

Modern Slavery Statement 2025



Chairman Statement

This is the Modern Slavery Statement ('Statement') for Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) and Victorian Clinical Genetics Services (VCGS) for the financial year ended 31 December 2025 ('Statement Period') under the Australian Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth) ('Act'). MCRI is the reporting entity under the Act. For this Statement, reference to MCRI or 'we' refers jointly to MCRI and VCGS unless otherwise stated.

At MCRI, we recognise the importance of identifying and addressing Modern Slavery risks as we pursue our purpose to give all children the opportunity to live a healthy and fulfilled life.

Modern Slavery covers a range of exploitative practices that impact upon people's freedoms including human trafficking, forced or compulsory labour including any form of child exploitation and abuse.

This statement outlines our approach to identifying and minimising risks of Modern Slavery in our operations now and in the future. It upholds our commitment to combat Modern Slavery and protect the human rights and freedoms of any individuals, including of our personnel and those involved in MCRI's operations and supply chains.

Murdoch Children's Research Institute makes this statement in accordance with section 13 of the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth) and following consultation with its subsidiary, Victorian Clinical Genetics Services Limited.

This statement was approved by our Board of Directors on 4/6/2026.

Patrick Houlihan
Chairman and Non-Executive
Board Director

Our Purpose

**To give all children the
opportunity to live a
healthy and fulfilled life**



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Introduction

Key Objective

MCRI's objective is to combat exploitative practises that violate an individual's dignity and human rights in all forms.

MCRI

MCRI is a registered charity that marks its 40th year of operations in 2026. MCRI is Australia's largest child health research institute and is dedicated to making discoveries to prevent and treat childhood conditions. Many of our researchers are also clinicians at The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) and often hold joint appointments at the University of Melbourne.

MCRI specialises in discoveries transforming child health and our research improves the lives of millions of children each year. We also study the health of communities to understand what factors influence child health at the population level and research common infections and immune conditions both locally and globally. MCRI's work goes beyond research to impact clinical practice and community health. We are one of the only research institutes in Australia to offer genetic testing to find answers for families of children with previously undiagnosed conditions, using the latest genetic sequencing technology.

Our Approach

Over the reporting period, we assessed and identified Modern Slavery risks within our supply chain, worked closely with our research partners including the Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI) and the Informed 365 supplier platform and increased organisational awareness.

We have categorised our total 3rd party spend into three risk categories reviewing the following to assess individual supplier risk:

- Annual spend with individual suppliers
- Categories of goods and services delivered
- Location of the supplier globally

We have continued to maintain a risk-based approach to assessing our suppliers during the statement period and have utilised the Walk Free Global Slavery Index as a guide to identify the risk rating in conjunction with the categories of goods and services purchased and the location of the supplier.

The Walk Free Global Slavery Index is a comprehensive data set that provides estimates of Modern Slavery risk in 160 countries around the world. A risk score is assigned to each country based on 23 risk variables across five major areas:

Walk Free's five major risk areas



MCRI's Modern Slavery risk management is overseen and endorsed by executive leadership and approved by the Board. The Audit, Finance and Risk Committee, a sub-committee of the Board, has responsibility for overseeing MCRI's response to Modern Slavery risks.

Key Areas of Focus 2025

- Conducted a full supply chain review of our supplier base.
- Completed policy reviews and updates including Procurement Policy, Child Safety Policy and Counter-Terrorism Financing Procedure.
- Maintained and upheld fully compliant hiring practices, Bribery and Corruption Policy and Code of Conduct.
- Conducted whistleblower training for the senior executive team.
- Became an active member of the AAMRI consortium and commenced using the Informed 365 supplier platform.
- Reviewed Global Health communication guidelines.
- Engaged with United Nations agencies including WHO and UNICEF.
- Collaborated with Universities and other non-government organisations.
- Increased Modern Slavery awareness organisation wide.



About MCRI

Our Structure

MCRI's research is centred around five themes: Genomic Medicine, Stem Cell Medicine, Infection Immunity & Global Health, Clinical Sciences and Population Health.

