



COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT

- Five major cancer institutions join Cancer Trials Australia**
- significant event for cancer management in Victoria**
- better outcomes for patients through access to local trial work**

Tuesday, October 28th, 2008: Melbourne Australia: Cancer Trials Australia (CTA) has announced today that the future of cancer clinical trials undertaken in Victoria has been given a major boost with five major cancer institutions joining the organisation.

The significance of the member expansion cannot be underestimated according to Professor Mark Rosenthal, Chairperson of Cancer Trials Australia, as it now positions CTA as the largest hospital site based collaborative cancer trials group in Australian Oncology.

The new members of CTA, which include two major metropolitan cancer centres and three regional cancer institutions, are St Vincent's Health, Southern Health, Bendigo Health, Albury-Wodonga based Border Medical Oncology and Peninsula Oncology Centre.

“This is a significant event for cancer management in Victoria. The expansion of CTA will ensure greater co-operation in cancer clinical trials between (now) nine Victorian clinical cancer centres. As a result, patients across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria will have improved access to new anti-cancer therapies,” Prof Rosenthal said.

“This access is critical for our cancer patients as it provides them with the benefits of expanded treatment options. It should also ensure patients and their families are afforded these opportunities close to home. There are significant clinical and psychological benefits for patients to have a choice of involvement in ground breaking clinical research. Indeed, many of the trials are “first-time in studies.”

Prof Rosenthal added that this development would communicate to global heads of pharmaceutical companies that Australia intends to compete strongly in the global R&D effort and is developing structures to ensure it remains one of the most cost effective sites for clinical trials. He said the reality is that Australia, through such groups as CTA, has contributed cost efficiencies via providing skilled personnel and well resourced capabilities to the global R&D effort in the development of cancer therapeutics over a long period.

“This translates into timely initiation and completion of studies. Time is the most expensive element of the process,” Professor Rosenthal said.

CEO of CTA, Mr Marcus Clark, said the expansion of CTA also enables both CTA and the Victorian Cancer Agency to fulfil an objective for both Victoria and Australia to have comprehensive data on cancer trial work and the resultant cancer treatments available for patients.

He also acknowledged the significance and ongoing support of the Victorian Cancer Agency.

“CTA and the Victorian Cancer Agency have many common goals, the most important of which is to improve patient outcomes through the greater use of the clinical trial process.”

CTA previously received funding from the Victorian Cancer Agency to expand its member base into metropolitan and regional areas, in line with their aim to build cancer research capacity and capability across Victoria.

Mr Clark added that new members, St. Vincent’s Health cancer centre and Southern Health centres at Moorabin and Monash are themselves two of Australia’s leading cancer centres and bring new processes and contacts with overseas groups to CTA.

“Bendigo, Border and Peninsula cancer centres provide representation for three key regional centres and their patients.

“The addition of these regional centres will not only expand CTA’s understanding of regional issues, but will allow CTA to advocate for these centres and their patients.”

Mr Clark also noted that two of CTA’s founding members are globally recognised research centres– the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research and the Walter and Eliza Hall Research Institute, which provide the group with tremendous translational research capabilities.

- Ends -

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:

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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