

Experts Meet to Solve Infectious Disease Challenges

13 August 2014

AUSTRALIA - Many of Australia's leading animal and human infectious disease experts are joining forces this week to identify challenges that might benefit from greater collaboration across Australia's research institutions.

The Forum will be held at the Geelong high-containment facility and is a joint initiative between CSIRO's Australian Animal **Health** Laboratory (AAHL) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

Professor Warwick Anderson, CEO of the NHMRC said the Forum was an important step towards managing infectious **disease** in **Australia**.

"More than 70 per cent of new and emerging infectious diseases originate in animals, so there are great benefits to merging the collective genius from both sides to address some of the nation's greatest infectious disease challenges." The Forum's workshops will be lead by Australia's Chief Medical Officer - Professor Chris Baggoley, Nobel Laureate - Professor Peter Doherty, and Director of the Sydney Institute for Emerging infectious Diseases and Biosecurity - Tania Sorrell.

This meeting of the minds will discuss emerging zoonotic disease threats, comparative medicine, and medical countermeasures including anti-microbial resistance, diagnostics and treatments.

The workshop structure of the program will enable researchers to tease out and prioritise issues that will deliver the greatest national and global impact by combining Australia's collective biomedical research and infrastructure capabilities.

Dr Kurt Zuelke, CSIRO Biosecurity Flagship Director and Executive Director, AAHL said: "AAHL's extensive Physical Containment Level 4 laboratories are some of the most sophisticated in the world, which when combined with the unique research tools, models and expertise available within the facility, have great potential for human health research as well as animal health.

"With funding through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy, we hope to facilitate greater access to this facility for fellow infectious disease researchers."

ThePigSite News Desk