

Call for an Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Mission: Recovery

THE MRFF MISSION VISION

An Australia where musculoskeletal conditions no longer limit participation, productivity or quality of life

The impact of Arthritis and MSK conditions is significant...

AFFECTING OVER
7 MILLION
AUSTRALIANS

ACCOUNTING FOR
13%
OF DISEASE BURDEN

FORCING OVER
50,000
AUSTRALIANS OUT OF THE WORKFORCE

THE SECOND LEADING CAUSE OF EARLY
RETIREMENT DUE TO ILL-HEALTH

COSTING THE HEALTH SYSTEM NEARLY
\$16 BILLION
ANNUALLY

We urge the Australian Government to commit to a MRFF Mission with a minimum investment of

\$100 MILLION Over 10 years

The Goal: To build a stronger, integrated and cost-effective dedicated MSK research and implementation engine that is consumer-centred, research-driven and service-oriented

Despite being among the leading causes of disability and early retirement and representing 13% of disease burden, Arthritis and MSK conditions attracted only 6% MRFF funding and just 4% NHMRC funding in 2024.

The current fragmented, underfunded approach leaves unaddressed gaps in prevention, diagnosis and models of care.

Feasibility and Cost-benefit Analysis confirmed that, among the available funding models, only a Mission-based approach can deliver the required outcomes, given its superior scalability, impact and economic viability.

Consultations with Consumers, Researchers and Clinicians have identified Six Strategic Pillars vital for a successful Mission, providing a clear framework for a sustainable investment.



Foster
Collaboration
& Engagement
Across the Ecosystem



Ensure
Funding &
Sustainability



Drive
Health Innovation



Strengthen
Australia's
Research Capacity
& Workforce



Generate
High-quality
Research
& Evidence



Influence
System
& Policy

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Australian health &
medical research
Our Voice
Your Innovation

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Arthritis
AUSTRALIA

Return of Investment of an Arthritis and MSK Mission

64

RESEARCH AND
CLINICAL JOBS
SUPPORTED
per year



2.2X

POTENTIAL REDUCTION
IN HEALTH SYSTEM +
PRODUCTIVITY BURDEN

\$361M

POTENTIAL NET RETURN
TO AUSTRALIAN
ECONOMY



EVERY \$1 =
\$4.61
ROI VALUE

Based on an independent cost benefit analysis of a 10 year \$100 Million Mission

KEY RESEARCH STREAMS

National Data Platform

To unify health data, track outcomes, and drive evidence-based improvements in care

Access to Equitable Healthcare

To accelerate discovery of innovative cost-effective interventions and care models that support delivery of faster, high-value care to all Australians with Arthritis & MSK

Prevention and workforce productivity

To develop and scale interventions that prevent MSK conditions, reduce the impact of injuries, and boost workforce participation

Supporting recovery and return to work

To trial and implement new rehabilitation and support models that help Australians recover from MSK conditions and remain active in the workplace

OUTCOMES OF THE MRFF MISSION

FOR CONSUMERS & COMMUNITIES



Tackle Health Inequities

Embed Consumer Partnerships

Reduce Pain & Disability

Enable Economic & Social participation

FOR THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM



Drive Evidence-Based Care

Build a Sustainable Workforce

Foster Innovation & Collaboration

Secure the National Research Pipeline

FOR AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE



Be a Global leader in Arthritis & MSK

Drive Evidence-Informed Policy

Boost Economic Productivity

Reduce Disease Burden

This is a vital opportunity to transform the lives of millions of Australians, reduce the strain on our healthcare system, and build a more productive economy. Arthritis Australia, urges the Australian Government to align its research investment with the National Health Priority status of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal conditions by funding this critical MRFF mission.