

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC**

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business



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## MEDICAL RESEARCH, TRIALS BOOM IN GEELONG AND BARWON

Geelong is establishing its credentials as a medical research hub with Barwon Health's level of clinical trials at an all-time high, providing locals with access to new and emerging therapies.

Over the past 12 months some 200 clinical trials involving 700 participants have run at Barwon Health. The trials have included treatments for diabetes, cardiology, stroke and respiratory illness, and subjects have also taken part in an international trial of a COVID-19 vaccine.

The Victorian Government is boosting the number of clinical trials run in regional Victoria through a Clinical Trial Research Support Service launched last year at Barwon Health as well as Bendigo Health, Ballarat Health, North East Health Wangaratta and Goulburn Valley Health.

Medical research is also booming in Geelong, with a team of Barwon Health researchers receiving funding from the Government's COVID-19 Research Fund to carry out a study into the long-term effects of coronavirus.

A team of researchers from Barwon Health, Deakin University and the Geelong Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases is set to begin its nationally significant study into the biological, physiological and psychological impacts of COVID-19 infection on a regional population.

Victoria is a premier location for medical research and clinical trials in Australia, with locally based projects securing more than 40 per cent of competitive national research funding.

The Government has invested \$14.7 million in 17 dedicated coronavirus research projects being conducted by the state's world-leading researchers and \$37 million towards the advancement of other life-saving medical research.

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford**

*"There is groundbreaking work being done in Geelong in medical research and clinical trials. The impact for individuals, the wider community and the Geelong economy are profound."*

### **Quote attributable to Member for Geelong Christine Couzens**

*"Growing the number of clinical trials and medical research projects conducted locally not only provides access to life-improving treatments, it also supports economic growth."*

### **Quote attributable to Member for Bellarine Lisa Neville**

*"Increasing the number of clinical trials held in regional Victoria provides faster local access to new treatments and contributes more than \$300 million annually to our economy."*

### **Quote attributable to Member for Lara John Eren**

*"I know first-hand the importance of medical research and I am so proud to see Barwon Health spearheading important research that will change and save lives."*

### **Quote attributable to Member for South Barwon Darren Cheeseman**

*"The dedicated workforce at Barwon Health cannot be praised highly enough for their efforts to look after us now and in striving to create a healthier future for the community."*

### **Quote attributable to Barwon Health chief executive Frances Diver**

*"Clinical trials are vital to providing access to new and emerging therapies for people in the Barwon region and we are expecting to grow our research footprint, ultimately delivering better care for our community."*

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