



## Project Funding 2019 to 2024

The Children's Cancer Foundation together with its funding partners has committed **\$15,783,588** across **28 projects** from 2019 through to 2024. Funding includes salaries for 45 hospital and research staff (32 EFT), laboratory consumables and family resources.



Project 219

**Research:** Hudson Monash Paediatric Precision Medicine Program – Phase 2 (7.8 EFT)

**Focus:** Brain cancer, central nervous system tumours and Wilm's tumour

**Institute:** Hudson Institute of Medical Research and Monash Children's Hospital

**Recipient:** A/Prof. Ron Firestein

**Funding:** \$4,967,221 over 2 years (2019-23). Renewal – funded since 2017

Australia's first paediatric living organoid and functional genomic program utilising individual patient's tumour cells to identify new therapeutic targets and repurpose existing targets using cutting edge functional genomics technologies, with a focus on brain cancer, central nervous system tumours and Wilm's tumour Phase 2 of the program expands subject recruitment to 150 patients, enable cutting-edge molecular analyses for each child's tumour, and establishes a paediatric cancer molecular tumour board to translate this knowledge into clinical application. The key outcome will be integration of comprehensive molecular analysis into clinical management by guiding molecular-targeted therapeutics for cancer patients.



Projects 133 & 218

**Family:** Family Counselling Service

**Focus:** In-hospital family support

**Institute:** The Royal Children's Hospital and Monash Children's Hospital

**Funding Partner:** The Pratt Foundation (\$40,000)

**Funding:** \$429,000 over 5 years (2017-22)

Funding for face-to-face counselling with a psychologist for children with cancer, their parents or siblings. Recent research has confirmed both the unmet demand for and benefit of psychological support to help families through cancer diagnosis and treatment.



Project 139

**Research:** Children's Cancer Foundation Chair (1.0 EFT)

**Focus:** Childhood and adolescent cancers

**Institute:** University of Melbourne

**Recipient:** To be appointed

**Funding:** \$6 million for perpetual funding of the endowed chair, matched by \$6 million from the funding partners

**Funding Partners:** Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Royal Children's Hospital, Murdoch Children's Research Institute  
Establish the Children's Cancer Foundation Chair, Victoria's first perpetually endowed Chair, to be based at the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre. The Chair, a leading international clinician-scientist, will provide academic leadership in personalised clinical care and research in paediatric cancer and provide support and mentorship to facilitate growth of the discipline, and incorporation of leading edge research insights into routine clinical practice for children in Victoria and beyond. The Chair will play a key leadership role in collaborative research directed towards improving clinical care of children with cancer both nationally and internationally.



Project 306

**Research:** Translational Studies Leveraging the SIOPEX Neuroblastoma Clinical Trial (1.0 EFT)

**Focus:** Neuroblastoma

**Institute:** University of New South Wales

**Funding:** \$671,270 over 3 years (2019-24)

Translational research leveraging patient participation in the SIOPEX High Risk Neuroblastoma clinical trial also funded by the Foundation. This study aims to understand relapse, improve residual disease detection and develop pre-clinical testing models to identify better therapies for high-risk neuroblastoma patients.



Project 216

**Clinical Trials:** Clinical Trials Manager (1.0 EFT)

**Focus:** All childhood cancers

**Institute:** Monash Children's Hospital

**Recipient:** Irina Arzhintar

**Funding:** \$380,507 over 5 years (2016-21)

Salary funding for a Clinical Trials Manager to lead the clinical trials unit. The key outcome is to increase the portfolio of trials open, and the number of children enrolled in clinical trials accessing new treatments and innovative drugs.



Project 134

**Research:** Children's Cancer Foundation Clinical Research Fellowship (2.0 EFT)

**Focus:** Acute lymphoblastic leukaemia

**Institute:** Murdoch Children's Research Institute and The Royal Children's Hospital

**Recipient:** Dr Seong Lin Khaw

**Funding Partner:** Victorian Cancer Agency (\$400,000)

**Funding:** \$1,029,000 over 4 years (2017-21), plus \$341,100 from Murdoch Children's. Research project to improve the effectiveness of treatment in children with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia who respond poorly to or relapse following standard-of-care therapy. The key outcome from this research project is to translate biological data to improve treatment precision and effectiveness, particularly with the use of newly developed drugs.



