

Aus univ gets massive funding for TB, HPV R&D

11 January 2013 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau



Singapore: University of Queensland (UQ) has secured support from the federal government for two research of its projects, aimed at treating papilloma virus and tuberculosis infections. The funding will help Professor Ian Frazer, who is the co-inventor of the human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine, in his project to seek treatments for people infected with the cancer-promoting viruses.

The second project, which is led by Professor Matt Cooper of UQ's Institute for Molecular Bioscience, will help to improve the treatment and control of tuberculosis that affects every country in the world and causes two million deaths a year.

Health Minister Ms Tanya Plibersek said that the National Health and Medical Research Council's Development Grant scheme would provide \$513,630 for Professor Cooper's three-year tuberculosis project, and \$209,782 for Professor Frazer's HPV study, over two years. Scholarship funding for seven UQ PhD students have also been announced.

Professor Cooper said that, "This prolonged treatment means many patients don't finish the course of medicine. This has led to the TB bacteria developing resistance to multiple drugs, so we need to develop new medications. Reducing the treatment time would help us improve patient cure rates, contain TB's spread and potentially save millions of lives."

Professor Frazer said that, "We have some understanding of what will be required to develop a therapeutic vaccine effective for persisting HPV infection in skin. The project aims to find novel solutions for immunotherapy for cancer and chronic viral infections, and reflects our collective research expertise in immunology and Coridon's strength in optimising vaccine technologies."