



Victorian Cancer Agency

Awards presentation evening

Message from the Minister for Health and Minister for Innovation

Welcome to the inaugural awards presentation evening for the funding recipients of the Victorian Cancer Agency.

The Victorian Cancer Agency has been established to enable cancer patient care, outcomes and survival rates in Victoria to be amongst the best in the world, through the rapid translation of cancer research into clinical care.

A strong research capacity and capability is critical to accelerating access to the latest treatments for Victorian cancer patients. Research is an essential component of identifying new preventative techniques, developing new screening programs, improving diagnostics and developing novel treatments. Research can also have significant impact on the patient journey and the experience of cancer treatment and follow up.

A flourishing cancer research environment in Victoria will continue to attract leading international researchers and clinicians, overseas investment, and will bring improved economic benefits to the State through leveraging the Victorian Government investment. In addition, exposure of clinicians to a strong research environment will drive improvement in patient outcomes through greater awareness of new treatments, more rigorous and evidence-based approaches to care and increased recruitment to clinical trials.

Congratulations to all the successful recipients of funding through the Victorian Cancer Agency. Thank you to all who work tirelessly in the cancer research field to improve cancer patient care and outcomes.



Daniel Andrews.

Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Minister for Health



Gavin Jennings

Hon Gavin Jennings MLC
Minister for Innovation

Message from the Chair

The Victorian Cancer Agency funding programs are designed to enhance excellence in cancer research. These areas were identified through a variety of mechanisms including the work of the State Government Ministerial Taskforce for Cancer, professional consultation and consideration of world's best practice.

Key areas of funding in 2007-08 included translational/tumour stream research, clinical trials infrastructure support, supportive care and workforce (including early career researchers). These areas apply across the State, with more specific needs addressed in outer-metropolitan and regional Victoria.

The 2007-08 Victorian Cancer Agency funding programs were designed to be flexible in order to further our understanding of the greatest areas of need and to enable the strategic objectives of the Victorian Cancer Agency to be achieved. All applicants had to clearly demonstrate:

- how the research proposal or project would result in improved patient outcomes;
- that the project or proposal was collaborative in nature (demonstrating collaboration across multidisciplinary approaches and/or multi-site, or that key researchers in this field were involved in the project); and,
- how the project or proposal builds cancer research capacity and capability in Victoria.

We are delighted with the excellent calibre of applications received for our funding programs and on behalf of the Consultative Council, I would also like to congratulate all of the successful recipients for 2006-07 and 2007-08. In addition, I would like to thank all who have taken the time to attend and support the Victorian Cancer Agency awards presentation evening.



D. Alcorn

Professor Daine Alcorn
Chair Consultative Council
Victorian Cancer Agency

Funding Recipients

The following pages provide a brief overview of each of the funding programs and detail the successful funding recipients.

Fellows and Scholars

Awarded by the Hon Gavin Jennings MLC

The Victorian Cancer Agency clinician-researcher fellowships in cancer are aimed at strengthening and supporting clinical research. These fellowships will increase the pool of clinician-researchers who can facilitate the translation of research into improvements in cancer clinical care. In addition, these fellowships will build local capacity in clinical cancer research and strengthen hospital/academic partnerships to enhance the translation of research into practice.

The supportive care fellowships and scholarships are aimed at increasing the pool of experienced supportive care researchers that are able to conduct high quality research in supportive care, palliative care and survivorship that leads to immediate patient benefits.

