

Australia lays focus on genomics-driven cancer prevention

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To aid in accurate diagnosis, and inform the selection of targeted treatment options



Genomics-driven cancer prevention, testing and treatment strategies will be at the forefront of a new joint venture between the University of Melbourne and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre (Peter Mac) in Australia.

The Collaborative Centre for Genomic Cancer Medicine has been established to improve cancer outcomes and accelerate equitable access to precision technologies for Australians.

University of Melbourne Vice-Chancellor Professor Duncan Maskell said the collaboration was a clear example of the University's purpose of benefiting society through the transformative impact of research.

"The Collaborative Centre for Genomic Cancer Medicine has been established from a shared vision to tackle the ongoing challenges cancer presents, by harnessing the latest advances in technology and research," Professor Maskell said.

Peter Mac Chief Executive Professor Jason Payne said that by working together, the two organisations would improve the lives of people with cancer well into the future.

Professor Sean Grimmond, the inaugural Director of the Centre, said that it was the first national example of an academic-enabled genomics centre embedded within a cancer hospital.

"Our mission is to make genomic-informed approaches the standard of care for cancer, and within reach for all Australians. Our initial focus will be using comprehensive cancer genome diagnostics for hard to manage cancers, improving care by moving the latest advances from bench to bedside.

These are the cancers that are difficult to accurately diagnose, those more likely to return or spread, and those that don't respond well to treatment—where having a detailed genetic profile could immediately make a huge difference in how we approach them", Professor Grimmond said.

Victorian Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas said the collaboration will improve the lives of people with cancer and

strengthen Victoria's reputation as a global leader in cancer research.

The Collaborative Centre for Genomic Cancer Medicine is based in the Melbourne Biomedical Precinct, co-located with the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre Alliance and other cancer-related organisations.