

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



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Thursday, 19 April, 2018

BUDGET BOOST TO MAKE MADDIE RIEWOLDT'S DREAM A REALITY

Maddie Riewoldt's dream to establish the world's first research centre into bone marrow failure syndrome will become a reality, thanks to funding from the Andrews Labor Government.

Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Health Jill Hennessy today announced the *Victorian Budget 2018/19* would provide \$2.1 million to set up the Centre for Research Excellence in Bone Marrow Biology.

Maddie Riewoldt's Vision is dedicated to finding a cure and saving lives, and was founded by the Riewoldt family following Maddie's tragic death in 2015.

Bone marrow failure syndrome mainly affects young people, like Maddie, aged 17 to 40. About 160 young Australians are diagnosed with the syndrome every year. Sadly, more than half will die from the disease.

The new Centre for Research Excellence in Bone Marrow Biology will see experts from across Australia work together on cutting edge clinical research to develop a better understanding of bone marrow function.

This world-leading research centre will translate to new and better treatments for patients with bone marrow failure syndromes such as aplastic anaemia, and will hopefully one day find a cure.

To further support this work, the Labor Government will provide an extra \$305,000 to the Victorian Cancer Agency for a new international fellowship to investigate links between bone marrow failure syndromes and cancer biology.

Currently, only half of bone marrow failure syndrome patients respond to drugs. And while bone marrow transplants are the best treatment – saving up to nine out of ten people who have a matched sibling – only one in four patients have a matched brother or sister.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"We're helping transform Maddie's dream into a reality – finding a cure for bone marrow failure."

"Maddie fought so hard and now her legacy will live on in a new world-class research centre. This is an investment that has the potential to change and save lives."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Jill Hennessy

"Bone marrow failure is a devastating disease and strikes young people in the prime of their lives. This centre will support the work of Maddie's Vision to fast-track new and better treatments."

"Maddie's Vision gives hope to families across Victoria that one day we will find a cure for this awful disease. We're proud to be supporting them in this lifesaving work."