


# Federal government grant for world-first dementia treatment invented in Warrnambool



Kyra Gillespie

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 New medication: Dr Tim Morgan from Warrnambool's company Lachesis Biosciences Limited have received funding for a nasal spray to help treat dementia. Picture: Anthony Brady

Spurred on by the loss of his grandparents to Alzheimer's disease, Warrnambool's Dr Tim Morgan has created a new dementia nasal spray to help sufferers live longer.

Dr Morgan has received a \$438,000 federal government grant to help get the world-first Rivastigmine Nasal Spray to the commercial market.

The product reduces the risk of a dementia patient dying by 10 to 30 per cent and works in a similar way to existing oral and patch treatments but without many of the side effects, including nausea and skin irritation.

"My nanna was particularly proud of me when I graduated, she passed away with Alzheimer's dementia and that was one of my motivations to do this," he said.

"Both my grandparents had Alzheimer's dementia and went off therapy because of tolerability issues. The nasal spray is solving that issue by improving tolerability so the patients can stay on the optimal and higher doses for longer.

"I don't want anyone else to go through what my family did."

He said the product will help dementia-sufferers stay at home for longer.

"It's not a cure, but it keeps them at home longer living independently. Doctors call it a stabilising treatment," he said.

***“It's about providing patients with hope.”***

Dr Tim Morgan

"Once a patient's been diagnosed with dementia, without a cure they will eventually pass away from the disease, and that will typically take seven to eight years.

"So if we can slow that process down, giving them more time to live independently, that is really important. They might get anywhere between six to 18 months further at home rather than in nursing care.

"It's about providing patients with hope."

Wannon MP Dan Tehan said he was proud to see the grant go to Dr Morgan.



 Grant: Dr Tim Morgan from Warrnambool with Wannan MP Dan Tehan. Picture: Anthony Brady

"You have to have a good product and it has to have that commercial potential, and that's exactly what this product has to offer," Mr Tehan said.

"The fact that it's been produced here in Warrnambool I just think is terrific and it goes to show that this type of research can take place anywhere from across Australia.

"Not only have we developed it but now we're going to commercialise it, and that brings export returns as well as improving domestic outcomes here in terms of better outcomes of people staying at home.

"If you can keep someone out of an aged care facility for 12-18 months that's a huge impact on our long-term aged care and health budget - all being done here in Warrnambool."

Dr Morgan has been working on the product at his Warrnambool laboratory since late 2014.

He and his team at Lachesis Biosciences Limited will carry out two more studies over the next six months to get the product to the final pivotal stage, which will be testing the product in dementia patients.

His technology has just been patented in the United States.

"That study data will be the launching platform to a commercial deal which will bring export dollar into Australia," he said.