



MINISTER FOR HEALTH INVESTS \$2m IN GAME CHANGING RESEARCH TO PREVENT, TREAT AND CURE CEREBRAL PALSY

Sydney, Australia – 18th June 2018 – Minister for Health Greg Hunt has announced \$2 million in funding to the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation for four key priorities which were set by Australians living with cerebral palsy and their families.

Every year, more than 600 babies are born with cerebral palsy in Australia and there are currently 17 million people living with the disability worldwide. Cerebral palsy imposes a severe physical and emotional burden on affected individuals, their families and the communities in which they live. The condition costs the Australian economy \$1.47 billion each year in lost income and costs of care.

The Cerebral Palsy Alliance Research Foundation has been driving exponential breakthroughs in the prevention, treatment and cure of cerebral palsy since its establishment in 2005 including a reduction in the incidence of cerebral palsy by 20% from 1 in 400 Australian live births to 1 in 600, and the introduction of standardised tools for diagnosis of infants as young as 12 weeks.

“More work needs to be done to change the perception of cerebral palsy, which has been described as ‘a condition with permanent, lifelong disability – and little possibility of prevention and even less of cure’, said Professor Nadia Badawi AM, Macquarie Group Foundation Professor and Chair of Cerebral Palsy, The University of Sydney. “Strategic investments in innovation and research are required to accelerate progress. It is so heartening to see the government get behind this vital research”.

The funding will directly contribute to future research in the prevention, treatment and cure of cerebral palsy with a focus on four priorities:

1. Making early diagnosis and treatment of cerebral palsy standard care in Australia;
2. Clinical trials of new interventions in high risk infants, including stem cells;
3. Feasibility and acceptability trial of TheraSuit® intensive therapy; and
4. New therapies to prevent cerebral palsy during pregnancy.

Rob White, CEO, Cerebral Palsy Alliance said “Cerebral palsy research has reached a critical point where new technologies are providing research opportunities never previously possible. The time is right to accelerate the search for better treatments and a cure. This funding will go a long way to provide hope, empowerment and lasting change through world-leading research.”

About Cerebral Palsy Alliance Research Foundation

In 2005 Cerebral Palsy Alliance established a Research Foundation to fund Australian and international research in prevention and treatment, and ultimately to find a cure for cerebral palsy – a condition that affects more than 17 million people around the world. The Foundation is committed to improving the quality of life of people with cerebral palsy by funding research into improving early diagnosis tools (which can reduce the long term impact of the disability), treatments (interventions) and technology innovations. <https://research.cerebralpalsy.org.au/>

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