

ST VINCENT'S HOSPITAL MELBOURNE

# RESEARCH

*Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025*



# INTRODUCTION

St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne (SVHM) has a proud tradition of research excellence and in pioneering advances in clinical practice.

SVHM and our partners are connecting science, health and engineering to discover new ways of transforming health care and tackling our greatest health challenges.

Our reputation for pursuing and applying new, evidence-based treatment options and innovative models of care, is what attracts the best and brightest to work and partner with us.

Generating and implementing evidence into clinical practice, is a corner stone of high quality health care. A thriving research environment, with high-calibre research programs and dedicated research leaders underpins recruitment of the best and brightest clinicians and delivers better patient outcomes and better patient experiences. St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne (SVHM), as a leading tertiary academic health service, is ideally placed to drive the rapid translation of evidence into clinical practice and to define and solve questions from the bedside so that we can deliver the best care and health experiences for our communities.

The history of SVHM describes the relentless pursuit of better health and wellbeing for our communities. The Sisters of Charity, the founding Sisters of SVHM, pushed the boundaries of care to those most vulnerable by supporting the search for new knowledge and development of better ways to treat disease. The Sisters aptly demonstrated that the best outcomes are derived from innovation, as well as compassionate, person-centred care; delivered not alone, but in partnership with others – and this is the model which still inspires us today.

Our reputation for pursuing and applying new, evidence-based treatment options and innovative models of care is what attracts the best and brightest to work and partner with us. SVHM and our partners are driving the convergence of science, health care and engineering to discover new ways of transforming health care and tackling our greatest health challenges. The next five years offer an unprecedented opportunity for SVHM to build on our strong research foundations and to realise our vision to transform tertiary hospital care – to become a destination for world-class treatment, research & training and to lead the biomedical engineering revolution.

This Strategy presents the future of research at SVHM and outlines the commitments we will make to achieve this future over the next five years. True innovation – the ability to turn bold ideas into new ways of working – requires a flexible, agile and collaborative organisation that has the structures, processes and people in place to turn our vision into reality. The commitments and actions outlined in this Strategy seek to enable staff across all disciplines to have the opportunity to engage in research, develop a culture of curiosity, and to see the real world impacts of applying the best possible evidence to the way we deliver care.

# ABOUT RESEARCH AT SVHM

SVHM's research program spans basic science, clinical trials, bedside implementation and clinician-led innovation. As one of the five pillars in the enVision 2025 Strategy for St Vincent's Health Australia (SVHA), research is supported at all levels and driven by expert clinicians, scientists and researchers, all focused on improving care for our communities.

In any given year, there are over 1000 clinical research studies underway across SVHM, with approximately 300 new projects commenced each year. Our researchers produce a high volume of publications including more than 850 journal articles, 25 book chapters and three books every year. SVHM invests up to \$1 million in research each year through its Research Endowment Fund, with our teams securing in excess of \$122 million per annum in collaborative research grants, \$18 million of which is awarded directly to SVHM.

Our research footprint covers the breadth of clinical disciplines with significant expertise in neurosciences, musculoskeletal, cancer, digestive diseases, cardiology, endocrinology, rheumatology, mental health, addiction medicine and palliative care. As part of our clinical research, SVHM has a significant allied health research program and an emerging nursing research program, supported by the recent appointment of a Professorial position in Nursing research. Importantly, our research activities across all disciplines have a distinct focus on social and patient experience, particularly for patients from our priority populations. The data gathered from these activities is compared across health services to support continuous improvement in patient experience.

Clinical trials provide our patients and clinicians with access to new and innovative treatments and therapies. SVHM is actively growing the clinical trial opportunities on campus as well as growing options for teletrials, distance monitoring of trial participants and novel ways of undertaking and participating in clinical trials. With specific expertise in bioengineering and medical devices, SVHM is especially active in clinical trials involving new modes of drug delivery, diagnostics, theranostics and devices. SVHM has recently partnered with the Centre for Commercialisation of Regenerative Medicine (CCRM) Australia to establish CCRM Australia Attract to assist researchers, sponsors and industry in undertaking clinical trials in regenerative medicine in Australia.

