

# Media Release

**The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC**

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council  
Minister for Training and Skills  
Minister for Higher Education



Monday, 15 August 2022

## SWABS AWAY - WEARABLE TECH GIVES INSTANT COVID CHECK

An instant sensor that can detect COVID-19 and smart bedding monitors for aged care residents are among the projects to be developed with the Andrews Labor Government supporting a groundbreaking new medical device prototype facility at RMIT University.

Minister for Higher Education Gayle Tierney today announced a \$12.7 million Labor Government investment towards the new \$16 million centre at RMIT's City Campus as part of the Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund.

The Victorian Medical Device Prototyping and Scale-Up Facility will be the first ISO-accredited prototyping facility in Asia-Pacific to focus on the development of non-invasive wearable and nearable medical technologies, which are used for diagnosis and monitoring of a range of healthcare issues.

Wearables refer to wireless electronic devices that can be worn as accessories, embedded in clothing or implanted in the body, while nearables are smart devices that can sense and send data but do not need to be attached to a person.

The facility brings together start-ups, small businesses, and researchers to collaborate on field and clinical trials for products looking to be taken to market.

Initial projects include:

- An instant sensor for detecting COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory illnesses such as influenza and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) coronavirus;
- Smart bedding products for aged care, using stretchable electronics technology (skin-like, ultralight electronics) to monitor sleep and vital signs; and
- Minimally invasive wearables for health monitoring and diagnostics.

Swinburne, Deakin and Monash universities are collaborating with RMIT on the facility's design - but once open it will be available to all Victorian universities as a place to collaborate with industry.

The Labor Government's \$350 million *Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund* supports universities with capital works, applied research and research infrastructure to support jobs and the state's economic rebound from the coronavirus crisis.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney

*"This is a significant investment in medical technology that will drive innovation to support the healthcare needs of people across Australia."*

*"Collaborative projects like this show our government's strong support for higher education, backing industry to become international leaders in their field."*

### Quote attributable to Professor Alec Cameron, Vice-Chancellor and President of RMIT University

*This new medical research facility drives impact, by supporting the deep industry collaborations to deliver real world solutions and home-grown health technologies.*

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