

\$2 million research funding to make immediate impact

Health Translation SA (HTSA) is pleased to announce a \$2 million investment aimed at improving the health of South Australians within the next 12 months.

HTSA CEO Wendy Keech says the eight projects that will share the funding were chosen after an exhaustive peer-reviewed process.

“The key factor underpinning all the successful presentations was the ability to take research that already exists and work with existing frontline health services to benefit South Australian health in the short term,” Ms Keech said.

“Translation is all about bridging the gap between medical research findings and making an impact in the real world.”

On average it takes 17 years for medical research to be translated into better health care practices.

“That’s far too long,” Ms Keech said. “That’s why HTSA exists; to identify research that can make a difference and provide the support to bring the research into practice.”

The projects are funded through the national **Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Rapid Applied Research Translation (RART) Health Impact Grants**. They are truly collaborative, ensuring involvement across the health system including primary care, hospitals, South Australia’s three universities and the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute.

“The projects focus on key health areas including colorectal cancer, stroke, diabetes, Aboriginal health and mental health in SA,” Ms Keech said.

HTSA funded nine projects in 2018 under its former name, the South Australian Academic Health Science and Translation Centre. Four of those projects are among the eight to earn funding for the next 12-month period, from January 1, 2019.

Funded projects to commence in 2019

Project 1 (re-funded)

Improving wait times between a positive faecal immunochemical test (+FIT) and diagnostic colonoscopy: <120 days for all (Lead: Professor Dan Worthley)

This project will help our target of eradicating bowel cancer death in Australia. Building on extensive earlier work, this project aims to reduce the time between screening and colonoscopy, as a key indicator of the efficiency and impact of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. This project will help hold front-line health services accountable for their performance, will identify new issues and ways to improve, and implement evidence-based practice that is yet to be implemented.

Project 2

Translating evidence-based chronic breathlessness intervention services to South Australia: personal, clinical and cost effectiveness (Lead: Dr Kylie Johnston)

This project will adapt, deliver and evaluate a short home-based program that helps people to manage and cope better with breathlessness and conduct and evaluate a training course in breathlessness management, enabling clinicians to continue delivering such services beyond the life of this project.

Project 3 (re-funded)

Action fast to increase time-critical stroke treatments to all South Australians (Lead: Professor Susan Hillier)

This project will introduce a suite of system-wide stroke care improvements to reduce disparities and improve access to certain treatments, improve the speed they are administered, thus reducing death and disability from stroke, and improving patient flow through the SA Health system. The aim is to end the ‘postcode lottery’ that currently determines stroke outcomes.

Project 4

Safely sleeping Aboriginal babies in South Australia – doing it together (Lead: Associate Professor Julian Grant)

This project will provide the opportunity for Aboriginal families to provide a safe sleep environment for their newborn babies while increasing awareness and knowledge of safe sleeping behaviours. It aims to reduce the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous rates of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (3:1) and Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (4:1).

Project 5

Healthy South: Testing the feasibility of the rapid translation of Health in All Policies (HiAP) ideas to create healthy urban environments, create health promoting services and stem the non-communicable disease epidemic in the Southern area of Adelaide (Lead: Professor Fran Baum)

Examine the feasibility of a Healthy South initiative that will adapt a whole-of-community approach to creating health, wellbeing and low risk environments for non-communicable diseases. The research will focus on stimulating collaborative action and it will examine whether evidence and practice can be rapidly disseminated, while identifying any blocks to doing so.

Project 6

Engaging with Aboriginal People to Improve Kidney Care and Outcomes in South Australia (Lead: Dr Janet Kelly)

The over-arching aim of this collaborative project is to improve kidney care for Aboriginal people in South Australia. The project focuses on the needs and priorities of Aboriginal patients with complex care needs complicated even further by kidney failure.

Project 7 (re-funded)

Implementing a decision support tool to facilitate early access to community-based care for people with severe mental illness (Lead: Associate Professor Niranjan Bidargaddi)

Explore whether the use of patients’ MBS and PBS data consolidated in My Health Record via the AI² platform can support improved decision making by clinicians and other healthcare professionals and optimize health care for patients with severe mental illness by assisting the transition between community and primary care.

Project 8 (re-funded)

Initiation of a novel in-hospital intervention for patients with Type 2 diabetes (Lead: Professor Gary Wittert)

Implement and rapidly optimise an intervention for people admitted to the Lyell McEwin Hospital with a cardiac condition and found to also have type 2 diabetes based on an evidence-based Model of Care.