Project 135

**Family:** Family Connect  
**Focus:** In-hospital family support  
**Institute:** The Royal Children's Hospital  
**Funding:** \$50,000 over 5 years (2017-22)

A weekly morning tea in the Children's Cancer Centre at The Royal Children's Hospital to meet and connect with other families in a relaxed atmosphere. Each week, Family Connect hosts an interactive and creative activity for children and their families, featuring a special presenter.



Project 136

**Research:** My Room Clinical Research Fellowship program (2.0 EFT)  
**Focus:** Fellow #1: Brain cancer  
**Institute:** The Royal Children's Hospital and Murdoch Children's Research Institute  
**Recipient:** Fellow #1: Dr Stacie Wang  
**Recipient:** My Room Clinical Research Fellow  
**Funding Partner:** My Room (100%)

**Funding:** \$495,331 over 3 years (2018-21)  
Salary funding for a 2-year clinical research fellowship training program, with a split of 0.8: 0.2 EFT research and clinical time. This program is an investment in training the next generation of oncologists in translational research skills. Two fellowships will be funded under this program.



Project 137

**Clinical Care:** My Room Oncology Social Worker (1.0 EFT)  
**Focus:** In-hospital family support  
**Institute:** The Royal Children's Hospital  
**Funding Partner:** My Room (100%)

**Funding:** \$396,154 over 3 years (2018-21). Renewal – funded since 1998  
Salary funding for a Social Worker to support families with children undergoing treatment within the Children's Cancer Centre. In addition to salary funding, My Room provides a Patient Amenity Fund of \$16,000 per year supports families of children undergoing transplant for non-malignant conditions.



Project 302

**Research:** National Clinical Trials Investigating Stem Cell Transplantation and Personalised Medicine (1.0 EFT)  
**Focus:** All childhood cancers  
**Institute:** Sydney Children's Hospital  
**Recipient:** A/Prof. David Ziegler  
**Funding:** \$316,218 over 3 years (2017-20)

Salary funding for a Clinical Trial Associate coordinating two clinical trials: (1) PRISM (PREclSion Medicine for Paediatric Oncology Patients) study targeting 300 paediatric and adolescent patients with high-risk malignancies (expected survival < 30%). The key outcome is feasibility of precision medicine in a clinical setting, outcomes of patients treated and review of psychological impact and economic viability; (2) Pαβlo study recruiting >24 patients to test a novel technology that may allow safe and effective stem cell transplant from a patient's parent (when stem cell transplant is the only available cure and a matched sibling or unrelated donor is unavailable).



Project 115

**Clinical Care:** Art Therapists (1.4 EFT)  
**Focus:** In-hospital patient care  
**Institute:** The Royal Children's Hospital  
**Recipients:** Amy McKay and Tilly Dawson  
**Funding Partner:** The Pratt Foundation (\$40,000 in 2018)

**Funding:** \$721,745 over 5 years (2017-22). Renewal – funded since 2010  
Salary funding to provide art therapy services enabling children under treatment for cancer to process their emotions such as anxiety, depression, hopes and fears through



art. Through non-verbal and safe individual and group sessions, children can use creative avenues while socialising with other children sharing similar cancer experiences.



Project 132

**Research:** Modelling leukaemia using human pluripotent stem cells (1.0 EFT)

**Focus:** Leukaemia

**Institute:** Murdoch Children's Research Institute

**Recipient:** Prof. Andrew Elefanty and Prof. Ed Stanley

**Funding:** \$461,576 over 3 years (2016-20)

Research project to model the development of blood cells and to understand how fusion oncogenes cause childhood leukaemia. The significant innovation is the ability to study how cancer genes function directly in a human cell model, improving our understanding of how these genes cause cancer, and to identify new targets against which therapy can be directed and tested.



Project 301

**Clinical Trials:** Acute Myeloid Leukaemia National Clinical Trial (Myechild01)

**Focus:** Acute myeloid leukaemia

**Institute:** Led by Dr Andrew Moore, Lady Cilento Hospital, Brisbane; with nine participating hospitals in Australia and New Zealand

**Funding Partner:** My Room (100%)

**Funding:** \$1,055,245 over 5 years (2018-23)

National clinical trial recruiting children with acute myeloid leukaemia across nine participating hospitals. This trial provides access to a new drug currently unavailable to Australian children, even on compassionate grounds. The key outcome is to determine which of the current treatments combined with the new drug will provide the best chance of survival.



