

\$18 M investment for world-first Australian research project for heart attack protection

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Researchers will work to bring in the new treatment within 10 years



The government is investing almost \$18 million in a world-first Australian research project that will trial a drug discovered by Australian researchers that protects the heart during a heart attack.

In a major breakthrough, researchers from the University of Queensland discovered a peptide, known as Hi1a, that protects the heart during a heart attack and improves donor heart viability.

The drug is inspired by a molecule discovered in the venom of an Australian funnel-web spider and has the potential to save thousands of lives each year and improve the quality of life for heart attack survivors.

The Albanese government is providing \$17.86 million in funding over five years to a team led by Professor Glenn King at the University of Queensland for the project, known as The Heart Rehab Clinical Trials: Therapeutics to Protect the Human Heart project.

The project will involve clinical trials with a miniaturised version of Hi1a to develop the first-ever drugs for heart attack and heart transplantation. Researchers will work to bring in the new treatment within 10 years.

Heart attacks are the leading cause of death globally. Each year, more than 55,000 Australians will have a heart attack, and around 7,000 will die from one. Heart attacks are also the primary cause of heart failure, which has a significant impact on survival and quality of life.

The \$17.86 million in funding is provided through the Medical Research Future Fund's Frontier Health and Medical Research (Frontiers) grant opportunity.