SVHM also offers the sector-leading Research Valet Service to streamline human research ethics submissions for staff and industry, supporting all levels of clinical trials. This unique initiative provides fast facilitated Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) submissions preparation and submission and liaison throughout the HREC approval process. The Valet Service links closely with the SVHM HREC which is credentialed for National Mutual Acceptance and is the only public hospital HREC that meets every two weeks throughout the year. This combined approach has enabled SVHM to provide world-leading times for speed of study start-up.

Health and medical research and clinical trials are a key focus for State and Federal governments in expanding the access for all Australians to state-of-the-art new treatments and therapeutic options whilst also growing the medical research industry in Australia. In support of this, SVHM is an active participant in international GlobalVic and Austrade trade missions aimed to build international collaborations.

## AREAS OF CURRENT RESEARCH



BASIC SCIENCE



CLINICAL TRIALS



IMPLEMENTATION

## DRIVERS OF THIS RESEARCH



Patient Experience



Community Health



Technology



Clinical Expertise

# OUR PARTNERS

The best achievements in research are borne from collaboration and collective thinking. SVHM recognises the critical importance of collaboration in research and is an engaged partner in multiple collaborative research activities. Through an historic relationship with our academic partners the University of Melbourne and the Australian Catholic University, as well as with medical research institutes including the St Vincent's Institute, Bionics Institute and O'Brien Institute and other more recent partnerships such as the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre, research at SVHM has flourished, enabling ongoing advances in clinical care delivery and the attraction of a high calibre clinical workforce. Augmenting this is the new collaborative being forged to create the Aikenhead Centre for Medical Discovery (ACMD), including SVHM, the University of Melbourne, Australian Catholic University, University of Wollongong, St Vincent's Institute, Bionics Institute, RMIT University, O'Brien Institute, Swinburne University of Technology and the Centre for Eye Research Australia.

SVHM is part of the Melbourne Academic Centre for Health, an Advanced Health Research Translation Centre (AHRTC) that includes ten leading public health services, eight internationally recognised medical research institutes and the University of Melbourne, Australia's highest ranked university.

Further afield, SVHM is fortunate to be a partner in a number of international research collaboratives including studies in the United States, United Kingdom and China.

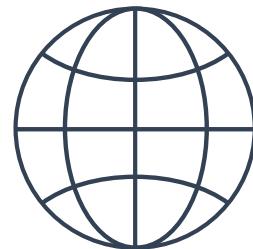
As well as our academic, research and industry partners, one of the most critical partnerships is the one we have with our patients and their families. The voice of our consumers in research activities is growing, supported by strong policy directions both locally and at the federal level, as well as a clear will from both our consumers and our researchers, to develop genuine partnerships and engagement platforms for consumer participation in research strategy, study design and ethics and governance processes. SVHM is already a leader in consumer engagement in research. We are proud to host a series of public lectures and forums to increase consumer awareness around research and clinical trials. A committed focus to further developing structures and processes for consumer engagement and participation in research at SVHM is a core pillar of this Strategy.

