



**Australian Government**

**NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**National research plan leads the way to dementia cure and care**

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Every three seconds someone in the world develops dementia.

Dementia is one of Australia's greatest health challenges. As Australians live longer, most people will either be diagnosed with dementia, care for someone with dementia, or watch a relative live with cognitive decline.

Some Australians will experience all three.

The NHMRC National Institute for Dementia Research (NNIDR) has today launched the Strategic Roadmap for Dementia Research and Translation at the Australian Dementia Forum in Hobart.

Noted dementia advocate, Ita Buttrose AC OBE said the launch helps to position Australia to tackle the challenge of dementia within the community.

"People living with dementia have the right to timely diagnosis, support and social engagement. Highlighting these priorities in our nation's dementia research plan is a vital step in making Australia a truly dementia-friendly country."

Ms Buttrose was a key advocate in calling for the establishment of the Australian Government's \$200 million Boosting Dementia Research Initiative.

After five years of significant investment through the Initiative, NNIDR has identified new priority areas to focus future dementia research efforts. These include identifying methods for early diagnosis and tackling the challenge of dementia within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

"Early diagnosis represents a real opportunity to make an impact for people living with dementia. Earlier, more supported access to treatment can vastly improve quality of care, and life," said NNIDR Director, Janice Besch.

"Indigenous Australians experience dementia at nearly three times the rate, and almost a decade earlier, than the rest of the population. It's vital that we address this gap in healthcare."

Since the Initiative was launched in 2015, a total of 133 grants have been awarded to 280 leading dementia researchers working across 26 universities and medical research institutes. It is estimated that the work undertaken through the Initiative represents over one million new hours of dementia research.

"The Strategic Roadmap has allowed us to target areas of research, to really get the most out of the new capacity within the sector," said Ms Besch.

"Australia is in a strong position to contribute to the World Dementia Council's international target to identify a disease-modifying therapy by 2025."

The 2019 Strategic Roadmap is now available online.

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Bojana Kos | P: 0439 342 602 | E: [bojana.kos@nnidr.gov.au](mailto:bojana.kos@nnidr.gov.au)