



MEDIA RELEASE

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A second million dollar ACRF cancer research facility opened by Minister Brumby

The Hon. John Brumby MP today opened a new research facility funded by the Australian Cancer Research Foundation that will assist with the early detection of colon cancer, the most common internal cancer.

The new Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research (LICR) facility, situated at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, features a mass spectrometer that offers improved capability for the early detection, diagnosis and treatment of colon cancer.

The recently purchased mass spectrometer is the centre piece of the Australian Cancer Research Foundation (ACRF) Cancer Proteomics Program at the LICR, which was made possible with a \$1 million grant from ACRF.

Colon cancer is one of the top three cancers in the western world, affecting almost 1 in 20 Australians and leading to about 5,000 deaths per year.

According to ACRF, the LICR facility further cements Melbourne scientists as international leaders in cancer research and follows another ACRF-funded facility also launched by Minister Brumby last week.

Minister Brumby opened the Drug Discovery Facility at St Vincent's Institute of Medical Research, bringing ACRF's total funding to Melbourne cancer research institutes to \$9.9 million (of a total of \$18.5 million throughout Australia) in the past two years.

ACRF Chairman Tom Dery presented a \$1,000,000 cheque to Professor Tony Burgess, Director of LICR Melbourne and Mr Ed McDermott, LICR Global President.

"The cost of treating cancer in Australia is more than \$2 billion and the work at Ludwig to find a breakthrough for one of the most serious cancers affecting Australians – colon cancer – is the sort of project ACRF is committed to funding," said Mr Dery.

"We are optimistic there will be breakthroughs for colon cancer diagnosis and treatment and the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research is certainly at the forefront of colon cancer research, not just in Australia, but globally."

LICR's Global President, Mr McDermott added: "There are a variety of agencies funding research, but the ACRF is fulfilling a critical role in Australia by granting large, intercessional grants for infrastructure, not available elsewhere".

Professor Burgess said scientists had identified the mistakes which cause colon cancer.

“It is now time to detect these cancerous proteins and learn how to target the cancer with smart drugs. The ACRF Cancer Proteomics Program will provide a modern approach to killing cancer cells,” he said.

Dr. Peter Gibbs, an Associate Investigator at LICR, described the acquisition of the new mass spectrometer as “a major step forward in our bowel cancer research”.

“This technology will significantly advance development of treatment strategies tailored specifically for an individual patient,” he added.

The mass spectrometer is a highly selective technique of identifying specific proteins for the possible early detection of malignant cells as yet undetected in the body. The new machine improves data sensitivity at least a hundred fold.

Ends.

More info

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or visit www.acrf.com.au or <http://www.ludwig.edu.au/branch/>

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About Australian Cancer Research Foundation

Now in its 21st year, ACRF has so far raised more than \$50 million to support innovation and excellence in Australian research initiatives.

In just the last two years alone, the foundation has awarded grants totalling \$6.3 million, with recipients including Melbourne’s St Vincent’s Institute of Medical Research and Murdoch Children’s (Cancer) Research Institute and just last month ACRF announced the biggest ever private research grant – \$5 million, won by the Melbourne Comprehensive Cancer Centre.

Individual grants from ACRF exceed \$1million – a sum not available from other private sources in Australia. These grants continue to make significant contributions to far-reaching breakthroughs in the fight against cancer

About Ludwig Institute of Cancer Research

Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research (LICR) is a non-profit institute that conducts long-term basic and clinical research programs with approximately 800 scientists, clinicians, and support staff.

It is the largest international non-profit institute dedicated to understanding and controlling cancer, and to confronting the global challenge of cancer.

With nine branches in seven countries across Australasia, Europe, and North and South America, and numerous affiliates in many other countries, the scientific network that is LICR quite literally covers the globe.

LICR is expanding its activities into countries such as China, Russia, Ukraine, South Africa, and Turkey, which are scientifically talented but have had little opportunity for international collaboration in cancer research.