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Biotech labs get research funding boost

HEAD and neck cancers, influenza and Alzheimer's were among ailments targeted in \$8.6 million of state government grants unveiled last week.

Premier Anna Bligh announced the grants at the world's premier biotechnology conference, Bio 2008, in San Diego last week.

The Head and Neck Cancer Centre of Excellence for Asia Pacific, based at the Princess Alexandra Hospital at Woolloongabba, could receive \$1.25 million, Ms Bligh's office said.

The money will go towards an \$11 million project focusing on diagnosing and treating two head and neck cancers which are prevalent in Vietnam and China but also pose problems here.

Queensland University of Technology is slated to receive \$2 million for research into prostate cancer.

Brisbane-based BioChip Innovations is to get \$931,000 for research into genetic disease, and ailments such as Influenza A and dengue fever.

Dengue fever research is also one of the targets of a \$650,000 grant for a joint project between the University of Queensland and the University of Washington.

Almost \$800,000 will go to the University of Queensland to develop biomarkers for early diagnosis of Alzheimer's dementia.

And an equipment grant of \$3 million was allocated to the Molecular and Clinical Pathology Research Laboratory based at Woolloongabba.