# CURRENT RESEARCH PARTNERS

AUSTRALIA'S LEADING  
UNIVERSITIES AND  
RESEARCH INSTITUTES



INTERNATIONAL  
COLLABORATIVES

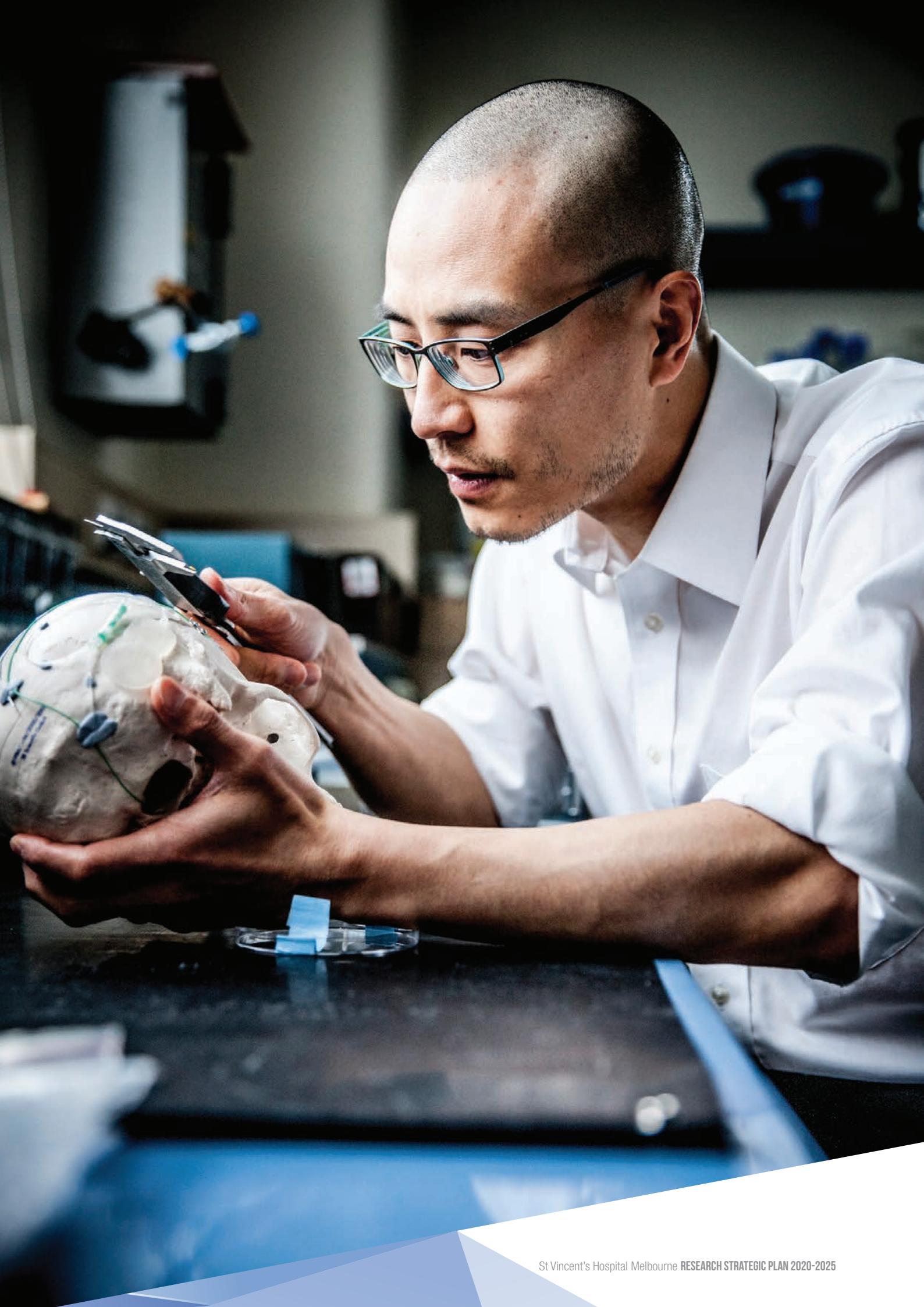


INDUSTRY



PATIENTS AND  
FAMILIES





# THE AIKENHEAD CENTRE FOR MEDICAL DISCOVERY

SVHM's contribution to ground-breaking biomedical advancements continues to be at the fore, with the development of the visionary Aikenhead Centre for Medical Discovery (ACMD) on the SVHM Fitzroy campus. Australia's first hospital-based biomedical engineering facility, ACMD will fuse medicine, engineering, technology and industry to develop innovative solutions to clinical problems and build a workforce with the skills to implement those solutions. The ACMD will realise these aims to yield powerful patient, healthcare and economic outcomes to benefit the whole community.

The goal of the ACMD epitomises the goals of research at SVHM, aiming to reduce the burden of illness in the community. The proposition of the ACMD transcends the potential of simply collocated or collaborative research, health care and teaching organisations and will truly integrate delivery of health care with health sciences research and education. The University of Melbourne SVHM Clinical School will be relocated to the facility and students, from medicine, engineering and science will be immersed in the clinical environment as part of their education to understand problems and recognise solutions. Bringing together these now distinct and parallel disciplines early will provide a catalyst for developing novel solutions, new paradigms of learning and accelerating translation and commercialisation.

