

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



Friday, 11 February 2022

BABIES REACH SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE IN STUDY OF A GENERATION

A Victorian hospital has joined Australia's largest child and parent research project, now having reached the milestone of 10,000 babies.

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford today welcomed the Royal Women's Hospital as the latest hospital to join the Murdoch Children's Research Institute's Generation Victoria (GenV) project, where the milestone baby was recently born.

Maribyrnong mother Christine Wong joined the GenV project with her son Lorenzo, who was born in January this year. With a career in healthcare and having older children experiencing issues with eczema, asthma and an anaphylactic allergy to peanuts, Ms Wong agreed to take part in the study to help improve the detection and treatment of future health care for families like hers.

GenV will eventually track up to 150,000 children across Victoria over the next two years in a pioneering bid to map the health of an entire generation, seeking early warning signs for complex health issues like asthma, food allergies, obesity and mental illness.

It's hoped the study will also pinpoint critical links between environment, genetics, physical characteristics and developmental milestones.

Royal Women's has joined 22 other metro hospitals and 33 regional hospitals across the state as the project scales up to be available to all newborns and their parents. Among the participating babies and families, there are more than 100 families with twins or multiple births, and 59 different languages represented, including Australian Sign Language.

The Labor Government has committed a total of \$30 million to the project, lead by the Murdoch Children's Research Institute working with the Royal Children's Hospital, the University of Melbourne and the Paul Ramsay Foundation.

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

"Future generations of Victorians can expect better healthcare and treatments, thanks to these babies and their families, who are making a difference right from the start of their lives."

"This research has never been more important in providing a complete picture of the impacts of COVID-19 on pregnancies, babies and children."

Quote attributable to Director of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute Professor Kathryn North AC

"This milestone helps us achieve a degree of inclusivity that other research cannot do. It doesn't matter if you live in regional Victoria, or if you speak a language other than English at home. Involving thousands of families across Victoria will help children of all backgrounds."

Quote attributable to GenV research participant and new mum Christine Wong

"While we are blessed that our children are healthy overall, we wanted to be part of the program knowing we are part of a bigger healthcare picture that can benefit all Victorian children and families."

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