



Brad Hazzard
Minister for Health
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MEDIA RELEASE

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\$12 MILLION BIOBANK TO REVOLUTIONISE RESEARCH

The largest storage bank for human biospecimens in the southern hemisphere opened its doors in Sydney today and is set to revolutionise medical research in Australia.

Minister for Health and Medical Research Brad Hazzard said the \$12 million NSW Health Statewide Biobank will help researchers change the way life-threatening illnesses are treated.

“The Biobank will house more than three million human samples including DNA, tissue, blood and tumour cells which researchers can use to unlock the puzzle of disease.

“The NSW Government is proud to have fully funded this world-class facility which may one day support a cure for cancer, diabetes, dementia and more,” Mr Hazzard said.

“It will save our researchers years of time that would have otherwise been spent collecting samples and will enable greater participation in even more international studies.”

The first and largest facility of its kind in Australia, the Biobank is part of the NSW Government’s record \$1.25 billion investment over four years in medical research across the state.

Researchers can deposit and access samples, not unlike a bank or a library, via a state-of-the-art -80°C robotic cold storage system and cryogenic vats set to -196°C. Advanced robotic technology reduces the time it takes to manage and retrieve samples, while the data obtained could help lab discoveries get to patients quicker.

NSW Health’s Chief Health Officer Dr Kerry Chant said members of the public are encouraged to donate tissue samples via their healthcare professionals.

“Adults in many countries throughout Europe, the UK and Asia donate DNA and other biospecimens to biobanks to help advance medicine. There are many biobanking research projects people can contribute to and participants don’t need to be ill to donate, so speak to your doctor if you want to help,” Dr Chant said.

The opening of the high-tech facility on Royal Prince Alfred Hospital campus follows the NSW Government’s \$1.5 million investment in 2015 to establish the first statewide biobanking framework to ensure a more standardised approach to biobanking.

Images and film footage available at: www.biobank.health.nsw.gov.au

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