

COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT

**BIOMARKER PILOT PROJECT LAUNCH – FUNDING BOOST
TO DEVELOP BETTER DIAGNOSIS FOR CANCER**

Tuesday, 21st July 2009: Melbourne Australia: Cancer Trials Australia announces its partnership with the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute, Victorian Cancer Biobank and the Victorian Government for the development of Cancer Biomarkers.

Health Minister Daniel Andrews and Innovation Minister Gavin Jennings today announced joint funding of \$763,000 from the Victorian Government and the Victorian Cancer Agency for the project.

The Biomarkers Pilot Project will investigate the use of protein and DNA biomarkers in the treatment of colorectal cancer. Biomarkers are any biological characteristic that can be used as an indicator of disease or response to treatment.

“It is a proof-of-concept study aimed at establishing DNA and protein biomarker translational capability in Victoria,” said Dr John Barlow Director, CTA Laboratory Services and the convenor of the project. “The Pilot Project will target protein and DNA biomarkers in colorectal cancer” he said.

“Colorectal cancer is the second most common internal cancer in Australia in men and women with over 4,000 deaths annually which is why the Brumby Labor Government is taking action with this funding to help develop a test that will save lives,” Mr Andrews said.

“There is an urgent need to develop a more sensitive and more reliable screening test to detect colorectal cancer in its earliest stages when treatment is likely to be most effective.

“This investment will allow clinicians who diagnose and treat colorectal cancer patients to work closely with scientists researching the biomarkers of this terrible disease; from the research bench to the patient’s bedside.

“Victoria has an international reputation in cancer research but there is more to do. Boosting world-class research and collaboration through Victoria’s Cancer Action Plan are key priorities for the Brumby Labor Government.”

“The Biomarkers Pilot Project demonstrates the value of previous Brumby Labor Government investment in research infrastructure including the \$7 million Victorian Cancer Biobank and the \$5 million Monash Antibody Technologies Facility,” Mr Jennings said.

“This innovative and collaborative project gives our researchers the opportunity to translate their frontline discoveries into practical, faster, more accurate diagnosis for cancer, which in turn will enable better treatment outcomes for patients.”

“Each year 106,000 Australians are diagnosed with some form of cancer and cancer is responsible for 30 per cent of all deaths in Australia. We expect this study will help to establish a roadmap for biomarker validation and to identify any roadblocks in the biomarker development pipeline,” said Dr Barlow. “This will lay the foundation for the translation of the huge amount of biomarker discovery in Victoria into practical applications for human health that will ease the burden of cancer on the community.”

About Cancer Trials Australia (CTA)

CTA is a Clinical Trial Network and Site Service Organisation providing research governance, advisory and laboratory assay services to investigators and sponsors of clinical trials in the field of oncology. Its member’s organisations are:

Alfred Health
Austin Health
Bendigo Health
Border Medical Oncology
Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research
Melbourne Health
Peninsula Oncology Centre
Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
Southern Health
St Vincent’s Health
The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute
Western Health

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