2006-07 Clinician-researcher fellowships

A/Prof Ian Davis	Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research – Austin Campus and Austin Health	In situ immunology and biology of urological cancers
Dr Lara Lipton	Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research – Parkville Campus and RMH	Optimising use of current treatments, and developing novel therapeutics, through greater understanding of the genetics of colorectal cancer development and prognosis
Dr Kylie Mason	Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research and RMH	Modulation of the apoptotic pathway to treat haematological malignancy
Dr David Thomas	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	Basic, translational and clinical research program in adolescent and young adult cancer

2006-07 Supportive care in cancer research scholarship

Ms Annabel Pollard	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	The effectiveness of a randomised controlled trial of a behavioural intervention to promote adoption and adherence of health behaviours in breast cancer survivors
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2007-08 Supportive care in cancer research fellowship

Dr Linda Mileshkin	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	Supporting the patient with advanced lung or breast cancer and their caregivers - making a difference
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2007-08 Supportive care in cancer research scholarship

Ms Emma O'Brien	Royal Melbourne Hospital	The effect of music therapy on hospitalised cancer patients' quality of life, mood and satisfaction with hospital stay - a randomised controlled trial
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Translational research

Awarded by Professor Peter Doherty

It is internationally acknowledged that translational research is an integral element of improving patient outcomes. One of the main mechanisms for increasing the translation of discoveries into improved treatments is to facilitate collaborative, interdisciplinary research and promote the transfer of knowledge between researchers, clinicians and industry.

To date, the Victorian Cancer Agency has placed a significant focus on supporting translational research which has actual or foreseeable patient outcomes. This can be seen throughout all of the funding programs, and in particular in the translational tumour stream and clinical trials grants.

2007-08 Tumour stream project grants

A/Prof Ian Davis	Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research – Austin Campus and Austin Health	Systematic collection and retrieval of data and tissue in patients with renal cell carcinoma
Mrs Sarah Everitt	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	A prospective study investigating the impact of serial PET/CT scans on the radiation therapy treatment of patients with lung cancer
Prof Suzanne Garland	Royal Women's Hospital	The oncogenic risk of HPV in children and adolescents: risk factors for early onset cervical carcinoma and high-grade cervical dysplasia
A/Prof Christopher Gilfillan	Frankston Hospital	Defining the genetic pathology of epithelial thyroid tumours to improve diagnosis and prediction of tumour behaviour
Dr Paul James	Genetic Health Services Victoria and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	A translational study to investigate the clinical significance of low penetrance breast cancer genes in a cohort of Victorian hereditary breast cancer families
A/Prof Geoffrey Lindeman	Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research and RMH	Establishment of a breast cancer biomarker discovery and evaluation program to improve patient outcomes
A/Prof Grant McArthur	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	Melbourne Melanoma Project
A/Prof Paul Mitchell	Austin Health	Application of scanning confocal endomicroscopy to the diagnosis and treatment of patients with lung cancer
Dr Amanda Vincent	Monash Medical Centre	Assessment of ovarian reserve in premenopausal women with breast cancer following chemotherapy

2007-08 Clinical trials: Pilot study grants

Dr Farshad Foroudi	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	A study of online adaptive radiation therapy for bladder cancer
Dr David Ritchie	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	Phase-III study: Autologous peripheral stem cell transplant and adjuvant vaccination in multiple myeloma
Dr Michelle White	Southern Health	Echocardiography for detection of early cardiotoxicity due to chemotherapy to prevent adverse cardiac outcomes



Infrastructure

Awarded by Professor Robert Thomas

One of the priority areas for the Victorian Cancer Agency is building cancer research capacity and capability in the following three areas:

1. **Cancer clinical trials** - increasing patient accrual to clinical trials is thought to improve patient outcomes as this allows patients to access the latest cancer therapies. Stakeholder consultation has indicated that health services in particular, lack the infrastructure to engage in clinical trials. Investment into infrastructure and pilot studies will increase the overall capacity of the Victorian system to initiate new clinical trials.
2. **Supportive care in cancer** - supportive care is a relatively new field of enquiry and includes palliative care and survivorship. These infrastructure grants are aimed at improving the capacity and capability of practitioners and health services to undertake supportive care, palliative care or survivorship research.
3. **Regional Victoria** - the main outcomes of the regional infrastructure funding program will be increased opportunities for participation of regional patient populations in clinical research. In addition, this funding will improve the attractiveness of regional centres as sites to conduct major clinical and public health research projects.