Realising the vision for the ACMD is a major platform of the SVHM Research Strategy 2020-2025. It provides an unparalleled opportunity for our organisation to take a local and global leadership role in developing advanced convergence science capability, and in leveraging this capability to accelerate health outcomes.





# ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

Victoria is home to a thriving medical research community. Collectively, Victorian health researchers attract more than forty per cent of NHMRC funding each year. There are more than thirty separate research facilities and forty Victorian-based bioscience companies listed on the ASX, with a combined market capitalisation of \$40 billion. The Victorian state government, along with key industry leaders, has a number of key strategies that reflect an ambitious research agenda and a desire to enhance Victoria's profile as a key contributor to international medical research. These strategies are supported by an investment of \$3 million per year in matched funding via the *Victorian Medical Research Acceleration Fund*.

Victoria's Health and *Medical Research Strategy 2016-2020* centres on the principle of 'healthier lives, stronger community'. This strategy has several synergies with SVHM's research strategy, including commitments to:

- encourage better integration between universities, health services, medical research institutes and industry;
- develop advanced capability in biomedical engineering, precision medicine and genomics;
- enhance participation in world-leading clinical trials;
- harness big data and informatics; and
- develop the next generation workforce.

SVHM also shares synergies with *Victoria's Future Industries Strategy 2016*, which seeks to:

- build scale and capability with collaborative hubs to tackle health problems;
- encourage medtech and R&D to grow the future workforce; and
- improve commercialisation of research.

At the Commonwealth level, the *Medical Research Future Fund* – a \$20 billion investment in Australian research - is seeking to better position the Australian research sector and health system to tackle future challenges that will impact the health of all Australians. The Fund aims to place Australia at the leading edge of research including areas such as genomics, rare cancers, rare diseases and unmet needs.

The *Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy 2016-2021* includes commitments to:

- strengthen transdisciplinary research and collaboration;
- facilitate commercialisation of Australian research; and
- embed research evidence into health policy and practice.

Notably, the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy also articulates an interest in research that seeks more affordable models of healthcare, aiming to reduce waste, reduce variation and foster information exchange.

Consistent with our focus on research to support the health and wellbeing of our vulnerable populations, the National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has articulated a focus on improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, mental health and issues related to the end of life and delivery of palliative and supportive care.

In the coming years research operations will also be augmented by the new National Clinical Trials Governance Framework, established by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. This Framework will facilitate standardised accreditation of research facilities undertaking clinical trials across Australia and aligns with the Commission's existing hospitals accreditation framework.



# STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne Research Strategy 2020-2025 is aligned with the St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne Strategic Service Plan 2017-2025 and the St Vincent's Health Australia ten year strategy enVision 2025.

Importantly, this Research Strategy seeks to outline how our research activities will support and enhance the delivery of our clinical services strategy and ultimately, support the delivery of the best clinical care to our patients and their families. Consistent with the vision for the ACMD and with our broader, organisation-wide strategic focus on continuous improvement, our research efforts will be focused on collectively solving ‘problems from the bedside’; generating evidence and driving the rapid translation of evidence into clinical practice.

The SVHM Strategic Service Plan outlined an ambition for SVHM to become a destination for selected, world-class treatment, research and training, particularly in the areas of digestive diseases, musculoskeletal, neurosciences, cancer, cardiac, addiction medicine and palliative care. SVHM's Research Strategy will be a key enabler of this ambition driving breakthroughs through convergence.





# OUR STRATEGY

Breakthroughs through convergence: connecting ideas and accelerating translation to advance health outcomes for our communities.



**STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 1**  
**A CULTURE THAT EMBRACES THE**  
**PURSUIT OF RESEARCH TO IMPROVE**  
**CLINICAL PRACTICE AND DELIVER**  
**EXCEPTIONAL CARE**



**MAKING IT HAPPEN**



**MEASURE OF SUCCESS**

**STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 2**  
**OUR NEW GENERATION OF RESEARCHERS**  
**ARE ENGAGED AND CAPABLE**



