

# 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



Monday, 5 September 2022

## **BREAKTHROUGH FOR KIDNEY DISEASE PATIENTS**

Victorian-led research backed by the Andrews Labor Government is now aiding in the early detection of kidney disease so it can be treated sooner.

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford visited Melbourne Genomics Health Alliance at Monash Health in Clayton to learn first hand how a new genomics test is reducing the need for invasive procedures and helping people receive better healthcare for kidney disease.

Australians with suspected genetic kidney disease can now undergo a Medicare-funded genomic test – with the test developed by researchers from The Melbourne Genomics Alliance.

The alliance is a collaboration of 10 hospitals, research and academic organisations – which has been supported by \$69 million from the Labor Government since 2015.

The new test allows patients with kidney related health issues to receive earlier diagnosis, slowing the progression of the disease and delaying the need for interventions such as dialysis or kidney transplantation.

A Melbourne Genomics study involving 204 Victorians found that genomics testing could make a difference for people at risk of kidney disease.

Testing saw 80 people (39 per cent) in the study diagnosed with a hereditary kidney disease and of those diagnosed, 59 per cent were able to change their medical management.

One patient already benefiting from the test is Scott Philipps who suffered from kidney stones every year since his teens.

The test found that Mr Philipps has a rare genetic disease that affects the kidney and liver, which was quickly diagnosed helping to slow its progression and develop a treatment plan.

The Government has committed \$1.3 billion to Medical Research since coming to office in 2014 and Victoria is home to 14 independent medical research institutes that employ more than 5,800 people.

Genetic kidney disease affects 3 per cent of the Australian population. One in seven adult Australians have chronic kidney disease and up to 20 per cent of this may be due to genetics.

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

*“Victoria is leading breakthroughs in genomic medicine that are changing lives of people desperately looking for answers and better treatment.”*

*“It’s thanks to this world-class research we’re creating better health outcomes for thousands of people with this new test now available through Medicare.”*

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