



**Hon. Ben Wyatt MLA**  
**Minister for Finance**

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**MEDIA STATEMENT**

Thursday, 3 August 2017

## **Two neurotrauma research projects funded by the Insurance Commission of Western Australia**

- Two research groups funded up to \$100,000 for neurotrauma research
- Funding provided by the Insurance Commission of Western Australia
- The research aims to improve rehabilitation and independence outcomes for people catastrophically injured in car crashes

The Insurance Commission of Western Australia (Insurance Commission) will fund two neurotrauma research projects via the Neurotrauma Research Program at the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research which commenced on July 1, 2017.

These are the first projects funded as part of a three-year research funding contract with the Neurotrauma Research Program that aims to improve the rehabilitation and independence outcomes of people catastrophically injured in car crashes. The research projects were selected for funding following a competitive application and scientific peer-review process.

The first project focuses on stimulating locomotory movement in people with acquired brain injuries by using a mobile application that plays music and triggers pressure sensors on the foot.

This project will test the efficacy of the application to improve gait during rehabilitation exercises and to deliver improvements to patients' neurological and functional outcomes. The research team includes scientists and clinicians from The University of Western Australia, Murdoch University and Royal Perth Hospital.

The second project will involve researchers from the Perron Institute for Neurological and Translational Science, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and The University of Western Australia, undertaking a pre-clinical assessment of a peptide to reduce central nervous system injury following neurotrauma.

Certain peptides can protect the brain's neural pathways following an injury sustained in a car crash. This project will assess the neuro-protective potential of a peptide to reduce brain damage in neurotrauma-related injuries.

The funding of these initiatives follows an increase in care costs for the Insurance Commission after the introduction of the lifetime care scheme for people catastrophically injured in car crashes from July 1, 2016.

### **Comments attributed to Finance Minister Ben Wyatt:**

"Car crash injuries cost the Insurance Commission hundreds of millions of dollars every year.

"These costs increased with the introduction of the lifetime care scheme on July 1, 2016.

“The Insurance Commission hopes to lower the cost of car crash injuries by improving the rehabilitation and independence of people catastrophically injured, by funding neurotrauma research projects through the State’s Neurotrauma Research Program.

“This is a proactive initiative that funds leading Western Australian researchers in neurotrauma.

“I congratulate the two successful research teams on securing this funding and look forward to seeing the results of their research.”

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