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# Research funds to target diseases at gene level

**ROB HARRIS**

AUSTRALIA'S best and brightest medical researchers will share in a \$65 million investment in a new push to find cures for cancer, children's illnesses and diseases with low survival rates.

The research grants will be put towards unlocking the power of genomics. People with life-threatening genetic conditions could have their particu-

lar disease individually tested through genomic sequencing.

Health Minister Greg Hunt will today announce the first competitive call for applications under the Federal Government's \$500 million Genomics Health Futures Mission. The mission aims to transform the lives of more than 200,000 people through research into better testing, diagnosis and treatment.

The new type of medical

treatment works by looking deep into each patient's cells, analysing their DNA to work out how to target and destroy the cancer or disease.

It can result in a tailored treatment based on the individual, meaning doctors and specialists can find out what medicine might work for a particular disease and then get it to the patient.

Funding will be available over three years from 2019-20

for research into cancers, including lung cancer and mesothelioma, and diseases with high mortality (\$15 million); paediatric acute care genomic research for critically ill children (\$15 million); and ethical, legal and social issues related to genomics in health care (\$3.7 million). And more than \$30 million will be available over four years for pathogen genomics, including infectious respiratory diseases.