



## St George Hospital and Community Health Services

15 March, 2017

### An Australian first: gut research at St George Hospital



St George and Sutherland hospitals are opening Australia's first medical research centre dedicated to studying gut micro biome.

Federal Health Minister **Greg Hunt** announced funding of \$4.4 million to the St George and Sutherland Medical Research Foundation to go towards the research work on 27 February.

The Minister said it was estimated that one in two Australians would experience a digestive problem over the next 12 months and the centre would investigate how the disturbances occur and cause disease.

Professor **Emad El-Omar**, Professor of Medicine at St George and Sutherland hospitals, will lead the research.

"The bugs that grow in your gut have a major influence on your health, and are responsible for lots of diseases that affect our community and our society," Emad said.

"It is essential the centre is embedded in the clinical domain in our hospitals, led and driven by clinicians who understand disease, but utilising state of the art science and technology to answer those clinical questions."

"For that reason, I think it was so important to be able to establish a structure or a body like this, because it needs funding, effort and takes a lot of commitment," he said.



**Health**  
South Eastern Sydney  
Local Health District

"This is very exciting because it allows us to link up with things like critical care, mental health, diabetes... Imbalances in micro biota are connected to a range of diseases, including stroke, asthma, obesity, diabetes, mental health, and pre-eclampsia in pregnant women."

The centre will build on research already being undertaken in collaboration with clinicians at St George and Sutherland hospitals.

**Peter Christopher**, Chief Executive of the St George and Sutherland Medical Research Foundation, said the project would be "a cornerstone" for the foundation's growth to international status.