Determination).

### **Section 2 – Commencement**

This section provides that the Determination commences on 6 November 2022.

### **Section 3 – Authority**

This section provides that the legislative authority for making the Determination is subsection 32E(1) of the *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015*.

### **Section 4 – Cessation**

This section provides that unless earlier revoked, the Determination will automatically cease at the end of two years after the Determination commenced.

### **Section 5 – Schedules**

This section provides that Schedule 1 to the Determination sets out the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2022-2024*.

#### **Schedule 1**

Schedule 1 to the Determination sets out the *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2022-2024* (2022-24 Priorities).

The 2022-24 Priorities consist of 13 priorities for medical research and innovation funded from the MRFF. The 2022-24 Priorities align with and are expected to facilitate the achievement of the 2021-26 Strategy's vision, aim and strategic objectives. Each priority is outlined, along with details regarding its relevance (the 'why') and a recommended implementation approach (the 'how'). This approach provides context on each priority's contribution to the key elements across one or more of the strategic objectives to achieve health equity and deliver health and economic benefits through transformative and innovative research and a health system that is responsive to health challenges and underpinned by a skilled and sustainable workforce.