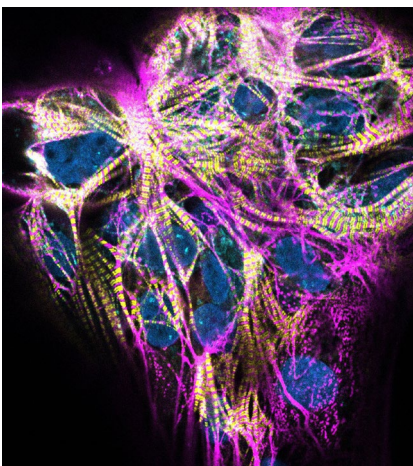
In addition to the five key research themes, MCRI wholly owns a Not-for-profit subsidiary, Victorian Clinical Genetics Services Limited ('VCGS'). VCGS is a specialist prenatal, childhood and adult genetics service, one of the largest contributors driving genetic healthcare, research and policy in the country and the pioneering clinical genetic services arm of MCRI.

Underpinning the research activities is a Research Support and Operations function providing support services to sustain and enhance those research and clinical activities.

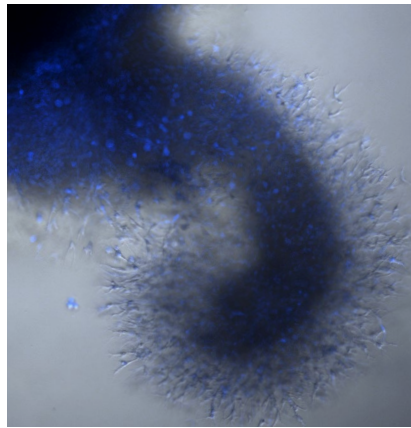
Our five themes are detailed below:

Genomic Medicine

Our scientists study the genome to understand the genetic basis of diseases including ataxia, thalassemia, mitochondrial and chromosome disorders.



Dr Antonia Zech, Heart Regeneration and Disease labs



Dr Kat Goodall, Senior Research Officer, Raymond Yow, Research Assistant, Blood Development

Stem Cell Medicine

Stem cell medicine researchers work with stem cells and cutting-edge technology to understand how disease alters healthy cells. They're developing new treatments for children with cancer, congenital diseases and developmental disorders.

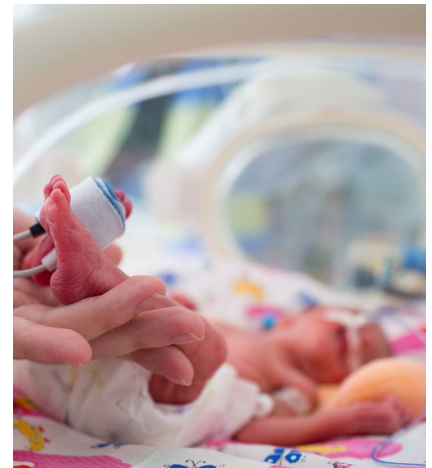
Infection, Immunity & Global Health

Allergies, infections, and immune conditions are under the microscope at MCRI with a major focus on improving health outcomes for children and adolescents in low-to middle-income countries. To achieve these goals, we work with the World Health Organization, UNICEF, multilateral and regional organisations and NGOs, universities, research institutes and governments in 14 countries.



Clinical Sciences

Our co-location within The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) enables our clinical researchers to conduct high-quality clinical trials and patient-focussed research, pushing the boundaries in areas like Neonatal research, Diabetes & Endocrinology, and Transgender Health Research.



Population Health

Researchers in this theme are studying the health of communities and developing interventions to solve modern epidemics of obesity, allergy, diabetes, and mental illness, advancing understanding of the social, environmental, and biological factors influencing child and adolescent health.





Our Values

We are founded on three values as outlined below:

- **Courage** – leading with bold action, authenticity and purpose
- **Integrity** – building trust through rigour, responsibility and transparency
- **Curiosity** – driving discovery, creativity and collaboration

Act with **Courage**

- **Have brave conversations.**
Create a safe and inclusive environment where all voices are heard, fostering open and honest communication, even when difficult.
- **Explore and discover.**
Seek out novel research questions and push the boundaries of knowledge by embracing challenges and pushing ourselves past limitations.
- **Learn from setbacks.**
View setbacks as valuable learning opportunities, openly discussing challenges and sharing lessons learned to foster collective growth and resilience.
- **Step beyond the familiar.**
Seek out new experiences and skills, embrace experiences that stretch your capabilities and broaden your perspective.
- **Value authenticity and action.**
Have the courage to be the authentic version of yourself and actively advocate for support, fairness, equity and wellbeing.

