




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

QIMR Berghofer, Funding

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.51 am): On Melbourne Cup day last week, Cross Counter may have won the great race, but Queensland secured the trifecta of research, investment and advanced jobs in biomedicine. On cup day, I announced a \$1.4 million boost in funding to leading medical research institute QIMR Berghofer which will support 40 full-time jobs at its Q-Gen facility in Herston as well as grow QIMR Berghofer's reputation as a world leader in immunotherapies.

The \$1.4 million in funding assisted the institute to secure a deal with US biopharmaceutical company Atara Biotherapeutics to develop immunotherapy treatments for clinical trials locally and in the United States and Europe. Immunotherapy works by training the immune system to recognise and destroy cancer and other harmful cells. Through our government's support, QIMR Berghofer can now expand its cell therapy facility, Q-Gen Cell Therapeutics, including purchasing specialised laboratory equipment. That means that Atara has agreed to extend its agreement with QIMR Berghofer to collaborate on research and development of new immunotherapies for cancer. The upgraded Q-Gen facility could also attract clinical trials to Queensland that may otherwise be conducted overseas. The project was supported by \$700,000 from the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning and \$700,000 from Queensland Health. I thank the Minister for Health for his strong support for Queensland's growing biomedical sector.

We believe a large part of the success of our mission to grow Queensland's economy relies on agreements like those recently signed between QIMR Berghofer and Atara. The Palaszczuk government's 10-year biomedical roadmap and action plan is attracting projects like this to Queensland. Our 10-year plan was developed in close consultation with industry to create high-value knowledge based jobs of the future and drive export growth for the industry—and, Mr Speaker, we are delivering.

In February, medical device manufacturer Cook Medical added 94 staff to its Eight Mile Plains facility to meet export demand for its life-changing stent devices. Fuelling the government's vision for this industry are programs such as our \$2 million Biomedical Assistance Fund, which delivers financial assistance to Queensland biomedical businesses developing innovative biomedical products.

Queensland's biomedical sector in 2015-16 added \$1.4 billion to the state's economy and employed 9,440 people. It is forecast to grow by up to 38 per cent over the next 10 years to \$1.9 billion and potentially generate a further 3,000 jobs. That is why the Palaszczuk government is committed to backing this growing industry and the thousands of jobs for Queenslanders it is supporting and creating now and into the future.