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Australia to open health leadership academy to address critical workforce challenges

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Responding to urgent needs for transformation in healthcare systems globally



A $7.5 million philanthropic donation from Dennis Bastas, CEO of DBG Health, will establish a new Health Leadership academy to address critical leadership and workforce challenges facing the global health sector.

The Bastas Academy for Health Leadership – an innovative cross-disciplinary partnership between the University of Melbourne's Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences and Melbourne Business School – will provide world-class leadership development programmes to upskill and empower health professionals to drive innovation, collaboration and excellence across the industry.

The establishment of the Academy responds to urgent needs for transformation in healthcare systems globally. In Australia, revitalising the 40-year-old Medicare system, enhancing primary care, and reducing strain on hospitals requires implementing wide-scale, system-wide changes that demand innovative solutions such as adopting new technologies, building new cross-sector partnerships, and pioneering new models of care delivery.

To drive reforms of this scale and complexity, exceptional leadership capabilities across governance, strategy and change management are needed. However, chronic under-investment in leadership development across the public and private health systems has diminished those critical capabilities.

In addition to the educational pathways, the Bastas Academy for Health Leadership will foster an ecosystem for health sector innovation, ensuring that Australia remains actively engaged in better outcomes for all.

Three flagship pathways will be offered to healthcare professionals: Leading in Health, Leading Complex Health Systems, and Innovating for the Future of Health. These will equip participants with core leadership skills, the ability to navigate complex health environments, cultivate innovative solutions, and implement systemic change.

The donation, announced at an event at Melbourne Business School, will fund fellowships for aspiring leaders in the health sector. Those selected to undertake a fellowship will benefit from mentoring, an alumni network and extensive professional development.

In addition to his $7.5 million dollar gift, Bastas will contribute $2.5 million in funding towards enabling staff within his company, DBG Health, to undertake training at the Academy.