First sod turned for Smart State Medical Research Centre

The Queensland Premier, The Honourable Anna Bligh, turned the first sod for the $135 million Smart State Medical Research Centre on Tuesday 9 February, 2010.

Queensland Institute of Medical Research’s new building is set to expand the current research facilities within the Institute.

“This event is an important milestone for the Queensland Institute of Medical Research,” said the Chair of QIMR Council, Professor John Hay AC. “The new facility will accommodate an additional 400 scientists in 20 purpose-built research laboratories and serve to link the two existing QIMR buildings.”

Watpac Construction is building the new 13-floor state-of-the-art medical research facility, which will be on the site of the former Queensland Radium Institute.

"We are delighted to be playing a significant role in the development of this historic project," said Watpac Limited Managing Director, Greg Kempton.

“The Smart State Medical Research Centre will be an important asset to QIMR, and to the wider community, and we are committed to building a world-class, quality facility that will benefit Queenslanders for many years to come.”

“The capital expansion was made possible by a most generous gift from The Atlantic Philanthropies, as well as funding from the State and Federal governments. It will increase our current research capacity in areas such as tropical diseases, vaccine development, cancer and genetics. It will allow the development of a new Mental Health Research Division, as well as the expansion of our highly successful education program,” said Professor Hay from QIMR Council.
The sod-turning proceedings were opened with a Welcome to Country by Maroochy Barambah, Songwoman from the Turrbal people, and a traditional Indigenous smoking ceremony will be conducted by representatives from the Nunukula Yagera people.

To mark the occasion, a time capsule representing the Institute in 2010 was buried on the construction site. The capsule includes information about recent QIMR research achievements, the current state of Indigenous health in Australia, equipment used in QIMR laboratories including a Genotyping Chip, Epidemiology Health Questionnaire and a Gilson Pipetman, as well as a photographic list of current staff.

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QIMR
QIMR is one of Australia’s largest and most successful medical research institutes. Our researchers are investigating the genetic and environmental causes of more than 40 diseases as well as developing new diagnostics, better treatments and prevention strategies. The Institute’s diverse research program extends from tropical diseases to cancers to Indigenous health, mental health, obesity, HIV and asthma.

More information about QIMR can be found at www.qimr.edu.au

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