2007-08 Clinical trials: Infrastructure grants

Mr Marcus Clarke	Cancer Trials Australia	Ongoing assistance to Cancer Trials Australia's program to expand a clinical trial network in Victoria
A/Prof Ian Davis	Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research – Austin Campus and Austin Health	Seed funding for a new national cooperative clinical trials group for urologic cancers (prostate, kidney, bladder, germ cell)
A/Prof Richard Fisher	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre - Centre for Biostatistics and Clinical Trials	Information technology and trial coordination support for clinical trials
A/Prof Richard Fisher	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre - Centre for Biostatistics and Clinical Trials	Biostatistical support for clinical trials
A/Prof Jeremy Millar	The Alfred Hospital	Development of a complete, reliable, accessible web-based register of active cancer trials in Southern Melbourne
Ms Laima Muceniekas	Monash Medical Centre	Research nurse education package
A/Prof John Seymour	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	Program 1: Regional staffing and administrative support Program 2: Australasian Leukaemia and Lymphoma Cooperative Oncology Group – infrastructure support
A/Prof Raymond Snyder	St Vincent's Hospital	A web-based support tool for breast cancer trials across Victoria
Dr Craig Underhill	Border Medical Oncology	Capacity building for clinical trials at Border Medical Oncology
Dr Greg Wheeler	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	Audit of the radiation dosimetry of Victorian patients enrolled in SJMB96 and SJMB03