**MAKING IT HAPPEN**



**MEASURE OF SUCCESS**

<p>Clarify the expectations and responsibilities for the whole SVHM community to actively support research as a core business of our organisation.</p>	<p>Realise the vision for the Aikenhead Centre for Medical Discovery to create Australia's first hospital-based biomedical engineering research hub.</p>	<p>Develop systems that empower consumer involvement in research.</p>	<p>Build research literacy across all staff groups to generate awareness and develop a deeper understanding of the benefits of research.</p>	<p>Promote research that enhances ability to address the complex care needs of our priority populations.</p>
<p>The ACMD collaborative is established and facility commissioned.</p>	<p>Individual research priorities and activities are identified and included in all relevant position descriptions and employment contracts.</p>	<p>A Research Consumer Engagement Plan is delivered that reflects actions to increase the opportunities for consumer engagement in research.</p>	<p>Research education programs are in place ranging from 'Fundamentals of Research' to 'Advanced Research' and are delivered through both online and face-to-face media.</p>	<p>An agreed suite of research key performance indicators is established for regular reporting to relevant SVHM &amp; SVHA Executive Committees.</p>
<p>Collaborate with academic partners, including the University of Melbourne and other affiliated universities, to establish structured development pathways for early career researchers.</p>	<p>Support clinicians to undertake higher degrees.</p>	<p>Develop research leaders.</p>	<p>Ensure Research Endowment Fund is aligned with SVHM's clinical strategy and funding is allocated equitably across professional groups, optimising effectiveness and impact for early career researchers.</p>	<p>Build capability in researchers to understand commercialisation pathways and the benefits commercialisation can bring to organisations and communities.</p>
<p>The SVHM Early Career Researcher Development Program and Research Mentoring Partnership Program is established</p>	<p>Minimum 20 per cent of the annual Research Endowment Fund is awarded to early career researchers.</p>	<p>Increased number of SVHM researchers enrolled in research leadership development programs (including for example, VCCC, MACH, MBS and other partner programs).</p>	<p>Succession plans are developed for key positions in research-active departments.</p>	<p>Five commercialisation education activities per annum are delivered for SVHM researchers (through partnership such as Actuator, Biocurate, the Wade Institute).</p>
				<p>More than 100 PhD candidates or higher degree researchers are based at SVHM campus each year, with representation across each professional group.</p>

## **STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 3**

### **EVERYONE PARTICIPATES IN RESEARCH**



**MAKING IT HAPPEN**



**MEASURE OF SUCCESS**

## **STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 4**

### **A COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH COMMUNITY WHERE PARTNERSHIPS THRIVE**



**MAKING IT HAPPEN**



**MEASURE OF SUCCESS**

Develop a Research Engagement Framework for SVHM.	Develop appropriate corporate processes for supporting research including financial, information technology and human resources processes.	Explore a centralised Clinical Trials function to support development and design of investigator-led clinical trials.	Support the Research Directorate to drive delivery of research commitments.	Ensure any future Electronic Medical Record development at SVHM facilitates research activities.	Support the maintenance of a biorepository facility.
A Research Engagement Framework is in place for SVHM and engagement is measured using an evidence-based research capacity and culture survey.	An agreed process and structure is in place for appointment of research staff, including dedicated research positions.	An agreed organisational policy and procedure is in place for management of research funds.	A centralised ethics and research governance database is implemented.	A Clinical Trials Management System is implemented.	A Research Concierge Program is established.
Establish a Research Advisory Council to enhance connectedness, oversight and visibility of research activities.	Build collaborative cross-disciplinary research programs.	Evolve the relationship with collaborating institutes and industry partners to better link clinician researchers with basic scientists to collaborate and solve problems from the bedside.	Continue to foster strong relationships with our core academic partners, including the University of Melbourne, to facilitate alignment of research priorities and deliver synergistic benefits.	Leverage opportunities afforded by St Vincent's Health Australia to further develop, and benefit from, research activities.	Map available research platforms to support collaborative research and develop a mechanism of sustaining and communicating this to the SVHM research community.
An SVHM Research Advisory Council is established.	20 or more grant applications are submitted annually to major funding bodies, both government and philanthropic.	SVHM is represented on research collaborative committees including: MACH, VCCC and relevant Cooperative Research Centres.	Five collaborative research streams and programs are in place across SVHA.	Cross discipline and cross clinical areas collaborative research is promoted in REF grant funding.	SVHM Platform Technology Network is implemented.

