



THE MASONIC CHARITIES TRUST
South Australia and the Northern Territory

Freemasons building a better future

MEDIA RELEASE: Boost for male health as Flinders University joins research alliance

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Flinders University has joined a ground breaking male health research alliance to create an unrivalled global entity.

The addition of Flinders University, in association with Flinders Foundation, as a research partner of the [Freemasons Centre for Male Health & Wellbeing](#) (FCMHW) is a significant milestone to mark during International Men's Health Week (June 14 to 20).

The involvement of Flinders University considerably broadens the scope and footprint of the Centre's research and translation activities, creating the largest and most comprehensive entity of its type.

[The Masonic Charities Trust](#), the charitable arm of Freemasons SA/NT, and Flinders Foundation are contributing an initial \$1.2 million over two years for men's health research based at Flinders University.

Flinders joins the Masonic Charities Trust and existing FCMHW research partners the University of Adelaide, the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) and Menzies School of Health Research.

An initial investment of \$4.8m over three years in boys' and men's health has been committed by the research partners, with a goal to achieve at least a 4:1 return from commonwealth and other funding pools for high impact programs.

The Masonic Charities Trust is donating a minimum of \$2.4m over three years to the FCMHW with the potential to extend its investment a further two years in the first instance.

Bringing together globally recognised leaders in male health, the Centre's focus is on the common chronic conditions affecting males, including prostate cancer, obesity, diabetes, depression, sleep disorders, and cardiovascular disease as well as health service use and delivery and social and emotional wellbeing.

Professor Robert Saint, the Deputy Vice Chancellor of Research at Flinders University, said he was delighted the institution was able to contribute its research expertise to tackling boys' and men's health.

"It is well known that males have particular health challenges, such as prostate cancer, and have unmet needs in relation to a range of chronic physical and mental health conditions," Professor Saint said.

"This burden is even more pronounced for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males, who have the poorest health and shortest lifespan of any population group in Australia. In addition to strengthening ongoing work in this area, Flinders University also delivers research programs aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of young men and Veterans."

David Booker, the Grand Master of the Freemasons of South Australia and the Northern Territory, said it was important that his organisation's charity arm supported the ongoing development and reach of a Centre that began in 2007 as the Freemasons Foundation Centre for Men's Health.

“We want the research, programs and young scientists we support to be representative of our entire jurisdiction, with Freemasons playing important roles in their communities from the bottom of South Australia to the top of the Northern Territory,” Mr Booker said.

“We are therefore very pleased to have Flinders University join the Centre, given its activities spread throughout the central corridor of Australia. Our goal is that by advancing male health and wellbeing, we also improve the health and wellbeing of families and communities.”

The 2021 theme for Men’s Health Week is, “Connecting for Men’s Health”, which resonates with the Centre’s SA director, Professor Gary Wittert, and NT director, Professor James Smith.

“This multidisciplinary and multi-institution Centre is unique in Australia and internationally in men’s health, with capabilities and capacity to address male health across the lifespan,” Professor Wittert said.

Professor Smith said there was, “no better example of the importance of connecting organisations and stakeholders with males to undertake research and co-design strategies to fast-track improvements in male health and wellbeing” than the FCMHW.

The SA division of the FCMHW was launched by Governor Hieu Van Le at SAHMRI in February 2021 and the NT division, based at Menzies, in November 2020.

The Centre builds on a 13-year research partnership, and reputation as leaders in men’s health research, between Freemasons SA/NT and the University of Adelaide.

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About Masonic Charities Trust

The Masonic Charities Trust is the major philanthropic arm of Freemasonry in South Australia and the Northern Territory. It is a leading charity organisation that constantly turns its eyes to, and focusses on, the needs of others. Freemasonry is one of the world’s oldest and largest non-religious, non-political, fraternal and charitable organisations.



About Freemasons Centre for Male Health & Wellbeing

FCMHW is a research alliance involving the Masonic Charities Trust, the University of Adelaide, Flinders University, Flinders Foundation and SAHMRI in SA and Menzies School of Health Research in the NT. FCMHW brings together globally recognised leaders in male health to ensure research translates into real world changes in clinical and public health practices.



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