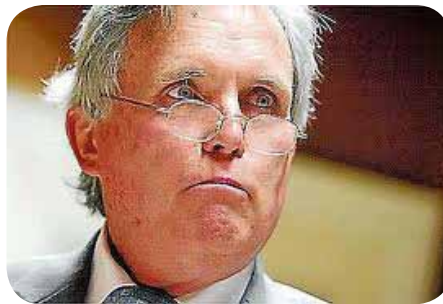


## “All of the projects funded by Cancer Council have the potential to dramatically improve the lives of people touched by cancer”

This year Cancer Council has invested a record \$16 million in Australian cancer research by some of the world's leading scientists. This newsletter explains some of the exciting research projects we'll be funding over the coming year, as well as bringing you up-to-date on the CLEAR Study, which has now reached a milestone of 5,000 participants.

The projects funded by Cancer Council cover every aspect of the cancer experience: prevention, diagnosis, treatment and survivorship. All of them have the potential to dramatically improve the lives of people touched by cancer.

Our CEO, Dr Andrew Penman, said “While I wish we could have funded more



research projects, I'm confident the ones we've chosen will have a positive and lasting impact on people affected by cancer.

Thank you for your interest in our research, whether as a study participant or donor. We couldn't do it without you.”



## Working towards individual targeted treatments for breast cancer

Although breast cancer is the most prevalent cancer in our society, death from the illness has now plateaued to around 23 deaths per 100,000 people. This decrease has arisen because of earlier detection and improved treatment. To reduce mortality even further, new therapies must be invented.

To revolutionise the management of breast cancer we have to have a detailed understanding of the molecular pathways controlling the similarities and diversity among breast cancers.

It is believed that a move towards the 'personalisation of medicine' will allow great advances in determining the risks confronting individual patients, the design of new drugs, and the tailoring of treatment. Using this technique, Associate Professor Christopher Ormandy and his team

are going to study the molecular pathways and explore the process that allows information from a gene to be reproduced at will.

The central hypothesis of their proposal is that the networks controlling the development of the breast also regulate the interaction of the environment with random genetic variations that can create a breast cancer tumour. By discovering and defining these master regulators we will be able to create new predictive indicators and isolate the specific targets for a new range of drugs.

This project is intended to deliver at least two clinically relevant outcomes:

- to identify new predictive indicators for breast cancer, and
- lead researchers to novel targeted therapies for breast cancer.

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## How to increase children's activity levels

FamilyFIT is a new and enjoyable activity program for the whole family.

We need to recruit families with primary school children to take part in a trial to evaluate its feasibility and effectiveness.

For more information visit [www.cancerCouncil.com.au](http://www.cancerCouncil.com.au) or call 13 11 20.

## Focus on some Cancer Council research in Newcastle

# Spotlight on Dr Peter Greer

Newcastle Mater Hospital and University of Newcastle



Dr Peter Greer has an enduring interest in improving the accuracy with which prostate radiation therapy is applied. It's the most prevalent cancer in men, accounting for over 29% of all diagnoses.

Dr Greer is particularly interested in improving treatment options by the use of portal imaging techniques—the ability to accurately position and then capture digital images, for review and guidance.

He has achieved great success in this area since his first Cancer Council NSW Project Grant in 2007. This three year study resulted in the development of software tools with the capacity to automatically delineate organs on a patient's MRI scans. The scans can now be used for dose calculations during treatment planning, reducing uncertainties in patient treatment schedules. It has the benefits of allowing for a reduction in toxicity as well in the side-effects of treatment, which in turn can improve quality of life for radiotherapy patients and reduce fatalities.

In 2011, Cancer Council NSW is awarding Dr Greer a new three-year Project Grant for his work "Does the initial treatment plan predict doses delivered to normal tissues during prostate radiation therapy?"

In order for clinicians to safely deliver the highest possible doses to the prostate during radiation therapy to

maximise cure without unacceptable side effects, they need to understand the doses that the adjacent bladder and rectum can tolerate. At present it is only possible to predict these doses prior to the treatment course. This project will determine the doses actually delivered to these organs using daily on-treatment CT scans, and will provide better guidance to clinicians in determining safe doses for patient treatments.

