



\$20m federal funding injection for chronic respiratory conditions

Lung Foundation Australia (LFA) and The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) welcome the recent Federal Government announcement of a \$20 million investment in chronic respiratory conditions through the Medical Research Future Fund.

Respiratory diseases have a major impact in Australia, both in terms of healthcare utilisation, and lost quality of life and productivity for individuals, communities and governments.

The 2021 Chronic Respiratory Health Conditions Grant Opportunity will focus on improving outcomes for people with chronic respiratory health conditions. COVID-19 has shone a light on the importance of lung health, and with 1 in 3 Australians already being impacted by a lung disease - a number expected to grow resulting from Long-COVID – we hope to see Australia lead the way in respiratory disease research.

As part of the Lung Health Alliance LFA and TSANZ have been advocating for increased investment since the launch of the Australian Government Department of Health's National Strategic Action Plan for Lung Conditions in 2019. The Lung Health Alliance includes Lung Foundation Australia, The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand, National Asthma Council Australia, Cystic Fibrosis Australia and Asthma Australia, and our collective vision is to provide hope of a cure for all Australians living with lung disease and lung cancer. This recent announcement of \$20 million does exactly that - it provides hope for better treatments and a cure.

The latest round of Medical Research Future Fund announcements, totalling \$276 million, include a \$42.8 million injection for a new Early to Mid-Career Researchers Grant Opportunity, which will be available to Australia's emerging researchers.

"Lung disease and lung cancer is the second highest health burden in Australia. Every year we see over 7,400 Australians lose a loved one to Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. The prevalence of bronchiectasis, a debilitating disease caused by chronic infection that damages the lungs, continues to increase across the world," Lung Foundation Australia CEO Mark Brooke said.

"Until now lung disease has received only 2% of research funding, despite being responsible for 9% of the total disease burden. This announcement is an important step forward, and we look forward to continuing to work with the Federal Government to ensure equitable investment in lung health research, and to seeing this funding be scaled up over the years to come."

TSANZ CEO Graham Hall says the funding will support emerging researchers and the next generation of clinician researchers. "This will allow ground-breaking discoveries to be made in the diagnosis, treatment and cure of chronic lung disease.

The 2021 Chronic Respiratory Health Conditions Grant Opportunity is one of 12 areas of medical research investment in the latest round of Medical Research Future Fund announcements. More information about the grants and criteria are available at www.grants.gov.au.