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Australia announces world-first brain cancer clinical trials

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Brain-POP launches in Melbourne, transforming clinical research into the development of new therapies for brain cancer



A world-first clinical trial platform launching in Melbourne is set to transform research into new therapies for brain cancer and deliver more targeted, personalised treatment for patients.

The Brain-POP (brain perioperative) clinical trial platform will enable doctors to precisely see the effect of a new drug therapy on a patient's brain cancer for the first time, by comparing tumour samples before and after treatment.

The new platform is led by The Brain Cancer Centre and research partners WEHI, The Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH), Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, The Royal Children's Hospital and the University of Melbourne, with $16 million in funding support from the Victorian Government.

Survival rates for brain cancer have barely shifted in three decades, with 80 per cent of patients diagnosed dying within five years. One Australian is diagnosed with brain cancer every five hours and more children die from brain cancer in Australia than any other disease.

Brain-POP is the first perioperative or 'Window of Opportunity' clinical trial programme for brain cancer, where biopsies are taken before and after treatment to provide critical information on drug activity through small, well-designed studies that guide further development.

The first clinical trial (NCT05577416) to run through the new Brain-POP platform has begun recruitment and focuses on patients with low grade glioma, a type of slow-growing brain tumour.

The results will be used to personalise treatment, enabling doctors to be more targeted with available therapies for brain cancer patients.