

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business

Minister for Resources



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DELIVERING CUTTING EDGE CARE TO CRITICALLY ILL NEWBORNS

The Victorian Government is investing in a world-first medical device that will help more critically ill newborns get access to potentially lifesaving care.

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford today announced Melbourne startup Navi Medical Technologies would receive \$50,000 as part of the \$6 million *Technology Adoption and Innovation Program*, which helps small to medium-size enterprises develop new innovative technologies.

Each year, nearly 10,000 newborns receive lifesaving treatment through central venous catheters – thin flexible tubes inserted into the veins of patients to deliver fluids and medications.

Without a way to pinpoint the exact location, around 40 per cent of catheters are inserted incorrectly or move after insertion, exposing patients to additional risks.

Navi has created a device that records and analyses electrical signals from the heart, providing feedback on the position of the catheter in real time. The new funding will help develop an advanced prototype of the device, enabling the Navi Neonav to reach a critical stage of product development.

The medical device is already helping deliver life-saving treatment to babies at the Royal Women's Hospital Newborn Intensive Care Unit, including babies like Nash Constable.

Nash was born in December 2020 at 28 weeks, weighing just 728 grams. After his family consented to be involved in the research, Nash had a catheter inserted using the new technology as part of an operation.

Nash is now a healthy eight-month-old and his family are strong advocates for continued investment in newborn research.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford

"We're backing innovative Victorian businesses, because we know that new technologies have the potential to solve some of our biggest challenges and help people like the Constable family."

"By supporting medical innovation from idea to commercialisation, we're helping develop world-first technology and delivering the best care for Victorians."

Quote attributable to Navi co-founder and chief executive Alex Newton

"Less than 5 per cent of medical innovations that make it to market have a neonatal indication for use – there's a huge market for products like the Neonav to assist in delivering the care critically ill newborns need."

Quote attributable to Royal Women's Hospital chief executive Dr Sue Matthews

"Research underpins the care that we provide to babies in our Newborn Intensive Care Unit. We are thrilled to be part of this research and look forward to seeing the Navi team drive better health outcomes for premature babies."