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Monash University in Australia awards innovation grants to propel precision cancer treatment

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To transform the landscape of cancer care delivery and positively impact patient outcomes



Monash Partners Comprehensive Cancer Consortium (MPCCC) has announced the recipients of the Precision Treatment Accelerator Grant, designed to propel ground-breaking advancements in precision cancer treatment.

This initiative underscores MPCCC's commitment to revolutionising cancer care and improving patient outcomes across its partner organisations. A total of $426,184 has been awarded to four innovative projects, each poised to drive significant progress in precision cancer treatment.

One project introduces a simple blood test for Extramedullary Disease (EMD patients). EMD patients are a subgroup of Multiple Myeloma (MM), an incurable blood cancer that affects over 2000 Australians annually. Over the duration of the grant, the project aims to improve early detection of EMD, facilitating urgently required intervention before EMD advances, and enable precise, personalised treatment options and monitoring to enhance patient outcomes.

Another project aims to prove that ctDNA in plasma and EBC have comparable sensitivity to tissue samples in identifying clinically relevant mutations in NSCLC which may facilitate therapeutic decision making at the time of diagnosis and during treatment. The traditional tumour-biopsy based genotyping has limitations and challenges of insufficient or low-quality tumour DNA as well as limited molecular information. The plasma circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) and exhaled breath concentrate (EBC) can be used to identify lung cancer specific mutations.

The third project aims to develop a blood-based test to identify mutations in patients with brain tumours, which can be used to monitor progress over time, along with comprehensive anonymised patient data, to help learn how best to apply these results, while the fourth project will fund the addition of a dedicated Oncology specialist doctor and researcher to join the emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Oncology Service in Healesville.