

Adelaide researchers to develop novel Zika vaccine

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Could potentially lead to global elimination of the disease



Researchers from the University of Adelaide, Australia have made significant advances in developing a novel vaccine against Zika virus, which could potentially lead to global elimination of the disease.

The virology team, led by Professor Eric Gowans and Dr Branka Grubor-Bauk - based at the Basil Hetzel Institute for Translational Health Research and supported by The Hospital Research Foundation - has developed a vaccine that prevents Zika infection in pre-clinical models of the disease.

This research, which has been years in the making, has progressed to a significant stage thanks to funding from National Foundation for Medical Research and Innovation (NFMRI) and ongoing funding from The Hospital Research Foundation.

The work was done in collaboration with eminent global vaccine researcher Prof Dan Barouch, Director of Harvard Medical School's Centre for Virology and Vaccine Research (CVVR) at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Centre; as well as Adelaide's Prof Sarah Robertson, Director of the Robinson Research Institute, University of Adelaide; and other scientists from the universities of Adelaide, South Australia and Flinders.

Dr Grubor-Bauk, senior research officer with the Adelaide Medical School, said the team had developed a novel vaccine against Zika that proved effective in mouse models.

"The next steps are to advance the vaccine to being ready for Phase I human clinical trials. This involves further pre-clinical studies which are vitally important to identify the most effective dosing and demonstrate protection against Zika infection in different pre-clinical models of the disease," Dr Grubor-Bauk said.