2007-08 Supportive care research infrastructure grants

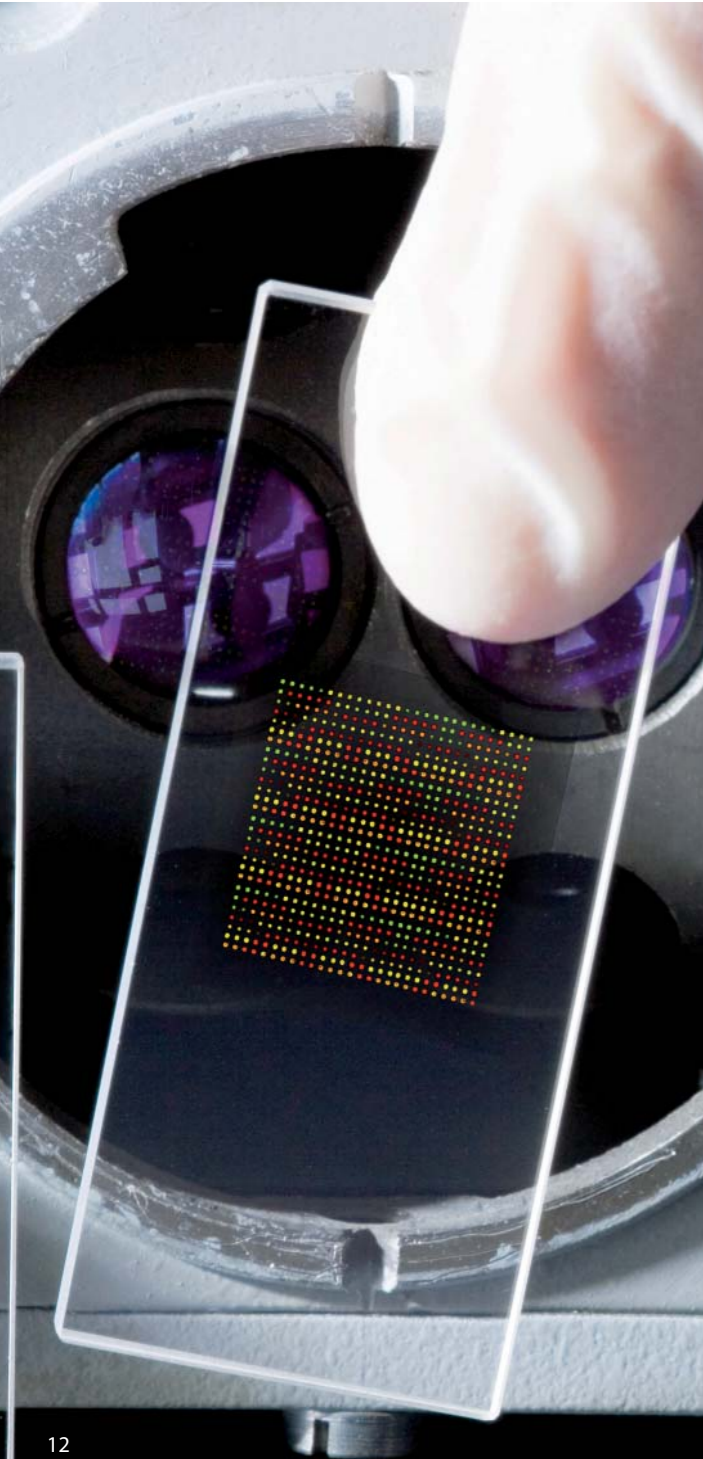
Dr Jacqueline Anderson	University of Melbourne	The efficacy of targeting intentional forgetting strategies in memory rehabilitation for individuals with frontal lobe tumours
Dr Sibilah Breen	Latrobe Regional Hospital	The Supportive Care Resource Kit: Assessment of clinician and patient acceptability across a range of health care settings
Ms Nicole Kiss	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	Establishment of a dietician/nurse-led clinic to optimise nutritional status of patients diagnosed with head and neck tumours
Ms Marian Lieschke	Royal Melbourne Hospital	Pilot study to assess the efficacy of a 24-hour nurse run phone advisory service for patients undergoing medical oncology or haematology care, in reducing admissions for chemotherapy and related side effects
Dr Patricia Livingston	Deakin University	Developing supportive care measures across day oncology settings, and in emergency departments, to assist cancer patient care during chemotherapy treatment
Dr Patricia Livingston	Deakin University	A nurse-assisted screening and referral program for depression among survivors of cancer: a pilot study
Prof Jeanette Milgrom	Austin Health	Psychological intervention to reduce depression and anxiety in cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy
Ms Lee-Anne Sargeant	St John of God Health Care	Development and evaluation of an interdisciplinary oncology rehabilitation program
A/Prof Elmer Villanueva	Gippsland Medical School, Monash University	Economic and return-to work issues of rural patients diagnosed with cancer
Mrs Melinda Williams	Geelong Hospital	Definition of the emotional/psychosocial needs of patients across the Barwon South Western Regional Integrated Cancer Services, via the implementation of a supportive care needs self assessment screening tool
Dr Addie Wooten	Royal Melbourne Hospital	Investigating the experience of cancer patients enrolled in clinical trials: What is the psychological impact of participation and are there any unmet supportive care needs? A pilot study

2006-07 Regional cancer research infrastructure enabling grants

Dr Geoff Chong	Ballarat Base Hospital	0.2 EFT research pharmacist, education, administration costs
Dr Robert Blum	Bendigo Health	Data manager/nurse, administration costs
Dr Ivor Burns	St Vincent's Hospital	0.2 EFT study coordinator, administration costs
Dr Craig Underhill	Border Medical Oncology	Freezer, ECG machine
Ms Anne Woollett	Barwon Health	Project officer, administration costs

2007-08 Regional cancer research infrastructure enabling grants

Dr Robert Blum	Bendigo Hospital	Travel, education and staffing expenses for familial cancer research
Dr Philip Campbell	Andrew Love Cancer Centre, Geelong Hospital	Conference attendance, staffing and equipment costs
Dr Geoff Chong	Ballarat Health Services	Staffing, conference attendance and training costs to expand capacity to conduct randomised clinical trials
Prof John McNeil	Monash University	Staffing costs for establishing a clinical research unit in Shepparton through the ASPREE trial
Dr Craig Underhill	Border Medical Oncology	Equipment and licensing costs
A/Prof Elmer Villanueva	Gippsland Medical School, Monash University	Staffing, research design support and equipment costs



