

Tuesday, 6 June 2023

## **NEW EYE CLINICAL TRIALS CENTRE TO GIVE VICTORIANS WORLD-FIRST TREATMENTS**

Breakthrough Victoria is investing \$10 million towards a new world-leading eye clinical trials centre that will provide Victorians with early access to new treatments aiming to prevent and cure blindness.

The new eye clinical trials centre will be embedded within the Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA) at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital.

CERA is an independent medical research institute ranked in the world's top five for ophthalmology research.

Establishing a dedicated eye clinical trials centre will help commercialise Victoria's world-class medical research and health services by providing clinical trials that will give Victorians early access to new treatments, particularly in innovative gene and cell therapies.

As well as attracting international clinical trials, it will allow local researchers and companies to conduct clinical trials in Australia instead of overseas. This will ensure that new eye treatments and technologies developed in Australia are trialled here to benefit local patients and the research and innovation ecosystem.

The centre will create up to 50 new high-skill jobs and give around 2,000 patients access to new treatments over ten years. It will deliver significant benefits to Victorians, including:

- providing early access to new treatments for eye disease through clinical trials that may be years away from broader public access
- enabling more rural and regional eye care professionals to refer their patients to clinical trials
- developing and expanding a broader eye-care telehealth service
- increased training opportunities for eye care professionals

The new eye clinical trials centre is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2024.

### **Quotes attributable to Breakthrough Victoria CEO Grant Dooley**

*"Victoria has world-class medical research and public health services. Establishing the new eye clinical trials centre will help commercialise that expertise by providing clinical trials that benefit Victorians through early access to new treatments that could one day cure blindness."*

### **Quotes attributable to Centre for Eye Research Australia Managing Director, Professor Keith Martin**

*"The new centre will position Victoria as the go-to location for international clinical trials of innovative treatments to prevent blindness, restore sight and transform the lives of people living with incurable eye conditions. It will be a hub for international clinical trials that will create new high-skill jobs and attract global talent and industry partnerships to Victoria."*

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll**

*"We're backing projects like CERA because we know these investments help to change lives, create jobs and boost our economy for years into the future."*

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#### **About Breakthrough Victoria**

Breakthrough Victoria is an investment company established in 2021 to manage the Victorian Government's \$2 billion Breakthrough Victoria Fund. We invest in innovation for impact, supporting companies to commercialise new technologies to create jobs and investment and have a positive impact on people's lives.

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## Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Ann Thomas

*“Our investment in a new clinical trials centre is a stunning example of how research can improve people’s lives, while also cementing Victoria’s international reputation as a destination for investment, research, and global talent.”*

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