## **STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 5**

### **WE GENERATE VALUE FOR OUR ORGANISATION AND OUR COMMUNITIES**



**MAKING IT HAPPEN**



**MEASURE OF SUCCESS**

Actively showcase research activities to raise the profile of SVHM research on the national and international stage and to expand the reach of partnerships.	Ensure SVHM is a core member of the health and medical research sector in Victoria and nationally, with strong links to academic and industry partners.	Partner with the St Vincent's Foundation to generate exposure for research and optimise funding opportunities.	Promote SVHM as an active voice to advocate for health and medical research as a key driver of health, social equity and economic growth in Australia.	Develop an accessible IP policy to support our researchers on the commercialisation pathway.
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A coordinated SVHM research communication platform is established, including events program.	The SVHM Research Philanthropy Program is in place, including annual schedule of grant opportunities and applications.	SVHM research has an established social media presence.	SVHM is represented on key government health and medical research councils, peak bodies or advisory panels.	An accessible IP policy and procedure is implemented.
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# OUR RESEARCH ROADMAP

## OUR COMMITMENT

**A CULTURE THAT EMBRACES THE PURSUIT OF RESEARCH TO IMPROVE CLINICAL PRACTICE AND DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL CARE**

## IN 1 YEAR

An agreed suite of research key performance indicators for regular reporting to relevant SVHM & SVHA Executive Committees.

Five per cent of SVHM research studies approved annually reflect mission related research projects.

**OUR NEW GENERATION OF RESEARCHERS ARE ENGAGED AND CAPABLE**

Minimum 20 per cent of the annual Research Endowment Fund is awarded to early career researchers.

**EVERYONE PARTICIPATES IN RESEARCH**

An agreed organisational policy and procedure is in place for management of research funds.

An agreed process and structure is in place for appointment of research staff.

A centralised ethics and research governance database is implemented.

**A COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH COMMUNITY WHERE PARTNERSHIPS THRIVE**

An SVHM Research Advisory Council is established. SVHM is represented on research collaborative committees.

Cross discipline and cross clinical areas collaborative research is promoted in REF grant funding.

**WE GENERATE VALUE FOR OUR ORGANISATION AND OUR COMMUNITIES**

A coordinated SVHM research communication platform is established, including events program.

## IN 2 YEARS

## IN 3 YEARS

## IN 5 YEARS

Individual research priorities and activities are identified and included in all relevant position descriptions and employment contracts.

A Research Consumer Engagement Plan is delivered that reflects actions to increase the opportunities for consumer engagement in research.

Research education programs are in place ranging from 'Fundamentals of Research' to 'Advanced Research' and are delivered through both online and face to face media.

The ACMD collaborative is established and facility is commissioned.

The SVHM Early Career Researcher Development Program and Research Mentoring Partnership Program is established.

Increased number of SVHM researchers enrolled in research leadership development programs.

Succession plans are developed for key positions in research active departments.

Five commercialisation education activities per annum are delivered for SVHM researchers.

More than 100 PhD candidates are based at SVHM campus each year.

A Researcher Engagement Framework is in place for SVHM and engagement is measured.

A Clinical Trials Management System is implemented.

A Research Concierge Program is established.

An agreed and sustainable operational and financial plan is in place for the biorepository facility.

20 or more grant applications are submitted annually to major funding bodies.

SVHM Platform Technology Network is implemented.

Five collaborative research streams and programs are in place across SVHA.

The SVHM Research Philanthropy Program is in place, including annual schedule of grant opportunities and applications.

SVHM research has an established social media presence.

SVHM is represented on key government health and medical research councils, peak bodies or advisory panels.

An accessible IP policy and procedure is implemented.

# DELIVERING ON OUR RESEARCH COMMITMENTS WILL LEAD TO A FUTURE IN WHICH:

We embrace the pursuit of research to improve clinical practice and deliver exceptional care

Our new generation of researchers are engaged and capable

Everyone at SVHM participates in research

We have a collaborative research community where partnerships thrive

We generate value for our organisation and our communities



**SVHM.ORG.AU**



**ST VINCENT'S  
HEALTH AUSTRALIA**

UNDER THE STEWARDSHIP OF MARY AIKENHEAD MINISTRIES