



Media Release

2 April 2015

NHMRC's funding of monkey breeding facilities a backward step says Humane Research Australia

Last week (25th March 2015) Australia's peak medical research funding body, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), announced its grant of over \$1.7 million to breed monkeys for experiments in Australia. Monash University received \$1.25 million towards the maintenance and breeding of marmosets and macaques in Gippsland, Victoria, and the Sydney Local Health Network received \$487,500 to breed baboons at a facility in Wallacia in New South Wales.

"As the world moves away from using primates in research, with the National Institutes of Health in the United States phasing out chimp research, Australia is taking a backward step by committing more funds to breed primates for experimentation" **Helen Marston, CEO of Humane Research Australia (HRA) said today.**

The Australian not for profit organisation challenges the use of animals in experiments and says that these huge grants together with further grants for primate experiments in this country is a regression rather than scientific and moral progress.

Instead, HRA calls on the government to redirect funding to more scientifically valid, human-relevant research by establishing dedicated Centres for Alternative testing, such as those seen in Europe, the United States, Brazil, and South Korea.

Sadly, the \$1.7 million spent on monkey breeding facilities is only the tip of the iceberg with the NHMRC financially supporting the use of hundreds of primates in experiments every year.

"As well as the unethical nature of using sentient and highly cognitive animals as research tools, reliance on data from animal experiments is dubious as they are insufficiently predictive of human outcomes. This in turn causes major concern for Australian health when we rely on these out-dated models for human ills" Ms Marston concluded today.