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Australia to boost clinical trial landscape

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Singapore: Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has taken up the task of implementing initiatives to make the process of starting and conducting clinical trials significantly, more efficient and cost-effective in the country.

The work, under the Australian Government's Accelerating Clinical Trials Reforms initiative, was prompted by the 11 recommendations of the former Clinical Trials Action Group (CTAG), which has since been superseded as the Clinical Trial Advisory Committee (CTAC).

The initiatives are aimed at keeping Australia competitive as a destination for clinical trials and have three broad aims, to streamline research governance and ethical approval of clinical trials; develop training and education for researchers and support staff in industry and academia in order to facilitate clinical trial application submission and assessment; and develop a pilot project for the development of a fully interactive clinical trials portal which, it is hoped, would lead to increased patient recruitment into clinical trials.

The NHMRC also advised that it has received funding in July 2014 as part of the government's commitment to Simplified and Consistent Health and Medical Research. The funding from this initiative will initially be used to consider the feasibility of providing support for a small number of human research ethics committees (HRECs) to improve their efficiency during the review of clinical trials ethics applications.