

# New treatment for Ross River

A NEW treatment for Ross River fever is being trialled in Queensland and Victoria.

If successful, pentosan polysulfate sodium could be used to significantly reduce the duration and severity of joint pain caused by the virus that has infected 85 Central Queensland residents this year.

The drug has been around for more than a century to prevent formation of platelets during pre-operative procedures and to treat bladder pain.

It has also been used for osteoarthritis in animals and humans.

Paradigm Biopharma

launched the limited clinical trial this month and is seeking people with the Ross River virus to take part.

It will be at least 12 months before researchers know if the drug is a success, with results to be released in mid-2018.

If successful, the drug could also be used to treat another mosquito-borne disease, chikungunya, that is prominent in South-East Asia.

Mater Health Services infectious disease specialist Dr Paul Griffin will oversee the clinical trial. Dr Griffin said the trial was set to treat 24 Queensland patients.