Early career and collaborative grants

Awarded by Sir Gustav Nossal

The aim of the Victorian Cancer Agency Early Career Seed Grants is to support high quality cancer research conducted by early career researchers. The grants provide limited seed funding as a means of enhancing competitiveness of early career researchers, to enable them to leverage further funding from other granting bodies or industry.

The Link and Learn grants will provide individuals with an opportunity to gain skills in specialised techniques in distant locations, to facilitate collaboration, or to enable access to particular facilities and resources.

Early career seed grants

Dr Anne Cust	University of Melbourne	Identification and risk prediction of individuals at high risk of melanoma
Dr Dragan Ilic	Monash University	Prostate cancer screening in general practice – knowledge, practice and uptake of evidence
Dr Karen Scalzo	Monash University	The effects of chemotherapy on peripheral levels of regulatory T cells in patients with ovarian cancer
Dr Benjamin Solomon	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	Molecular predictors of outcome after chemoradiation for squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck
Dr Renea Taylor	Monash Institute of Medical Research	Molecular profiling and plasticity of prostate cancer stem cells with disease progression
Dr Andrew Wei	The Alfred Hospital	Bridging the gap between drug development and rational-based clinical trials using a novel screening approach

Link and learn grants

Dr Elizabeth Algar	Royal Children's Hospital and University of Melbourne	Travel to Affymetrix Clinical Service laboratory, West Sacramento, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Hospital for Sick Kids, Toronto and Sloan Kettering Cancer Institute
Dr Anne Cust	University of Melbourne	Travel to the melanoma genetics international research consortium (GenoMEL) at University of Leeds and GenoMEL collaborators' meeting in Paris
A/Prof Wei Duan	Deakin University	Travel to the University of Florida Shands Cancer Centre, Harvard Medical School and North-Eastern University, Boston
Dr Katherine Morley	The University of Melbourne	Travel to the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Ms Gemma Sacco	Southern Health - Monash Medical Centre	Travel to the Royal Marsden Hospital, London
Dr Andrew Stephens	Prince Henry's Institute of Medical Research	Travel to the American Association for Cancer Research Annual Meeting, San Diego
Mr Jacky Wong	Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre	Travel to the European Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology, and Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, Brussels

Biographies

Hon Gavin Jennings MLC

Minister for Innovation and Minister for the Environment and Climate Change, Victorian Government, Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council.

In his current role, Gavin Jennings has a key role in spearheading the Brumby Government's approach to tackling the threat of climate change. His other portfolio of Innovation makes him ideally placed to drive the technological and scientific advances that will help Victoria make a significant contribution to the fight against global warming. He is also Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council.

Gavin was first elected to the Legislative Council in September 1999. He became Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council and was appointed Cabinet Secretary in the first term of the Bracks Government. Following the 2002 election, Gavin became Minister for Aged Care and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and after the 2006 election was appointed Minister for Community Services and retained the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio.

Gavin was born in Melbourne in April 1957 and raised mainly in country Victoria before returning to Melbourne for University. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Monash University and a Bachelor of Social Work from Melbourne University. Prior to entering Parliament, Gavin has been a social worker at the Aboriginal Health Service in Fitzroy as well as an Industrial Officer for various Unions.

Professor Peter Doherty

Laureate Professor
School of Medicine
University of Melbourne

Professor Doherty has held the Michael F Tamer Chair of Biomedical Research at St Jude Children's Research Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee, since 1988. From July 2002, he has been Laureate Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Melbourne, where he is currently based.