Project 129

**Family:** Family Gym Memberships

**Focus:** In-hospital family support

**Institute:** The Royal Children's Hospital

**Funding Partner:** Inside Out Performance

**Funding:** \$2,562 per year since 2016

The Foundation secured four 12-month gym memberships at the independent gym based at The Royal Children's Hospital for parents of children in the Children's Cancer Centre. The key outcome is to support parents in improving their wellbeing while based at the hospital for prolonged periods caring for their children.



Project 215

**Research:** Clinical research fellowship investigating brain tumours (1.0 EFT)

**Focus:** Brain cancers: Medulloblastoma and Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma

**Institute:** Hudson Institute of Medical Research, with Monash Children's Hospital and Monash University

**Recipient:** Dr Sara Khan

**Funding Partner:** Australian Lions Childhood Cancer Research Foundation (100%)

**Funding:** \$525,000 over 4 years (2016-20)

Salary funding and laboratory consumables for a paediatric oncologist to investigate new therapeutic options for two of the most prevalent and aggressive paediatric brain tumours – medulloblastoma and Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG). Key outcomes will be the development of a rapid and cost-effective clinical tool to determine the medulloblastoma molecular subtype; new DIPG gene targets for potential therapeutic intervention; and preclinical validation of potential pharmacological epigenetic modifiers of DIPG.



Project 305

**Clinical Trials:** SIOPEX Neuroblastoma Clinical Trials (0.4 EFT)

**Focus:** Neuroblastoma

**Institute:** Sydney Children's Hospital

**Recipient:** A/Prof. Toby Trahair

**Funding:** \$602,211 over 5 years (2019-23)

Funding for two international clinical trials and a registry study targeting high risk, low and intermediate risk and infant neuroblastoma opening at hospitals across Australia and New Zealand. The SIOPEX high risk neuroblastoma-2 trial focuses on improving survival for patients with the lowest chance of cure (<50%). The SIOPEX LINES trial is for children with less aggressive tumours and incorporates refined tumour analysis and staging techniques to more easily identify biologically favourable tumours (these patients will receive less intensive treatments) and unfavourable tumours.



Project 209

**Clinical Care:** Dietitian (0.4 EFT)

**Focus:** In-hospital patient care

**Institute:** Monash Children's Hospital

**Funding Partner:** My Room (100%)

**Funding:** \$137,526 over 3 years (2017-20). Supplement of 0.4 EFT to the 0.3 EFT funded 2010-17 and now embedded in hospital budget.

Salary funding for a Dietitian to provide intensive nutritional support to children with cancer, which is associated with improved survival rates and treatment tolerance. This EFT increase ensures all children have access to a full-time nutritional service to optimise their health during cancer treatment.



Project 220

**Research:** My Room Clinical Research Training Fellowship (3.0 EFT)

**Institute:** Monash Children's Hospital and Hudson Institute of Medical Research

**Funding Partner:** My Room (100%)

**Recipient:** My Room Foundation Clinical Research Fellow

**Funding:** \$773,900 over 5 years (2019-23)

Salary funding for a 2-year clinical research fellowship training program, with a 0.8:0.2 EFT split of research and clinical time. This program is an investment in training the next generation of oncologists in translational research skills. Three fellowships will be funded under this program.



Project 117

**Clinical Care:** Music Therapist (0.6 EFT)

**Focus:** In-hospital patient care

**Institute:** The Royal Children's Hospital

**Recipient:** Melina Roberts

**Funding:** \$172,600 over 3 years (2016-19). Renewal – funded since 2007

Salary funding for a Music Therapist to provide clinical music therapy services (song-writing, active music making, therapeutic music lessons, improvisation, relaxation) to children under treatment within the Children's Cancer Centre. Music therapy improves children's psychological adjustment to cancer treatment and promotes positive coping skills.



**Family:** Family Resource Coordinator (1.0 EFT)  
**Focus:** In-hospital family support  
**Institute:** The Royal Children’s Hospital  
**Recipient:** Merridy Justice  
**Funding Partner:** Portland House Foundation (\$85,000 in 2019)  
**Funding:** \$273,397 over 3 years (2018-21). Renewal – funded since 2006  
 Salary funding for a non-medical staff member providing practical and emotional support for children and families across inpatients, outpatients and day oncology. The Family Resource Coordinator facilitates discussion between staff and families, and provides day-to-day support services through play, social activities and respite.



