

Under the Microscope

WA to Develop an Early Phase Clinical Trials Facility

The State Government recently announced that a new clinical trials facility would be built at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Nedlands.

WA's premier adult medical research institute, the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research (WAIMR), welcomed the announcement, saying the move would give fresh hope to many West Australian patients and provide critical infrastructure for WA's growing biotech sector.

WAIMR Director Professor Peter Klinken said he was delighted with the State Government's \$9.95 million commitment to the establishment of the state-of-the-art centre.

"Research has shown that patients who enrol in clinical trials live longer and have a better quality of life than those who don't take part, so this initiative is critical," said Professor Klinken.

"We expect the setting up of this early phase clinical trials facility will have major health benefits for West Australians as they'll be able to take part in trials of exciting new medicines and treatments that otherwise may not have been possible."

WAIMR Co-deputy Director Professor Peter Leedman said the establishment of an early stage clinical trials centre would deliver economic benefits to the State's burgeoning medical research industry.

"With Australia's excellent reputation for high standards and efficiency in clinical trials, global pharmaceutical companies keen to trial breakthrough treatments are ready and waiting to work with this new world-class facility," said Professor Leedman.

"It's an investment that really creates WA as an exciting one-stop clinical research shop that will allow joint projects with the pharmaceutical industry."

The new facility would mean local biotechnology companies and WAIMR scientists could trial new discoveries and compounds in WA. In the past, these trials had to happen interstate or overseas.

The State Facility will be available to clinical researchers who are involved in early phase clinical trials, including clinical researchers at the RPH campus. Investment in medical research in WA currently stands at \$35 million a year. Pharmaceutical-industry sponsored clinical trials currently contribute around \$15 million annually to the State's economy.