Professor Doherty is perhaps best known for winning the 1996 Nobel Prize, with Rolf Zinkernagel, for their discovery of how the immune system recognises virus-infected cells. He was named Australian of the Year in 1997 and also received the Albert Lasker Award for Basic Medical Research in 1995. Professor Doherty has also been elected to the Royal Society of London, the Australian Academy of Science and the US National Academy of Sciences, as well as being the University of Queensland's 1993 Alumnus of the Year.

Peter Doherty graduated Bachelor of Veterinary Science from the University of Queensland in 1962, Master of Veterinary Science four years later, and PhD from the University of Edinburgh in 1970. In 1972, he joined the John Curtin School of Medical Research Canberra, where he switched from animal to human-pathogen studies and carried out research on histocompatibility antigens.

Professor Robert Thomas

Chief Clinical Advisor for Cancer, Department of Human Services, Victorian Government and Chief Surgical Oncologist, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

Professor Thomas was appointed Chief Clinical Advisor for Cancer for the Victorian State Government in 2007. Prior to this, Professor Thomas was a member of the Ministerial Taskforce in Cancer and chaired the Clinical Services Working Group.

Professor Thomas has been instrumental in the recognition of the discipline of Surgical Oncology in Australasia and responsible for the creation of the Surgical Oncology Group within the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, of which he was the inaugural Chair. His roles have included President of the Clinical Oncological Society of Australia and chair of the National Committee creating Colorectal Cancer Management Guidelines. He has been a member of the Awards Assembly of the General Motors Cancer Research Foundation and has been honoured by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons with the award of Excellence in Surgery.

Professor Thomas is a Melbourne academic surgeon with a special interest in Oncology. In 2000 he was appointed Director of Surgical Oncology at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, and from 2004 to 2007 he was also Director of the Western and Central Melbourne Integrated Cancer Service. In addition, Professor Thomas has ongoing research interests in the molecular pathology of gastrointestinal tumours.

Sir Gustav Nossal

University of Melbourne

Sir Gustav Nossal was knighted in 1977 for his groundbreaking work in immunology, and in 1989, was made a Companion of the Order of Australia. Sir Nossal was named Australian of the Year in 2000, and holds numerous international scientific awards and doctorates. The Nossal Institute for Global Health at the University of Melbourne was named in his honour.

Sir Nossal has held Presidencies of the International Union of Immunological Societies and the Australian Academy of Science. He has chaired the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, the committee overseeing the World Health Organization's Vaccines and Biologicals Program and the Strategic Advisory Council of the Bill and Melinda Gates Children's Vaccine Program. He was Deputy Chairman of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and at present, chairs the Advisory Committee of the Global Foundation.

Sir Gustav Nossal graduated from Sydney University's Medical School with first class honours and moved to Melbourne to work with Sir Frank Macfarlane Burnet. Sir Nossal gained a doctorate of Philosophy in 1960 and shortly after became Professor of Medical Biology, University of Melbourne. Five years later, at the age of 35, Nossal became director of the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research while continuing his Professorship at the University.

Victorian Cancer Agency

Cancer patient care, outcomes and survival rates in Victoria will be amongst the best in the world through the rapid translation of cancer research into clinical care.

The Victorian Cancer Agency was first announced in April 2006 upon the recommendation of the Ministerial Taskforce for Cancer. The Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development provided \$15 million of funding for the initiative, and the organisation was established through the Cancer and Palliative Care Unit of the Department of Human Services.

The Agency has been established to: Promote, enhance and facilitate cancer research that enables the delivery of evidence-based research driven cancer services.

We will achieve this through:

- Setting strategic priorities for cancer research across Victoria, based on identified areas of need;
- Further build cancer research capacity and capability in Victoria;
- Fostering collaborative relationships between key stakeholders;
- Adding value to existing statewide initiatives and programs; and,
- Providing high level, strategic advice to stakeholders and Government on all aspects of cancer research.