Act with **Integrity**

- **Uphold scientific rigour.**
Maintain the highest standards of accuracy and transparency in the design, conduct and analysis of research, ensuring the reproducibility and validity of our research.
- **Make ethical choices.**
Balance personal goals with responsible, honest and fair behaviour that respects others' rights and promotes the wellbeing of our Institute.
- **Take ownership.**
Accept responsibility for actions and outcomes, learning from mistakes with humility and a commitment to continuous improvement.
- **Be transparent.**
Share the 'why' behind decisions, inviting open dialogue, and fostering a culture of understanding and trust.
- **Build trusting partnerships.**
Approach teamwork with a generosity of spirit and respect, building strong, collaborative partnerships that empower every member to contribute their best.

Exercise **Curiosity**

- **Inquire with intention.**
Ask thoughtful questions with a genuine desire to understand, creating a culture where curiosity is valued and every perspective is heard.
- **Spark innovation:**
Embrace a mindset of exploration, venture beyond conventional thinking, and seek out new ideas, technologies and approaches to spark innovation and advance discovery.
- **Seek solutions:**
Question existing norms with a positive and solution-oriented mindset, striving to make our Institute better each day.
- **Collaborate, share and grow.**
Connect with colleagues to exchange ideas, continuously learn from one another and ignite creativity.
- **Listen and connect.**
Seek inspiration and knowledge from our community and actively listen to diverse voices to ensure our work addresses real-world needs.



Our Locations

Our main operations are based in
The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) in Victoria, Australia.

We also conduct program and research activities with collaborators around the world including in: Austria, Brazil, Cambodia, Denmark, Fiji, France, the Gambia, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Thailand, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States of America, Vanuatu and Vietnam.



Modern Slavery risk assessment Supply chain review

MCRI operates within diverse supply chains acquiring goods and services from domestic and international suppliers including the Asia Pacific region, America, Canada, Africa and Europe.

The total supplier spend for the reporting period was \$110.1M of which \$9.5M represents the Institute's spend with international suppliers. This equates to 8.6% of the Institute's total supplier spend.

Category of Goods and Services - Percentage of spend

Our spend is categorised and tabulated below for our international suppliers:

Global agency costs	7.24%
Laboratory & Research Equipment	0.89%
Laboratory sequencing	16.13%
Commercialisation expenses/licenses/ maintenance contracts	11.75%
Computer hardware, software products and services	10.74%
Research conferences and staff training	2.42%
Consultants and professional services	8.31%
Research equipment	0.22%
Freight and Cartage	0.42%
Research publications and subscriptions	5.19%
Research project costs	17.55%
Medical and surgical supplies	1.10%
Clinical research memberships	0.56%
Clinical trial collaborators	14.52%
Overseas travel	1.09%
Pathology services	1.83%
Safety equipment	0.04%
Total	100%

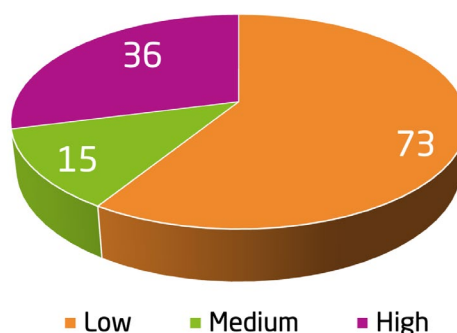
Modern Slavery risk assessment by supplier

We maintained a risk-based approach to assessing our suppliers during the Statement period and have aligned with the Informed 365 principles for risk rating. This assessment considers the following:

