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*MEDIA RELEASE*

## *COALITION COMMITS \$42 MILLION TO TROPICAL MEDICINE AT JCU*

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**The Hon Joe Hockey MP**

Shadow Treasurer

Coalition Campaign Spokesman

**The Hon Andrew Robb AO MP**

Shadow Minister for Finance, Deregulation and Debt Reduction

Chairman of the Coalition Policy Development Committee

**Ewen Jones MP**

Member for Herbert

A Coalition Government will invest \$42 million to support the expansion of James Cook University's (JCU) renowned Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine (AITHM).

Today's announcement further underlines the Coalition's determination to support the development of Northern Australia.

In June Tony Abbott and Andrew Robb, along with Senator Ian MacDonald and Ewen Jones, launched *The Coalition's 2030 Vision for Developing Northern Australia*, an effective 'green paper' – at JCU Townsville – after three years of active consultation across the north. This will inform the development and release of a strategic white paper within the first 12 months of a Coalition Government.

The Coalition has strongly identified tropical health and medical research as an enormous opportunity for Northern Australia, underpinned by the impressive work to date by institutions like JCU.

The tropical region, which includes Northern Australia, accounts for more than 40 per cent of the world's population – a figure which is projected to grow to 50 per cent by 2050.

The Coalition's \$42 million investment matches the funding commitment made by the Queensland LNP Government. The \$42 million commitment includes:

- \$25.5 million to fund Tropical Health Research and Training facilities at JCU in Townsville, Cairns and Thursday Island;
- \$10 million to fund a Translational Research Centre at JCU Townsville;
- \$1.5 million to fund an Occupational Health Research Centre in Mackay; and
- \$5 million to fund Network and general operating activities.

This funding will further support the wonderful work being carried out by JCU, under the leadership of Vice-Chancellor Sandra Harding, and further enhance AIITHM's reputation as a world-leading centre of excellence.

It will help support research and training in virology, disease and vector control as well as the development of new treatments and vaccines for tropical diseases. The funds will also go towards supporting clinical trials, tele-health and translational research and training to aid international infectious and chronic disease efforts.

In addition this investment will support research and strategies to enhance workplace safety in key regional industries.

This funding commitment demonstrates the importance the Coalition places in developing the core strengths of Northern Australia, which includes James Cook University and in particular the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine.

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