

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



Thursday, 11 February 2021

MORE RESEARCH TO IMPROVE SURVIVAL RATES FOR CANCER

The Andrews Labor Government is helping Victoria's best and brightest researchers discover new breakthroughs in cancer prevention, treatment and care.

Minister for Health Martin Foley today announced the 21 recipients from the Victorian Cancer Agency's latest grants round, who will share in more than \$10 million in research grants to work on ground-breaking discoveries.

Dr Paul Beavis from Peter MacCallum Cancer Center is investigating a new way to make CAR T-Cell therapy, a breakthrough treatment for blood cancer, also work against solid tumours.

Dr Laura Forrest also from the Peter MacCallum Cancer Center is testing a new screening tool designed to identify the best support for people with genetic risk factors for cancer.

The Victorian Cancer Plan 2020-24 sets an ambitious target of saving 10,000 lives from cancer by 2025.

In Victoria, the five most common cancers are prostate, breast, bowel and lung cancer, and melanoma. Participating in cancer screening and finding cancer early, before any symptoms are noticed gives the best chance of survival.

More than 90 per cent of bowel cancers can be successfully treated if found early. All eligible Victorians aged 50-74 should screen every two years for bowel cancer by completing a free, at-home screening test sent in the mail.

Due to early detection and better treatment, more Victorian women are surviving breast cancer, with the five-year survival rate now at 91 per cent compared to 73 per cent in 1986. Eligible women aged 50-74 are invited to screen for breast cancer every two years.

Cervical cancer is one of the most preventable cancers with regular cervical screening tests for women aged 25-74 and the HPV vaccination.

This funding takes the total investment by the Victorian Cancer Agency to more than \$250 million since it was established by the Victorian Government in 2006.

As part of its dedication to cancer research, the Labor Government allocated a further \$2.447 million in the 2020/21 State Budget to increase access to clinical trials and teletrials for regional patients.

To view all grant recipients, visit victoriancanceragency.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"When it comes to cancer, early diagnosis is the key to survival. These grants are supporting researchers and fast-tracking new breakthroughs to improve survival rates in Victoria."

"Victoria is home to some of the world's best and brightest clinicians, scientists, and researchers and these fellowships will help support them to continue and build on their inspiring work."

Quote attributable to Minister for Medical Research Jaala Pulford

"We're backing our medical researchers to make the breakthroughs that change lives, improve outcomes for patients and save more families the heartache of losing a loved one to cancer."

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