

# Media Release

**The Hon Ben Carroll MP**

Minister for Industry and Innovation  
Minister for Manufacturing Sovereignty  
Minister for Employment  
Minister for Public Transport



Tuesday, 6 June 2023

## LIGHT ON THE HORIZON FOR NEW EYE CLINICAL TRIALS

Victorians will have better access to ground-breaking treatments for preventing and curing blindness, thanks to a multi-million-dollar investment in a new clinical trial centre by the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll today announced that Breakthrough Victoria will invest \$10 million towards a new eye clinical trials centre at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital to help boost the number of clinical trials for world-first treatments for eye disease.

The new centre, which will be embedded within the Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA), will also enable further research into areas such as gene and cell therapy – allowing patients to access treatments that may still be years away from being available to the public.

Rural and regional communities are also set to benefit from the expanded network of local optometrists participating in clinical trials and the provision of eye-care telehealth service through the new centre.

Establishing the new clinical trials centre will give around 2000 patients access to new therapies over the next 10 years – and create around 50 new jobs. Construction of the centre is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

Victoria's health technology sector is one of our fastest growing industries, generating \$2.5 billion in exports in 2022. The commercial sector has around 31,000 workers, while a further 20,000 people are employed in research.

As one of the world's leading life science hubs, Victoria carries out one-third of Australia's clinical trials and this investment will strengthen the state's clinical trial eco-system further.

Breakthrough Victoria invests in companies to support the commercialisation of new technologies that will benefit Victoria. Recent investments include FLAIM Systems, Quantum Brilliance, Samsara Eco and Smart Paddock.

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll**

*"We're backing projects like CERA because we know these investments help to change lives, create jobs and boost our economy for years into the future."*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Medical Research Mary-Anne Thomas**

*"Our investment in a new clinical trial centre is a stunning example of how research can improve people's lives, while also cementing Victoria's international reputation as a destination for investment, research, and global talent."*

### **Quote attributable to Breakthrough Victoria CEO Grant Dooley**

*"In establishing a new eye clinical trials centre, we are commercialising our state's expertise in global markets by providing clinical trials that benefit Victorians through early access to treatments that could one day cure blindness"*

### **Quote attributable to CERA Managing Director Professor Keith Martin**

*"The new centre will position Victoria as the go-to location for international clinical trials of innovative treatments to prevent blindness, restore sight and transform the lives of people living with incurable eye conditions."*

**Media contact:** Anthony Templeton 0475 256 383 | [anthony.templeton@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:anthony.templeton@minstaff.vic.gov.au)