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UQ begins human dosing of COVID-19 vaccine

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The Queensland Government has provided $10 million Advance Queensland funding for the vaccine project



The next critical phase for Australia's University of Queensland's COVID-19 vaccine is underway – with the research effort moving out of the lab and into human trials.

Healthy adult volunteers have received the first dose of the vaccine at the Brisbane clinic of phase 1 clinical trials specialist, Nucleus Network.

UQ vaccine project co-leader Professor Paul Young said the first human trial was about evaluating the safety of the vaccine and the immune response it generates in a group of healthy volunteers.

"The green light to move into this first phase of human trials follows extensive pre-clinical testing that started when we first selected our lead vaccine candidate on 14 February," Professor Young said.

The Phase 1 trial will involve about 120 volunteers aged between 18 and 55, with a proportion of participants to receive a placebo.

"We expect to have preliminary results after about three months, and if all goes well, we can move as fast as we can to the next stage in the vaccine's development.

"That will be a larger trial with people from a range of ages, to ensure the vaccine works across the board", said Professor Young.

Queensland Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation Kate Jones congratulated the UQ team on reaching another important milestone.

"We invested millions into this research because we know a vaccine is crucial to defeating COVID-19," Ms Jones said.

"Our vaccine – made in Queensland by Queenslanders could save millions of lives throughout the world."

The Queensland Government has provided $10 million Advance Queensland funding for the vaccine project, the Federal Government has contributed $5 million and more than $10 million has been provided by philanthropic and other donors.

Image Caption- Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk speaks with the first volunteer to be given the COVID-19 vaccine.