



\$5 million grant to trial new Stepping Stones Triple P modules

Stepping Stones Triple P will be the focus of a (Aus) \$5.24 million research project aimed at improving mental health treatments for developmentally-disabled young people.

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) – Australia’s peak body for health and medical research - is funding the five-year project, to be conducted jointly by The University of Queensland, The University of Sydney and Monash University.

Stepping Stones is a specialist Triple P intervention for families who have a child with a disability. It helps parents develop effective management strategies for dealing with a variety of childhood behaviour problems and development issues.

The grant will enable a multi-site trial — in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria — to evaluate the efficacy of Stepping Stones Triple P as a multi-level system of intervention and to test some newly developed modules aimed at specific causes of developmental disabilities.

Chief investigators are Professor Matt Sanders (UQ), Professor Stewart Enfield (USyd) and Professor Bruce Tonge (Monash).

Professor Matt Sanders, who is also the founder of Triple P, said the mental health of young people with developmental disabilities was a substantial public health problem.

“Developmental disabilities affect about three per cent of children in high-income countries and there are stark health and access inequalities facing these young people” said Professor Sanders.

“The life expectancy for someone with an intellectual disability is 20 years lower than the general population.”

The Triple P project was among nine high-level medical research programs to receive NHMRC Program Grants.

Mark Butler, Australia’s federal minister for Mental Health and Ageing, said the funding was going to some of the nation’s most distinguished and highest profile researchers.

“The nine medical research programs announced today have the potential to unlock a range of key health issues,” said Mr Butler.

NHMRC Program Grants provide support for teams of the highest-quality researchers to drive their own five-year research projects to address complex health problems. They support the development of new ideas and approaches through collaborative work, and assist up-and-coming researchers.