Dr Greer is an active member of the scientific community, supervising several MSc and PhD students at leading universities. He has reviewed many grant applications and has acted on the scientific committee, as well as being technical program coordinator, for the International workshop in electronic portal imaging.

Dr Greer has led key research collaborations both in Australia and overseas, and is currently appointed at the Newcastle Mater Hospital.

## FamilyFIT

### An innovative approach to increasing children's physical activity

Regular participation in physical activity provides children with physical, psychological, social and emotional benefits. The more physical activity undertaken, the greater the benefits. However, a significant proportion of Australian children don't achieve the recommended levels of physical activity — that's 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous activity each day.

Parents and the family environment play an important role in influencing children's physical activity behaviour, but no-one is certain of an effective strategy to encourage parents to promote their children's activity.

In this project, families with primary school aged children will be recruited to take part in a pilot randomised controlled trial to evaluate the



feasibility and effectiveness of FamilyFIT, a family-focused program designed to increase child and parent activity levels. Parents will be provided with information, skills and resources to support appropriate parenting strategies which influence activity behaviour, and help create a home environment which is conducive to physical activity. Children and their parents will participate in fun, skill-based activities together.

Recruitment of families will start this year. This project is funded by a Hunter Children's Research Foundation (HCRF)/ Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI) grant and a University of Newcastle/Centre for Health Research and Psycho-oncology PhD scholarship.

## Two cancer research projects

# We need you for your information

The information we receive from people who have been directly affected by a cancer diagnosis within the past 18 months will very likely lead to huge advances in cancer prevention.

The NSW Cancer, Lifestyle and Evaluation of Risk (CLEAR) study will provide the most comprehensive information ever gathered about the lifestyle and genetic factors that influence cancer in the NSW community. Its findings are expected to lead to a much better understanding of what causes cancer.

Participation in the study involves completing a questionnaire and providing a small blood sample (optional). Both are a one-time-only activity, and there are no further obligations. It's that simple to help us find the answer to 'what really causes cancer?'

When a cancer is diagnosed one of the first questions asked is 'why?'. CLEAR is the first study of its kind in NSW that is working to find the answers to that often-asked question 'what really causes cancer?'

To date, the CLEAR study has signed up 5,000 participants but urgently needs

a further 5,000 people by the end of 2011 to research the more common cancers, such as melanomas, prostate, breast and lung cancers.

"We understand the eighteen months after a cancer diagnosis is an incredibly tough time. But the study is CLEAR and simple, and it takes a mere 30 minutes. It's studies like these that will help prevent future generations from hearing the words 'you've got cancer,'" said Assoc. Professor Freddy Sitas.

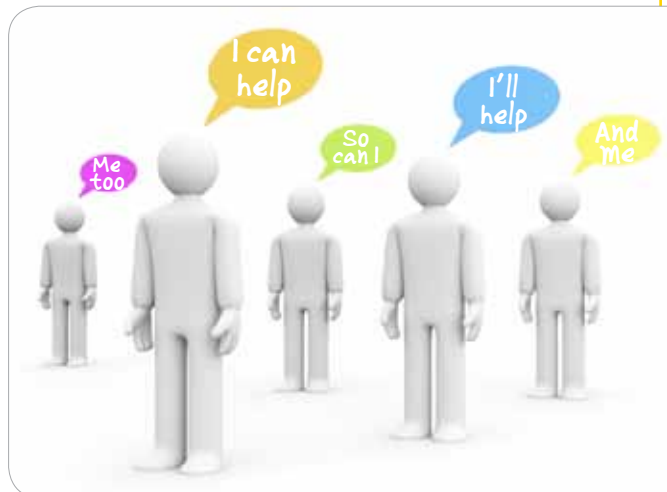
Each participant fills out a 30 minute confidential questionnaire on diet, activity, medications used, sun exposure, alcohol consumption, smoking history, medical history, stress and other lifestyle factors. They will also be asked to provide an optional blood sample for genetic testing at designated locations throughout NSW.

If you or your partner has been diagnosed with cancer in the past 18

months, you're over 18 and you live in NSW, you can help us in the CLEAR Study. Contact the CLEAR Study Hotline on 1800 500 894 or go to [www.clearstudy.org.au](http://www.clearstudy.org.au)

Your story, or the story of someone you know, will help us find the answer.

