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Malaria researcher awarded national fellowship

Menzies School of Health (Menzies) researcher Dr Kamala Thriemer has been awarded a prestigious \$1.25 million CSL Centenary Fellowship to develop and optimise treatment programs against vivax malaria in SE Asia and the Horn of Africa.

Vivax malaria is the second largest cause of malaria deaths and is hard to treat as the parasite can hide in the liver and re-emerge months later. Studies have shown that as few as one in ten patients successfully complete the long course of treatment.

The Plasmodium vivax strain of malaria, represents a challenging foe and is responsible for more than 14 million cases of infection every year, many of them fatal, yet receives little attention.

Kamala who is a graduate of the Medical University Vienna (MUV) in Austria, has been at Menzies over the past 6 years where she has led large clinical trials in malaria-endemic countries including Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Vietnam.

“P. vivax is hard to tackle because after the initial attack, it can hide in the liver and reappear weeks, even months later. A long period of treatment is required which patients often don’t complete, so they get sick again.

We have shown that shorter treatments than those that are currently used work well and we hope that it will be easier for people to complete their treatment” says Kamala.

Her research reveals that public health strategies to improve treatment outcomes must align with the geographic and economic conditions in any given nation. The five-year CSL Centenary Fellowship will enable her to generate country-specific roadmaps to guide public health programs.

It will also assist Darwin’s growing reputation as a key location for tropical health research.

“Darwin is a tropical city, located much closer to Jakarta than Melbourne, which makes it a perfect home for tropical health research” said Kamala

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Menzies School of Health Research

Menzies School of Health Research is one of Australia's leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving Indigenous, global and tropical health. Menzies has a history of over 30 years of scientific discovery and public health achievement. Menzies works at the frontline, joining with partners across the Asia-Pacific as well as Indigenous communities across northern and central Australia. Menzies collaborates to create new knowledge, grow local skills and find enduring solutions to problems that matter.

About the CSL Centenary Fellowships

The Fellowships are competitively selected, high value grants available to mid-career Australians who wish to continue a career in medical research in Australia. They were established to mark 100 years since the establishment of CSL in 1916. Two individual, five-year, AUD\$1.25 million fellowships are awarded each calendar year.
www.cslfellowships.com.au.

About CSL

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