

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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GENERATION VICTORIA STUDY REACHES MAJOR MILESTONE

An Australian first study into the health and wellbeing of a Victorian generation has reached a major milestone and research projects from its data will soon be underway thanks to investment from the Andrews Labor Government.

There are now 60,000 Victorians signed up to the Generation Victoria (GenV) research program including 22,000 babies – almost 5,000 of those from regional Victoria.

Diversity is well represented with 4,500 participants speaking 65 languages including Australian Sign Language and of the non-English speaking households more than 40 percent are Indian and 16 percent are Chinese. More than 800 signed up identify as Aboriginal and 10 percent of mothers were born in Southern and Central Asia.

The Labor Government has also invested \$685,000 in one of the first research projects using GenV data to study the role of maternal vaccine protection in 20,000 mother-baby pairs, focusing on COVID-19 and influenza vaccines.

Led by Associate Professor Margie Danchin from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI), the study will provide world-first data on the longer-term outcomes for infants and children when their mothers are vaccinated.

More than 100,000 families across Victoria will be invited to participate in GenV 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.

Researchers hope the study will also pinpoint critical links between environment, genetics, physical characteristics and developmental milestones.

Emily Raval from Point Cook gave birth to her little boy Rowan at the Werribee Mercy Hospital in February this year and in his first five weeks of life, Rowan was transferred back and forth between the Werribee Mercy and the NICU at Royal Children's Hospital for specialist care.

This experience reinforced the importance of medical research to the Raval family, and they joined the GenV project so future families like theirs can receive the best care possible.

The Government has invested a total of \$30 million in GenV, led by the MCRI working with the Royal Children's Hospital, the University of Melbourne and the Paul Ramsay Foundation.

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

"This incredible study will capture a complete view of the health and environment of our youngest Victorians enabling us address some of the most complex health issues in our state."

Quote attributable to Member for Werribee Tim Pallas

"This is an exciting project that will comprehensively track the health and wellbeing of a generation of Victorians, from infancy to old age."

Quote attributable to GenV research participant and Rowan's mother Emily Raval

"GenV is creating a "research village" filled with parents we may never meet, but who will help us protect and learn about our baby and future generations."

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