Annual spend with individual suppliers	Categories of goods and services delivered	Location of suppliers globally
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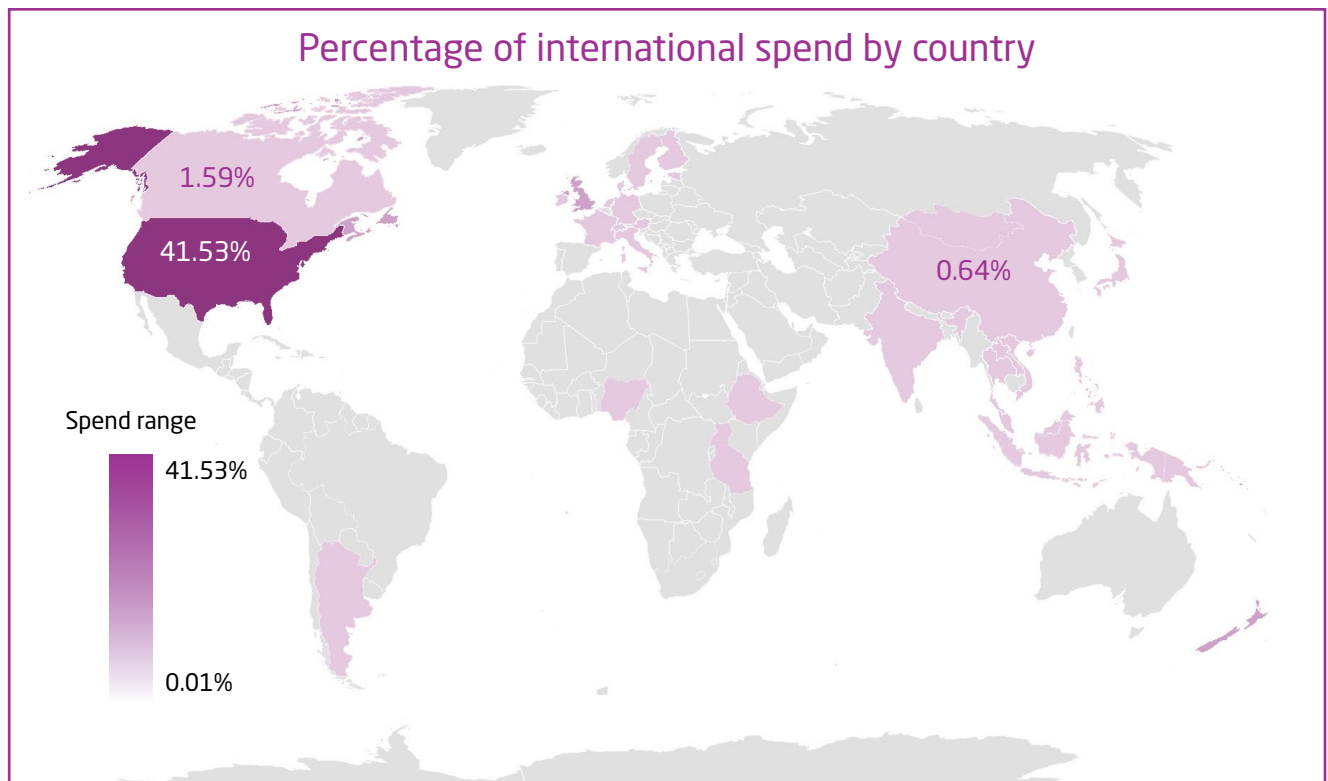
A summary of our risk assessment is graphed below:

Risk rating of key international suppliers





Our supply locations outside Australia



Country	Spend %	Score ¹
Argentina	0.63%	36
Austria	0.09%	8
Cambodia	2.32%	58
Canada	1.59%	11
China	0.64%	46
Denmark	0.50%	6
Ethiopia	0.12%	67
Fiji	2.68%	N/A
Finland	1.74%	5
France	1.78%	13
Germany	3.24%	11
Ghana	0.11%	45
India	0.26%	56
Indonesia	2.14%	49
Ireland	0.11%	9
Italy	0.51%	22
Japan	0.52%	11
Kiribati	6.19%	N/A
Laos	0.45%	52
Lithuania	0.28%	21
Luxembourg	0.26%	N/A
Malawi	0.11%	55

