



\$15 million for Medical Research Institute: lemma

June 27, 2008

Premier Morris lemma today announced the NSW Labor Government would provide \$15 million for Stage 1 of the Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute.

Mr lemma said the funding would allow the University of Wollongong to proceed in partnership with the Government on the \$30 million first stage of the research institute.

Mr lemma and Minister for the Illawarra David Campbell made the announcement at the official opening of the University of Wollongong's iC Central campus on Friday.

"The medical research institute will be linked to the University's Graduate School of Medicine and form a unique partnership with Wollongong Hospital," Mr lemma said.

"The Institute will be built on the grounds of the University of Wollongong within the Science & Engineering precinct, close to the hospital.

"The institute will focus on issues that will make a difference to how long and how well people live.

"Research will focus on reducing childhood obesity and reducing the incidence of diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

"It will also work on research into reducing the number of people affected by mental illness and helping people live longer, more productive and healthier lives."

Mr lemma said in an Australian first, the institute would be set-up as a 'community-based laboratory' in a bid to directly improve people's health.

"The aim of this new generation research institute is to reduce the time between discovering new treatments and seeing them used to treat patients," Mr lemma said.

"Scientific and medical advances are occurring at a phenomenal rate throughout the world, but it can take a significant time for these advances to have an impact on people's lives.

"To overcome this, the institute will simultaneously conduct research, scan the world for latest research findings and proactively apply them in a clinical and public health environment.

"This will enable both the people of the Illawarra and across Australia to directly benefit from ground-breaking research."

The key features of Stage I of the medical research institute include:

- A Modern Clinical Trials Unit;
- State of the art laboratories;
- Specialist areas for molecular genetics, radioactive testing, vaccine-testing and animal surgery; and
- Office facilities, interactive spaces and lecture theatre/workshop/conference facilities.

Mr lemma said the NSW Government had identified the Illawarra and the University of Wollongong as one of 10 designated research hubs.

“The Minister for the Illawarra David Campbell has been working with the university and lobbied hard to secure the \$15 million Government funding,” Mr lemma said.

“Wollongong MP Noreen Hay has also been a strong advocate for the university as are the other Illawarra Labor members.”

Mr Campbell said the University of Wollongong was the region’s second largest employer and injected more than \$600 million into the Illawarra economy each year.

“The lemma Government is committed to working with the University to expand the excellent work being done by both researchers and students,” Mr Campbell said.

“The medical research institute and the Graduate School of Medicine put Wollongong at the forefront of medical education and research.

“Along with the Innovation Campus the University now has the capacity to build the knowledge economy and revitalise the profile of this region and the State.”

Mr lemma said \$5 million funding would be provided each year for three years.

“This \$15 million commitment to research infrastructure shows Labor listens and delivers for the Illawarra.”

Mr Campbell said: “I am particularly pleased to see the community focus of the Research Institute which will build on the close integration of the University with our local community.”