

Media Release
13 October 2014

Mentored Clinical Researcher Fellowships Awarded

JDRF is delighted to announce the recipients of the Australian Type 1 Diabetes Clinical Research Network's (T1DCRN) prestigious Mentored Clinical Researcher Fellowship Award, worth \$30,000 per year for two years. The recipients, Dr Martin DeBock, Consultant Endocrinologist at the Princess Margaret Hospital in Western Australia, and Dr Bala Krishnamurthy, an Endocrinologist at the St Vincent's Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne, are both working on some of the most promising type 1 diabetes research and are being mentored by world leading researchers.

The Mentored Clinical Researcher Fellowship enables clinician researchers to establish their research career in the field of type 1 diabetes, by supporting one day per week of dedicated research time for involvement in a clinical research project, consistent with the objectives of the T1DCRN. Fellows must be supported by a mentor who is experienced in the field of clinical research.

"Supporting promising type 1 diabetes researchers to strengthen their skills and knowledge in the early part of their careers by working with world leading mentors, is crucial to building Australia's research strength in type 1 diabetes. We congratulate both Dr DeBock and Dr Krishnamurthy and look forward to hearing more about their projects as they progress," said JDRF Australia CEO, Mike Wilson.

Dr DeBock is being mentored by Prof Tim Jones at the Princess Margaret Hospital. Their research is at the forefront of developing a closed-loop system, or artificial pancreas, that would allow people with type 1 diabetes to live without the burden of constant blood glucose checks and insulin injections. He currently has a large clinical trial funded by the T1DCRN which is testing a feature on the closed-loop system that would allow episodes of hypoglycemia to be predicted and insulin delivery to be suspended before they occur.

Dr Krishnamurthy is working under the mentorship of Prof Thomas Kay, Director of the St Vincent's Institute of Medical Research. Dr Krishnamurthy and Professor Kay's research focuses on autoimmunity and type 1 diabetes. They are currently investigating the factors in pancreatic islet cells that stimulate the autoimmune response and lead to the destruction of these cells in type 1 diabetes.

The Fellowships have been awarded by JDRF's T1DCRN which is a national collaborative network that supports and promotes the most promising emerging researchers and research projects in type 1 diabetes clinical research in Australia. Led by Australia's brightest minds in type 1 diabetes, it is built around an innovative model that facilitates national and international collaboration on cutting edge research projects. The T1DCRN brings together and builds research teams from multiple research disciplines to answer the most important type 1 diabetes research questions with the goal of bringing us closer to finding a cure for type 1 juvenile diabetes and its complications.

More information about the Fellowship can be found at www.t1dcrn.org.au/for-researchers/mentored-clinical-researcher-fellowship

Further information, or interviews please call Catherine Strong 02 9020 6100.

About JDRF

JDRF is the leading global organisation funding type 1 diabetes (T1D) research. JDRF's goal is to progressively remove the impact of T1D from people's lives until we achieve a world without T1D. JDRF collaborates with a wide spectrum of partners and is the only organisation with the scientific resources, regulatory influence, and a working plan to better treat, prevent, and eventually cure T1D. As the largest charitable supporter of T1D research, JDRF is currently sponsoring USD\$568 million in scientific research in 17 countries, with over USD\$27 million currently devoted to research programs in Australia. JDRF was recognised as the 2014 Charity of the Year in The Australian Charity Awards. The award recognises JDRF's campaign to secure \$35 million of funding for the Type 1 Diabetes Clinical Research Network (T1DCRN) over five years. For more information, please visit www.jdrf.org.au.