Country	Spend %	Score ¹
Malaysia	0.34%	37
Mongolia	0.93%	50
Netherlands	4.01%	6
New Zealand	3.44%	8
Nigeria	0.51%	76
Papua New Guinea	0.57%	79
Paraguay	0.11%	47
Philippines	0.14%	66
Portugal	0.01%	6
Sierra Leone	0.07%	55
Singapore	5.58%	24
Solomon Islands	2.74%	N/A
Sweden	2.89%	7
Switzerland	0.92%	14
Tanzania	0.16%	53
Thailand	0.08%	46
Tonga	0.07%	N/A
Uganda	0.30%	62
United Kingdom	8.44%	14
USA	41.53%	25
Vietnam	0.90%	44

(Global Slavery Index 2023 Dataset, Walk Free Foundation, available from: www.globalslaveryindex.org)¹
Indicating the vulnerability of a country in relation to Governance, Nourishment, Inequality, Disenfranchised Groups and Effects of Conflict (scale 1-100; low is desirable).



Modern Slavery risk assessment by Country

An assessment of our supply locations against the Global Slavery Index identified the following as posing higher risks of Modern Slavery during MCRI's Statement Period:

- Ethiopia
- Nigeria
- Papua New Guinea
- Philippines
- Uganda

Overall, we were able to maintain a relatively low spend in these locations, effectively the same as the previous reporting period. Combined this spend is 1.5% of MCRI's overseas supply spend. Furthermore, and significantly, our work in these destinations is not in high-risk industries for Modern Slavery.





Our actions and effectiveness

Our actions

Operational due diligence

The steps taken to identify and manage Modern Slavery risks within our operations include:

Supply chain review

By reviewing supplier transactions, we were able to identify that most of our key suppliers with whom we transacted rated low risk for Modern Slavery. These suppliers are also in countries considered low risk for Modern Slavery by the Walk Free Global Slavery Index 2023. It also enabled us to identify suppliers that we had not transacted with previously and record these for future monitoring.

Policy reviews and development

Our policy documents support our vision and values and form part of our key compliance controls in our operations and supply chains. Regular review of MCRI's organisational policies helps to ensure that we meet our legal and ethical obligations, and fulfill MCRI's mission, goals and objectives. This Statement Period included review of the following policies, guidelines and practices:

- Global Health Communication Guidelines - to ensure transparency, accountability and integrity in our work with collaborators in low-to middle-income communities.
- Engagement with United Nations Agencies, including the World Health Organization and UNICEF
- Ongoing collaboration with universities and non-government organisations. MCRI is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and is committed to respectful representation of other non-government organisations.

- Child Safety Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Counter-Terrorism Financing Procedure
- Whistleblower Policy

Hiring practices

MCRI has continually upheld its internal standardised hiring process and practices (including screening employees) for domestic and international research. We work with international collaborators such as hospitals, universities and international research bodies and these are skilled staff. Our experience in partner selection with reputable organisations that maintain robust hiring practices is built into our sourcing and helps manage Modern Slavery risks. We conduct due diligence on collaborators in low-to middle-income countries that employ personnel engaged in projects we manage, including reviewing recruitment and human resources policies in high-risk settings. When assessing the suitability of a prospective collaborator, MCRI's Global Health team will complete a Collaboration Assessment. Our Global Health research assists many people around the world with healthcare that reduces vulnerability.

Whistleblowing Program

MCRI maintains a Whistleblowing Program that enables reporting of Modern Slavery and is internationally available in multiple languages. Our partnership with an independent whistleblowing service strengthens compliance by our employees and external suppliers with our ethical requirements. This Program includes a process for anonymous reporting of concerns and employee awareness measures.

Compliance Portal

Our electronic compliance portal helps us monitor compliance with our core regulatory Modern Slavery obligations.

AAMRI Consortium

In 2025 MCRI formally began collaborating with the Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes (AAMRI) Modern Slavery working group and the Informed 365 supplier platform consortium, with a view to strengthening our commitment to building a sustainable supply chain. As a platform collaborator, MCRI is provided a central portal for engaging with suppliers as part of its commitment to minimising Modern Slavery in its supply chains and maintaining compliance with regulatory and ethical requirements. We attend monthly AAMRI meetings that are aimed at addressing Modern Slavery risk in supply chains.

Safeguarding

MCRI's safeguarding systems are underpinned by the Child Safety Policy and the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy.

