

1. MND BIOMARKER PROGRAM

PROJECT:

Pre-familial and early MND biomarker program

PROJECT LEAD:

Associate Professor Mary-Louise Rogers
Flinders University, SA

“This is an exciting opportunity to work collaboratively with MND researchers in Europe and Australia to, for the first time, identify an ‘early signature or fingerprint’ of MND.” – Associate Professor Mary-Louise Rogers



Biomarkers are molecules that detect or confirm the presence of a specific disease. Currently, biomarkers specific to MND are not available for clinical use, which is delaying diagnosis for patients by more than 12 months. This innovative collaborative project between researchers in Australia and Europe aims to overcome this barrier. Investigators are developing a signature of early MND by measuring specific markers in body fluids such as blood, urine, and brain fluids.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

This international collaborative project will utilise the Ian Davis Flinders University Biomarker Facility which is funded by FightMND and named in honour of the late co-founder of FightMND, Dr Ian Davis OAM. The project will build a fingerprint of MND to fast-track diagnosis and identify causes of the disease.

AMOUNT INVESTED BY FIGHTMND IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT:

\$499,980

Q&A:

Why is this important and how will it benefit patients?

For MND patients and their carers, our project provides hope. Our large collaborative project may uncover a biomarker/signature that increases the efficiency of future clinical trials by enabling earlier diagnosis, and thus a longer window where therapy can be effective. For pre-familial MND, an early fingerprint also provides a decision tool for an earlier start of effective therapy when available.



Above: Associate Professor Mary-Louise Rogers | Below: Vassilios Karnaros (PhD student), Dani Renfrey (Research Assistant), Megan Dubowsky (PhD student), Associate Professor Mary-Louise Rogers (Lab Head) and Dr Stephanie Shephard (Postdoctoral Fellow)