

3 December 2021

## **Over \$4 million in grants to boost cancer research at the Centenary Institute**

Two Centenary Institute scientists have been awarded grants totalling \$4.3 million from the Cancer Institute NSW to undertake critical cancer related medical research.

A major cause of illness, cancer is responsible for approximately 50,000 deaths each year in Australia.

The grants will enable world-leading research in two dedicated cancer areas. The first, the development of a new theranostic, a form of precision medicine, that is designed to work against all types of solid tumours.

The other, a new study investigating melanoma, to determine why men have twice the fatality rate of women when it comes to this deadliest form of skin cancer.

### Funded Centenary Institute scientists and their research:

#### **Professor Philip Hogg, Head, ACRF Centenary Cancer Research Centre.**

*Awarded a Translational Program Grant. \$3.7 million over five years.*

The grant will fund the development of a new theranostic that is designed to work against all types of cancers, becoming more effective with each administration. An emerging field, theranostics refers to a combined therapy and diagnostics approach. It involves the use of a diagnostic drug to first identify and label tumour cells – followed by the delivery of a therapeutic isotope (radioactive drug) to then kill the identified tumours.

#### **Dr Jessamy Tiffen, Head, Melanoma Epigenetics Laboratory.**

*Awarded a Career Development Fellowship. \$600,000 over three years.*

The funding will look to determine why men are more than twice as likely to die from cancer as compared to women, specifically focusing on melanoma. Genes located on the X-chromosome will be comprehensively investigated to help explain this phenomenon and new melanoma treatments or interventions to improve survival outcomes in men will also be explored.

Professor Mathew Vadas AO, Centenary Institute Executive Director, said the successful grants were superb outcomes for two vital projects.

“Around 30% of Australians die of cancer with the disease also a leading cause of morbidity world-wide. It places a tremendous health burden on society,” said Professor Vadas.

“I congratulate both Professor Hogg and Dr Tiffen on their successful grants. They are both exceptional scientists and leaders in their fields. Each study will embrace the latest in advanced technologies and techniques, and has the potential to revolutionise cancer treatments, improving health and saving lives in our communities.”

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**Images:**

Professor Philip Hogg.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/16XewXpqeW1vDvpQUldP4zfFSlh\\_ZJ966/](https://drive.google.com/file/d/16XewXpqeW1vDvpQUldP4zfFSlh_ZJ966/)

Dr Jessamy Tiffen.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Vx8G7YN1rcubj4WdRLOoa7SpVV7iGqC-/>

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**For all media and interview enquiries, please contact**

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**About the Centenary Institute**

The Centenary Institute is a world-leading independent medical research institute, closely affiliated to the University of Sydney and the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Our research focuses on three key areas: cancer, inflammation and cardiovascular disease. Our strength lies in uncovering disease mechanisms and applying this knowledge to improve diagnostics and treatments for patients.

**For more information about the Centenary Institute, visit [centenary.org.au](http://centenary.org.au)**