



SENATOR THE HON JAN McLUCAS

**Parliamentary Secretary to the
Minister for Health and Ageing**

MEDIA RELEASE

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COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE GETS A BOOST

Research into the fast-growing area of complementary and alternative medicine received a boost today with the announcement by the Australian Government of more than \$7 million in grants.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Senator Jan McLucas, announced the funding at the third International Congress on Complementary Medicine Research at Darling Harbour in Sydney.

“Complementary medicine usage represents a substantial proportion of activity in the Australian health care sector,” Senator McLucas said.

“More than \$2 billion is spent nationally, with up to two-thirds of the Australian adult population using at least one product and one in four using complementary medicine services.

“There is growing testimony that complementary medicine can make a significant, cost-effective contribution to public health in chronic-disease management and in preventative care.

“Until now there has been a gap between those who believe in and use complementary medicine and the strength of evidence to support that use. Today’s announcement is intended to help bridge the gap.”

Funding of \$1.74 million has been awarded to establish three National Institute of Complementary Medicine (NICM) Collaborative Centres and a further \$5.3 million for 13 projects that will be funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

The NICM Collaborative Centres will be established at the University of Queensland, the University of Sydney and Swinburne University of Technology.

Senator McLucas estimated that the Rudd Government’s funding would enable the three centres to attract a further \$7.5 million in additional funding from universities and research partners.

The projects funded by the NHMRC will deliver evidence-based studies, including clinical trials, to strengthen acceptance and integration of alternative therapies into the health care system.

The projects include:

- the use of complementary and alternative medicines and self-management among people with type-2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease
- a trial of omega-3 fatty acids as a treatment for symptoms for young people at ultra-high risk of psychosis
- the evaluation of nutritional supplements in preventing Alzheimer's disease.

Details of the grants are attached.

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NICM Collaborative Centre Grants
\$1,744,000

Institution	Centre	Purpose	Funding
University of Queensland	NICM Collaborative Centre for Transitional Preclinical and Clinical Research in Nutraceuticals and Herbal Medicine	This multi-institutional research team will focus in two broad areas: cardiovascular medicine, including diabetes and obesity, and ageing and skin health	\$660,000
University of Sydney	NICM Collaborative Centre for Traditional Chinese Medicine	Through a consortium of eight universities this centre will establish a national approach to evaluating Traditional Chinese Medicine, including acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine. The focus will include diabetes, neurodegenerative diseases and cancer	\$734,000
Swinburne University of Technology	NICM Collaborative Centre for Study of Natural Medicines and Neurocognition in Health and Disease	The centre will systematically study the efficacy of natural medicines in improving memory, cognition and brain function and also explore brain mechanisms associated with chronic use of natural medicines	\$350,000

NHMRC COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE GRANTS
\$5,342,603

Chief Investigator	Institution	Project title	Funding
Dr Subramanyam Vemulpad	Macquarie University	Alternative medicines from medicinal plants of Aboriginal people of northern NSW.	\$149,886
Prof Lenore Manderson	Monash University	Care-seeking, use of CAM, and self-management among people with Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.	\$661,024
Dr Lisa Alleva	Australian National University	Determining the synergistic effects of complementary medicines on pro-inflammatory cytokines, with a view to treating severe influenza.	\$289,600
Prof Patrick McGorry	University of Melbourne	RCT of omega-3 fatty acids as treatment of subthreshold symptoms in young people at ultra-high risk for psychosis.	\$278,720
Assoc Prof Gordon Howarth	University of Adelaide	Novel probiotics and naturally-sourced extracts as treatment strategies for chemotherapy-induced intestinal mucositis.	\$321,250
Dr Jon Adams	University of Queensland	CAM use among mid-age women: a national mixed-methods study across the urban-rural divide.	\$450,771
Prof Rodney Croft	Swinburne University of Technology	Tailoring adjunct glycine therapy in schizophrenia.	\$444,900
Prof Alan Bensoussan	University of Western Sydney	Clinical and physiological evaluation of Chinese herbal medicine for constipation predominant irritable bowel syndrome.	\$590,200
Prof Andy Choo	Murdoch Childrens Research Institute	Does regular tai chi practice delay ageing of cells and improve cellular energy functions?	\$416,689
Dr Colin Duke	University of Sydney	Complementary medicines based on propolis produced by honeybees from Australian flora.	\$285,000
Prof Ralph Martins	Edith Cowan University	Evaluation of combination nutritional supplement therapies in the prevention of Alzheimer's disease in a transgenic mouse model.	\$484,676
Assoc Prof Patricia Armati	University of Sydney	Investigation of neural mechanisms of 670 and 830nm laser acupuncture in pain relief, using rat peripheral nervous tissue models.	\$326,207
Prof Gerald Holtmann	University of Adelaide	A randomised placebo-controlled trial of a herbal preparation in functional dyspepsia: cost effectiveness and mechanisms.	\$643,680