**Clinical Care:** Music Therapists (0.2 EFT)  
**Focus:** In-hospital patient care  
**Institute:** Monash Children’s Hospital  
**Funding:** \$119,839 over 5 years (2018-23). Renewal – funded since 2009  
 Salary funding for a Music Therapist to provide clinical musical therapy services to help children across the inpatient, day cancer and outpatient settings of the Monash Children’s Cancer Centre adjust to their diagnosis and treatment. Music Therapy aims to provide positive coping-related behaviours and reduce anxiety for patients and their families during procedures.



**Family:** Family and Community Resource Officer (0.2 EFT)  
**Focus:** In-hospital family support  
**Institute:** Monash Children’s Hospital  
**Recipient:** Beck Pahl / Liz Virgo  
**Funding:** \$41,483 over 3 years (2017-20). Supplement of 0.2 EFT to 0.4 EFT funded 2007-17 and now embedded in hospital budget.  
 Salary funding for a non-medical staff member providing practical and emotional support services for children and their families. The Family and Community Resource Officer facilitates discussion between staff and families, and provides day-to-day support services through play, recreation, social activities and respite.



**Clinical Trials:** Early Phase Clinical Trial Coordinator (1.0 EFT)  
**Focus:** Clinical trials for all childhood cancer patients  
**Institute:** The Royal Children’s Hospital and Murdoch Children’s Research Institute  
**Funding:** \$191,305 over 2 years (2018-20). Renewal – funded since 2014  
 Research clinical trials to offer children new treatment options, supporting target of 75% of all patients to be enrolled in a clinical trial. The position facilitates access to drugs unavailable to patients through standard clinical care and access to treatment for patients who would otherwise have no further treatment options.



**Family:** The Beaded Journey  
**Focus:** In-hospital patient support  
**Institute:** The Royal Children’s Hospital, Monash Children’s Hospital and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre  
**Funding:** \$79,900 over 5 years (2017-22). Renewal – funded since 2008  
 The Beaded Journey, a therapeutic program that gives children the opportunity to tell their personal cancer story by marking key medical and non-medical events throughout their treatment with a special bead.



Project 222

**Research:** PhD Scholars Program (3.0 EFT)

**Focus:** All childhood cancers

**Institute:** Hudson Institute of Medical Research

**Funding Partner:** [Hudson Institute of Medical Research](#) (50%)

**Recipient:** PhD Scholar #1 Claire Shi, PhD Scholar #2 Sarah Parackal

**Funding:** \$318,106 over 5 years (2018-23)

Funding for three PhD students in paediatric precision medicine. The key aims are to develop a doctoral training program focused on key research themes of precision medicine, enable hypothesis-driven research that directly arises from the Hudson Monash Paediatric Precision Medicine Program (Project 219), and to strengthen cross-institutional collaborations (local, national, and international).



Project 221

**Research:** International Collaborations in Paediatric Cancer Research

**Institute:** Hudson Institute of Medical Research

**Funding:** \$49,500 over 3 years (2019-21). Renewal – funded since 2018

Funding of on-site visits during the annual Childhood Cancer Research Symposium for national and international researchers and clinicians from prestigious universities and health services. The aim is to advance the Hudson Monash Paediatric Precision Medicine Program (Project 219) by developing and strengthening collaboration with international experts in paediatric precision medicine and educating and catalysing scientific innovation in childhood cancer research and clinical care.



Project 223

**Clinical Care:** Physiotherapy Service (0.8 EFT)

**Focus:** In-hospital patient care

**Institute:** Monash Children's Hospital

**Funding Partner:** [My Room](#) (100%)

**Funding:** \$147,355 over 3 years (2019-20).

Salary funding for two physiotherapists to initiate, implement and evaluate a dedicated physiotherapy service for Monash Children's Cancer Centre to provide high quality assessment and intervention to all children and adolescents at diagnosis and throughout their cancer treatment.



Project 138

**Clinical Trials:** Neuro-oncology Research Coordinator (1.0 EFT)

**Focus:** Clinical trials for solid and brain cancer patients

**Institute:** The Royal Children's Hospital

**Funding Partner:** [Marcus Rosin Fund](#) (100%)

**Funding:** \$312,217 over 3 years (2019-21).

Salary funding to coordinate clinical trials for all solid and brain tumour patients within the Children's Cancer Centre, support a suite of three molecular clinical trials: PRISM, AIM and MNP, as well as supporting the opening of further early phase clinical trials for solid and brain tumour patients. The key outcomes are to increase clinical trial enrolment of children under treatment for cancer and to ensure that every child has access to the same pathway to timely and accurate treatment, improved drug access and novel therapies.