

**MEDIA RELEASE  
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**NSW Pain Plan provides major boost to Pain Services, Research and Education:**

**Millions with chronic pain to benefit from NSW Pain Management Plan**

Today's announcement by the NSW Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research, Jillian Skinner of an additional \$26 million over the next four years for the NSW Pain Management Plan, will make urgently needed pain services available to people throughout NSW.

It is a much-needed breakthrough for the one in five people in NSW, including adolescents and children, and one in three of people over 65, living with debilitating chronic pain and a significant step to address the recommendations of the National Pain Strategy.<sup>1</sup>

Director of the University of Sydney, Royal North Shore Pain Management Research Institute and Director Painaustralia, Professor Michael Cousins, congratulated the Minister and welcomed today's announcement.

"The Plan provides continuity of funding to expand the breadth of clinical care for people with pain - currently one of the most neglected areas of health care.

"The allocation of funding to pain centres in both metropolitan and regional areas and the establishment of new regional multidisciplinary pain centres will help ensure that people who are currently unable to access pain services, will be able to do so, without travelling long distances.

**A major boost to pain research and education:**

Significantly, the plan also provides the first major ongoing commitment by any Australian government to basic and clinical pain research through special funding of the Pain Management Research Institute (PMRI).

"The PMRI already has an international reputation and is currently involved in ground-breaking pain research. The commitment from the NSW Government will undoubtedly lead to new treatments, with a major opportunity of translation to clinical care" said Professor Cousins

The PMRI will also be funded to play a key role in pain education, utilising a program recognised internationally as being crucial to improving pain care at all levels.

“Today is a fundamental step forward for pain education in this State, and in this country. We now have the only major pain education program in Australia funded by government,” said Professor Cousins.

The PMRI, a joint initiative of the University of Sydney and Royal North Shore Hospital, offers a web-based Certificate, Diploma and Masters qualification in Pain Management.

The National Pain Strategy (2010) is Australia’s framework for the best practice assessment, treatment and management of acute, chronic and cancer pain.

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**Information about Painaustralia (and National Pain Strategy):**

[www.painaustralia.org.au](http://www.painaustralia.org.au)

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<sup>i</sup> Blyth et al 2001; National Pain Strategy 2010