



# 3D technology faces up to a healthy WA future

Friday, 19 August 2016

- **World-class research to unlock rare disease diagnosis**
- **Pilbara children focus of new \$298,000 study**

World-class Western Australian health research promising early diagnosis of rare diseases is being extended to the Pilbara.

Welcoming a \$298,000 donation by the Roy Hill Community Foundation to establish the Pilbara Faces study, Health Minister John Day said the research would have Australian and international implications.

"I congratulate the foundation on its commitment to Pilbara Faces, which is the latest - and largest - extension of a significant Western Australian health project," Mr Day said.

"It highlights the skills and innovative approach of Western Australian researchers, especially the work of renowned geneticist Clinical Associate Professor Gareth Baynam and his team at Genetic Services of Western Australia.

"Since 2013, Dr Baynam has been recording children's faces and identifying telltale features and contours, some that are not easily distinguished by the naked eye. These variations can flag rare diseases affecting thousands of West Australians and millions worldwide."

Working from Princess Margaret and King Edward Memorial hospitals, the Genetic Services of WA team began the current equitable health innovation project in 2013. This work has been enabled by Dr Baynam's Department of Health Raine Clinician Research Fellowship. They have recently recorded children's faces in the Goldfields, extending the library of Aboriginal faces to 120.

"One of the advantages of 3D imaging for disease diagnosis is that it is less invasive than many other tests and is often seen as a fun experience by children," the Minister said.

"Testing this way takes just 20 minutes and is not only cheaper but promises to be more accurate, especially as the database grows and is further analysed.

"The research aims to produce diagnostic tools that can be used by doctors around the world and is an example of the Liberal National Government's commitment to, and investment in, supporting innovation for the benefit of the Western Australian community."

The Pilbara Faces project starts in 2017 and will run for three years.

**Fact File**

- **Genetic Services of WA is an agency of the Department of Health**
- **Pilbara Faces has been made possible by a \$298,000 donation from the Roy Hill Community Foundation and support from the Perth Children's Hospital Foundation**
- **The funding was driven by the Emerging Leaders in Philanthropy Program, an initiative of the Perth Children's Hospital Foundation**

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