

**First-Ever Survey to Support Clinical Trials in Australia**

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The Australian government is canvassing drug and devicemakers as well as contract research organizations to gauge the level of privately funded clinical research activity in the country.

The web-based survey will support efforts to enhance Australia as a setting for clinical trials.

Trials annually add about U.S. \$1 billion to the Australian economy, including roughly \$460 million in foreign investment, according to a May 2011 report by the Clinical Trial Action Group (CTAG). The report called for a streamlined and nationally standardized ethical review process to meet demand.

The government set up CTAG in 2009 to bring more multinational clinical trials to Australia.

Industry welcomed the news. "The current lack of data is a problem as it allows industry contribution to health and medical research in Australia to be dramatically undervalued," **AusBiotech** said. "This in turn undermines the industry's ability to seek urgent reforms to reverse Australia's declining competitiveness as a destination for clinical trial investment."

The Pharmaceutical Industry Council, which represents several industry associations, is assisting in the survey, which may become an annual event, **AusBiotech** said. -- Meg Bryant

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