Modern Slavery, including trafficking, forced labour, forced recruitment into armed conflict, and the sexual exploitation of children, is among the worst violations of children's rights. The Child Safety Policy and related procedure set out our standards for staff, volunteers, contractors and collaborators to uphold children's rights and to prevent, identify and report child exploitation and abuse.

The PSEAH Policy and related procedure set out our standards for staff, volunteers, contractors and collaborators on preventing, identifying and reporting sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment of adults across our projects and research.

Bribery and Corruption

MCRI has a zero tolerance towards bribery and corruption. We are committed to preventing bribery and corruption, both within the organisation and in our dealings with other organisations. Our Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy in line with our updated Code of Conduct, sets out the key principles on which we manage our bribery and corruption risks, and strengthens our commitment to the highest standards of legal, moral and ethical behaviour.

Due diligence checks

In 2024 MCRI introduced a real-time risk management screening service provider. This platform screens individuals and companies (collaborators, suppliers and contractors) and includes reporting against human rights violations, labour violations and Modern Slavery. It conducts ongoing daily monitoring checks of activities enabling real-time

detection of any changes in activities alongside the initial due diligence checks.

To manage the risks in our activities in low-and middle-income countries, including risks of Modern Slavery, we conducted 25 comprehensive due diligence reviews for key collaborators during the current reporting period. Due diligence assessments include review of relevant legislation and country context, organisation policy and procedure, including supplier management, contracting and safeguarding practices. Activities to address risks can include consideration within project design and implementation, screening downstream partners in high-risk settings, training and supporting collaborators to strengthen their own policy and procedure.

Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct

Since 2017 MCRI has been a full member of the Australian Council for International Development ('ACFID'). ACFID is the peak body for over 250 Australian non-government organisations involved in international development and humanitarian action. ACFID members work to alleviate poverty, reduce inequality, support environmentally sustainable and inclusive development on the front lines of humanitarian emergency and disaster relief.

Our work is conducted with transparency, accountability and integrity in line with the guidelines and principles of the ACFID Code of Conduct. We are committed to meeting ACFID's compliance verifiers and good practice indicators, as we combat the risks of Modern Slavery and protect the human rights and freedoms of our staff, partners and individuals in our supply chains.

Effectiveness of our Actions

It is important to MCRI that the actions we are taking to identify and mitigate risks of Modern Slavery are effective.

- Ongoing reviews of our procurement and purchasing functions continue to give us greater visibility over our supply chain, including the ability to identify risks of Modern Slavery.
- Our collaboration with the AAMRI and Informed 365 consortium enables greater visibility and improved tracking of our suppliers Modern Slavery risks. This visibility provides a more robust tracking system for Modern Slavery in our supply chains, which in turn helps us to improve our supply choices.
- The supplier questionnaire continues to be a means to inform our decision making on suppliers and our assessment of risk. These continue to help us identify key suppliers for follow up discussions.
- Whistleblower notifications, including those in relation to Modern Slavery, are tracked and the number of reports can be used as a key indicator.
- Our legislative compliance portal helps our awareness and understanding of our Modern Slavery obligations.
- The implementation of a real-time risk management screening service allows us to check individuals and businesses against global sanctions, financial regulatory, law enforcement and politically exposed persons list, receiving immediate and up-to-date feedback on their potential exposure in multiple regions worldwide.



Continuous improvement

We recognise the need for ongoing improvement in mitigating Modern Slavery risks in our operations and the importance of reassessment as our institute grows and changes over time. In 2025, we continued our progress to combat the risks of Modern Slavery, as reflected in our actions.

Key Initiatives for 2026

MCRI will focus on the following initiatives during 2026:

- Continuing to screen individuals and suppliers with whom we collaborate via our risk management screening service to identify individuals and suppliers who may pose unacceptable risks in our supply chains. This helps us to assess our contractual obligations to determine the feasibility of continuing our supply contract.
- Reviewing, updating and implementing Modern Slavery clauses in all our supplier contracts and collaboration agreements.
- Increasing engagement with our suppliers through the AAMRI and Informed 365 consortium platform to enable ongoing risk assessments of suppliers.

MCRI remains committed to vigilance in our organisation to identify Modern Slavery risks and manage them effectively. Through our research and operations, we will continue to support vulnerable children and families in many parts of the world.





Murdoch Children's Research Institute

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mcri.edu.au    