## We need you, Please help.



## Exploring alternative therapies for prostate cancer patients

*"Men considering using complementary and lifestyle therapies need reliable information and this isn't always easy to find. We hope that our findings will provide a better understanding of these issues and provide more reliable treatment options for men with prostate cancer."*

Professor Dianne O'Connell, Senior Epidemiologist, and Dr David Smith, NHMRC Research Fellow have established a study that aims to discover which Complementary and Lifestyle Therapies (CALT) are being used by prostate cancer patients, and the type of patient or survivor most likely to use them. They intend to research and develop education materials on a wide range of treatment choices for prostate cancer patients, carers and health professionals.



Very little is currently known about the complementary and lifestyle therapies being used by long-term prostate cancer survivors, and those with an advanced stage of the disease.

These treatments are used in addition to conventional medical treatments and include dietary supplements, treatments by practitioners other than medical specialists, self help therapies, and diet and exercise changes.

A questionnaire will collect data on a wide spectrum of therapies, potential CALT use factors, sources of CALT information, as well as the patient's satisfaction with the treatment and reasons for using, not using or discontinuing any particular CALT.

## Pancreatic Patterns of Care Study

# What we're doing to improve early diagnosis of pancreatic cancer

Pancreatic cancer is the fourth leading cause of cancer death in Australia and has the worst survival of any cancer. The poor prognosis is due to many things, including late presentation, aggressive tumours, the complexity of surgery and the fact that at present there is no effective systemic treatment. To make matters worse, pancreatic cancer research has historically been poorly funded.

In order to address this imbalance Cancer Council has awarded a number of grants for projects that aim to improve early diagnosis and management of pancreatic cancer patients in NSW.

A diagnosis of pancreatic cancer can be overwhelming. We are doing

everything we can, not only in the area of diagnosis and treatment, but also to ensure that no matter where one lives, or one's socio-economic circumstances, every patient will receive the best possible support.

To achieve this, we are conducting a Patterns of Care Study in Queensland and New South Wales. The research is focussed on assessing patterns of care for patients with pancreatic cancer, and gauging their effects on supportive care needs and quality of life. The data will also contribute to the development of a world-class resource

which can be used — with additional financial support — to address issues such as the identification of predictors of pancreatic cancer.

Cancer Council is also providing \$2.5 million over five years to the International Cancer Genome Consortium project. This involves some of the world's leading scientists studying the genetic changes associated with 50 cancer types, and Australia is part of the consortium that is mapping the pancreatic cancer genome.



## The Sun, Vitamin D & GP's

Australia has the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. But now lack of vitamin D is emerging as a significant health concern. While it is important that the public continues to heed the sun smart message, the challenge is balancing that message—

- when to go out in the sun
- for how long
- at what time of the day or year, and
- when to use sun protection.

Despite being in an ideal position to provide 'safe' sun exposure advice to the public, GPs currently have few readily accessible

evidence-based resources for education on the topic. Few evaluations of web-based CME programs for GPs have been reported in Australia, and none on skin cancer prevention. With funding from a Cancer Institute NSW Research Innovation Grant this new project aims to develop a web-based continuing medical education program for GPs on 'Sun and Vitamin D'.



### Help us Beat Cancer



Join a Research Study NOW.

From time to time Cancer Council conducts research studies on people drawn from the New South Wales population. These studies range in type from questionnaire based surveys, focus groups and interviews to other types of research.

We need your help in undertaking our research to defeat cancer. Register your interest to be included on our mailing list and fill in your contact details below. Please note that study participants will not necessarily be cancer patients.

By helping us NOW, you can help us defeat cancer in the future.

**yes, please include me on the mailing list**

We will write to ask you some personal details and some additional questions relating to your health. These questions will enable us to target mailings to suitable population groups.

**Return by post: Study Mailing List  
Reply Paid 79819, Potts Point NSW 1335**

**Or: Register online  
[www.cancerCouncil.com.au/joinastudy](http://www.cancerCouncil.com.au/joinastudy)**

Mr/Ms/\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

At Cancer Council we recognise the importance of your privacy and the safeguarding of your personal information. Please refer to our Privacy Management Plan at [www.nswcc.org.au](http://www.nswcc.org.au) which addresses our compliance with all legislative requirements.

Please be assured that your health information will be stored for the Study Mailing List in a password protected electronic database accessible only by appropriate Cancer Research Division staff.