



Otago Medical
Research
FOUNDATION

LEAVING A GIFT FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH



OMRF.ORG.NZ

Many people make gifts to charitable causes throughout their life. If you wish to contribute beyond your own lifetime in a way that creates meaning for future generations, you could make a bequest.

A legacy gift in your will is a great way to ensure your generosity benefits others for years to come.

A LASTING GIFT

Leaving clear instructions for your loved ones, about your wishes when you pass away, can relieve them of a lot of pressure at a very hard time.

A bequest is a gift of cash or assets made through your will. Even if you do not have many possessions, stating what you want done with them and how you would like your memorial handled is wise. Your solicitor can advise you on the best way to go about organising a bequest.

By gifting some of your estate to the OMRF, you will be creating a legacy of support for medical research.

ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The Otago Medical Research Foundation was founded in 1967 to further medical research in Otago. With the first round of grants distributed in 1968, we have now funded over \$12 million dollars in medical research projects.

The Foundation is a careful steward of donations, and we do not receive any Government funds. Research is undertaken in Otago with funds raised from a variety of bequests, trusts, individual and corporate sponsors, and a number of fundraising events each year.

WHAT DO WE FUND?

The Foundation supports innovative, early-stage medical research projects and student scholarships in Otago.

FUNDING DISTRIBUTION

SUMMER RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIPS



ANNUAL GRANTS & OTAGO COMMUNITY TRUST



LAURENSEN BEQUEST



JACK THOMSON BEQUEST



Funding distributed financial year ending March 2025

Annual Grant Round – our premier round of year-long, innovative early-stage research projects.

Student Scholarships – 10-week student summer research projects, supervised by senior researchers. These often lead to research and teaching careers for the students, and the projects contribute knowledge to the field.

Jack Thomson Bequest – research into the problems and treatment of arthritis.

Laurenson Bequest – research into the effects of proper diet and/or drugs on human health.

HOW WOULD WE USE YOUR GIFT?

Your gift will be used to fund important medical research here in Otago.

For nearly 60 years, the Foundation has funded millions of dollars in research into many of the world's most devastating conditions including cancer, immune disorders, heart disease, gut health, stroke, arthritis and dementia.

We focus on innovative research for better diagnoses, treatments and ways of managing illnesses.

Our Scientific Committee assesses every application for support and selects the very best each year.

We are careful custodians of the money you entrust us with. We spend wisely on administration and we are conservative with our investments to maximise the return to the research community.

CAN I SPECIFY HOW MY MONEY IS USED?

If there is an area of medical research of particular interest to you (you may have had someone close to you with a specific condition), we welcome you stating in your bequest exactly how you wish your gift to be used.

It pays to speak to us when you are thinking of something specific to ensure we are able to honour your wishes.

Or, you can leave it up to us. We are happy to receive gifts that allow us to determine where the best place is to spend the money given to research.

If in doubt, simply give us a call and we can come and see you to talk about what you would like.

Tracey Fleet
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Otago Medical Research Foundation

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FUNDING ALLOCATION

All medical researchers are passionate about their work, so to be certain our funding is distributed wisely we have a committee of scientific experts to oversee the process. The Foundation's Scientific Committee reviews all eligible projects and scholarship students through rigorous application rounds, choosing the very best each year. Funding excellent projects and scholarships ensures that students and researchers are able to work in Otago, helping build our community along with focused research outcomes.



Professor Greg Jones,
Chair of the Scientific Committee

FOUNDATION PATRON

Emeritus Professor Gil Barbezat

Emeritus Professor of Medicine, Gil Barbezat, sought OMRF funding for trials not long after he set up a gastrointestinal research lab in the University of Otago Medical School.

"The beauty of OMRF funding to initiate a project meant we gained proof of concept, which meant we could then qualify for a larger Health Research Council grant to take it further."

Practising as a consultant gastroenterologist in Dunedin provided Gil with a real connection between patients and clinical practitioners, and informed his teaching and research programmes. Clinical teaching staff in medicine are required to maintain clinical expertise as well as conducting teaching and research.

He has been impressed by the many research projects the OMRF has invested in over the years and is equally proud of their student summer scholarship support. "The OMRF relationship provided a very necessary foot on the first steps of a research career."

As the Foundation's Patron, Gil enjoys an ongoing interest in medical education and research, and in community affairs.



PHOTO: Alan Dove

RESEARCHER

Dr Alisa Boucsein

Dr Alisa Boucsein's groundbreaking research at the University of Otago is already changing lives for people with Type 1 diabetes - a condition that affects thousands of New Zealanders every day.

Diagnosed at just 13, Alisa understands the constant pressure of managing diabetes - the injections, the anxiety and the 180+ decisions required daily just to stay well. Her personal experience drives her mission: to help life with Type 1 diabetes easier and healthier.

Working alongside Prof Ben Wheeler's team, Alisa has helped test automated insulin delivery systems for children. The impact has been remarkable - an extra 8.5 hours each day in safe blood-sugar ranges, dramatically reducing stress for families and improving quality of life.

With support from generous donors, the next phase is now underway - ensuring Māori and Pasifika adults can access advanced smart-pump technology that automatically adjusts insulin to reduce the daily burden of care.

This support has helped create a future where managing diabetes isn't a constant struggle - but something technology can take care of.



WE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOU

It is helpful for us to know if you have planned a gift to the Foundation in your will. This will ensure that we can acknowledge your generous support and keep you up-to-date with our work. There is no need to specify an amount, just let us know.

The Otago Medical Research Foundation (Inc.) is a registered charity.

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To donate

Otago Medical Research Foundation
Bank Acc. Number: **01-0815-0104572-00**

Charities Number: **CC33444**

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WHY MAKE A BEQUEST TO THE OTAGO MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION?

For one anonymous Foundation supporter, it is wanting to make a difference.*

The benefactor has seen first-hand the effects of Alzheimer's disease and cancer on the sufferer and their loved ones, and says it's not something you'd wish on anyone.

"After losing both my parents and a close friend to these awful diseases I started to think about what I could do – was there some role I could play personally that could make a difference, big or small, to help provide answers, and that would prevent another family having to take that same journey?

I thought long and hard about the options when a friend suggested a bequest to the Foundation, and I realised it made sense. I would be providing for my own children too, but creating a bequest meant I could also do something bigger with my money.

I felt strongly that I want to give back and feel like research is the way we will find answers to

the suffering these diseases cause. So providing money towards supporting research into cancer is my way of contributing.

The Foundation is well established and has a good reputation and is all about backing medical research; I know without this type of support there wouldn't be the people and the same level of work into tackling some of life's big problems. My bequest will help to keep that going and knowing that in the future this may help someone to live longer makes me feel like I am doing something positive.

I don't need to be involved or even to attend events; I trust the Foundation's Scientific Committee to invest into projects that make a difference.

Every person's journey is different, but if you're looking for a practical way to give back and fight the impact of these diseases on individuals and families, the bequest option is a good choice."

- Anonymous

**If you'd prefer for your support to remain anonymous, please let us know.*