

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW RESEARCH GRANT AWARDED TO HELP REDUCE STILLBIRTH RATES AND ENABLE EARLIER DETECTION OF AT-RISK PREGNANCIES

Stillbirth Foundation Australia, together with the National Centre for Research Excellence in Stillbirth (Stillbirth CRE), today announced major new funding for stillbirth research.

A grant of \$60,000 has been awarded to Dr Md Reduanul Hossain and his research team at the University of Newcastle, Australia. The innovative research grant will focus on testing the hypothesis that markers of placental aging can be detected in fragments of the placenta released into the mother's blood.

This research aims to provide a method for early detection of pregnancies at risk for stillbirth, offering new opportunities for prevention.

Dr Hossain said the potential impact is that a blood test can be developed to indicate the level of aging of the placenta that will enable the mother, family, and obstetrician to understand the risks for the pregnancy better.

Stillbirth Foundation Australia Chair, A/Prof Sean Seeho, said this awarded grant represents a real commitment to reduce the incidence and impact of stillbirth in Australia.

“With six babies stillborn every day in Australia, there is an urgent need for further research focused on early detection and preventative measures to help reduce the incidence and impact of stillbirth. This project has the potential to detect pregnancies at risk of stillbirth from premature aging of the placenta allowing clinicians earlier interventions to save babies,” A/Prof Seeho said.

“This research is only possible because of the extraordinary efforts of the Foundation’s supporters, who give their time to raise funds, and our donors who contribute each year to invest into key priority areas identified as part of the National Stillbirth Research Priorities Report 2023.

“These are often individuals who have been personally affected by stillbirth and who generously give their time, energy and resources in the hope of preventing other families from experiencing the same loss.”

Dr Md Reduanul Hossain is an Early Career Researcher within the Mothers and Babies Research Program (MBRP) at the University of Newcastle, Australia. His research focuses on developing innovative therapeutic and diagnostic interventions in reproductive medicine, with a particular emphasis on preterm birth prevention through nanoparticle-based uterine-targeted drug delivery systems and the establishment of a non-invasive placental liquid biopsy for the early detection of preterm birth and stillbirth risk.

To find out more about Stillbirth Foundation Australia visit: www.stillbirthfoundation.org.au