

UQ-US team targets faster Alzheimer's detection

June 18 2008

Early detection of Alzheimer's Disease is in the sights of University of Queensland (UQ) scientists who have secured \$1.6 million for new research.

The UQ experts will work with peers at the Medical University of South Carolina to develop urgently-needed methods for early diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease, which is the main form of dementia and afflicts more than 26 million people.

Queensland Premier Anna Bligh announced \$808,000 from the National and International Research Alliances Program to support the three-year project, which has \$810,000 in cash from the two universities.

Welcoming the June 18 announcement, UQ Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Greenfield said the team would aim to develop Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) biomarkers of Alzheimer's Disease.

“Alzheimer's Disease is known to be the most common cause of dementia, yet only about 60 percent of cases are diagnosed,” Professor Greenfield said.

“The new method will be non-invasive and will enable early diagnosis as well as safer monitoring of progression of the illness.

“The biomarkers would also be used to assess the efficacy of new and emerging drugs that aim to delay or arrest the advance of Alzheimer's

Disease.”

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor David Siddle said early detection would have other important implications for patients, their families and carers.

“It will give them more time to plan their futures and to access resources,” Professor Siddle said.

Professor Greenfield and Professor Siddle congratulated the research team for its success in this hotly-contested funding round. The team involves UQ's Queensland Brain Institute, Centre for Magnetic Resonance, Centre for Integrated Preclinical Drug Development/TetraQ and Australian Institute for Bioengineering and Nanotechnology, as well as the Neuroscience Institute of the Medical University of South Carolina.

The researchers will use brain imaging equipment from both universities, which together are contributing \$810,700 cash (excluding UQ salaries).

Source: The University of Queensland

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